

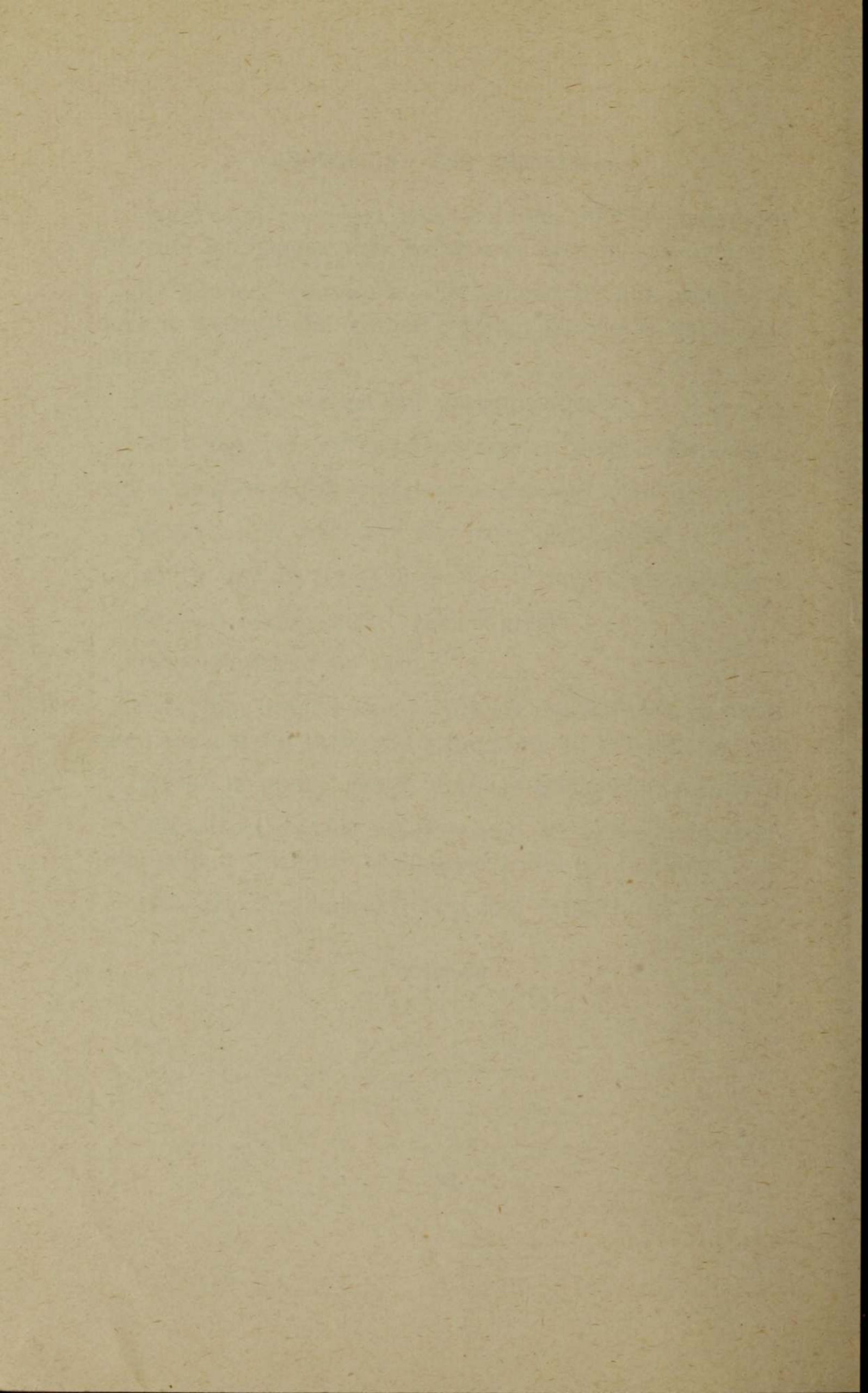


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# Snowbound for Christmas

BY

EDNA I. MACKENZIE

PAINE PUBLISHING COMPANY  
DAYTON, OHIO



## CHARACTERS

MA SIMPSON.

PA SIMPSON.

MINERVA, Oldest Daughter.

SAM, Oldest Son.

BILL

JENNIE,

BOBBY

BETTY,

} The In Between's.

} Twins.

## COSTUMES

### *Act I*

#### DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS

PA SIMPSON, Overalls and Work Shirt.

MA SIMPSON, Gingham Dress and Apron.

MINERVA, Red Waist and Blue Skirt.

SAM }  
BILL, } Overalls.

BOBBY, Torn Blouse and Good Trousers.

JENNIE, Old Dress.

BETTY, Old Dress.

### *Act II*

#### CHRISTMAS MORNING

Girls in Flannelette Night Dresses and Bed-Room Slippers.

Boys in Pajamas.

Pa in Bathrobe and Ma in Wrapper.

Time of Playing—About Twenty-five Minutes.

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# Snowbound for Christmas

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## Act I

*Scene.—A living room in the Simpson farmhouse. Toys, books, etc., are strewn around untidily. Children play with these when not talking. Doors Left and Right.*

*The curtain rises on Ma Simpson knitting by table in Centre, and Pa Simpson reading the newspaper.*

*Enter Sam, covered with snow*

SAM—It's still snowin', Ma.

MA (*not looking up*)—Yes, Sam.

SAM—It's been snowin' for three days, Ma.

MA—Yes, Sam.

SAM—And tomorrow's Christmas, Ma.

MA—Yes, Sam.

PA (*throws down paper*)—Do you suppose we don't know that it's snowing, and that it's been snowing for three days and tomorrow's Christmas. Can't you tell us something new?

SAM—But, Pa, how are we going to get to town to buy our Christmas presents and things?



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

PA (*gruffly*)—We can't go and that's all about it. The horses couldn't plow half a rod through these snowdrifts.

SAM—But whatever are we going to do for Christmas?

MA (*shaking her head*)—I guess we will have to do without Christmas this year.

*Minerva enters*

MINERVA—Do without Christmas! Oh, Ma!

MA (*brushing away tears*)—I'm sorry Minerva, but with the twins down with the grippe last week and it snowing so hard this week we couldn't get to town and—and (*puts apron to eye*). I feel every bit as bad as you youngsters. I've always prided myself on giving you a happy Christmas, and to think that I haven't a thing ready this year. Oh, you poor, poor children (*cries*).

PA—Now, see what you've done. Run away children and stop pesterin' your Ma.

MINERVA (*kissing Ma*).—Never mind, Ma. We know it couldn't be helped. We can do one year without Christmas, can't we, Sam?

SAM (*patting Ma awkwardly*)—Of course. Don't you worry about us kids, Ma. We'll get along.

MA—Bless your dear, kind hearts. But the little ones, the twins, how can I tell them that Santa can't come this year?



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PA—Those kids have got enough toys as it is to last them a life time. Look at this room. You'd think a hurricane had struck it.

MA—I know, I know. But they've been stuck in the house so long that they're bound to get their play things around. It's not the toys they need, but to tell them Santa won't be here. Oh, I can't! I can't!

MINERVA—Perhaps, Ma, we older ones could make them some presents. I could make a dandy nigger doll out of a bottle and a black stocking. Sara Martin showed me how to do it.

SAM—I'll go and get my tools right away and make a cradle for the doll.

MINERVA—And I'll give Jennie that ring that's got too small for me.

SAM—I'll paint my old sled over for Bobby and give Bill my hockey stick.

PA—That's the idea! You kids have got good heads on you.

SAM—Come on, Minerva, let's get busy.

*Exit Minerva and Sam*

MA—The dear children! There's not a woman living has better children than we have.

PA (*blowing nose*)—You're right there. I guess they take after their ma.



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

MA—How you do talk! And to think that my own children have to teach their ma a lesson. Here am I moping away because I hadn't anything ready when I should be hunting up and planning for them. What a silly old goose I'm getting to be (*jumps up*). I'll—

PA—Now, Ma, don't go and call yourself names. You're simply tired out working yourself to death for these youngsters and—

MA—There's that old Persian Lamb coat I got before I was married. I'll make muffs and capes out of it for Jennie and Betty. It's moth-eaten in spots, but there's plenty good fur left and Minerva can help me make them. And—and—for Minerva I'll (*rubs head*) oh, I know, I'll make Minerva a party dress out of my white silk wedding dress. I ain't never worn it much, and it's almost as good as new.

PA—Not your wedding dress! You ain't goin' to cut that up!

MA—Why ain't I? Laws-a-me, I can't wear it anymore. It wouldn't come within five inches of meeting round the waist, and it's too old fashioned for Minerva to wear the way it is.

PA—But your wedding dress, the dress you wore when we two was made one, and you lookin' like an angel straight out of heaven in it. Oh, I couldn't bear to see that cut up.

MA—Now, Pa, don't you go and talk nonsense. I didn't know you had that much sentiment in you. To tell the



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

truth I hate to have it cut up myself, but when it comes to making that dear child happy I'd give her my head on a charger if it would do her any good.

PA—Who's talkin' nonsense now? Well, since you've got the girls fixed up I guess I'll have to think up something for the boys. Blest if I know what I can give them (*scratches head*).

MA—It's awful hard planning for boys. They ain't so easy pleased as girls with fixed over things. They're more for animals and such like.

PA—There you've got it, Ma! I'll give Sam that little black colt all for his own. He's just crazy about it and Bill—let's see—what can I give—Oh yes, there's that Jersey heifer that's goin' to be a sure-enough winner some day—I'll give him that. Then there's Bobby, what in the dickens can I give that tyke. He's too young—

MA (*at door*)—Hush, I hear him coming.

*Bobby rushes in*

BOBBY—Oh, Ma, what do you think! I found a dozen eggs hid away in the hay-mow.

MA—Why Bobby, whatever are you doing with your Sunday trousers on?

PA—How'd you happen to find the eggs?

BOBBY—I was jumpin' off the beam into the hay and I landed right on top of them. Didn't know they was there. Gee, there was some spill. I guess them eggs was layed last



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summer, they smelt like it (*pause*). That's why I got my Sunday trousers on, Ma.

MA—Well, run along now and see that you don't get any more eggs for if you spoil them trousers you go to bed. You ain't got any others.

BOBBY—All right, Ma. I only wished we had a swing in the barn like Pete Miller's. Yuh kin go clean to the roof in it. It beats jumpin' in the hay all holler (*runs out*).

PA—The very thing! I'll put a swing up in the barn for Bobby. I'll give him a big bag of butternuts to crack to keep him out of the way 'till I git it up.

MA—And I'll get Minerva to make taffy to put the nuts in (*exit Pa and Ma*)

*Enter Minerva with bottle and stocking, Sam with chest of tools and boards*

MINERVA—I'm so glad I thought of this. It will be different from any doll she's ever had (*puts stocking on bottle*). I'll sew on beads for eyes with white paper pasted on for whites and red for a mouth and—

SAM (*sawing wood*)—This will be some cradle when I get done, you bet your life.

MINERVA (*severely*)—It's sure awful, the slang you use. You should cut it out.

SAM (*jeeringly*)—I should cut it out, eh! Cut it out isn't slang! Oh my stars! (*turns handspring*). Say, Sis,



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

don't you know that people in stone houses shouldn't throw glass?

MINERVA—No, I don't, and if I were you I wouldn't start quoting until I could get it right.

BOBBY (*outside*)—I did hear Santa's reindeer. I know I did.

MINERVA (*jumping up*)—Here's the twins. Hide your stuff quick (*scramble*).

*Enter Bobby and Betty*

*Betty has black sticking-plaster over front teeth to hide them.*

BETTY—Aw, you didn't (*runs to Minerva*). Thanta only cometh at night, don't ee, Nerva?

MINERVA (*lifting her on her knee*)—Yes, dear, when you're fast asleep in—

BOBBY—But I did hear him, I heard the bells jingle in the roof.

MINERVA—Perhaps he's around seeing if you're good children and don't quarrel. You know he doesn't give presents to bad children.

BETTY—Uths hathn't foughted for two days. Uths been awful good, hathn't uth, Bobby?

BOBBY—Yep, but if Christmas doesn't hurry up and come I'll bust, I know I will.

*Enter Bill and Jennie*



SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

BILL—Sam, what do you know, Pa says we can't get into town. How are we going to buy—

SAM (*shakes hand in warning behind twin's backs*)—See here Bill, I—I—

BILL—Say, what's the matter with you, Sam? Have you got the palsy?

SAM (*pulling him to front*)—No, but I wish you had. Ain't you got any sense? Do you want the kids to quit believin' in Santa?

BILL—No, but how—

JENNIE (*to Minerva*)—Ain't we goin' to get any Christmas presents, Nervy?

MINERVA—Of course we are, dear.

JENNIE—But where are we going to get them?

BETTY—From Thanta, of courth. Where elth could you get them?

MINERVA—Of course. He's never failed us yet and I guess he isn't going to this Christmas either. Twinnies, have you all the pop-corn strings made for the tree?

BOBBY—No, let's go to the kitchen and finish them, Betty (*exit twins*).

JENNY—But Nervy, where are we goin' to git them?

BILL—Yes, where? Pa and Ma never got to town and—

MINERVA—By making them for each other.



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

BILL and JENNIE—By making them!

SAM—Yes, why not? (*gets tools, etc.*). Sis and I are making our presents.

BILL—What are you makin'?

SAM—Wouldn't you like to know, now?

JENNIE—But, Nervy, made things won't be real Christmas presents (*cries*). And I wanted a book, and a pencil box and a ring and—and—a muff and—and—

MINERVA (*fiercely*)—Now see here, Jennie. You stop crying this minute, Ma's feeling dreadful bad as it is because she can't give us a real-to-goodness Christmas without store presents—

BILL (*shaking her*)—Aw, shut up, Jennie. I guess one Christmas without regular presents won't kill us. And there will be heaps of fun makin' them and keepin' secrets and things. I bet I kin make Bobby the dandiest top you ever saw.

JENNIE (*brightening*)—And I'll make a picture book for Betty.

MINERVA—You're talking now. They'll be tickled to pieces with them.

MA (*outside*)—Minerva, where are you?

PA (*outside*)—Sam, come here a minute.

MINERVA—There's Ma calling me! (*exit*).



SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

SAM—There's Pa calling me! (*exit*).

JENNIE—Say, Bill, I've got something thought out for Nervy too.

BILL—What?

JENNIE—Well, you know that piece of green silk Aunt Mary gave me for a doll's dress? I'm going to make a bag for Nervy to carry her crochet in and put featherstitching on it with the purple sil—silk—silklene I've got.

BILL—Aw shucks, you haven't time.

JENNIE—I have, too, it just takes a few minutes. Boys don't know nothin' about sewin'.

BILL—Aw, sewin'. Hockey beats that all to pieces. What kin I give Sam? (*picks up magazine*). Oh, I know, I'll cut up the ads in our old magazine and glue them on pasteboard. They'll make swell picture puzzles.

JENNIE—Oh goody! I just love picture-puzzles.

BILL—I ain't makin' them for you, they're for Sam, I told you.

JENNIE—Well, he'll let me play with them. He ain't stingy like some people I know.

BILL—Hush, here's Sam now.

*Enter Sam and Minerva*

MINERVA—Sam and I have thought of presents for everybody but Ma and Pa. What can we give them, I wonder.



SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

SAM—Have you kids anything for them?

BILL and JENNIE—No.

JENNIE—What can we give them?

MINERVA—I don't know. There isn't time to make much and I've promised to help her make the f— (*puts hand on mouth*).

JENNIE—Make what?

MINERVA—Make some taffy. Bobby's cracking nuts for it.

BILL (*turning somersault*)—Oh, I've got an idea.

ALL—What is it?

BILL—I know what'll please them more'n anything.

JENNIE—For goodness sake, Bill, get up and tell us. Don't keep us in suspenders.

BILL—Well, I read a story once where a lot of kids instead of givin' their pa and ma presents, wrote notes promisin' to do the chores and things they hated most for a whole year without bein' told and—

MINERVA—Oh, that's a splendid idea!

SAM—It is if we can stick to it.

JENNIE—I don't believe none of us could—not for a whole year.

MINERVA—We can if we love them enough to really try. Will you do it?



SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

SAM—All right, I'm game.

BILL—So am I.

JENNIE—I'll—has it got to be what you hate the very worst?

BILL—Of course, it ain't no good to promise something easy. Anyone could do that.

MINERVA—And it will show whether you love them enough to sac-to sacer-sacerfice ourselves for them.

JENNIE—I, guess I can do it. Anyway I'll try awful hard.

MINERVA—I know you will, Jennie. I'll go and call the twins.

SAM—Do you think we had better let them in on it.

MINERVA—Why, of course, Pa and Ma would be so pleased.

BILL—That settles it. (*calls*) Bobby! Betty! Jennie, hunt up some paper and pencils.

*Enter Twins*

TWINS—What do you want?

JENNIE—We're talking about the Christmas present we're going to give Ma and Pa and—

BETTY—Why, ithn't Thanta goin' to give them any prethents?



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

MINERVA—No, dear, Santa just brings presents to children. Would you like to do something that will please Pa and Ma very much?

BETTY—Yeth, tell uth what it ith.

MINERVA—We are all going to promise to do something we hate doing for a whole year without being told.

BOBBY—That ain't no present.

SAM—Oh, yes, it is the very best kind.

BOBBY—But you can't put a pwomise on a Christmas tree.

BILL—We put notes on instead. Will you do it?

BOBBY—I guess so. I like doin' everything I have to, so it won't be hard for me to pwomise.

JENNIE—Oh, you little lilac. What a fib.

BOBBY—It ain't then.

JENNIE—It is too. I could tell you half a dozen things you make a fuss about. Here's paper and pencils (*distributes them*).

MINERVA—Now let's get around the table and write our notes. I'll write yours for you Betty.

BETTY—No. I'll wite it mythelf.

JENNIE—You can't write nothin' anyone could read.

BETTY—I can print then, ith's eathier to read.

BOBBY—So can I. You can spell the hard words for me, Sam.



SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

MINERVA—You didn't give me a pencil, Jennie.

JENNIE—There wasn't enough to go around. Bill, see if you have one in your pocket.

BILL—All right (*empties pocket full of truck, brings out dead mouse and pencil at last. Girls scream. Minerva jumps on chair*).

MINERVA—Oh Bill, you nasty boy.

BILL (*laughs*). Girls are the beatenest. Afraid of a dead mouse! (*puts things back in pocket*). ..

SAM—Let's get down to business. We haven't any time to waste.

MINERVA—I don't know which I hate doing worse, washing dishes or dusting (*bites pencil*).

JENNIE—I wouldn't bite that pencil if I was you. It's been rubbin' up against that dead mouse.

MINERVA (*slipping it down*)—Ugh! I'll not touch it. I'll use yours when you're through.

BOBBY—I wish you'd keep quiet so that I could think up something to pwomise. I don't know nothin' I hate doin'.

JENNIE—Oh, Bobby, look at your ears, they're—

BOBBY—I can't. My eyes ain't in the back of my head.

JENNIE—You didn't wash behind them this morning.

BOBBY (*jumping around*)—I know, I know, I'll pwomise to—



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

SAM—Let's not tell each other what we're goin' to promise. There'll be more fun reading the notes tomorrow.

BETTY—Notes don't make much thow on a Chwismas tree.

JENNIE (*claps hands*)—I've got it! I've got it! I've got it!

BILL—What, a lunatic germ?

JENNIE—Let's put a simpleton of what we're going to promise on the tree.

BILL—A simpleton, what' that?

JENNIE—Why a sign, of course. You see if Nervy hates dusting, she can put a dust rag on the tree and make Pa and Ma guess what it stands for.

MINERVA—Symbol! That's what she means (*laughs*). A simpleton! Oh, Jennie, that's what you are.

JENNIE—I ain't then. They're the same thing.

MINERVA—The same thing, oh—

SAM (*excitedly*)—By gimminy, Jen, that's the bulliést stunt yet.

BILL—Oh, boys, it will make the jolliest fun we've ever gotten out of a tree in all our lives. Let's do it.

ALL—Yes, yes, let's do it.

*Curtain goes down on children writing in various positions, Bobby wags tongue, Betty wiggles whole body, etc.*



SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

*Act II*

*Scene.—The Simpson living-room, tidied table pushed back and Christmas tree decorated with home-made trimmings and presents tied in various ludicrous parcels.*

*Enter Minerva carrying dishpan with note attached.*

MINERVA—I go first because I'm the oldest.

JENNIE (*outside*)—That ain't no fair.

MINERVA (*finger to lips*)—Hush, you don't want to wake Ma. She didn't come to bed until near morning (*puts dishpan under tree*). There, that's a promise it'll be mighty hard to keep for if there's anything under the sun I hate doing it's washing dishes. Three times a day and there's 365 days in the year, that washes, let me see—three times five is fifteen, three times six is eighteen, and one to carry is nineteen, and three times three is nine and one's ten. Good gracious, over a thousand times a year and eight in the family means eight plates, eight cups, eight—a million dishes! Oh dear, I wish our family was smaller.

*Enter Sam with armful of wood*

SAM—It takes a good sight longer for you to put a dishpan down than for me to drop this wood (*slams it down*). There's the first load delivered on the contract. Gee, I wish there was a gaswell on our farm. Perhaps I could persuade Ma to use a coal-oil stove.

*Enter Jennie with music roll*



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

JENNIE—Oh dear, how I hate practising, but Ma says she's bound she'll make a musicale out of me. Her chance is better now than it ever was before (*puts it on tree*).

SAM—Aw, Jen, why didn't you choose something quiet? Do you want to drive us all insane listening to you running up and down those everlasting scales?

JENNIE—It's your own fault. You said we had to promise what we hate doin' most and I'm sure—

MINERVA—I must get the twins up.

*Enter Bill with book-bag*

BILL—I had an awful hunt for this bag. Well, I know one person who'll be mighty glad I made this promise.

SAM and JENNIE—Who?

BILL—The school-marm. And the strap will be gitten' a rest, too. I'm thinkin'. Gee, when I grow up and git in for president I'm goin' to have every school-marm in the States put in jail who gives homework (*puts bag down*).

*Enter Bobby carrying large bar of soap and Betty with an alarm clock*

BOBBY—You'll not say I didn't wash behind my ears again, Jennie. I'm goin' to wash them every mornin' the water isn't froze in the pitcher.

BETTY—And you can't call me theepy-head neither cos I'm goin' to get up first time I'm called every mornin' cept Saturday (*Minerva fastens clock on tree. Alarm goes off*).



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

MINERVA—There, that will waken Pa and Ma.

BOBBY—Oh, oh, oh, look at all them presents. Let me see what are mine (*goes to tree and examines parcels*).

SAM (*drags him away*)—Here, Bobby, no peekin' 'til Pa and Ma come.

*Enter Pa and Ma*

PA—Laws-a-me, children, what are you doin' out of bed and—

MA—And in your nighties, too. You'll catch your death of cold.

PA—Yes, and wakin'—well, I swan, what are you doin' with a woodpile under the tree?

MA—And a dish-pan and book-bag and —

ALL—They're your Christmas presents!

PA and MA—Our Christmas presents!

SAM (*putting note in Pa's hand*)—Read and see.

PA (*reads*)—"I promise to fill up the wood box every morning before school. Your lovin' son, Sam." Well now if that ain't an original Christmas-box and a mighty good one, too.

MINERVA—Here's mine, Ma (*hands the note*).

MA (*reads*)—

"Dear Ma, you need not ever fear  
That the dishes won't be done.  
For I'll wash them throughout the year  
And make believe it's fun."



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

You dear child, give me a kiss. And to think you hate doin' dishes so. This is what I call a noble sacrifice.

MINERVA—Oh Ma, I'm so glad.

BILL (*gives book-bag and note to Pa*)—See what a smart boy I'm goin' to turn into!

PA (*reads*)—"To MA and PA. I bet you won't believe me, but I'm goin' to get my homework up every night 'cept Friday as good as I can.—Bill." That's the way to talk, BILL. We'll all be proud of you some day.

JENNIE—Read mine, Ma, read mine.

MA (*reads*)—"To whom it may conserve. I, Jennie Simpson, do promise to practice my music lessons faithfully and preservingly every time Ma says I must. I hope she'll be mercyfill."

MA—I will, Jennie, I promise. Bless your dear heart.

BOBBY (*takes his off tree*)—Here's mine! Here's mine! (*gives it to Pa*).

PA—Bless my soul! A cake of soap! (*reads*) "I'll always keep behind my ears clean where it shows.—Bobby."

BETTY—And mine, and mine (*gives to Ma*).

MA—Is that what I heard? (*reads*) I—I—Oh, I haven't my glasses. You read it, BETTY.

BETTY—"I pwornith to git up when I'm called if I'm not too theepy" (*all laugh*).

BOBBY—That ain't no pwomise.



## SNOWBOUND FOR CHRISTMAS.

PA—Yes it is. And now children, you've made your Ma and me happier than we've ever been in our lives.

MA—Indeed you have. This shows us how much you love us better'n the costliest gifts in the world could have done.

BOBBY—Can't we get our presents, now?

ALL—Yes, yes (*every one scrambles for presents at once and open them before audience, exclaiming together*).

MINERVA—A dress, a lovely party dress. Oh! Oh!

JENNIE and BETTY—Oh the lovely furs (*puts them on*).

BILL—A hockey-stick. Ain't it great!

BOBBY—Look at my sled.

PA—Now, boys as soon as you get dressed we'll go out to the barn and I'll show you some presents I've got for you.

BOYS—Oh, goody, goody (*Bill and Bobby start for door*).

SAM—Hold on kids, before we go, let's give three cheers for the best Christmas we've ever had in all our lives.

ALL—Hip, hip, hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah!

CURTAIN









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