

SANTA and the SNOW MAN

BY LUCRECE HUGGINS

Chapter 7 FINDING ANOTHER TREE

Danny and the Snow Man stood speechless as the great stone tree settled to the bottom of the lake far below them.

Here was the end of all their labors and here was the end of Danny's hopes of curing his twisted leg.

The little boy lightened his lips and tried not to cry. The Snow Man was not to leave great tears ran down his snow cheeks. But the tears were for Danny and not for himself, though his own arm had broken off.

"For a job, I might poke then," Danny said, "come and I will fix your arm. It is broken on the knee" and he held a fine round arm out of snow and tenderly fitted it to the Snow Man's shoulder.

"I wish I were a snow boy," he said, "I wish to laugh." Then I



"WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THAT TREE?"

could kick off this crooked leg and make a new one any time I wanted.

"Just the same," said the Snow Man. "It's no fun to be always melting away. You never know what's going to happen."

Then they began to laugh and they sat down beside the road and laughed and laughed and after a while their heartsache was gone.

"Maybe the Wizard already had a stone tree?" said Danny.

"Maybe," said the Snow Man. "Or maybe he wouldn't have thought it remarkable enough."

They sat there for a while and stared absently at a little fir tree on the other side of the road. It was quite small—maybe 5 feet tall—but it stood so straight and proud and its branches were so even and its needles so thick and green—there could not have been a more perfect tree anywhere.

I don't know who thought of it first. Maybe the idea came to both of them at the very same time. Anyway, the two of them suddenly jumped up and Danny said, "What's the matter with that tree?" And the Snow Man said, "That Wizard has 999 crooked trees in his valley and not a single one is so remarkable as this plain little old one."

Well, they set to work and dug that tree up and carried it on down the hill to the Valley of Wasoon. The little tree sat lightly on their shoulders and smelled so good and felt so soft it was a joy to carry it.

The Wizard met them at the Avenue of Colored Trees where each tree was a different color—orange or purple or maroon or raw turkey amber—not just the leaves but the bark and branches and all. You never saw such mad looking trees!

"What is that?" cried the Wizard when Danny and the Snow Man put the little tree on the ground. "It's a Fir tree," said the Snow Man.

"It's very remarkable," added Danny. "I guess it is the only tree in this whole valley that looks and smells and acts like a tree!"

"Mercy me!" cried the Wizard. "What a feather in my cap such a tree will be! Wherever did you get it?"

The Snow Man winked at Danny and said, "That will be our secret. Remember the agreement was only that we should bring you a tree different and more remarkable than any you have."

"Oh, yes, yes," said the Wizard, falling on his knees and smelling and caressing the tree as though he truly had never seen another

JUST MADE CHINA 'ESCAPE BOAT'



USING A SAMPAN to overtake a U. S. Navy transport after it had sailed from war-periled Shanghai, an American scrambles up a rope ladder and makes certain of a quick journey to American shores. The st. carried 4,000 dependents of American personnel who were ordered from China. Many of the homeward voyagers were children. (International)

like it anywhere.

"The—'the pill'?" faltered Danny.

"Yes, yes, the pill," muttered the Wizard. He reached in his pocket and drew out a small box holding one tiny pill.

"Here," he said giving it to Danny. "When you have left my Valley four hours behind swallow this pill and your crooked leg will be as fine and straight as that of any boy you know."

"But take care! If you lose it—there is not another one to be had."

Chapter 8 THEY LOSE THE PILL

Danny held the tiny pill box tight in his fist.

"Just imagine!" he cried to the Snow Man. "Just imagine me with two legs like any other boy!"

The Snow Man grinned. "And what will you do first when you have your two good legs?"

"Why," said Danny. "I shall learn to skate. And then I'll play football. And I'll run faster than any other boy and I'll swim and—oh, but the best thing will be—"

"What?"

Danny sighed happily. "The best thing will be that the other kids won't laugh at me anymore!"

The Snow Man, squeezed his hand and for a long time they walked without a word between them. They went so fast in their excitement that, before they knew it Santa Land lay just ahead.

"Now," said Danny. "Surely you have left the Valley four hours behind. It is time to take my pill."

But the Snow Man said, "Let us wait a little bit longer to be sure."

Danny sat down on a fallen log. "Then we will wait right here because I want my leg to be well and whole when I see Santa again."

At the word "Santa" the evil Flournoy sprang before them. Danny nearly fell off the log he was so astonished for surely the hideous elf had popped out of the very ground.

"Back again?" said Flournoy. "And what is it you are holding so tight in your hand?"

"Oh, it's a wonderful pill," cried Danny, eager to tell his happy story.

"I wish you would go away from here," said the Snow Man for he

hated Flournoy's evil eyes. "Why is it you are always hanging around on the edge of Santa Land?"

"Because I'm going to play a joke on Santa," grinned Flournoy. "He is an old busybody doing no one any good."

"But, you're wrong!" cried Danny. "Only just look what he has done for me; he sent me to the Wizard of Wasoon to get this pill which will straighten my leg."

"Ah!" said Flournoy. "Let me see your pill." And before Danny could stop him the wicked elf snatched the box from his hands and leaped into a tree.

"Give that back!" roared the Snow Man.

"Oh, please be careful!" cried Danny. "Don't lose it! Don't crush it! Please give it back to me!"

The poor boy jumped up and down helplessly while the Snow Man ran round and round the tree heaving at it with his fists. But Flournoy just sat there on a limb and grinned.

"Santa would feel pretty bad if he knew you lost your pill, wouldn't he?" teased the elf.

"But, he won't lose it," retorted the Snow Man and he picked up a rock and threw it into the tree. Flournoy leaped down and ran away.

Danny and the Snow Man followed but how could a cripple boy and a man of snow catch an elf who could run faster than a leaf on the wind?

Suddenly Flournoy vanished but before Danny could cry out his despair the elf reappeared at his very side.

"Here, take your pill," he said and threw the box at Danny's feet. Then laughing shrilly he disappeared.

Poor Danny never even suspected the evil which had been done. He took the pill from the box and with trembling fingers popped it into his mouth and swallowed it whole.

"Now watch," he cried joyfully and he held out his crippled leg for the Snow Man to see.

But what awful thing was this! The leg, instead of becoming whole and straight, twisted and turned, and right before their eyes became more crooked than it was before.

"Merciful heavens!" gasped the Snow Man. "The elf has taken



RECENT NON-FICTION

Along with all the new fiction the Library has added there are a number of new non-fiction books.

For helping out in the home "Weaving You Can Do" by Allen Weaving up all the "little" questions involved in successful hand weaving. "Cook It In a Casserole" by Brobeck gives menus—with the recipes for all kinds of casserole cooking—including the use of leftovers. A great demand from several of the women in town this summer was "American Glass" by McKearin. The Library has its own copy now for your use.

"A study of the self—its importance, capabilities and satisfactory development, the influence upon it of heredity, tradition, culture, habits, and work. An active participating attitude toward all situations is advocated as the most rewarding." This will be found in Overstreet's "How To Think About Ourselves". A book that a lot of people have been requesting is Dale Carnegie's "How To Stop Worrying and Start Living".

The how and why of genealogy can be found in "Searching For Your Ancestors" by Gilbert Harry Doane.

"Crusade in Europe" by Dwight Eisenhower gives the complete story of the war as he planned it and lived it. Through his eyes is seen the whole gigantic drama of the war—the strategy, the battles, the moments of fateful decision. This book covers the years 1941-1945.

For jokes and stories about fam-

your pill and given you a poisonous one in its stead!"

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County Librarian

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