



Santa and the Dumdiddy

By Lucrece Hudgins Beale

AP Newsfeatures



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Chapter 1

THE BIG FUSS

Once upon a time there lived a little boy called Beanie. He had a sister named Betsy. Beanie and Betsy fought all the time.

When they got up in the morning they started arguing right away over who would read the paper first. At breakfast they argued over who could eat the most pancakes. After breakfast, they fought over whose turn it was to take the dog for a walk.

And so it went. Fussing and arguing all day long.

Now, it was very near Christmas and the children's mother was worn out with hearing this awful fighting in the house day after day. So she said "If you children don't stop this terrible fussing there's just not going to be any Christmas at this house."

This worried little Betsy because she loved Christmas better than anything in the whole world. So she said, "I'll stop fighting, mother. In fact, I'm going to shut myself in my room right now and work on my Christmas presents."

But Beanie wasn't worried. He said, "Aw, who cares about Christmas? I sure don't."

"Why, Beanie!" exclaimed his mother. "Whatever do you mean by saying such a thing?"

"I mean I don't like all that giving and stuff," said Beanie. "I like birthdays much better. Then I don't have to give away anything."

"But, Beanie, Christmas is a time for giving - not for getting. It's fun to give things to your cousins and your friends. And it's fun for them to give to you."

"Well, no one ever gives me as good as I give," retorted Beanie "And even Christmas dinner, when I think I'm going to have plenty of turkey and pie just for once, why, we always gotta have company and I never have thirds on anything!"

"You're a pig," said Betsy.

"You're a pinhead!" shouted Beanie.

"Children" cried the mother. She was beginning to be very angry.



Beanie and Betsy fought all the time

Betsy ran away to work on Christmas gifts but Beanie threw himself on the sofa and put his feet up on the wall

"Beanie, put your feet down at once!" ordered his mother.

"There you go," said Beanie. "Always picking on me. Nothing I do is right."

He stomped out of the room. He went upstairs and leaned down to look through the keyhole into his sister's room.

"Look at the little angel making Christmas presents!" he scoffed. "She thinks she's Santa's little helper!"

"Mother!" Betsy threw open the door. "He's bothering me!"

Mother came up the stairs. There were tears in her eyes.

"Really," she said to Beanie. "You are ruining Christmas for all of us. I don't know what is the matter with you. Go in your room."

Beanie went in his room. He lay on his bed. He thought about how he was always in trouble and this everything always was blamed on him - or so it seemed to him.

That's why his birthday was the best day in the year - much better than Christmas - because then no one fussed at him and everything was for him alone and did not have to be shared with anyone.

Suddenly Beanie sat up: He thought:

"I'll run away! I'll run away until all this Christmas stuff is over!"

He ran into Betsy's room to get his hat from under the bed where it had been thrown during a fight. Betsy was sitting on the floor making something out of clay.

She held up a lumpy clay figure for Beanie to see. "Isn't he beautiful!" she whispered.

The figure had a fat round body and a teeny head stuck on top and no neck at all. One arm was longer than the other and the legs had little bumps on them for feet.

"That's a big fat mess!" snorted Beanie.

"Is not!" cried Betsy. A dreamy look came into her eyes and she said softly, "It's a Dumdiddy and I'm giving it to Santa for Christmas!"

Chapter 2

RUNNING AWAY

Beanie was in a hurry run away. But when he saw Betsy's clay man he threw himself on the floor and laughed until the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Oh, you stupid!" he screamed at his sister. "Oh you nut!"

His sister sat there holding the little figure she had made. For a long moment she stared at Beanie without saying a word. Then she opened her mouth and screamed.

"Mooooother!"

As soon as she had screamed, she burst into tears.

The children's mother ran up the stairs. "Now what?" she cried. She was angry because, as usual, the children had been fighting all day long and the mother was very tired of it.

"I made this for Santa for Christmas," sobbed Betsy. She held up the clay man. "Beanie says it's a mess and I'm a nut!"

The mother stared at the dumpy little figure. "What on earth is it?" she asked.

"It's a Dumdidddy."

"Whoever heard of a Dumdidddy?" roared Beanie.

"There isn't even such a thing. And how can you give something to Santa Claus?. Did you ever see him, huh? How can you be so dumb?"

His mother stamped her foot.

"Be quiet, Beanie. It's a darling thing no matter what you call it, Betsy, and you are a sweet child to make something for Santa.

"As for you, Beanie, I've had all I can take of your trouble making. There will be no dessert for you tonight."

"That does it!" shouted Beanie. "As usual I'm the one to get punished when I haven't done a thing - not a thing!" And it really seemed to him that he was a model of good behavior and that the whole world was against him.

He stamped clown the stairs and put on his coat and mittens. His mother had been making a fruit cake for Christmas and the kitchen table was covered with good things to eat. Beanie filled his pockets with nuts and raisins and figs.

"They'll be sorry when I'm gone," he told himself furiously. "Oh, they'll be sorry!"

He was about to slam out the back door when he heard his mother and sister go up to the attic. He knew they were going to get out the Christmas tree decorations.

"Christmas, Christmas! That's all you hear around here" thought Beanie. "And now it's presents for Santa Claus, no less. How silly can you get!"

Suddenly he shut the door and came back into the kitchen. He sneaked upstairs into his sister's room. There was the little clay figure sitting on Betsy's desk.

"Dumdidddy!" snorted Beanie.

He snatched up the figure and fled down the stairs and out of the house. "Boy, will she howl now!" he thought happily. He slipped the Dumdidddy into his pocket and set out down the street.

Now Beanie lived in a very small town and when he ran away he ran so fast that in hardly any time he was out of the town and walking down a lonesome road.

He had no idea where the road led and didn't really care but he was lonesome. So he was glad when he saw a fat little man ahead of him.

Beanie ran after the man and called out, "Hey! My name is. Beanie. May I walk with you?"

The fat man had been scribbling in a notebook. He put the notebook away and said, "Why certainly. But where are you going?"

"Oh, I don't know" said Beanie as they walked along together. "It

really doesn't matter because you see I am running away."

"Goodness!" exclaimed the stranger. "What a time for a boy to run away - just before Christmas!"

"That's why I'm running away. I hate Christmas."

The fat man was so astonished he stopped still and his mouth fell open and his spectacles fell down his nose and his whiskers stood straight out from his face.

"Oh," he said. "Oh, oh, oh!"

And he stared at Beanie as if he could not, he simply could not, believe his ears.



Chapter 3

BEANIE FALLS

“You must be the only boy in the world who doesn’t like Christmas,” said the strange, fat man. “Don’t you like getting presents?”

“Oh, yes,” said Beanie. “I like the getting but I don’t like the giving. Besides, my sister always gets something that I want and sometimes she gets more than I do. Last year, for instance, I counted and she got 23 toys and I got only 21.”

“Dear me,” said the fat man. “Christmas must be in awful time at your house if you go around counting your gifts.”

“It is awful,” agreed Beanie. “That’s why I like my birthday best. Then everything is for me.”

For a long while the fat man said nothing. He walked along pulling at his whiskers and now and then shaking his head sadly.

Presently Beanie said, “I bet even Santa Claus likes his birthday better than Christmas. I’ll bet he likes to get things better than to give them.”

The fat man looked at Beanie in astonishment, “Why, Santa Claus doesn’t even have a birthday!” he declared.

“Gosh,” said Beanie. “That must be awful! Imagine giving all that stuff and never getting anything.”

“Beanie,” said the stranger sadly. “I am afraid you are a very selfish little boy.” He took his notebook from his pocket and began to write in it.

Beanie was furious. “There you go!” he exclaimed. “Picking on me just like everyone else.”

“I’m going to leave you now, Beanie,” said the stranger, “because I have a very long journey to make. But if you’d like, I’ll take you home before I leave.”

“Oh no you won’t,” cried Beanie. “And you won’t leave me because I’m leaving you and it’s too bad for you because I was just going to give you some of my nuts and raisins. Now I won’t!”

And with that Beanie filled his mouth with some of the goodies from his pocket and then turned on his heel and ran as fast as he could off the road and into the woods.

But, unfortunately, as he ran he turned his head to stick out his tongue at the stranger. As he did so he tripped over a stone and fell crashing against a tree.

The fat man ran after Beanie. He found him lying unconscious on the ground. The boy was pale and there was a large lump on his forehead. The stranger rubbed the bump and covered the boy with leaves to keep him warm.

As he sat beside the boy the stranger thought, “Oh, dear, I must hurry on my journey but I can’t leave this boy. He is going to get in terrible trouble and he has so much to learn before he goes home again. If only there were someone I could leave to watch over him!”

Just then he saw a funny little clay man on the ground. It was the Dumdiddy that Beanie had stolen from his sister. It had dropped out of his pocket when he fell.

The stranger picked it up and peered at it through his spectacles. The poor Dumdiddy was mashed a little from being in Beanie’s pocket. His nose was lopsided.

But the stranger kept staring at it and running his fingers over it; and whispering to it. Finally he said out loud, “Little fellow, I want you to stay with this boy and take care of him and keep him out of trouble as best you can. Will you do that?”

Well, the little Dumdiddy was a real live Dumdiddy now and he nodded his head vigorously although this was a very hard thing to do because he had no neck.

“Sure,” he said in a clayey kind of voice. “I’ll do my best. But who are you anyway and who is he?”

“I am Santa Claus,” said the stranger. “And he is a poor boy who has an awful lesson to learn.”



Chapter 4

SANTA LEAVES

"M goodness!" cried the Dumdiddy to Santa. "What are you doing here? Why aren't you in Santa Land? Where is your red suit and your reindeer? How is anyone to know you are Santa Claus?"

Santa laughed. "I don't want anyone to know who I am. I am making my yearly inspection trip to find out which boys and girls in the world have been good and which ones bad."

He pulled his notebook out of his pocket and flipped through the pages. There were thousands of names written there. Some names had checks beside them and some had black marks.

"I've almost finished," said Santa, "and I must hurry on my way for I must be back in Santa Land by midnight. That's why I can't stay to help this boy. Look, his eyes are beginning to fitter. He soon will be awake. I must be off."

"Wait," said the Dumdiddy. "First, tell me what kind of mark does this boy have against his name in your notebook?"

Santa shook his head sadly. "Black as black can be. But take care of him, for his greed and selfishness will get him into much trouble. Spare him what you can and if things get really bad, come to me."

"I will," promised the Dumdiddy. "But why should you bother so over one with a black mark when your book is filled with the names of good children?"

"Because," sighed Santa. "This is the unhappiest child of all. And now, goodbye."



"Take care of him - for his greed and selfishness will get him into trouble."

Before the Dumdiddy could even catch his breath, Santa had vanished from the woods. None too soon either, for Beanie had begun to stir.

"Billikins!" thought the Dumdiddy. "I better get out of sight myself. Now what pocket am I supposed to be in?" He hobbled over to the boy. "Ah, this one will do!" And he climbed into Beanie's back trouser pack.

To his delight he found the pocket filled with nuts and raisins and figs and he immediately began nibbling them up. "I'm glad I was made with a big stomach" he said to himself.

Just then Beanie sat up, He rubbed his head. He couldn't imagine what had happened to him. He remembered being angry with the strange fat man and he remembered running away from him.

"I guess he threw a rock at me," he exclaimed. "Well, I'm glad to be rid of him, but I guess I better stay out of these woods and keep to the road."

At first he felt a little dizzy but by and by he felt better and he walked on and on until he found himself in a big city. Now he became very cheerful and was glad he had run away from home.

By this time it was night and the city streets were filled with people hurrying home from work. Beanie had never been in such a large city and he stared at the bright lights and the store windows and the bustling people.

From his pocket, the Dumdiddy stared, too. "Kitcheroo!" whistled the Dumdiddy. "What sights to see!"

Suddenly Beanie saw a redheaded hunchback running towards him. He was chased by a man who was shouting and waving his arms. The hunchback turned frightened eyes on Beanie as he passed him and cried, "Trip him! Trip him!"

Without stopping to think, Beanie obediently stuck out his leg just as the chaser came by and brought him crashing to the ground.

The man leaped to his feet. But it was too late - the redheaded hunchback had disappeared in the crowd. The man turned furiously on Beanie.

"See what you've done!" he cried. "You've helped a robber escape!"

Chapter 5

THE ROBBER

The man shouted at Beanie for tripping him and letting the redheaded robber escape. Then he angrily brushed off his trousers and limped away.

“Whew!” gasped the little Dumdiddy from Beanie’s pocket. “That was a close one!”

Beanie strolled on down the street gazing at the sights. Bright Christmas lights glittered above him. Giant red and white stockings hung from the lamp posts. A fat cardboard Santa stood at every corner.

Beanie stood admiring a particularly fine Santa sitting in a cardboard sleigh. Suddenly he felt a tug at his arm. Turning, he saw the redheaded hunchback.

He had glittering green eyes and crooked teeth and short red whiskers sticking from his chin.

‘Thanks for saving me,’ he chuckled.

“I only did what you asked me,” said Beanie. “It is true that you are a robber?”

“The best there is,” boasted the hunchback. “And now you’re a robber too.”

“Why?” cried Beanie in astonishment.

“Because you helped me escape.”

“But I’ve never robbed!” explained Beanie.

“What’s the matter?” said the hunchback, growing angry.

“Are you afraid of being a robber?”

“N-no!” stammered Beanie. “I’m not afraid of anything!”

“Good,” replied the hunchback. “I’m going to let you in on something big I’ve planned for tonight. I’ll do that because you saved me from that man.. How’d you like that?”

Beanie’s heart fluttered wildly. His throat was dry and he could hardly speak. At last he managed to nod his head. “F-fine,” he whispered.

The little Dumdiddy, leaning far out of Beanie’s pocket, saw the nod and heard the whisper and his heart fluttered.

“Oh, my! Oh, my!” he moaned. “Now we’re in for it.”

The robber pulled Beanie into a dark alley and sat with him on a broken box. “Listen,” he whispered, putting his arm around Beanie. “Did you ever get all you wanted for Christmas?”

Beanie shivered under the robber’s arm. He shook his head. “Not all,” he said.

“Well, this year you’re going to get all you want!”

Beanie’s eyes popped wide open. “How?” he gasped.

“Because,” said the hunchback, “you’re not going to wait for someone to give you what you want, you’re going to Santa’s Workshop and take what you want. Unless, of course, you aren’t brave enough!”

“Don’t worry,” snapped Beanie though his teeth were chattering. “I’m as brave as you!”

“We’ll see,” said the robber. “I know this store called Santa’s Workshop. They make all sorts of toys there. We’ll just go in and help ourselves.”

Beanie swallowed hard. ‘Let’s go,’ he said. He hoped the robber wouldn’t feel him shaking.

“No, we won’t go together,” said the robber. “I’ll go first and leave a trail of arrows for you to follow. They’ll lead you right to Santa’s Workshop. You’ll find me there.”

He pulled a piece of chalk from his pocket and drew a small arrow on the sidewalk. “Now you stay here for one hour and then follow the arrows.”

With a wave of his hand he disappeared. Beanie sank back and hugged himself with his arms. He was shivering so he could hardly stay on the box.



“But I can do anything he can!” he told himself fiercely.

Meantime, the Dumdiddy in Beanie’s pocket shook himself. “Well, kitcheroo,” he muttered. “I better get busy and do something.”

He climbed out of Beanie’s pocket, jumped to the ground and fell flat on his tummy.

“Billikins!” he thought as he straightened himself out. “I wish my legs had better feet than these!” He glared at the little clay bumps on the ends of his legs. “Oh, well, I’ll have to make the best of them.”

And away he hopped, following the arrows of the redheaded robber.

Chapter 6

IN THE WORKSHOP

It was a pretty hard job for the Dumdidddy to follow the redheaded robber's arrows. In the first place, it was night and the arrows were hard to see. (But it also made it hard for anyone to see him.)

In the second place people kept stepping on him or almost stepping on him, anyway, and he was so busy dodging feet and falling off curbstones that he lost a lot of time. He thought he never would get where he was going in time to do anything.

Not that he knew what he was going to do. But Santa Claus had told him to watch out for this poor, foolish Beanie and so he had to do something.

He struggled along following the arrows. They led him off the main street and down dark alleys and through deserted and finally they stopped.

By the last arrow was a piece of chalk where the hunchback had left it when he drew the last mark.

"This must be it," thought the Dumdidddy. He looked up and sure enough, there was a little store and over the door there was a sign reading. "Santa's Workshop."

There were no windows and no lights to be seen. The Dumdidddy crept to the door. It was open just a crack and he squeezed in. He could hear nothing but he could see ahead of him a streak of light. He tiptoed to it and found another door almost shut. He squeezed through it and found himself in a room of toys.

What toys there were! Skates and balls and games and jumping ropes and boxing gloves and bats and marbles and wagons and - well, any other toy you could think of.

In the midst of the toys stood the redheaded robber and he was stuffing toys into an enormous brown sack.

"Oh, if only someone would come and catch him!" thought the Dumdidddy.

He watched angrily as the hunchback loaded his bag. At last there was no more room in the bag and the robber set it outside the door. Then he took a large bottle off a shelf. He opened it and poured it out on the floor.

"What on earth is he doing?" wondered the Dumdidddy.

When the bottle was empty the robber threw it down by the door. Then he went out, picked up his bag and slipped out of the shop, leaving the lamp burning behind him.

"Why he's not even waiting for Beanie!" exclaimed the Dumdidddy. "What can he be thinking of? And what is this stuff he has put on the floor?"

He stretched on his tiptoes to read the label on the bottle:

"Stick Tight Glue," he read. "Guaranteed to hold anything or anybody."

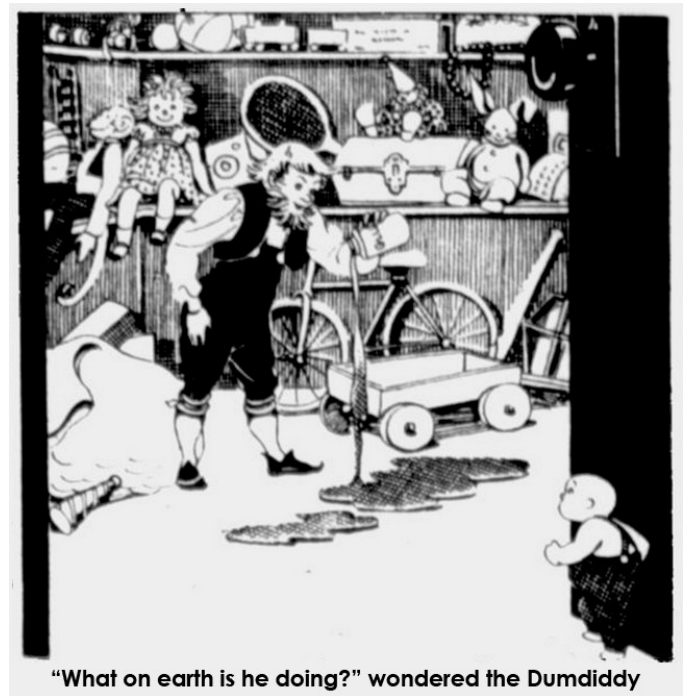
"Whoops!" cried the Dumdidddy. "He's set a trap for Beanie! When Beanie comes he'll be caught in the glue and when the shop owner comes in the morning he'll find Beanie here and think he robbed the store!"

The Dumdidddy ran out in the street. He was just in time to see the hunchback disappearing down an alley. The robber had the sack of toys slung over his shoulder and was running as fast as his short legs would carry him.

"What'll I do? What'll I do?" wondered the Dumdidddy. He ran around in a circle holding his head in his hands. Suddenly he fell flat on his face. He looked down and saw he had stumbled over the chalk the redheaded hunchback had thrown beside the last arrow.

The Dumdidddy let out a soft whistle. He lifted the chalk. It was as long as his longest arm.

"Thank goodness," he cried. "This will save Beanie."



"What on earth is he doing?" wondered the Dumdidddy

Chapter 7

THE FALSE TRAIL

The little Dumdiddy heaved the mighty piece of chalk to his Shoulder and ran a few feet down the street. Then he lowered the chalk and made an arrow on the pavement. He lifted the chalk, ran a few more feet and made another arrow.

And so he went, as fast as his poor knobby feet could carry him, drawing arrows through the town.

Meantime, back in the alley where the redheaded robber had left him, Beanie huddled on his heels and shivered. At last an hour had passed and it was time for him to follow the arrows.

The more he thought about it the less he liked going. But he was afraid of making the robber angry. And he was afraid the robber would know he was afraid.

"I'm brave as anyone," he told himself fiercely. "I'll show him!"

He got to his feet and set out to follow the chalk arrows the robber had left for him. They led him off the main street and down alleys and through empty streets.

He passed store after store but the arrows never stopped. He passed large warehouses and factories and still the arrows went on. He went down streets where there were only private homes and not a store in sight and still the arrows went on.

Finally he found himself out of town on a road leading to Far Away Places and there where there were no houses or stores or anything except a road, there the arrows ended.

Beanie searched and searched but he could find no more arrows. He was exhausted. He sank down by the road and he thought, "The robber has tricked me!"

In his heart he was glad and he said, "I hope I never see him again!" He curled up in a pile of leaves beside the road and fell sound asleep.

As soon as Beanie snored his first snore the little Dumdiddy struggled down from a nearby rock where he'd been waiting. With a sigh of relief he threw away the last tiny speck of chalk he held in his hand. Then he slipped into Beanie's pocket and he, too, fell asleep.

The next morning when Beanie awoke he was hungry. He reached in his pocket for the raisins and nuts he had brought from home. But they were all gone. The Dumdiddy hid finished them off.

Beanie found the Dumdiddy in his pocket. He pulled it out and thought about how his sister, Betsy, had made it for a present for Santa Claus.



"Could I have some food?"

"What a dope she is!" said Beanie and he started to throw the little figure away. But there was something so sad in the Dumdiddy's expression that Beanie changed his mind.

"The thing looks almost real," he thought and he dropped it back into his pocket. "Well, anyway, I must get some food."

He rose and looked about. Far off in the forest he saw smoke curling among the tree tops. He followed the smoke until he came to a little purple house sitting all alone in a clearing.

In front of the door stood a big black pot. Beanie climbed over the pot and knocked at the door. A kind-faced woman opened the door. She smiled at Beanie.

"I am hungry," said the boy. "Could I have some food?"

"Certainly, you poor dear bay," said the old woman. "Come right in." She led Beanie into a pleasant room where everything was neat and orderly except for three black pots that stood one behind the other in the middle of the room.

"Now, rest yourself," said the woman, "while I fix you some food."

Beanie turned away and looked out of the window. "How lucky I am to have found such a kind old lady!" he thought.

The Dumdiddy, peeping at the old lady from Beanie's back pocket, was thinking the same thing when suddenly he saw the old lady put both hands to her face and give it a tug.

"Good gracious!" cried the Dumdiddy to himself. "That's not her face! That's a mask!"

Chapter 8

WITCH OF THE BLACK POTS

The little Dumdiddy blinked. Then he peered again at the sweet, kind-faced old lady.

Sure enough, he again saw the old lady reach up and tug at her face as if it were a hat she was setting straight on her head.

“Oh, me, oh, my,” moaned the Dumdiddy. “If only Beanie would turn around!”

Just at that moment Beanie did turn around and now the Dumdiddy in his back pocket found himself staring out the window while Beanie faced the old woman.

“How nice it is to have a visitor,” said the old woman “I love little boys, especially at Christmas time.” Her eyes twinkled and her mouth smiled sweetly. “Now what would you like more than anything in the world to eat?”

“Well,” said Beanie. “I like raisin pudding.”

“Fine” said the old lady. “If you will go in the yard and chop some kindling wood for the fire I will cook you some delicious raisin pudding.”

Beanie started for the door but he was clumsy and on the way he tripped over one of the three black pots in the middle of the room. The Dumdiddy flew out of his pocket and rolled under the sofa.

“Why does she have these black pots in the middle of the room?” wondered Beanie.

He picked himself up and went into the back yard. There was another black pot by the wood pile. And still another down by

the back fence. “She must collect old black pots,” thought Beanie as he set to work with the ax.

Meantime, the Dumdiddy lay where he had rolled under the sofa. Suddenly he heard a hideous screeching.

The old lady was singing.

But her voice was so creaky and so hoarse it made the Dumdiddy shudder. He crept from under the sofa and into the kitchen. No one was there. He ran into the dining room. No one was there.

The old woman’s screeching seemed to fill every room and he could not tell where she was. Finally he ran into the dressing room and there he beheld a sight more hideous even than the sound of the singing.

The old woman was sitting at her dressing table. She had taken off her mask. Her face in the mirror was the face of a witch: toothless, evil-eyed, sunken-cheeked.

“Ha, ha!” chortled the witch to herself in the mirror. “He he!” She leaned forward and opened a little black box on her dresser. She took out of it a little black pill and slipped the pill into her pocket.

The Dumdiddy clapped his hands to his head. “She’s going to poison Beanie!” he thought with horror.

At that moment Beanie banged into the kitchen with a load of wood. The witch snatched up her mask and slipped it over her face. She went into the kitchen. The Dumdiddy crept after her.

“Lay the wood on the fire, boy, and I will mix your raisin pudding.”

The witch brought out a bowl and beat into it eggs and sugar and butter and bread crumbs. She poured the mixture into four colored baking dishes. Then she carefully sprinkled raisins into each dish and the puddings were ready to be cooked.

She put the red dish in the oven. She put the yellow dish in the oven. Then the green dish. She was about to put in the purple dish when she exclaimed:

“Dear me! A raisin fell in my pocket!”

And, quicker than the eye could follow, she pulled the little black pill from her pocket and dropped it into the purple dish.

“Now that one has more raisins than the others,” said Beanie.

“Yes,” nodded the witch. “So it shall be for you!” And she popped the purple dish into the oven.



“She must collect old black pots,” thought Beanie

Chapter 9

THE POISONED PUDDING

“While the pudding cooks,” the witch to Beanie, “come into the parlor and talk with me.”

She led him into the sitting room where the three black pots sat in a row in the middle of the room. “Tell me where you are going and where you have come from.”

“Well,” said Beanie. “I am running away from home because I did not want to make Christmas gifts and spend my allowance for gifts for the poor and all that stuff.”

“What! You don’t like Christmas?”

“I like getting things,” said Beanie. “But I don’t like giving. And I don’t see why I have to share everything at Christmas time.”

“Good,” said the witch. “That is a very proper feeling.

Beanie looked at her in surprise. “You’re the first grownup person who has agreed with me,” he said. He thought it was a shame his family didn’t understand him as this dear old woman did.

Meantime, in the kitchen, the little Dumdiddy was struggling mightily to find a way to save Beanie from the “dear old woman.”

He thought if he could get into the oven he could dump out the purple pudding. To reach the oven door he climbed up the stick of a broom behind the stove. Then he slid over onto the top of the stove.

He ran to the front and leaned way, way over until he managed to reach the handle of the oven. He gave it a jerk and the door flew open.

He could see the four puddings bubbling inside. But it was hot! Waves of heat from the open oven suffocated him.

Still, he thought, Santa Claus brought me alive just to take care of Beanie and I’ve got to get to that pudding.

But, alas! as he started to swing himself down, the poor Dumdiddy slipped and crashed to the floor.

He heard steps coming and he rolled under the stove just as Beanie and the witch came in.

“There,” said the witch, “They’re all ready even though I did forget to shut the oven.”

She laid out two dishes on the table, the green one for herself and the purple one for Beanie.

“Oh, boy!” cried Beanie. “I am hungry!”

But just as he lifted his spoon the witch said, “Dear me! You haven’t washed your hands. Come with me while the pudding cools.”

As soon as they went out of the room the Dumdiddy scrambled from under the stove and shinned up the leg of the table. It was hard going but he finally got to the top

He ran to the purple dish and took up the spoon. He dug frantically in the pudding until finally he dredged up the little black pill that looked like a raisin. He put the pill on his shoulder and ran over and dropped it into the green dish at the witch’s place.

Then, with a tremendous sigh of relief, he dropped down into Bennie’s chair and just lay there.

When Beanie came back he saw the Dumdiddy and put it back in his pocket. Then he sat down to eat.

The witch sat down across from him and took up her spoon.

“Gee she looks strange,” thought Beanie as he took up his spoon. “Her face looks like it’s slipping!”

“Come - eat up!” said the witch. And she spooned a great spoonful of pudding into her mouth.

As she did so there was a hiss and a rattle and suddenly the witch was no longer a witch. She had turned into an old black pot that fell clanging and crashing off the chair to the kitchen floor.



He dug frantically in the pudding until he dredged up the little black pill

Chapter 10

IN TROUBLE AGAIN

Beanie stared in amazement at the old black pot that had fallen from the old woman's chair. He left his raisin pudding untouched and ran to the front door. On the way he stumbled again over the three black pots in the parlor. When he went out the door he stumbled over the black pot sitting there.

The hair stood up on his head. He thought, "If I stayed in that house any longer maybe I'd turn into a black pot."

He was so frightened he never stopped running until he was well out of the forest and back on the road leading to Far Away Places.

In Beanie's pocket the little Dumdiddy rolled himself into a ball and went to sleep.

As Beanie went on his way he became hungrier and hungrier. Presently he came to a farm house surrounded by a fence. On the fence was a sign saying: "Keep Out." On the other side of the fence stood a Christmas tree. It was decorated with peppermint sticks and gum drops and cones of chocolate candy and stars made of sugar.

"I am so hungry," thought Beanie. "Surely no one would mind my having something from this Christmas tree. Especially since Christmas is a time for giving."

HE climbed over the fence and ran to the tree. He had just popped a white marshmallow in- to his mouth when he felt a hand on his shoulder. He was swung around to face a skinny old man with deep set eyes.

"Taking candy from my tree, eh?" said the man. "Well, pay me."

The man spoke in such a shrill, angry voice that the Dumdiddy awoke. He poked his head out of Beanie's pocket just in time to hear Beanie say. "But, sir, I haven't any money."

"Very well," said the old man. "You'll work to pay for it." And he took hold of Beanie's collar and led him into the barn. He pointed to a pile of dirty glass lamps.

"Clean the inside of those lamps," he ordered. "Have the glass nice and shining and all of them done by noon."

Beanie stared at the lamps. There were about 50 of them and the glasses were so dark with smoke that he could not see through them.

"W-what if I don't finish by noon?" he faltered.

"Then I'll beat you," said the man. And he left Beanie alone with the lamps and a pile of old rags.

Beanie picked up the first lamp. He pushed and pushed but he could not get even his hand inside the lamp to polish it. He kept pushing with the cloth until suddenly there was a plop!



He had just popped a marshmallow into his mouth when he felt a hand on his shoulder

and the glass shattered in his hands. He tried another and the same thing happened.

The next lamp he pushed the cloth into inch by inch and turned it and pressed it ever so gently. He finally cleaned it but it had taken a long, long time and there were more than 45 lamps to clean in another hour.

The Dumdiddy thought, "This will never do." So while Beanie was cleaning the next lamp the Dumdiddy climbed out of his pocket and sneaked into the corner with the pile of lamps.

He took a rag and climbed right into the nearest lamp. With a few whisks of his cloth he had polished it clean. Then he climbed into the next lamp.

When Beanie finally finished his second lamp he came to the corner and to his amazement he found all the lamps were clean.

Just about that then the skinny old man came in.

"Look!" cried Beanie. "They're all clean!"

It was hard to tell who was the more astonished: Beanie or the old man.

"Now I have paid for touching your tree. I will go." said Beanie.

But the man snatched him by the arm. "This job was too easy for you," he said. "You must do another job really to pay me."

Chapter 11

CLEANING THE BARN

“That’s not fair,” protested Beanie when the farmer told him he must do another job to pay for the candy.

“You’ll do as I say,” ordered the skinny man glaring at Beanie.

Beanie stared at him. For the first time he saw deep, deep into the man’s eyes and what he saw was fire and chains and lightning. When he saw this he knew with horror that this wasn’t a man but an ogre and that the Christmas tree in his yard was a trap the ogre set to catch boys like himself.

“I want you to clean this barn,” said the ogre. “Stack the bags of grain. Pile the corn in the crib. Put the hay in the loft. Sweep the floor. Have it spotless by sundown. To be sure you get it done I will lock you in here until the sun goes down.”

“But there are no brooms or pitch forks or anything to work with!” exclaimed Beanie.

“Use your hands,” replied the ogre and he went out and locked the barn door.

Beanie stared in dismay at the dark and dirty barn. High up one side was the only window and it was tightly shuttered. The only light came from cracks in the sides of the barn. Still, it was light enough to see the awful mess.

“Well, I’ll just have to get it cleaned,” thought Beanie. “It’s the only way I’ll ever get away from this place.”

He set to work. He threw the corn cobs into one bin. He loaded the hay on his back and carried it up the ladder to the loft. It took many, many trips for there was a great deal of hay and it was scattered all about the barn.

He scraped the grain together into an enormous pile. He found some empty sacks and filled them with the grain. Then he stacked them in the corner.

But when he had done all this work the floor was still covered with bits of hay and grain and corn and there was nowhere in the world for Beanie to sweep it even if he’d had a broom to sweep with.

It was nearly sundown. Beanie sat in a corner and buried his head in his hands. He had done the best he could but his best was not good enough. He thought he would never get away from the ogre now.

The little Dumdidly had watched Beanie working so hard without any help and now he thought, “It’s time for me to help.”

He began to climb up the wall of the barn. He put his feet in knot holes and clung to splinters and struggled and twisted and

reached until he came to the window high up at the top of the barn.

He pushed open the shutters and perched on the window sill. Then he began to make strange soft noises. So soft that Beanie never even heard. But others heard because, in a few moments, there were answering noises from far beyond the barn and suddenly a flock of birds swooped through the open window.

Beanie dried his tears and gazed in astonishment as the birds flew down and began to eat up every last grain and corn kernel on the floor. When they had finished eating they picked up the scattered wisps of hay for their nests and flew away.

“Why, they’ve swept the barn clean!” cried Beanie joyfully. He was so busy admiring the floor that he never looked up and so he did not see the Dumdidly climbing down from the window.

Just then the ogre came in. His eyes popped when he saw the spotless barn.

“I’ve done the job,” said Beanie. “Now I will go.”

“Oh, no,” said the ogre, and the fire in his eyes was burning bright. “You are such a good worker I think I will keep you here for another job tomorrow.”

And, with that, the ogre put a chain around Beanie’s leg and locked him to the barn door.



Beanie gazed in astonishment as the birds flew down and began to eat every last grain and corn kernel

Chapter 12

THE DWARF OF GIMME HOUSE

Beanie howled and cried and kicked at the chain that held him fastened to the barn door.

But it wasn't any use. The ogre only laughed at him.

"Why are you so upset? I will give you another job to do tomorrow and then perhaps you can go."

But Beanie knew that there would never be an end to the jobs. He knew that he was in the ogre's power and if he did a job poorly he would be punished, and if he did it well he would be kept for still another job. And so on forever.

He heard the ogre stamping away from the barn. Through the open door he could see the fire of the ogre's eyes cutting through the dark of the evening.

"Whatever shall I do?" wondered Beanie. "How wretched I am!" He twisted and turned, he fretted and worried, and finally he fell into an exhausted sleep.

Meantime, the little Dumdidddy decided that the only thing to do was for himself to get the key to Beanie's chain and to free him.

He went out of the barn and ran to the farm house. He could hear the ogre moving about inside. The Dumdidddy went to all the doors but they were shut tight. Finally he found a window not quite closed and he squeezed under it and into the house.

By this time the ogre had gone to bed. The Dumdidddy could hear the bed springs creaking and the ogre groaning as he tried to get comfortable. The Dumdidddy stood at the bedroom door and watched the flashes of light from the ogre's eyes until finally there was only blackness and he knew the ogre was asleep.

Quickly the Dumdidddy climbed a chair and searched through the pockets of the ogre's coat. In the third pocket he found the key.

He lifted the key to his shoulders and started to climb down. Suddenly the key fell from his grasp and crashed to the floor. Spears of light darted from the bed and the Dumdidddy clung to the chair leg with trembling knees. Presently the lights went out and the ogre snored again.

The Dumdidddy slid to the floor and raced out of the house with the key. When he got to the barn he quietly unlocked the chain that held Beanie. Then he climbed in Beanie's back pocket and pinched the sleeping boy until he awoke.

"Stop!" cried the boy, jumping up. He had been dreaming that the ogre was sticking pins in him. He kicked at the ogre. To his astonishment he found he could move his legs.



He raced out of the house with the key

"I'm free!" he gasped. "I must have kicked off the chains in my sleep!"

He bounded out of the barn and ran for the road. He never stopped running until dawn had come and he was a long, long way from the ogre's house.

By and by, he came to a town and in the town he found a beautiful toy store. He pressed his face against the window and stared at the beautiful toys.

Suddenly, a dwarf with a pointed head was standing beside him. "I suppose you are planning what Christmas presents to get for your friends," said the dwarf.

"No," said Beanie. "I have run away from home and I do not have to give presents or share anything this Christmas."

The dwarf took Beanie by the arm. "Come with me to Gimme House," he said. "There you will have all your heart desires and never have to give or share again."

"Why, that sounds wonderful," said Beanie. "How do I get there?"

"Just follow me," said the dwarf and he started sway at a fast walk with Beanie running along behind him.

Now all this time the Dumdidddy had been sleeping soundly in Beanie's pocket but when Beanie started running the Dumdidddy awoke and stuck his head out of the pocket. But he stuck it out too far and suddenly there was a jolt and the Dumdidddy was flung into the air and rolled over and over into the gutter.

Chapter 13

ALL A BOY COULD WANT

The dwarf ran down the street. Behind him ran Beanie. Behind Beanie ran the Dumdiddy.

By and by the dwarf came to a big black house with a big black door. He went through the door and Beanie ran through the door but when the Dumdiddy reached the house the door was slammed shut and the Dumdiddy was left outside.

The Dumdiddy saw a sign on the door which said, "The Gimme House for Gimme Children."

The Dumdiddy's face turned white and his knees shook. He thought, "I've saved Beanie from a redheaded robber and I've saved him from a witch and I've saved him from an ogre, but I can't save him from the Gimme House."

He sank down on the steps and two little tears rolled down his cheek.

"I've done the best I could," he moaned, "but this is a problem too big for a poor Dumdiddy like me."

Suddenly he leaped to his feet. "I'll get Santa," he cried. "Santa will know what to do."

And he dried his tears and ran away.

Meantime, Beanie stood in the hail of the big black house: "Who are the Gimme Children?" he asked the dwarf. "And why do they call it the Gimme House?"

"Gimme Children are children who are always saying 'Gimme'," said the dwarf. "They never want to give or share. They always want to get. Whenever I find a child like that I bring him to Gimme House and every time he says 'Gimme' then I give him."

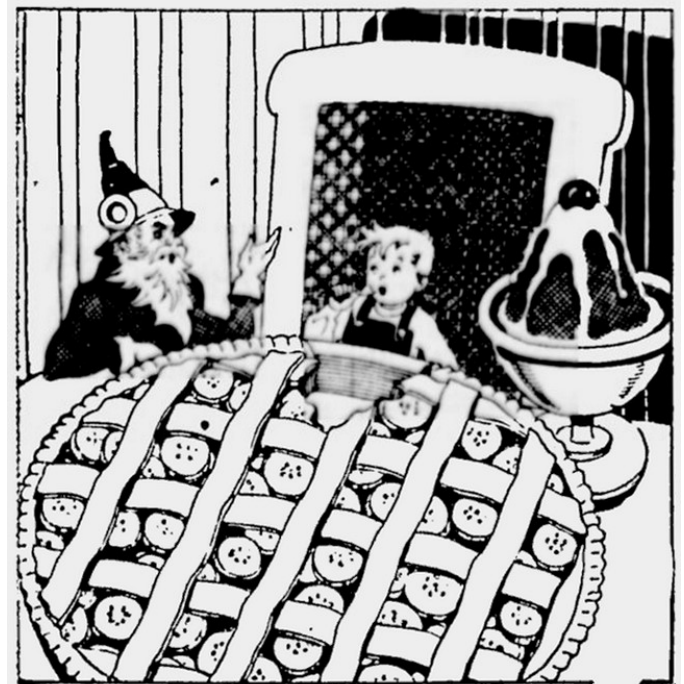
This sounded like a great life but, just the same, when he heard it a strange shiver ran down Beanie's back. But he laughed and said, "Well as a starter, why don't you gimme a banana pie as big as a wheel and a tub of ice cream to go on top."

"Certainly," said the dwarf. He lead Beanie into a dining room and, just like that, there was a banana pie, big as a wagon wheel, and a tub of ice cream sitting on the table.

Beanie ate until his eyes were popping, but when he tried to stagger from the table the dwarf pulled him back. "You asked for it," he said. "You must finish it" Beanie ate until he turned green in the face and finally he had finished every bit.

Then the dwarf said, "You may leave the table now but don't worry, every meal at Gimme House will be like this."

Beanie felt sick and lay down in a corner to sleep. After a while the dwarf woke him.



"You asked for it," he said. "You must finish it."

"Tell me some toy you would like," he said. "I want you to have everything your heart desires."

Beanie really didn't want anything, but he said "I've always wanted a table tennis set. Can you gimme that?"

"Of course," said the dwarf. And out of nowhere he produced a table and bats and ball.

"This is great," said Beanie. "I'll get some of the other Gimme Children to play with me."

"No," said the dwarf. "Gimme Children always play alone. That way they don't have to share with anyone."

So Beanie stood at the table and batted the ball back and forth to himself until he couldn't stand it any longer. Finally he said, "Maybe there are some other toys you can gimme?"

"Of course," said the dwarf. He took Beanie to a room with a sign on the door saying "Beanie's Room." Inside was every toy known to man. "They're all yours," said the dwarf. "Each has your name on it and says no one else can ever touch."

Beanie stared at the toys. He was suddenly very lonely and very frightened.

"Where are the other Gimme Children?" he asked fearfully.

"You'll never see them. Each Gimme Child lives in a world his own."

"I—I don't think I like it here," whispered Beanie, "I think I'll go back to my home now."

The dwarf laughed and laughed.

"Why, Beanie!" he cried. "Gimme Children never go home again!"

DUMDIDDY IN SANTA LAND

Meantime, the Dumdiddy ran through the town. He met a little white mouse warming himself in a spot of sun and he said, "O little white mouse, can you tell me how to get to Santa Land?"

The white mouse yawned and said, "No, I have never been."

Then the Dumdiddy met a cockroach crawling through a pipe and he said, "Can you tell me how to get to Santa Land?"

"Not me," said the cockroach. "I never go out of these pipes."

He went on until he met a mole and he asked him if he knew how to get to Santa Land. The mole said he didn't know that but he did know a Glump who had been to Santa Land last year and who knew all the proper travel reservations one had to make.

So the Dumdiddy hunted till he found the Glump (a Glump is a lumpy sort of Gee) and the Glump said yes, indeed, he had been to Santa Land and he had gotten there simply by having his wife wrap him up in a box and mail him off parcel post in the regular Christmas mail.

"Well," said the Dumdiddy. "I have a favor to ask of you. I'm in a terrible hurry to get to Santa Land myself and I wonder if you'd be kind enough to wrap me up and mail me in the Christmas mall?"

"Of course," said the Glump. And he carefully did wrap the Dumdiddy in stiff brown wrapping paper and tied him with thick twine and mailed him at the post office to:

Santa Claus
Santa Land
Wherever That May Be

So It came about a short time later, that Santa Claus was in his workshop designing paper doll clothes when the mail brownie burst in with the day's mail and laid it at Santa's feet The very first piece of mail that Santa picked up was the brown paper parcel sent by the Glump.

When Santa opened it, out fell the Dumdiddy, half dead from being bounced and crushed and twisted in the Christmas mail.

Santa stared at the Dumdiddy. "Oh, dear! Why are you here? I told you to take care of that boy who had run away from home because he had no Christmas spirit."

"That's why I'm here!" moaned the Dumdiddy. He was quite worn out with his worries over Beanie. "I saved the boy from a redheaded robber and I saved him from a witch and I saved him from an ogre but now he is in real trouble and I don't know what to do."

"Where is he?" asked Santa.

"The Gimme Dwarf has him!"



**Santa opened the brown paper parcel
and out fell the Dumdiddy**

Santa sprang from his chair. "The Gimme Dwarf?" he cried. "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

He strode up and down the shop, pulling at his whiskers and moaning softly. The Dumdiddy strode up and down at Santa's heels, blinking and sighing mighty sighs.

"I must go and save him," said Santa finally.

"But the Gimme Dwarf is the Spirit of Getting and is your worst enemy!" exclaimed the Dumdiddy. "What if he should capture you?"

"I will go in disguise and hope no one recognizes me," said Santa.

When Santa's workers heard this they were very upset.

"You can't leave now!" they cried. "It's just two days before Christmas! Look at the work to be done!"

They pointed to the toys that had yet to be finished and packed before Christmas Eve.

"You must finish them yourselves," said Santa. "I have long ago taught you all you need to know."

"But suppose you don't come back at all! What then?"

"I'll be back and in good time, too," promised Santa.

But as he strode away with the Dumdiddy on his shoulder he couldn't help thinking: "But what will happen if I don't get back?"

Chapter 15

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

Back in the Gimme House Beanie sat in his room with his mountain of toys and he was as miserable as a boy could be.

For what good were the toys when there was no one to see? He could not brag about his perfect stamp collection, or swap any of his elegant trading cards, or win another boy's marbles by shooting with his own.

He had no one on whom he could try out his boxing gloves, no one to admire the tricks he could do with the magic set, and, of all the card games he had, not one could be played alone.

So he sat in the room with the toys and he thought, "Oh, if only, I were out of this place I'd give everything here away and I'd never be stingy or selfish again."

But he couldn't get out for there were no windows in the house and not even a door leading out. The door through which he had entered the house could be seen on the outside only. On the inside it vanished somehow into the wall so there appeared to be no door at all.

The worst thing of all was the time. It seemed that every hour in the outside world took 24 hours inside Gimme House. So when Beanie had been there really only one day and a night it appeared to him that it had been 24 days and nights. -

And six times a day he had to eat - enormous quantities of sweets and sodas and hot dogs and hamburgers until he thought surely he would die.

From time to time he could hear the other Gimme Children sobbing in their rooms but he never saw them.

"Why do you keep us here?" he cried to the dwarf. "Why don't you let us go?"

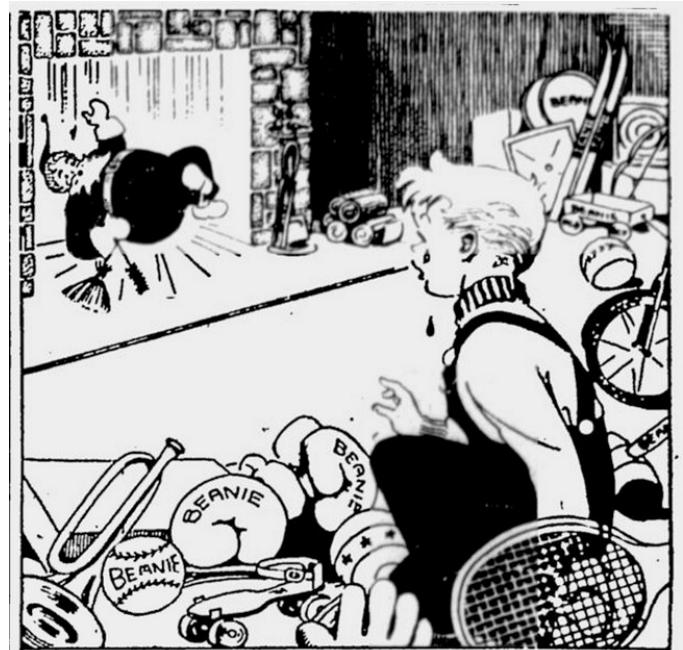
"Never!" declared the dwarf. "For you see I am the Spirit of Getting at Christmas and if I did not have children who said 'Gimme, Gimme' then I would collapse and would be no more.

"But I don't want to get anymore," said Beanie. "I am not a Gimme Boy now."

"Too late," said the dwarf. "I have you here now and I shall not let you or the other Gimme Children here escape. If you did, I would vanish forever."

Beanie went back to his room and stared at his toys. Presently he put his head in his hands and began to cry. He thought of his home and his sister and how wonderful it would be to be there getting ready for Christmas together.

In the midst of his tears, he heard a scraping and a sliding. He looked up and saw a short legged creature fall kerplunk into the fireplace at the corner of the room!



In the midst of his tears, he looked up and saw a short-legged creature fall into the fireplace

"Who are you?" gasped Beanie.

The fellow brushed the soot from his trousers and grinned. "I'm the chimney sweeper," said he. "I've climbed straight down your chimney to see if it needs cleaning."

"You mean - ?" cried Beanie. "You mean - a person could get in and out of here through the chimney?"

"Certainly," said Santa (for, of course, it was he disguised as a chimney sweeper). "Come along and I'll show you how easy it can be."

Beanie sprang to the fireplace. But suddenly his smile disappeared and he drew back.

"What's the matter?" asked Santa. "Aren't you anxious to leave?"

"Oh, yes!" cried Beanie. "But, well, you see there are other children here and they are miserable, too. I know because I have often heard them crying. I can't leave while - well you see -"

"You mean," said Santa gently. "You mean you want to help them get away, too?"

Beanie nodded eagerly. "Yes, that's it! And then the Spirit of Getting would disappear, you see?"

Santa beamed. He patted Beanie's arm. "Go quickly," he said. "See what you can do."

Chapter 16

THE LOST DUMDIDDY

Suddenly, the Gimme Dwarf knocked at Beanie's door.

"Gracious!" cried Santa, who was disguised as a chimney sweeper. "I must hide!"

"Doesn't he know you are cleaning the chimney?" asked Beanie in astonishment.

Before Santa could answer, the dwarf burst into the room.

"What's going on here? Who are you?"

"I'm a chimney sweeper," said Santa. "I was cleaning the chimney and I - well, I just dropped in."

The dwarf began to smile. "Ah," he said. "Perhaps you have the Gimmes, too, and you've come to Gimme House to live."

"Well," said Santa. "Perhaps that's so."

"I'm glad you've come," said the dwarf. "You need not spend your life sweeping chimneys. Tell me, did you ever wish for all the money in the world?"

"P - perhaps," said Santa doubtfully.

"You've come to the right place then," said the dwarf happily. "Just follow me. You come too, Beanie, for I can see you're ready to say 'gimme' too."

The dwarf led Beanie and Santa from the room. In the cuff of Santa's boot rode the little Dumdidddy and he thought to himself. "Mercy me! Has Santa, too, fallen under the power of the Gimmes?"

Down they went, single file, to the dungeon of the house, and below that to a second dungeon, and, below that, a third.

At last they came to a vault in the wall of the lowest dungeon of all. The dwarf unsealed and unlocked the door and threw it open. There, under the light of a torch, lay countless piles of gold.

"Say 'Gimme,'" cried the dwarf. "Say 'Gimme' and it's yours."

Beanie stared at the gold and then at Santa. Suddenly he threw himself on Santa. "Don't say it!" he screamed. "Don't say it! You'll be his slave forever if you do!"

"Don't worry, Beanie," said Santa gently. "There is a stronger spirit than the Spirit of Getting."

And suddenly Santa thrust out his arm and pushed the dwarf into the vault. Then he slammed shut the door and turned the lock.

"Now get the other children," he cried to Beanie. "Bring them to the chimney."



Under the light of the torches lay countless piles of gold

Beanie dashed up the stairs, falling and staggering in the dark, but never stopping until he came to the upstairs corridor where often he had heard the sound of sobbing children.

He burst through the first door. Here he found a Gimme Child - a girl, enormously fat, with eyes swollen by days of crying. Her room, like Beanie's, was packed with toys.

"Who - who are you?" she cried.

"I'm a Gimme Boy - I mean I used to be a Gimme Boy but I'm not anymore. A chimney sweeper is taking me away from here. Do you want to come, too?"

"Oh, yes! Oh, please take me, too!"

Beanie took her hand and ran to the next room. Here was a boy, pale and sick looking sitting among his mountain untouched toys.

"Take me with you," he begged when Beanie told of his plan. "I'm so sick of having everything I want!"

The children ran from room to room until they had gathered two more boys and two more girls. These were all the children of Gimme House.

They ran to Beanie's room and there was the chimney sweeper, who was really Santa Claus, waiting for them. One by one he boosted them up the chimney. But just as Beanie was about to go up, Santa clapped his hand to his boot.

"Mercy me! Something awful has happened!"

"What is it?"

"Something dropped from my hoot," moaned Santa. "It must have been left behind in the dungeon vault with the dwarf!"

“Never mind,” said Beanie. “Whatever it is we must leave it and get away from here.”

“No,” said Santa. “I cannot leave it behind.”

“Then what is it?” cried Beanie. He was ready to weep with vexation.

“Just a little thing,” said Santa. “Just a little man made of clay.

Chapter 17

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

“A man made out of clay!” exclaimed Beanie. “Surely we don’t have to go back for that!”

“I cannot leave him behind,” said Santa. He started away.

Beanie caught the chimney sweeper’s arm. He did not know the chimney sweeper was really Santa in disguise.

“I’ll go,” he cried. “If the dwarf catches you the others might not escape. If you must have the clay man I’ll go for it myself.”

He turned and ran back down all the long steps to the dungeon vault. He broke open the lock hoping against hope that the dwarf would have vanished by now.

When the door opened he heard a moaning. He dropped to his knees and felt on the floor. His fingers closed around a thing of clay and he dropped it into his pocket.

At that moment there was a scream and the Gimme Dwarf staggered to the door. Beanie dashed for the stairs. Up, up he stumbled, with the dwarf staggering after him. At last Beanie came to his room and started climbing up the chimney.

The dwarf climbed right behind him crying, “You’ll never escape me!”

As Beanie’s head came out at the top of the chimney, the dwarf caught hold of his foot and held him fast. There was ice all around the top of the chimney and Beanie could not hold on. He felt himself slipping back into the arms of the dwarf.

Suddenly the little Dumdiddy reached out of Beanie’s pocket and broke off a huge icicle that hung from the chimney top. He aimed it straight, and it fell plop down the dwarf’s back.

With an awful cry the dwarf let go of Beanie and fell in heap to the fireplace below.

Beanie pulled himself out on the roof. There was the chimney sweeper waiting for him. “Where are the others?” asked Beanie.

“I’ve sent them on their way,” said the chimney sweeper. They’re happy as can be.”

Beanie pulled out the little clay man. “I got your thing for you.” he said. “Here it is.”

Then he stared in astonishment. “Why - this is the Dumdiddy! It’s not yours at all. It belongs to my sister!” .

The chimney sweeper smiled. “Then take it to her,” he said. “Come, we must hurry, for it is Christmas Eve and I have a lot of chimneys to go through tonight!”

“Christmas Eve!” exclaimed Beanie. “Oh, I wish I were home.”

“Squeeze your eyes tight,” said the chimney sweeper softly, “and your wish will come true.”

Beanie did as he was told and sure enough, in some grand magical way he suddenly was in his bed in his own little room.

He sprang up and searched through his clothes until he found the little Dumdiddy in his back trouser pocket.

He tiptoed to his sister’s room.

‘Wake up! Wake up! Here’s your little Dumdiddy!’

His sister awoke. “Oh Beanie! Where have you been? Oh, I’m so glad you’re home. Let’s never fight again!”

“Never!” declared Beanie.

“And you’ve brought back my Dumdiddy. Now I can give it to Santa Claus. Come with me and I’ll leave it downstairs by the chimney.”

Softly they crept down the stairs. Beanie found a card and his sister tied it around the Dumdiddy’s neck and wrote on it:

“To Santa with Love.”

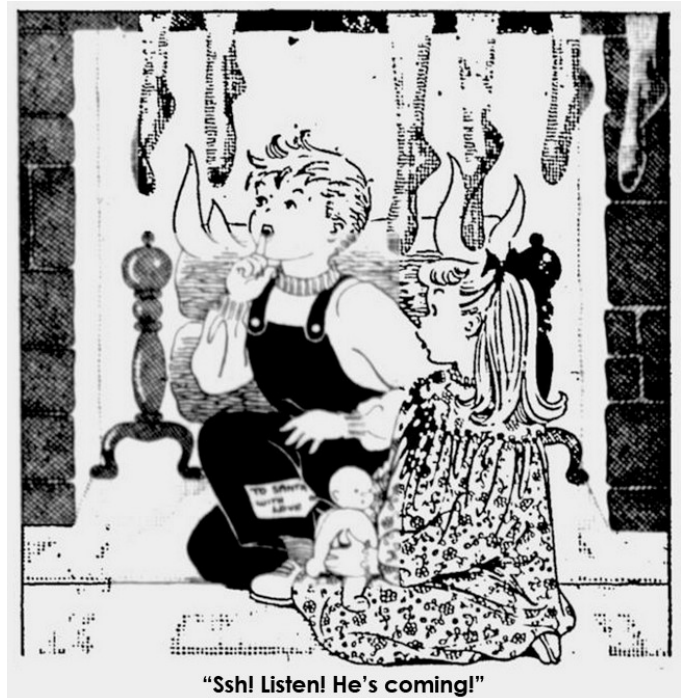
“Oh, Beanie,” she cried. “I wish you could give Santa something.”

“I am,” said Beanie and he too wrote on a card. “I’m giving him my birthday because he has none of his own.”

“Your birthday? But that’s your most favorite thing!”

“I know,” said Beanie, “That’s why I’m giving it away.”

Suddenly he held up his hand. “Shh! Listen!” He threw his arm around his sister. “He’s coming! He’s coming!”



And, sure enough, away off in the sky, they heard the tinkle of silver bells and a far-off voice calling joyfully:

“Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas to all!”

THE END

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