

### Impulse Dodds' Christmas

F.H. Sweet



**TOMMY** Dodd, "Impulse Dodds," cartoonist, was in Chicago, with his big sale over. And even in Chicago, where sight-seeing caterers were common, Impulse Dodds was a noticeable figure, with his six feet odd, free money ways, and almost perpetual smile.

He peered in front of a small, narrow store, whose one window was full of toys. Inside the counter and shelves were packed with the same kind of goods.

"Just Santa," said Impulse, aloud. "I'll be in."

He closed his fingers tightly and pushed open the door with his thumb, stiffly extended.

"Put in his thumb," he grinned, "and does he pull out a plum?" In the shop were two men, the one in front of the counter loud-voiced and threatening. "Well," this one was finishing, as Impulse entered, "I'll give you just two more days to meet your bill till the day after Christmas. If you don't pay me in full then, I will take possession."

As the man stalked out, Impulse raised his right foot and swung it back and forth thoughtfully.

"Can I show you anything, sir?" he asked a moment later, as Impulse turned to the counter with a half-regretful frown on his face, adding: "It's just as well you didn't do it, sir. He's a very vindictive man."

"That so? Then I sure wish I had, I don't generally hold back on things, but this city's getting me right scared. I've reined up unusual the last three days. Now 'bout the toys. That man's talk is so easy unraveled. I reckon you'll sell cheap?"

"At almost your own price, etc. There is only this one day to sell, and I can't hope to do enough. I've seen failure for a week past, though for a while I did hope to come out in condition to start again. Now what can I show you?"

"Well, not only one solitary thing in particular, I reckon," scanning the shelves judiciously. "They all look right ending, and what I didn't buy would make me feel sorry to look at. What'll you take for the bunch?"

The storekeeper moved along the counter, trying to arrange his goods more attractively.

"Look around all you want to," he said amiably. "And there is an easy chair back yonder where you can sit and rest, if you like."

Impulse followed him. "No wonder you can't sell, if you treat all customers like me," he complained. "Now, see here," slipping a big roll of bills on the counter. "How much?"

"How much?" Demanded Impulse.

"Fifteen hundred, if you mean the coat. But I warn you it's too late to sell much—"

"Oh, I'm sure a hustler down home," cheerfully, "and I've a hunch I can move Santa goods tolerable brisk the day before the day. Now let's see, fifteen, with a fair per cent for profit, and a little for good will makes it just two thousand. There you are," peeling off another bill or two, and then replacing the roll in his pocket. "Now you've got to throw in your services as clerk for the rest of the day."

"But I can't—" began the dazed shopkeeper. But Impulse was at the door.

"Tuck right soon," he called. "Be getting the goods ready to handle quick."

Outside, Impulse glanced up and down the street. Half a dozen urchins were playing on the sidewalk, two or three were hanging behind a tree, a newsboy was crying his papers. Other youngsters were dimly seen among pedestrians and street vehicles. Impulse put two fingers into his mouth and blew a blast that would cover a mile on the prairie. At the same time the other hand was coming from his pocket with all the coins his fingers could grasp. These were tossed into the air. By the time they had ceased flinging on the sidewalk, fifty more or less grimy little hands were clutched for them.

"Now, you bunch," called Impulse, "just listen to me for a minute. Who's the most no 'count boy in this neighborhood?"

"Crawfish Bobby," answered a voice promptly. "He never stands treat, an' carries every cent home to his ma-a-a."

"And the most unpopular girl?"

There was a short silence, then several of the boys fitted.

"Staggy Sally," said one of them. "She's Peppert Seller Fer's girl, an' when we boys throw mud she fights like a wildcat."

"And gives all of you a mighty good drubbing, I hope," commented Impulse. "Now, boys the two who bring Crawfish Bobby and Staggy Sally to me get a four-bit piece each, and tell them they'll get another for coming. Now, the lot of you come back, for the show isn't half over."

Ten minutes later, Crawfish Bobby and Staggy Sally stood in front of him. Impulse placed a hand upon a shoulder of each.

"These two are going to be little Santas and give you all a right nice



"Mr. Santa Claus, I believe, sir," She began.

present by and by," he called to the rapidly increasing crowd of urchins. "Mind, you'll owe it in part to them. Now stampede into the streets and alleys of the neighborhood and corral every boy and girl you can find, and bring 'em here. Just as hour from now this store'll commence to give out presents, and you'll all get one. Nobody will be missed. Hit the street now, the whole lot of you except these two."

In an hour, the door was thrown open and the rush began, with half a thousand whooping youngsters to make the assault. It was short work, the pillaging of the store, and in forty minutes all was over. And then, just as the hilarious present bearers were scattering into every street and alley, an automobile swerved out from the street traffic and stopped at the curb. In it were an old gentleman and a lady and several girls. The gentleman mentioned some of the urchins to the side of the car, where they were questioned as to the extraordinary spectacle. Then a few words passed between the occupants of the car, after which one of the girls alighted and came to the store. Crawfish Bobby and Staggy Sally were just outside the door, with their arms full.

"You're the little Santa's," smiled the young lady, as she took their hands. "And I just know you had a big time." Then she entered the store and went straight to Impulse.

"Mr. Santa Claus, I believe, sir," she began.

"Why—er—no," stammered Impulse, turning red, "only—er—just as a sort of advance agent, named Impulse—I mean Tommy Dodd."

The girl broke into a ringing laugh. "Impulse! I like that," she cried.

"Now, Impulse Dodd, have you any definite arrangement for the Christmas holidays—any binding engagement, I mean?"

"No-o, nothing except to tramp side-walks and say 'Howdy' to every stranger who'll let me."

"Good! Then there's nothing in the way of our invitation. You see, we're having a houseful of company for the holiday week, and papa and mamma suggested that I ask you. Papa owns a ranch out West, and he says he knows how a stranger must feel in a city at Christmas time, and he thinks a man who can do what you've just done will certainly be an acquisition to our party. And I may add we all feel the same way. You'll come? There is room in our machine."

Impulse nodded. He lacked words fitting to the occasion. A week at a house party! Gee! wouldn't that be stuff to tell the boys at the ranch. Start back the day after Christmas? Who? He? No, siree! That would be rank foolishness. Not till the last gun was fired.

So he walked out to the automobile with the girl, with never a thought of the emptied store behind, or of the beaming, misty-eyed man who could now stock up again without the hateful skeleton of a creditor to glare at him over the goods. And as Dodd entered the automobile, one of the girls afterwards declared that she heard him murmur, "And pulled out a plum," though she could not understand why. It was just one of his funny ways.

**SANTA BANNED BY PURITANS**

Christmas Was Utterly Denounced as Evil and Ungodly in Early Days.

IN THE early days of America's history Christmas festivities were not generally observed.

In one state the observance of Christmas was utterly denounced as an evil, ungodly and pernicious custom, and any child daring to think of as much as a plum pudding on that day would make himself liable to reproof by the authorities.

All along the stern and rock-bound coast, Geraldine Ames writes in the Churchman, the only Christmas trees in the days of the Puritan domination were those that nature had planted there and had adorned with feecy snow. The fires burned brightly on the open hearths, but as far as the children knew, Christmas was just like any other day in the calendar.

Even after the Puritan reaction against the forms and customs of the old church had spent itself to some extent the children of the Seventeenth century still expected no gifts in honor of the birth of Christ.

**If it's for a man—  
get it at a  
Man's Store**

## No Secrets

**Store  
Open Evenings  
Until Christmas**

**get me a pair  
of gloves**

**Men's Pajamas**  
Of cotton pongee of excellent quality. To be had in blue, tan, pink and white. Sizes. 15-18.

**Men's House Coats**  
Men find lots of comfort in wearing these house coats. All sizes.  
**Priced at \$5.00**

**Silk Shirts**  
Stripped Jersey, Broadcloth, Crepe de Chine—the heavy silks that men very definitely prefer.  
**\$350. to \$6.50**

**Men's Gloves**  
They are of calf in tan, brown and black and are featured specially as gifts.  
**75c to \$2.50**

**Men's Silk Cravats**  
All silk cravats of splendid qualities in an unusual variety of new colorful patterns.  
A low price that suggests the purchase of many. In pretty Christmas boxes.  
**50c and 75c**

**Men's Belt Buckles**  
Of sterling silver with pierced monogram to order—a highly appreciated gift by any man or boy.  
**Only 50 cents**

**Men's Kid Slippers**  
Comfortable slippers in kid-skin in tan, black and dark red. Splendid for Christmas gifts.  
**\$1.50 and \$2.25**

**I want a pair of cuff buttons**

**Men's Silk Hosiery**  
Thread silk hosiery in a number of two-color combinations, brown, blue or white with black, attractively clocked. All reinforced heels and toes.  
**50c to 85c**

**Men's Handkerchiefs**  
Of sheer linen, damask, linen and voiles—an assortment seldom to be had at this price. Very remarkable in quality.  
**20c to 75c**

**Men's Cloth Caps**  
Chamois lined caps with turn down bands for ear coverings. In three dark colors suitable for general wear. All sizes.  
**50c to \$2.50**

# FRANK PATECEK

**COVINGTON'S BIG STORE**

**I'd like to have a bathrobe**

**Men's Mufflers**  
I want a muffler

**a necktie for me**

### DATE OF BIRTH OF CHRIST

Nothing Certain Is Known as to Actual Time of Arrival of Child of the Manger.

IT IS a remarkable fact that nothing certain is known as to the actual date of the birth of Christ, Dec. 25 being only a tradition, adopted by the church about the middle of the fourth century. Lupi, a learned Jesuit of the eighteenth century, says:

"There is not a single month in the year to which the Nativity has not been assigned by some writer or other."

The earliest celebration of Christmas on Dec. 25 appears to have been held in Rome in the fourth century, being first mentioned in a Roman document, the Missal calendar, dating from the year 354, but containing an older record, referring to the year 336. Christmas was brought to England by St. Augustine, and kept in 598, but it would appear that it was not established in Germany until 818, and in Norway about the middle of the tenth century, by King Hakon the Good.

The Romans of the empire used to celebrate the birth of the Unconquered Sun on Dec. 25, according to the Julian calendar, the winter solstice, when the sun began to rise in new vigor, after his autumnal decline. Therefore, the reason for the choice of Dec. 25 for Christmas would seem to have been symbolical.

### To Remove Chewing Gum.

Wet the material well around the gum with kerosene and rub lightly. This will promptly remove the gum. Then wash as usual.

### THE ANNUAL ROMANCE

By Mary Graham Bonner

(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

ROSALIND was engaged to be married. She was to be married the day after Christmas. She couldn't very well be married before then as her fiancée was so especially, unusually busy at Christmas time, and it would have been cruel, too, not to have waited.

For Bill, her beloved, took the part of a Santa Claus every Christmas for one of the big city stores. He was an ideal Santa Claus. He wasn't too tall, he was not too short; he was rather inclined to a stockiness of build, and extra clothes made him look an ideal round Santa. He had a ruddy face and snapping blue eyes—and dressed in a Santa Claus costume he was perfect.

How the children did adore him! And how he loved them! They whispered their secrets to him and their eyes danced with rare happiness when he waved a good-bye to them and called them:

### "Sweethearts," and "My dears," and "Children dears," and other affectionate terms.

Rosalind had been thrilled when she had heard him first, in his deep beautiful voice uttering such beautiful words! For Rosalind had met him first when he had been a Santa Claus and she had been an extra sales girl taken on for the Christmas rush.

It had been her first meeting with him. But she had been kept at the store after the Christmas rush was over, and Bill had worked for the store for seven years now. Every December he was Santa Claus. The other eleven months he spent in selling kitchen utensils in the basement. They had fallen in love with each other, though, at this time when he had been Santa Claus. And many a time when he had said: "Good-by, dearie," to a child, he had been thinking of the pretty girl who was at that very moment selling dolls and giving her smiles, her beautiful smiles to a mother or to children.

And now a second Christmas was coming around, and once more Bill was Santa Claus, and as soon as he was through being Santa Claus they would be married.

"I've always had lots of romance in my nature," she said to him one evening. "I've always thought it would be awful to be like some folks—some I know and some I've heard talk. One lady who came to the store with a friend was telling how she and her husband got along perfectly. They

each had other friends, and sometimes they met and embarrassed others when they told that they were married. For one time the husband had been having dinner with a friend, and the friend had been looking flirtatiously at his wife who was also in the restaurant. "The friend had been much embarrassed when he discovered he had been

married, all right." I don't want that kind."

"And you won't have it, little girl," Bill said. "I'm for your kind of romance every time. I'm for the kind of a married life where folks won't think we're married—we'll be so happy! I had a friend once like that. Why, a cop called him down because he was making love to his wife and wouldn't believe they were married 'cause she called him 'darling.' They found it awkward, but they had the right idea."

And as Rosalind listened to her Santa Claus, as she counted the days before the wedding, she said to herself:

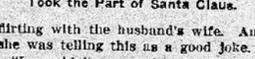
"It will be an annual romance to see Bill as Santa Claus, for it was as Santa Claus that I, too, fell in love with him as well as the children, and every year our happy, merry memories will be revived for us. We believe in romance and romance believes in us, for it, too, is going to play its part."

And someone who knew them both said:

"It wouldn't be a bad idea if every man could be as he was during his courtship days for a whole month of every year!"

Have Breakfast Room Tidy. Start the day right by having the breakfast room aired and tidy, even though a more thorough sweeping and dusting is done afterwards. If the table is set the night before a light cloth must be thrown over it.

Take the Part of Santa Claus. flitting with the husband's wife. And she was telling this as a good joke. "I wouldn't want that kind where one goes one way and the other the other way. And I wouldn't want to be known as a wife because I was quarreling with my husband. "You know how you hear folks say 'Well, you could tell they were mar-



Take the Part of Santa Claus.