

With the Coeds . . .

WOMEN'S EDITOR ERMA FISTE

IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS?

Once a year, it is fitting to reprint the now-famous editorial from the New York Sun. The reply was written by Mr. Frank P. Church.

Dear Editor: I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so." Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?

Dear Virginia: Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen work which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and

picture the supernatural beauty and glory beyond. It is all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

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GIRLS ARE FUNNY!

Girls are funny at Christmas.

They love their enemies, smile in the face of debts, pray for beastly weather, and drop quarters in boiling pots.

They applaud sour sopranos and gush over a two-gallon size of Yankee Clover that will hit the drain come December 31st.

They get a new dress (hang the expense), to go to a dark movie, never to be seen. They rollick in the snow until their hair looks like a whisk broom and their fingernails turn blue. They dig their sled out of the cellar when on their twelfth birthday they vowed they wouldn't be caught dead riding it.

They wear bare little chifions and thin little shoes to the coldest dance of the year and claim their little thin jackets are plenty warm enough.

They embrace friends before vacation time that they've treated like poison since September and call "Happy Holidays" to profs who threw them a "D" at mid-term.

They're even kind to the goon with the glasses and the Webster appendix. During their long-awaited vacation, they wish for the fifty-five minute lecture and the two-hour labs.

Yep, girls are funny . . . God bless 'em . . . I know, I know, I nag at 'em every issue but . . . gee whiz . . . it's Christmas!

—E. L. F.



CHRISTMAS SHOPPING — OR HOW TO DANCE THE CONGA CHEAPLY

Every year I resolve to do my Christmas shopping at least one month in advance, and each year, three days before that joyful day, finds me slugging my way through a maddening throng. Oftentimes I find myself literally CRUSHED by some big, burly man—until his big, burly wife comes along. That's one time Burly's teeth aren't pearly! However, once again I found myself dashing in and out among the crowd—and loving every bruise of it! Ah mad, gay people! I threw back my head to shout my jubilation to the skies . . . from where I was lying on the sidewalk I noticed that nine out of nine people wear Red Goose shoes!

Glory, Glory Hallelujah!

I turned blithely toward the revolving door (we've been going around together ever since) and reached for my shopping list, noting with anxiety that I had forgotten Aunt Biguver. Dear Aunt Biguver! How she loved to trip the light fantastic—landed her husband the same way. Always wanted to be one of the original bloomer girls. What a personality—size 68 to be exact. I lingered in the Men's Wear dept. only long enough to convince myself that they had nothing to buy, and glanced back again at my "Deftly Fingers Shopping Guide."

TO EACH HIS OWN

For Pop—a new pot holder. He needed suspenders in the worst way.

Baby sister—a new bottle. That last Schenley's lasted a week. Mother's quite proud of her . . . only three months old and already she gurgles.

Mother—a new strainer. The family is a little tired of seeing her push potatoes through the screen door. The flies are the only ones who don't mind a speck.

Grandma—a new griddle. Knowing my weakness for spelling, I marked foundation garment next to this and read on.

Grandpa—Skates. Grandpop always had a yen to take grandma to a skating rink and rollerdome.

Uncle Flint—new glasses. Seems his old ones didn't hold enough.

Satisfied that I had picked up all the little things I needed, I turned up an alley and headed for my humble abode—thinking how happy I'd be if Santa would send me a new pencil sharpener. My old one was ruined by my brother when he got his head stuck in it trying to sharpen his wits.

—HELEN DUDERSTADT.

HE KNELT WITH ME

Everyone knew I was a convert . . . I could sense it.

The usher who watched as I genuflected on the wrong knee . . . the way I fumbled with my missal. He knew.

The woman next to me who finished her prayers long before I . . . She knew. When the people stood up and I kneeled, everyone must have suspected I had just adopted the faith. Ritual . . . so meaningful to them, yet so empty to me who had no understanding for the choir's Latin responses.

The crowd filed out, the candles were extinguished and the darkness and the silence settled in the little chapel.

I cried.

Could I only pray in a darkened church when I was alone? There were footsteps . . . then I wasn't alone. Someone else was spending Christmas Eve in solitude. The figure came from the altar and knelt beside me. I did not look up. I spoke my prayers fervently and with a new kind of warmth. The figure beside me arose. His footsteps sounded again from the altar where He disappeared.

My eyes filled with tears. I had spent Christmas Eve kneeling with God but I knew He lovingly knew that I was a convert.

—E. L. F.

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CAUTION

(Between us girls)

Take heed, my dear, of golden dreams
That are wrought on a night
When earth in all its loveliness
Is deluged with star light;
For in the crystal, glare of morn
You may find that you are
"Miss Gullible" with tarnished faith
Trapped . . . by a glittering star.

—SHIRLEY McNEIL.

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LOST BRILLIANCE

A meteoric love affair
Is like a gay, pastel balloon;
Inflated with youth's trusting air
But bursting, like all dreams, too soon.

—SHIRLEY McNEIL.