



SANTA *and the* FLYING PUP

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AP Newsfeatures



Santa and the Flying Pup

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Chapter 1

SANTA AND THE FLYING PUP

Once upon a time in a land far away, there lived a little girl named Henrietta. Her family was very large and very poor.

She lived with her parents and her grandparents and two uncles and two aunts in a teeny tiny house. She was the only child in the house. There was hardly room for her to move without stepping on someone.

There was never a Christmas in this house. Worse than that - there was never enough to eat. Nor enough blankets to keep a body warm at night. There was hardly ever a bright new toy for a child to play with.

But Henrietta didn't mind. She was a cheerful, happy child. Only sometimes she was lonesome.

With no children to play with and no toys and no money to go to the movies with or anything - well, you can understand why she would be lonely now and then.

But one day Henrietta met Willie and she thought she would never be lonesome again.

It was near Christmas. Henrietta was coming home from the store with a bag of turnips for the family dinner. When she came to her house, she saw sitting on the bottom step, the littlest, softest, brightest looking brown and white puppy you ever dreamed of.

Henrietta stood there and held her breath and gazed down into the deep brown eyes of the puppy. The puppy gazed up into the soft blue eyes of Henrietta.

For a long moment there seemed to be nothing else in the whole world except this one little girl and this one little puppy.

Henrietta dropped to her knees. She put down the bag of turnips. Slowly she held out her hand. She never said a word. She dared not breathe. Suddenly a stump of a tail sticking from under the puppy began to wiggle furiously and the little dog leaped into Henrietta's arms.

"Oh, you wonderful, wonderful thing!" cried Henrietta.

She scooped up the puppy and leaving the turnips forgotten on the sidewalk, ran into the house.

"Mother! Father! Grandmama! Grandpapa! Everyone! Come quickly!"

All the family came. They saw at once this marvelous thing that had happened to Henrietta.

"He's mine" cried the little girl. "He has no collar and he wants me and oh! I love him so!"

She pressed her face into the soft warm fur of the puppy's neck.

The family smiled and patted the dog and spoke gently to the child. All the family except one. Henrietta's father stood there silently. He watched the child and the dog and slowly, sadly he shook his head.



He played merry-go-round the mother as she scrubbed the kitchen floor.

Henrietta turned to her father. She was afraid. "I can keep him, father"

The father cleared his throat. His voice, when it came, was tired and old. "Poor folks can't afford a puppy, Henrietta. We have no food nor room to spare.

"But, I'll give him food from my own plate!" cried Henrietta. "And he can sleep with me. Why, you won't even know he's in the house. I promise! I promise!"

The puppy wiggled free from Henrietta's arms and dashed to the father's feet. He licked the father's broken shoes lovingly..

The father did not smile nor speak.

"Christmas will be here soon," said the mother, taking pity on Henrietta. "Let the child have her dog."

"I'll call him Willie!" exclaimed Henrietta. She threw herself down beside the scampering pup and gathered him into her lap.

"What's the harm?" mumbled grandpapa. "Let the child have her dog."

"I'll love him forever and ever!" whispered Henrietta. The dog escaped from her and ran joyously round and round the tiny room.

"It's the only Christmas he will have!" said the uncles and the aunts.

"He's my dearest friend!" breathed Henrietta. "My only friend."

But the father stood stolidly in the kitchen doorway and said not a word.

"Oh, father, please!" cried Henrietta and she burst into tears.

Chapter 2
LIFE WITH WILLIE

Henrietta wept when her father said she could not keep Willie. "He won't cost anything" she cried. "You will never know he is here."

The father said, "Keep him, then, and you will see."

So Henrietta kept Willie and this is the way things went in the tiny crowded house where the family was so poor.

Willie ate.

Each mealtime he ate half of everything on Henrietta's plate and begged for more. He drank all her milk. He cried for more.

When grandmama left a loaf of bread on a shelf Willie pawed it down and devoured it. When grandpapa left a little bag of groceries on a chair Willie fished out a soup bone - meant to feed the faintly for two days. Willie hid under the house and stripped the bone clean.

When uncle went in the ice box for a bit of jam Willie went in too and knocked out the bowl holding the week's supply of eggs. Happily Willie licked up the mess.

Besides eating, Willie chewed.

He chewed out the linings of the father's shoes when he took them off at night. He shredded a blanket hanging from a bed. He gnawed the edges of the one rug in the house. He jumped in the bath tub and chewed a hole in the spray. He went in the pantry and chewed the straws off the broom.

Besides eating and chewing Willie frolicked.



He played merry-go-round the mother as she scrubbed the kitchen floor.

In pure joy he raced through the house. He tripped up the father who came in with a heavy load of wood. He twirled between the feet of the grandmama as she dusted the table. He played merry-go-round the mother as she scrubbed the kitchen floor.

As he romped, the tattered rug was tossed into a heap behind his flying feet. Curtains were pulled from windows, lamps broken, scrub buckets knocked over, torn wall paper stripped from the walls.

Besides eating and chewing and frolicking. Willie cried.

When they put him outdoors to save the house, Willie cried so loud and so sorrowfully the police complained. When they shut him up in the kitchen, he cried so broken heartedly the neighbors complained. When they shut him in the basement the whole family complained because he cried so dreadfully that no one in the house could sleep at all.

But Henrietta never noticed the awful bother and expense of Willie.

"You are all the Christmas we need at our house." she whispered to Willie as he snuggled beside her in bed. The puppy chewed absently at Henrietta's tattered night dress. He paused now and then to lick her face.

"You are my only friend," murmured the girl. "I'll never be lonesome again."

After a while Henrietta and Willie fell asleep. They were happy.

But out in kitchen the father talked to the rest of the family.

"You see how it is," he said. "We can't afford a dog in this house."

The mother who had scrubbed and scrubbed behind Willie had to agree. The uncles and aunts who had had their poor clothing ripped by Willie had to agree. Grandmama and grandpapa who had been tripped up again and again by Willie had to agree.

Then they all thought of the precious food that had been poured into Willie and they all sighed and said, "Yes the dog must go."

So the father tiptoed into the room where Henrietta lay asleep on her little cot with the dog beside her. The father stooped looking down at the girl and the puppy for a long time. He hated what he had to do.

At least he reached down and gently picked up the sleepy pup. Willie woke and dreamily licked the father's check. Then he went back to sleep.

The father put on his hat and carried Willie out of the house.

Chapter 3

THE HUNT FOR WILLIE

When Henrietta woke the next morning the first thing she did was reach out her hand for Willie.

“Willie! Willie! Here, Willie!”

But Willie did not come. Henrietta ran into the kitchen where the grandmama was slicing stale bread for breakfast.

“Where’s Willie, grandmama?”

Grandmama said nothing. Henrietta ran to the grandpapa who was trying to start a fire to warm the kitchen. “Where’s Willie? Have you seen Willie?”

Grandpapa said nothing.

Henrietta’s heart began to thump wildly. Her voice trembled. “Mother, where is Willie?”

The mother said, “Get dressed, dear. Breakfast is ready for you.”

Henrietta was filled with fear. “I want my dog!”

The father came into the kitchen. He looked as though he had not slept that night.

“Come here, Henrietta.” he said tiredly. He drew the little girl to his lap. “I had to give the dog away, child. He was eating all we had and chewing up our clothing and -”

Henrietta tore herself away from the father’s grasp. Tears ran down her cheeks.

“He’s all I ever had!” she screamed. “I never have good clothes or toys or any kind of Christmas or anything. All I ever had was Willie and if there’s no room for Willie in this house then there’s no room for me either.”

With an awful sob she rushed from the kitchen. She put on her clothes and ran out of the house not even bothering to slam the door.

Out in the kitchen the old folks were sad. They could not eat the little food they had. The mother began to weep.

The father said. “She’ll be back. Don’t worry.” He dropped his head in his hands. “What else could I do?” he said heavily. “I am a poor man.”

Together they waited in the kitchen for Henrietta to come home. The morning passed and she did not return. The noon hour came and no one ate. The afternoon drifted by and no one left the house.

Still Henrietta did not come home.

At twilight when they were about to despair the door opened and there was Henrietta, white and tired and strangely old-faced.

She went to the father and said “I am sorry I spoke so this morning, father. I know you had to do what was best for all.”

Tears came to the father’s eyes. He gathered Henrietta in to his arms. “Child! Child!” he whispered.



“He’s all I ever had!” she screamed.

Suddenly he leaped from his chair. “Come with me! We’re going to get Willie back. If there’s room in this house for anyone I guess there’s room for Willie!”

All the family exclaimed with excitement and relief. The brightness and the wonderful little girl look came back into Henrietta’s eyes.

“I gave Willie to Mr. Murphy, the drug store man,” said the father, “I know he will give him back.”

But when they went in the drug store Mr. Murphy shook his head. “The pup chewed up my wife’s brand new marvelous hat. After that she couldn’t stand the sight of him and I gave him to the grocer.”

Henrietta and the father rushed to the grocery store but the grocer shook his head. “That dog ate up twenty dollars worth of food from my shelves in one morning. I had to give him away to Tony the paper boy.”

They found Tony and he said, “Every time I threw a paper the pup ran and brought it back to me. I never could get my papers delivered. I gave him to the janitor in the apartment house on the corner.”

They went to the janitor. He said, “Sure you can have him back. I have him locked in the furnace room.”

But when the janitor opened the furnace room the pup was gone. There was a broken window any anyone could plainly see Willie had run away from there and was gone forever.

Chapter 4

STARTING AN ADVENTURE

The way Willie figured it, if he was just going to be handed around from one person to another he would as soon start out on his own.

That way he would at least have some say in his own affairs and certainly wouldn't be shut up in a furnace room for maybe the rest of his life. He might even have a great adventure.

He sneezed four times in a row. "Phew! Furnace rooms!" he thought with disgust. Ever since he had escaped from that awful apartment house he had been sneezing coal dust out of his nose.

"Of course, it is too bad about Henrietta," he thought as he resumed his run-away journey. "I'm afraid she will miss me very much when she finds out what her father did with me. As far as that goes I shall miss her, too."

He began to be distracted by the wonderful smells that surrounded him. "On the other hand," he told himself, "I feel that a Great Adventure awaits me."

He paused to explore the inside of an old tomato soup can. When he had licked it clean he amused himself by pushing it ahead of him down the street.

It made a lovely noise.

Some boys saw the fun and joined in. Willie chased the can and the boys chased Willie. Pretty soon Willie found himself chased right out of town. He lost the can and he lost the boys. He didn't know where he was.

He wasn't scared exactly. But he was tired and he was hungry.

He found something he thought was a good T-bone but when he bit into it he found it was only a piece of tree limb. Then he thought he had gotten hold of a hunk of stew but it was only a pile of moss and no good to eat at all.

"Oh, well," thought Willie. "I will find something to eat tomorrow."

He curled himself up on some dead leaves and went peacefully to sleep.

Early next morning, while Willie slept, there came into that part of the woods two tiny creatures named Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little. They were named like that because of their sense. Mr. Not Much did not have much sense and Mr. Very Little had even less.

They were traveling along at a great speed on a very important errand when suddenly, Mr. Not Much, who was in front, halted and called back to Mr. Very Little.

"Alas! There is a mountain in front of us and I am too tired to climb it."

Mr. Very Little came up and stared at the mountain. "We must be very careful," he said importantly. "This is a volcano mountain. I can hear it rumbling inside. It may erupt any moment."

Just as he spoke the mountain shook itself and turned over.

Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little hurled themselves backward and hid under a mushroom.

The mountain stood up on four legs and yawned.

"Why, it's not a mountain at all" whispered Mr. Very Little. "It's an animal. In fact, I believe it is a dinosaur and our very lives are in danger!"

The dinosaur stretched itself, scratched his ear and moved absently in the direction of the two creatures who were shivering in terror under the mushroom.

Just as the dinosaur was about to step on the mushroom Mr. Not Much screamed and Mr. Very Little screeched, "Stop! Stop!"

The dinosaur nearly fainted with surprise and fright. He stared down at the two tiny things dancing around his toes. He wasn't sure whether he should run away or whether he should just stand there and holler.

"Oh, Mr. Dinosaur," cried Mr. Not Much. "Have mercy on us!"

"Oh, Mr. Dinosaur," begged Mr. Very Little. "Spare us!"

"Why, I am not a dinosaur," said Willie. "I am a puppy dog."

"A puppy dog," exclaimed the two creatures. They were ashamed and embarrassed.

"My name is Willie and I am looking for a Great Adventure."

"Why, then," said Mr. Not Much eagerly, "you must come with us!"

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Very Little, "for we are on a very important errand and I am sure it will lead to a Great Adventure."



"I believe it is a dinosaur. Our very lives are in danger."

Chapter 5

TRIP TO SANTA LAND

The two tiny creatures, Mr. Not Much Sense and Mr. Very Little Sense, explained their very important errand to Willie.

“We are on our way to Santa Land,” they said importantly.

“Whatever for?” asked Willie.

“We must see Santa Claus silly,” said Mr. Not Much.

“We must have his help,” said Mr. Very Little

“You see we are Dreamlins,” said Mr. Not Much. “Our queen has been captured by the Gremlins. Unless we get her back we will all just fade away and, goodness knows what will happen to all the children in the world.”

Willie tried hard to understand. But it was all so mixed up!

“What are Dreamlins?” he asked timidly. “And what do they have to do with children?” (He was sure he had never seen a Dreamlin around Henrietta.) “Also, what is a Gremlin?”

Mr. Very Little and Mr. Not Much patiently explained.

“Gremlins are evil creatures who cause children trouble. They break things and hide toys and trip people and turn over milk glasses at the table.

“Dreamlins, on the other hand, take care of children. They cover them at night. They keep them from falling out of trees and swings. They find their lost toys and they chase away nightmares and they keep children from getting separated from their mothers in great big stores”

“My,” said Willie, “Dreamlins are nice.”

“Of course,” said Mr. Not Much matter-of-factly. “But we do not know how to work without our queen. Soon we will perish for we do not know even how to take care of ourselves without her.”

“That is why we must get to Santa and ask his help. Now will you come with us?”

“I will, indeed,” said Willie. And he thought to himself, “My goodness! Only yesterday I was locked in a furnace room and today I am on my way to see Santa himself. What a wonderful world this is!”

The three of them set forth. It a good thing it was so early in the morning with no one out of bed to see them. Because they certainly made an unbelievable sight; Mr. Very Little and Mr. Not Much tramping down the road with Willie, the puppy, pattering along between them.

“How do you know which way to go” asked Willie who was tired in a half an hour.

“Just keep going North,” said the Dreamlins. “We will surely get there that way.”

But the way was very long and after a while Willie said. “I am hungry, Shouldn’t we stop and eat?”

The Dreamlins said they just didn’t know how to eat without their queen to advise them and the best thing to do was just

keep going until they reached Santa Land where they would get advice from Santa.

Willie didn’t need any advice on how to eat. When they passed a house, he excused himself and went in the yard to look around. He found a wonderful bone that must have belonged to the dog that lived there. He was tempted to stay. But he went on with the journey.

All that day and night and through the next day and night they traveled. Willie thought he would surely faint with so much walking and so little to eat and never to stop to chew on an old shoe or a piece of rubber tire or anything.

At the end of the third day, it began to snow and before long they were in the midst of a great snow storm.

The Dreamlins said, “This must be it because there is always snow in Santa Land”

Willie started to say that he had seen snow in a lot of other places, too. But one of the Dreamlins climbed a sign post and wiped off the snow. Sure enough there were big black letters on the sign reading “Santa Land. Home of Santa Claus.”

“Santa Claus!” repeated Willie joyfully. And he wasn’t even



Willie could see a humped over figure stalking through the night.

the least bit tired any more.

Chapter 6

WILLIE PROTECTS SANTA

Willie and the Dreamlins peered through the snow and darkness. Far away they saw lights.

“That must be Santa’s house!” cried Mr. Very Little.

The three of them hurried forward but in a moment there was a call for help. Both the Dreamlins were stuck. They were so tiny they disappeared in the snow with every step they tried to take.

“I am large and you are small,” said Willie. “I will carry you.”

The Dreamlins thought this a good idea. Gladly they climbed on Willie’s back. Willie gamboled through the snow. Soon they were at Santa’s house.

Suddenly Mr. Not Much clutched at the fur on Willie’s neck. “Look!” he whispered.

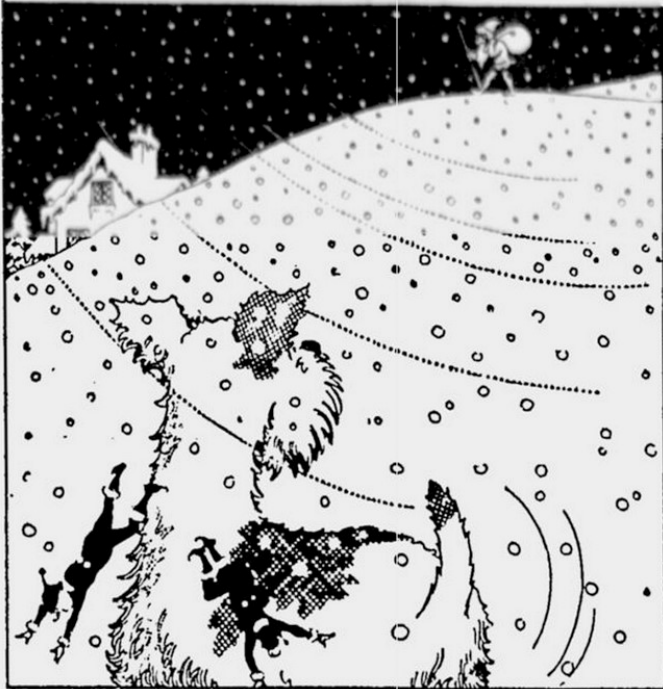
Willie looked and he could see a humped over, dreadful, black figure stalking through the night straight for Santa’s house.

“Santa must be in terrible danger.” shivered Mr. Very Little. “Whatever will we do?”

Willie thought the best thing to do would be to go back home. But it was too late now. He growled fiercely to hide his terror and threw himself forward. Surprised, the Dreamlins lost their hold on Willie’s back and went flying head first into a snow bank.

Willie fastened his teeth around the man’s ankle. He roared, Willie growled, the Dreamlins, digging themselves out of the snow bank, screamed.

The door of the house opened and Santa Claus himself rushed onto the scene.



Willie could see a humped over figure stalking through the night.

“What in the world is happening here” he cried.

“Help!” roared the man. “It’s a wolf!”

Willie believed that Santa could now take care of himself so he released his grip. Then, to encourage Santa, he began to run madly around in circles barking furiously all the time.

“Stop it! Stop it!” shouted Santa. To Willie’s amazement, Santa went over and put his arm around the man. “Are you hurt?” he asked kindly.

“Hurt?” sputtered the man “I’ve been eaten alive! For 600 years I have worked for you faithfully and I can’t think why you would have a wolf around to attack me.”

“It’s not a wolf,” said Santa. “It is only a puppy. Come in the house now and we’ll see what this is all about.”

As soon as they were in the house Willie saw that what he thought was a big, wicked man was really a very small, very old, hunched over dwarf.

“This is Patrick Tweedleknies.” said Santa severely to Willie. “He is the oldest worker in Santa Land. Now perhaps you will tell me who you are and why you have attacked this friend of mine.”

“Don’t let him speak” cried Patrick Tweedleknies. “Throw him out. I hate dogs!”

Truth to tell, Willie didn’t think he could speak, anyway, how could he tell Santa that he mere had been trying to save his life? He stared up at Santa and his eyes filled with shame and sadness and love.

Santa leaned down and patted Willie’s head. “Poor little pup,” he murmured. “I understand”

Instantly Willie’s sadness vanished. He thought that here surely was the kindest, dearest creature anywhere in the world.

While Patrick Tweedleknies sputtered in disgust Willie licked Santa’s boots.

“I am Willie,” he said, surprised himself that he could talk. “I came here with two Dreamlins who need your help but they must be stuck outside in a snow drift.”

Santa laughed. He and Willie went outside and rescued Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little from the snow. Then they all went back indoors and the two Dreamlins told Santa their story and why they had come.

“How can I help you?” asked Santa sadly. “Christmas is very nearly here. I dare not leave my workshops.”

“But if our queen is not rescued the Dreamlins will perish,” said Mr. Not Much gently. “Who then will protect the children of the world from the wicked Gremlins?”

Chapter 7

THE REINDEER

Mr. Not Much reminded Santa that if the Dreamlin Queen was not rescued the Dreamlins would perish. Who then, he asked, would protect the children of the world from the wicked Gremlins.

“True, true.” said Santa. He was very upset. He walked back and forth in front of his fireplace thinking, Willie followed at his heels.

“Stay in Santa Land awhile.” said Santa at last. “I will think of something. Give me time.”

Patrick Tweedleknees exploded. “If that dog stays in Santa Land I am leaving!”

“Willie is a good pup,” smiled Santa. “He will be our watch dog.”

A watch dog in Santa Land! Willie nearly burst with pride. He licked Santa’s fingers. He gladly would have licked Patrick Tweedleknees, too, but the dwarf was already stomping out of the house in a rage.

“He will get over it,” said Santa. “He always does.”

Willie thought, ‘I will stay here the rest of my life and be Santa’s watch dog. But I wish someone would think of eating for I am truly starved!’

He was too polite to say anything about it. “I won’t be a bother,” he told himself. He crept under Santa’s chair and contented himself with chewing a hole out of the bottom.

Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little curled up in an empty ash tray and went to sleep. Santa sat in his chair and tried to think of a way to save the Dreamlin queen

By and by, Willie thought, “Perhaps I should look around in the kitchen. After all, I am a watch dog and there may be something in the kitchen that needs watching.”

When he got to the kitchen he smelled a lovely smell. He climbed a chair and put his front paws on the kitchen table. There, in front of him, was a plate of chocolate drop cookies and a glass of milk. Mrs. Claus had left them for Santa to have before he went to bed.

“If I tired just one, no one would miss it,” said Willie to himself.

So he tried one. And then he tried two. Then three. Before he knew it the plate was empty! He sniffed underneath for crumbs and his eager nose pushed the plate right off the table.

The crash brought Santa running to the kitchen.

Willie looked at Santa and waited to be scolded, to be run out of Santa Land, even. But Santa said “Don’t forget the milk, Willie.” And he poured his own glass of milk into a saucer and put it on the floor for Willie.

When Willie had finished the milk he thought. “I am the happiest dog in the whole world” Then he went into Santa’s bedroom, climbed on Santa’s bed and stretched himself out on Santa’s clean white pillow. Instantly he was asleep.



Willie climbed in Santa’s bed and stretched out.

The next day Willie explored Santa Land. He romped through the top shops. He licked the boots of the Santa Land workers. He frisked joyfully after the fairy workers who fluttered around the doll table. He snatched up stockings waiting to be filled and chewed great holes in their toes. Meanwhile Patrick Tweedleknees grew black in the face and his chest swelled with rage. So Santa said. ‘Willie, go down to the stables. You haven’t seen the reindeer yet.’

Willie gladly obeyed. But when he reached the stables he found they were empty. He went around the far side of the stables and there he saw a wondrous thing.

Santa’s eight reindeer were practicing their flying. They swooped high into the sky and drifted gently down. Again and again they circled above the astonished pup.

Willie sat back and watched. Never had he dreamed such a thing was possible.

Suddenly he leaped up in excitement. “I too, shall fly!” he thought. “I shall be a flying pup!”

Chapter 8

HENRIETTA'S SEARCH

While Willie enjoyed himself in Santa Land, Henrietta searched the city for her lost puppy.

At the very moment that Willie decided to become a flying pup, Henrietta put an advertisement in the newspaper. It said, "Lost: Brown and white puppy named Willie" And it gave Henrietta's address. But although the ad ran for three days no one ever found Willie

Henrietta herself walked the streets and searched the alleys calling for Willie. When she wasn't hunting for her dog she sat on the steps of the little house where she lived and just waited.

"Someday he'll come home," she told herself. "Someday he'll come back to me. I know it."

Each night Henrietta woke up screaming, "Willie! Willie!" For it was a nightmare she had that Willie was run over or sick or hungry somewhere. And after she was really awake she would lie there for a long while and think about Willie.

Meanwhile, the family was heartbroken to see the little girl so grieved. The father blamed himself. Finally, he said, "I will buy her a new dog. A real fine pedigreed dog - the best that money can buy. Such a dog will make Henrietta forget all about Willie."

"But, where will you get the money?" asked the mother

The father was a wood chopper and he said, "I will chop more wood and earn more money."

The uncles and aunts worked in a cigar factory rolling cigars out of tobacco leaves. Now they said, "We will help you. We will roll more cigars and make more money to help buy a grand expensive champion of a dog."

The grandpapa was a seller of shoelaces and hairpins. He went from door to door selling these things for pennies. He said "From now on I shall go to twice as many houses and make twice as much money so that I, too, can help, to buy this wonderful animal."

The father and grandpapa and uncles and aunts already worked all the day long but now they worked at night, too. Very, very late, when they had come home at last, they would count the extra pennies they had earned.

While Henrietta slept they sat about the kitchen table and whispered about their plans. Then, when Henrietta woke up screaming, "Willie! Willie" the old folks smiled and thought "Just wait until she gets sight of a real champion dog. She won't calling for Willie anymore."

Finally the day came when they had enough money and the father went to the finest pet store in the town and asked to see their finest dog. The clerk showed him a grand aristocrat of a dog sitting like a king in the store window. He was big and sleek and noble and cost \$100.

The father had only \$20. But he said, "I've got to have this dog. I'll pay you what I have and pay the rest a little each week. Besides that I will clean up your store every Sunday for

nothing. The clerk said all right; but that way he would have to pay \$110 instead of \$100 for the dog. The father promised to do that.

Then he led the lordly dignified dog home. They were all waiting eagerly in the kitchen for him except Henrietta who was out searching for Willie as usual.

"What a royal looking animal!" exclaimed the family.

And indeed the dog was. He stared at them all proudly and there was never quiver of his tail to show if he liked them.

"The child is coming!" whispered the father.

They heard Henrietta's slow steps crossing the porch. The door opened and the little girl came in. She stared in astonishment at the kingly dog who stood before her.

The whole family held its breath and waited.

Suddenly Henrietta burst into tears. She turned and ran from the room. The father went after her.

"He's yours, child!" pleaded the father. "We bought him for you - the finest dog in town!"

Henrietta threw herself in the father's arms. "Take him away! Take him away" she sobbed. "This is Willie's house." wept Henrietta. "No one can ever take Willie's place!"



"Take him away! Take him away!" she sobbed.

Chapter 9

WINGS FOR WILLIE

While Henrietta wept for her pup, Willie himself capered madly around in the snow behind the stables in Santa Land.

Presently Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little appeared. They were sitting on a child's ski and pushing themselves across the snow by shoving on pencils which they used as ski poles.

They were so tiny, this was the only way they could travel in the snow without sinking over their heads.

"Whatever are you doing?" they called to Willie.

"I'm learning to fly," replied Willie happily. "I am going to fly like the deer."

The Dreamlins looked up and for the first time they saw Santa's eight reindeer swooping gracefully above the stable. Then the Dreamlins looked down at Willie throwing himself wildly from one snow bank to another and imagining that he truly was learning to fly.

"Oh, come now!" exclaimed Mr. Not Much. "You need wings to fly!"

Willie stopped his prancing "But the deer don't have wings," he pointed out.

"They have built in wings that you can't see," said Mr. Very Little. "But you don't have any kind of wings and you'll never fly."

Willie was not discouraged "I shall make myself some wings, then," he said. "That certainly won't be hard with all these workshops around here. Especially if you will help me."

The Dreamlins were very glad to help. They were worried because Santa had not yet thought of a plan to save their queen from the Gremlins. Making wings for Willie was just what they needed to take their minds off their troubles.

The Santa Land elves and fairies were so busy working on Christmas toys, they paid no attention to the two Dreamlins who flitted from bench to bench picking up tools and materials. And Santa was so glad to see Willie quieted down he never imagined that the puppy was busy with a world-shaking invention.

"We need string and glue and tissue paper and light wood," said Mr. Not Much as he picked up these things from here and there.

"Yes, and we'll need plenty of time," said Mr. Very Little.

"No, no," said Willie. "I can't wait. Here I will help." He picked up the jug of glue and carried it to the stable. But when he went to put the glue down the jug had spilled over and glued his jaws together.

"Good," said Mr. Not Much, "That will keep you out of trouble while we work."

The Dreamlins worked for several hours while Willie watched in an agony of silence. At last, the Dreamlins washed out Willie's mouth and told him his wings were ready.



The wings were two giant kites fastened on a harness.

The wings were two giant kites fastened on either side of a harness - truly beautiful invention.

The Dreamlins fastened Willie into the harness.

"Now," said Mr. Very Little. "You must climb a high mountain and jump off and you will fly as sure as anything."

Willie thanked his friends and eagerly took off up the highest mountain in sight. He climbed and he climbed. It wasn't a bit easy - particularly with the big kite wings bumping around his back.

But by and by he got to the top. He couldn't see the stables or Santa Land far below because he was above the clouds! Perhaps it was a good thing he couldn't see the ground or he might have been too scared to jump.

He said to himself, "In a few minute's I will be known the world over as 'The Flying Pup.'"

So saying, he leaped off the mountain.

But, alas! instead of gliding gracefully away he fell smack into a puffy white cloud and was swept away - a prisoner in the heart of the cloud.

Chapter 10

THE CLOUDKEEPER

As the bulging white cloud holding Willie swept over Santa Land the little pup walled long and mournfully.

His friends waiting eagerly to see him soar out of the sky were astonished.

‘Mercy me’ cried Mr. Not Much “Willie has turned into a cloud!”

“It’s a magic spell!” said Mr. Very Little. “We must tell Santa at once. He should know we are surrounded by an evil Spirit!”

Santa was working in the bicycle shop. At the same time he was trying to figure out a plan the save the Dreamlin queen from the Gremlins. Suddenly Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little burst in and announced that Willie had been turned into a cloud.

Santa ran out of the shop and gazed up at the sky. Sure enough a puffy white cloud was sailing overhead and Santa could hear Willie’s voice moaning in the cloud.

Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little clung to Santa’s boots. They shook with fear.

“Who knows” they whispered. “The evil spirit may change us into stars or the moon or something. It was a very bad thing to have helped the puppy with his wings.”

“Nonsense,” said Santa. “There is no evil spirit here. Willie has somehow fallen into a cloud and is being blown away with it. That’s all there is to it.”

“Oh, my” cried Mr. Not Much with relief. “But how will he ever get out of the cloud?”



Willie hurtled toward the ground in a torrent of rain.

“I’ll have to see about that,” sighed Santa.

He went to the stables and hitched up two reindeer. Then he climbed in the sleigh and shouted: “To the Cloud Keeper! Fly!”

Silently the reindeer rose into the air and sped to a silvery castle atop a far away mountain.

When they landed Santa leaped out and rushed into the castle. He found an ancient, silver-haired man sitting beside the fire.

“Hello, Mr. Claus,” said the old man. “You are early. Christmas is not yet awhile.”

“Mr. Cloud Keeper. I have not come to fill your stocking.” said Santa. “I have come to ask you to do something about a little puppy who has fallen into one of your clouds and is being swept away with it.”

The old Cloud Keeper rose from his chair. “I can get him out,” he said. “But it won’t be pleasant for him.” He went to his desk and pressed three buttons. ‘There,’ he said. “I have changed all the clouds near Santa Land into rain clouds. Soon your puppy will be washed out of the sky.”

Santa thanked his friend and raced back to Santa Land. All the Santa Land workers had learned of Willie’s troubles. Now they stood outdoors anxiously watching the darkening sky.

Suddenly there was a clap of thunder, a streak of lightning and the howl of a puppy dog.

“It’s Willie!” cried the Dreamlins. “He’s in that cloud - the blackest one of all!”

At that moment the cloud burst open and Willie himself hurtled towards the ground in a torrent of rain. He pancaked down breathless and exhausted at Santa’s feet.

Poor pup. He put what there as of his tail between his legs and gazed miserably up at Santa.

“I was only trying to learn to fly,” he said.

“I see.” nodded Santa.

I wanted to be a flying pup,’ said Willie wistfully.

“Oh.” said Santa.

“I did want to fly like the reindeer!” cried Willie. His eyes brightened at the thought. “Do you know if it is possible I could ever learn?”

“Willie,” said Santa gently. “There is a way to fly like the reindeer. But it is very hard to learn.”

Willie sprang up.

“I can learn!” he cried “Just tell me the way!”

Chapter 11

AN UNSELFISH DEED

“This is the way the story goes,” said Santa to Willie the pup. “A long time ago my reindeer were like all other reindeer. They lived with a great herd of their brothers and sisters and not one of them ever dreamed of flying.

“Then there came a time when eight of those deer did a truly unselfish thing. When they had done it they found, to their amazement, that they were no longer like other deer for now they could fly!

“And that is how it happens that my deer are the only ones in the world that can fly.”

Willie waited for Santa to go on. But Santa was silent. So Willie said, “But, go on! What was this truly unselfish thing they did?”

Santa shook his head “I do not know,” he smiled. “For you see that is often the way with a truly unselfish deed. No one except the person who does it knows what it is.”

“I don’t understand at all,” said Willie. “I do not even know what unselfish means.”

“It is hard to explain such things,” said Santa. “It is something each person must discover for himself.”

Then Santa and his helpers went back to their work. Willie and the Dreamlins went into Santa’s house and sat down to think.

“Let us look up this great big word in the dictionary” said Mr. Not Much after a great deal of thought. “Then we will know how to proceed.”

The two Dreamlins studied the dictionary on Santa’s desk for a long while. Then Mr. Very Little said; “To be unselfish means simply to forget yourself, to do or give up something for someone else.”

“Why that isn’t difficult at all,” said Willie happily. “I think I shall just go down and talk to the reindeer for soon I shall be flying with them.”

Wagging his rear end confidently Willie took off for the stables. But he never got there for on the way he passed around Santa’s back porch. There, sitting by the rear door, was Santa’s big garbage can.

“My goodness,” thought Willie. “That can is simply bulging over. Perhaps I should empty some of it so that it will be easier for Santa to put in more.”

He placed his front paws against the can and pushed and pushed until over it crashed dumping most of its contents all over the ground.

What a feast there was for Willie! For a moment he could only stand and stare at the delicacies that lay before him.

“Where but In Santa Land could a dog eat so well?” he thought gratefully. “Surely I am the luckiest puppy alive and even when I learn to fly I will never leave this land.”

As soon as he thought of flying he remembered the unselfish deed he must do and immediately, he had a grand idea.

“Instead of keeping all this for myself,” he said, “I shall give sum of it away. In fact I shall give it all away. Not only that but I shall give it to someone I do not like very much. Surely nothing could be more unselfish than that!”

Enormously pleased with himself Willie immediately fished out of the garbage an old beat up ham bone and trotted away with it to a little cottage nearby. On the front of the cottage was a sign saying, “Home of Patrick Tweedleknees. Keep Out.”

Willie deposited the bone at the door and trotted back for another load. He worked without a pause and before long there was an immense “gift” at Patrick Tweedleknees door. There were orange peels, egg shells, tea bags, stale bread, hunks of fat, potato skins, carrot tops - to name just a few of the tempting morsels laid there.

Not one single bite of anything did Willie take for himself.

“Now,” he said when at last he had finished, “now I shall fly!”

But before he could make the smallest leap from the ground. Patrick Tweedleknees himself opened his front door and with a mighty roar stepped out.



“Let us look up this great big word in a dictionary.”

Chapter 12
THE DRAGONS

Patrick Tweedleknees was in a rage.

“This - this - this dog!” screamed to Santa. “This dog has put garbage all over my front porch.”

Santa was disturbed. He said, “Willie, why would you do such a thing to Patrick Tweedleknees?”

“I did it so that I could fly,” said Willie eagerly. “Watch!” He gave a running leap into the air but instead of soaring away he flopped back to earth with a whack.

“I don’t understand,” whimpered Willie. “I gave all that stuff away and never kept a taste for myself. That was a great and unselfish deed. Why can’t I fly?”

Santa couldn’t help laughing “Tweedleknees doesn’t want the garbage, Willie. You didn’t do anything for him.”

“I should say not!” chimed in Tweedleknees. “And you’ll please to clean away that mess at once.”

Poor Willie. He was left in disgrace to clean up Tweedleknees’ porch. It wasn’t so hard a job because he simply ate most of it. But his pride had been hurt. He felt that perhaps he was not good enough even to stay in Santa Land much less learn to fly.

Just then his friends, Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little, scurried up.

“Imagine!” cried Mr. Not Much in great excitement. “There is a dragon running round and round one of the buildings!”

“A dragon like a snake!” added Mr. Very Little. “Breathing smoke and sparks!”

“He rattles his shell!” puffed Mr. Not Much.

“And there is no one in the building to stop turn,” they both screamed. “Come we must run away as fast as we can!”

Willie was frightened. He turned to run. But right away he stopped. “If I can stop that dragon, it will surely be a glorious and unselfish deed.” he thought. “Then I could fly! Everyone will agree that I deserve to fly for such an act!”

Bravely he turned back to the building the Dreamlins had fled. On the door was a sign saying “Train Shop” but Willie didn’t stop to read. He was terrified by the hissing and puffing and rattling of some strange creature in the shop.

Quavering, Willie crept inside. There was no worker to be seen. But there were hundreds of snakes. The snakes were on tracks which circled the whole building. The tracks wound in and out of tunnels, over bridges and under mountains.

But of all the gleaming snakes lined up on the tracks, only one was alive.

It was going round and round a small circle of track, puffing smoke from its nose, rattling its sides, and throwing off sparks from its feet.

Willie’s eyes rolled with fright. Nevertheless he leaped toward the tearful creature.

He landed in the center of the ring of tracks - directly on top of the main switch box of the Train Shop. Alas! instead of halting one snake Willie had brought all the others to life!

He gazed in astonishment at the furor he had created. Hundreds of dragons hurled themselves round and round the shop covering Willie with sparks, blinding him with smoke, deafening him with whistles and the rattling of tracks.

Desperately Willie pushed and pulled at the switches but the uproar only worsened.

The whole of Santa Land will be destroyed!” thought Willie in a panic.

At this moment he noticed a draw bridge on the tracks. Quickly he raised the bridge with his mouth and jumped out of the way.

The first snake tore down the track leaped into the open space and crashed to the floor. The second snake followed. And the third.

In no time at all every single dragon lay crumpled and silent on the floor.

Santa Land had been saved by Willie the pup.



He gazed in astonishment at the furor he had created.

Chapter 13

TRIP IN AN UMBRELLA

The awful noise in the Train Shop brought Santa and his workers racing to the spot.

What they found was Willie the pup and the wreck of all the toy trains in Santa Land.

“I did it!” cried Willie proudly “I destroyed them all”

“Willie, Willie!” mourned Santa “What will I do now for all the little boys who have asked for trains for Christmas.”

“Trains?” said Willie. “Trains? But - I thought - I thought they were dragons!”

It was a sad thing. Willie turned away. He didn't even try to see if he had earned the right to fly. “It's no use,” he thought. “I always do the wrong thing.”

Santa himself was thinking time thing. “I shall have to send the pup away,” he thought. “He means well but he is always causing trouble. I have so much work to do and besides that I must arrange for the rescue of the Dreamlin queen.”

Now Santa had made a magic pill. If the Dreamlin queen would swallow this pill she would change for ten minutes into a puff of smoke. And while she was smoke she could escape from any chains or dungeon that held her.

But the problem was how to find the queen and get the pill into her hands.

Suddenly Santa had an idea. It would save the queen and get Willie out of Santa Land at the same time. He called the puppy. And he called Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little.

Santa said, “I have a magic pill which will save the Dreamlin queen if you can find her and give it to her!”

“The Gremlins live in the attic of the empty castle,” said the Dreamlins. “But we do not know where they have imprisoned our queen.”

“Perhaps Willie can find her,” said Santa.

“Me?” cried Willie in astonishment. “Me find the Dreamlin queen?”

“Of course,” said Santa with a smile. “A dog has a fine sense of smell. If you go to the castle where the Gremlins live I am sure you can track down the imprisoned queen.”

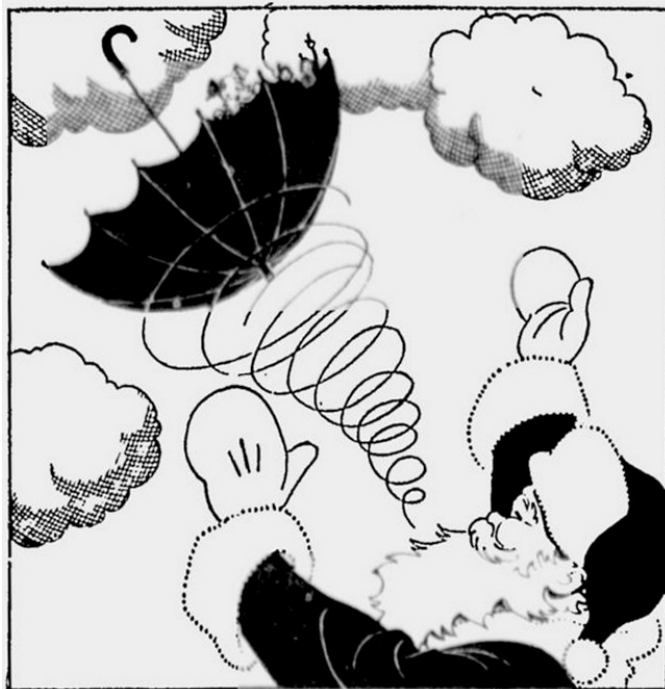
“Why sure I can!” cried Willie remembering that dogs really are good at tracking. “And if I do that - do you think that then I might be able to fly?”

Santa did not answer.

“It will be a very great deed I'll be doing.” Willie reminded him. “And very unselfish.”

Santa laughed. “Well, try and see,” he said. Then Santa tied a string around Willie's neck. On one end of the string was a tiny bag. In the bag was the magic pill for the Dreamlin queen.

“And now I will give you my umbrella.” said Santa, “and the three of you be off.”



Still twirling, it rose into the sky and whirled away.

“An umbrella?” asked Mr. Not Much. “Why do we want an umbrella?”

Santa opened a large black umbrella and laid it upside down on the ground. “Jump in.” he said. “It will take you wherever you wish.”

Willie and the Dreamlins did as they were told.

“We want to go to the castle where the Gremlins live,” said Mr. Not Much timidly.

Immediately the umbrella began twirling round on the ground. Still twirling, it rose into the sky and whirled away.

They never saw where they were going or how they got there but before very long the whirling stopped and the umbrella jolted to the ground.

Willie and the Dreamlins jumped out. They found themselves near a great castle. The windows were broken and the gates rusty. Weeds were pushing through the stones.

The Dreamlins shuddered. “It is certainly a fearful looking place,” they whispered.

Willie's heart thumped with fright. But he thought of the unselfish deed which would win him the right to fly and he said. “Pooh! What's there to be afraid of? Let's go!”

Chapter 14

THE GREMLINS

While Willie and the Dreamlins went in rescue of the Dreamlin queen little Henrietta waited and waited for her puppy to come home

It was almost Christmas and all the town was filled with merrymakers. But time spirit of Christmas did not come to Henrietta's home. The father had taken back the fine champion dog he had hoped would make Henrietta forget her lost puppy. Now there was nothing in the home except poverty and work.

One day Henrietta passed a store. There was a Santa Claims in the store window. Children lined up to tell Santa their wishes for Christmas.

"I will do that, too," said Henrietta. "It doesn't cost anything." She went in and told Santa that she didn't want anything at all Christmas except for her puppy to come home again.

The store Santa said he did not think he could do anything about that. Henrietta looked sad so he said that perhaps if she would write a letter to the real Santa Claus something might come of it. Then she ran all the way home. "Father! I am going to write Santa Claus to bring me my puppy for Christmas!"

"Child, there is no Santa Claus," said the father. "And even if there were he could not do anything about your lost puppy."

But Henrietta still believed there was a Santa and he would help her. She wrote a letter. She wrote, "Dear Santa, I have never asked for anything before but this year I would like my little lost puppy for Christmas."

She did not mail the letter because she didn't know how address it. She thought she would just save it until Christmas Eve and then if Santa came he would see it."

Meanwhile, Willie marched on the Gremlin castle. Mr. Very Little had let Willie smell a handkerchief of the lost queen so that he might track her. Now Willie hurried forward. He held his high head to show how brave he was. Then he realized that he could never catch the scent of the queen with his nose way up in the air so he lowered his head and sniffed busily at the ground.

Right away he caught the scent. But it was confusing. He darted off first one way and then another. He wagged his tail furiously and forgot about Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little who ran breathlessly along beside

Before they knew it they were inside the castle. It was cold and dark in there. Every sound they made brought back echoes.

"H-hurry! P-please hurry" whispered Mr. Not Much.

Willie sprang forward in the dark. "I have her!" he cried triumphantly. "She's right here! It's exactly the same smell as there was on her handkerchief."

Oh he was happy to think he had done such a great deed for Santa! He leaned over and licked the queen.

"Stop it! You're licking me!" shrieked Mr. Very Little.

Mr. Not Much lit a match. In the light Willie found that he had tracked down Mr. Very Little instead of the queen!

"But the scent is the one you gave me!" insisted Willie.

"Mercy me!" cried Mr. Very Little. "I gave you my own handkerchief instead of the queen's." He gave Willie a different handkerchief. Willie sniffed it thoughtfully.

"I do not think I have run across a track that smells like that." he said.

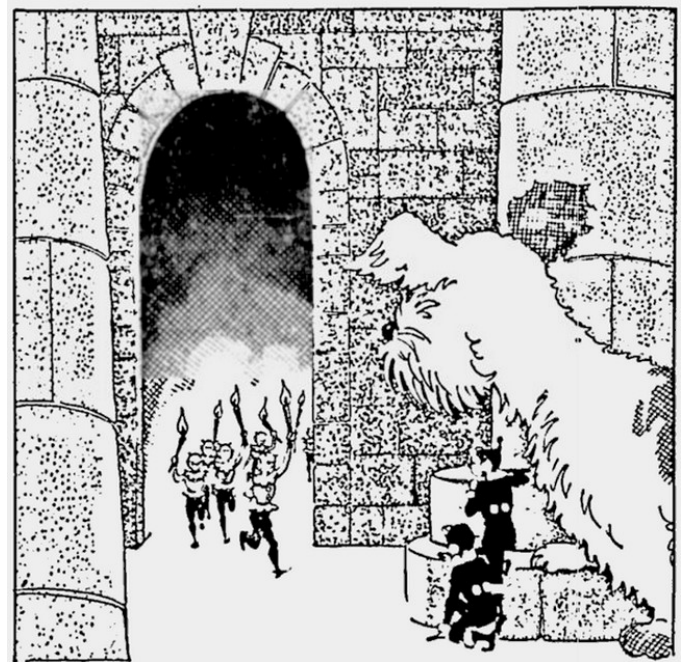
"Good!" said Mr. Not Much with relief. "The queen is not in the castle. Let's get out of here."

But even as he spoke a door at the end of the corridor flew open and a gang of Gremlins carrying torches burst into the room.

"Now we are lost," whimpered Mr. Not Much.

"Nothing can save us," moaned Mr. Very Little.

As for Willie—he was too frightened to say anything at all.



A gang of Gremlins carrying torches burst into the room.

Chapter 15

THE MAGIC PILL

Gremlins, as you know, are tiny evil creatures who cause children and grownups, too, all kinds of trouble - big and small. They cause mittens and hats to get lost. They make it rain on picnic days. They spill food at the table.

Now the Gremlins were delighted to find that a puppy and two Dreamlins had walked right into their castle.

“Put them in prison,” ordered the Gremlin leader. “Then we will decide what fun to have with them.”

Frightened as he was, Willie remembered the magic pill which Santa had given him to give to the Dreamlin queen. “If the Gremlins get the pill the queen will never be saved.” thought Willie. “I had better hold it in my mouth so they will not see it.”

Quickly he bit the little bag holding the pill off the string which was around his neck. He no sooner had it safely in his mouth than the Gremlins pounced upon him.

“Tie him up!” ordered the Gremlin leader.

Willie was too frightened to struggle. It would have done him no good anyway. Although the Gremlins were tiny, they were very nippy. Quickly they wound chains around Willie’s legs and locked the chains with a padlock.

“They must think I am a very fierce animal,” thought Willie. “I will tell them I am only a friendly puppy and perhaps they will let me go.”

He cleared his throat, “R-really,” he began. “I am -”

“Quiet!” screamed the Gremlin leader. He slapped Willie on the nose.

Poor Willie! He was so startled he let out a yelp and fell over backwards. Then a remarkable thing happened. Willie changed into a little puff of smoke!

“Mercy me!” moaned Mr. Not Much. “Willie has swallowed the magic pill meant for the queen!”

“What will happen to us now?” groaned Mr. Very Little.

A great deal happened very fast.

Willie simply floated out of the chains that held him. Then he swept down upon the Gremlins who were holding Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little. He brushed into the astonished eyes of the Gremlins. The evil creatures were so blinded by the smoke they released the Dreamlins and raised their hands to their eyes. They screamed with pain and surprise.

Finding themselves free, Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little ran down the corridor. Willie sailed along above them. They came to a door. The Dreamlins were tiny enough to squeeze underneath. As for Willie - he floated through the key hole.

They found themselves in the kitchen of the castle. There were old pots and pans and piles of broken dishes lying around. But unfortunately there was no other way out of the kitchen. There was not another door nor a window to be seen by the light of the match that the Dreamlins struck.

“What will we do now?” quavered Mr. Not Much.

Before anyone could answer there was the sound of running feet in the other room.

“The Gremlins are coming! We must hide!” sobbed Mr. Very Little.

Mr. Not Much crept under a broken tea cup and lay there quivering with terror. Mr. Very Little ran behind a rusty old dust pan. Willie hunted desperately for a hiding place.

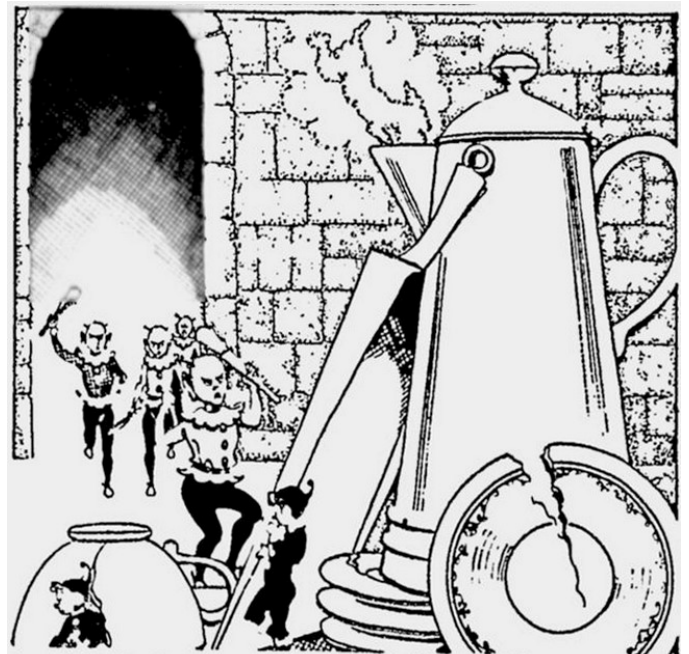
Just in time he saw a large coffee pot silting on a high shelf. With a sigh of relief Willie drifted over the pot and slid down the spout.

The Gremlins burst into the room.

“They are in here somewhere!” shouted the leader. “Find them and this time we will not spare them.”

Mr. Not Much and Mr. Very Little turned white with horror. But Willie never even heard because Willie had found the Dreamlin queen.

The Gremlins had imprisoned her in the coffee pot!



Willie floated over the pot and slid down the spout.

Chapter 16
THE QUEEN

“Why - you must be the Dreamlin queen!” whispered Willie when he found the lovely creature with a crown on her head imprisoned in the coffee pot.

“Indeed I am,” replied the queen. “And I do wish you would go somewhere else”

“But I have come to save you!” protested Willie.

“You are choking me and causing my eyes to sting quite badly, complained the queen.

“That’s because I ate a pill which was sent for you,” explained Willie. “The pill turned me into smoke and that is how –“

But before Willie could finish a terrible thing happened. The magic of the pill wore off and he turned back into his old self.

Instantly the pot was stuffed with puppy dog.

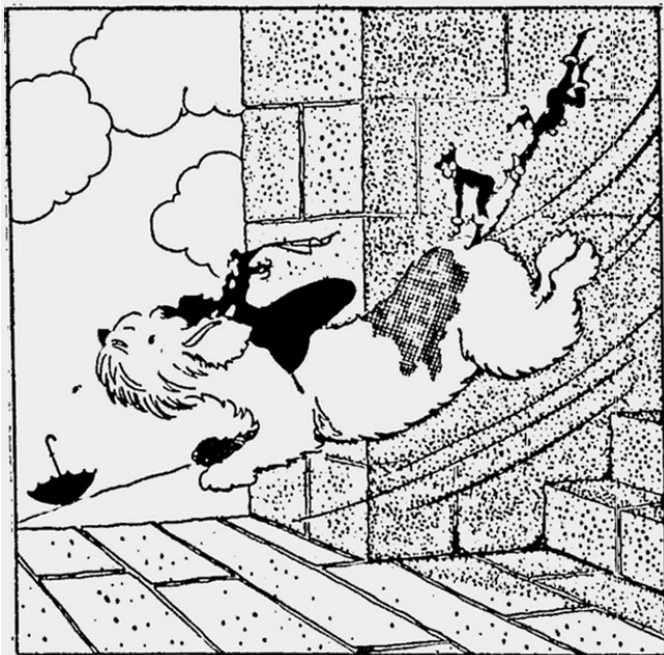
The poor queen crushed against the sides. Willie’s ears popped off the lid and his tail went up the spout.

“There he is!” cried the Gremlins. “He is in the prison with the queen”

They gathered under the shelf and shook their fists with excitement.

“Careful!” warned the leader. “Watch out for more magic he may try on us.”

But even if Willie had had more magic he could not have used it. He could not even draw a breath he was so crowded in the pot.



He ran down the castle corridor and out the castle door.

The queen could stand it no longer “You are mashing me!” she squealed.

Willie leaped and as he leaped the coffee pot turned on its side, rolled across the shelf and crashed upon the Gremlins below scattering them over the kitchen floor.

The pot burst open and Willie sprang out, the queen clinging to his neck.

Willie fled across the kitchen.

“Wait for me!” shouted Mr. Not Much.

“And me!” echoed Mr. Very Little.

The two Dreamlins snatched onto Willie’s tail as the puppy passed through the door.

Willie never stopped. Carrying the three Dreamlins he ran down the castle corridor and out the castle door straight to Santa’s umbrella. They didn’t relax until they were all safely in the umbrella and on the way to Santa Land.

Then Willie lay back in exhaustion while the Dreamlins told their queen of their long adventure to save her and how Willie had helped.

The queen said, “What an unselfish dog!”

Willie heard her say he was unselfish and thought, “Now I shall be able to fly!”

When they arrived in Santa Land they found Santa and all the workers waiting for them. There was Santa’s big sleigh and the eight flying reindeer, too, for it was Christmas Eve and soon Santa must take off with his load of toys.

Willie climbed out of the umbrella. “Wait until those reindeer see me fly!” he thought and he leaped into the air.”

But alas! Willie still could not fly.

Santa dug him out of the snow and rubbed him gently behind the ears.

“I saved the Dreamlin queen,” moaned Willie, “Wasn’t that a fine unselfish thing to do? Why can’t I fly now?”

“Willie,” said Santa, “true unselfishness is something that grows in the heart. I cannot explain it.”

“I shall never fly,” said Willie. He gazed longingly at the reindeer waiting patiently to fly away with Santa. “Oh, I did so want to go with you tonight!” he cried.

“You do not have to fly to go with me,” said Santa. “Climb in the sleigh and we’ll ride together. Hurry now for we must cover the whole world this night.”

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

Santa's great red sleigh rode through the night sky pulled by his eight flying deer. Santa held the reins and hummed a little song to himself. Beside him sat Willie.

"It didn't matter about never being able to fly," thought Willie happily. "It's enough just to be with Santa wherever he is."

And he promised himself that from now on he would try to be a good pup and not cause Santa any more trouble.

Presently the sleigh landed on a roof top. Santa dragged out his big bag of toys and he and Willie slid down the chimney and left toys there for all the children who had written him their wishes. They went to another house and another until they had visited all time houses in the city. Then the reindeer carried them away to the next city.

On and on they traveled around the whole wide world. Finally they came to the last city of all. When they had finished their visits there they saw a house where no light burned and no Christmas wreath hung.

Santa said, "That is strange. I have never had a letter from anyone in that house. I often wondered about it. This year I think I shall just go in and have a look."

Santa and Willie slid down the chimney and Santa lit a candle. Willie was tired now and sleepy. But as soon as he landed in the house he knew where he was. He pattered straight to the bedroom and up to the little cot by the window and sure enough there was Henrietta fast asleep.

Her face was thin and even Willie could see there were tears that had dried on her cheeks. On the floor by the cot was a tin pan. It was filled with milk and it was Willie's pan.

Beside the pan was a letter. Santa read it. It said "Dear Santa, I have never asked for anything before but this year I would like my little lost puppy for Christmas."

"How sad!" said Santa. "I cannot give her her lost puppy but I can leave some toys, though without her puppy I expect she will not enjoy toys."

Santa went to the sleigh and brought back his bag. He emptied everything that was left in it and put it all there on the cot for Henrietta.

All the time Willie just sat there by the cot looking at Henrietta and remembering things of long ago

Santa said, "Now it's home to Santa Land!"

Willie took a last look at Henrietta. Then he followed Santa up the chimney and across the roof and down to the ground to the sleigh. But he went slowly.

Santa climbed in the sleigh. "Come on, Willie. I can't wait to be home!"

But Willie just stood there looking up at Santa and finally he said, "I'm going to stay here."

"Stay here?" cried Santa.

"Yes," said Willie. "You see - I am the puppy Henrietta lost. She needs me. I must stay."

He thought for an instant of wonderful Santa Land and dear Santa that he would never see again. Quickly because his heart

was breaking and he couldn't bear to see Santa leave. Willie turned and ran back toward the house.

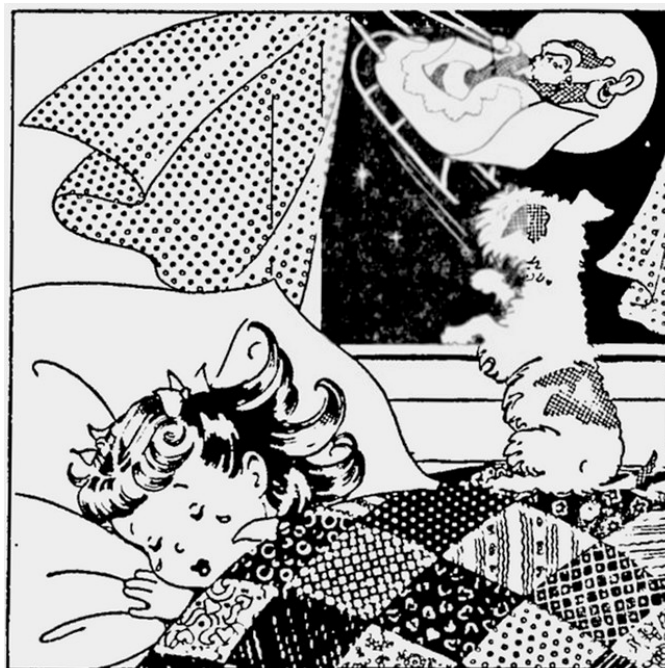
Then the strangest thing happened. Willie wasn't walking any more. He was flying!

Straight to the roof top he flew as easily, as softly as a leaf flying before the wind. Filled with astonishment he flew to the sleigh.

"I can fly! I can fly!"

Santa beamed. "And why not?" he asked. "For you are doing a truly unselfish deed!"

Then Santa and his sleigh rose into the air. Bursting with pride, Willie rose, too. Santa in his sleigh and Willie on secret wings circled the sky above Henrietta's home.



He heard the voice of Santa calling,
"A Merry Christmas to All."

"I will never let her know," thought Willie happily. "But every night when everyone is asleep I shall come out and fly. And perhaps each Christmas Eve I shall return to Santa Land and fly around the world once a year with Santa."

Then Santa waved farewell and Willie returned to Henrietta's house. As he snuggled down by the sleeping child he smiled to himself for he heard sleigh bells ringing and the far away voice of Santa calling, "A Merry Christmas to all!"

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