

CURLY AND FLOPPY TWISTYTAIL

THE FUNNY PIGGY BOYS

Chapter Thirty-One: The Twistytails' Christmas

“’Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even—an automobile,” read Curly Tail, the little piggie boy as he sat by the open fireplace in his house.

“Hold on!” cried his brother Flop Ear, “that isn’t right, Curly. It should be not a mouse stirring—I know that poem.”

“You’re right, Floppy dear,” admitted Curly Tail, “I read it wrong, but anyhow tomorrow is Christmas, and I was thinking so much about the toy automobile I want, that I guess I put one in the verse by mistake.”

“All right, then I’ll forgive you,” said Floppy, who was sitting by the fireplace, stringing red, white and blue popcorn for Baby Pinky’s rag doll’s Christmas tree. “And I’m thinking of the toy steam engine I want,” went on Flop Ear. “Oh! why doesn’t Christmas hurry up and come?”

“That’s what I want to know,” put in Pinky, as she dressed her doll in her best dress, all ready for the holiday that was soon to be there.

Oh such goings on as there were in the Twistytail house! The holly with its red berries, and its prickly leaves, had been put in the windows and on the gas chandeliers had been hung the magical mystical mistletoe, with its white berries, and whoever stood under it would have to love everybody else.

And such good smells as there were coming from the kitchen! Pumpkin pies, and sour milk pudding, and apple cake, to say nothing of cornmeal lollypops with chocolate in the middle.

Mrs. Twistytail was as busy as anything, and as for Papa Twistytail, he had stayed home from the office on purpose to help decorate the house. Flop Ear and Curly Tail and Baby Pinky had written letters to Santa Claus the night before, and put them near the chimney. And, in the morning, would you believe it? those letters were gone! Yes, siree! not a trace of them left!

“Oh, goody!” cried Baby Pinky, “Santa Claus came in his reindeer sleigh and took them. Now we’ll get just what we want.”

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Busier and busier became everything in the Twistytail house, and for that matter, there were busy times in the homes of Sammie and Susie Littletail, and Johnnie and Billy Bushytail, and the Wibblewobble duck children, and Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow, the puppy dogs. And as for Uncle Wiggily Longears, the old rabbit gentleman, who was quite rich since he found his fortune, he was so busy that he wore out two rheumatism crutches and Nurse Jane Fuzzy-Wuzzy had to gnaw him another from a broom stick, instead of a corn stalk.

Then it began to snow. Oh, how the white flakes did swirl down out of the sky, blowing here and there like feathers. They piled up in drifts, and the animal children raced through them, kicking their feet about, tossing the white flakes up in the air, falling down in the drifts and making snowballs. And the wind came down the chimney like a fairy blowing a blast on a trumpet. Oh, it was the most jolly time of all the year! Uncle Wiggily said to himself, and he ought to know, if anybody does.

“You must go to bed early this night, children,” said Mrs. Twistytail after supper. “The sooner you are asleep the sooner will it be Christmas.”

“We will,” said Curly Tail and Flop Ear and Baby Pinky, and off they trotted, after kissing their papa and mamma goodnight, their little kinky tails flopping up and down like a lady’s earrings when she runs after a trolley car.

Darker and darker it grew, and still the snowflakes kept coming down until all the ground was white and the roofs of houses, too, and the gate posts and the pump in the yard and everything—all white, ready for Christmas.

“Santa Claus’ reindeer can easily pull the sleigh tonight,” said Baby Pinky, as she looked from the window.

“Come, get back into bed!” called Curly Tail, “or Santa Claus won’t come.”

It was close to midnight, and still the snow came down. Outside the Twistytail house, just as outside of every other house where the children believe in Santa Claus, there was heard the ringing of bells. Then some one called:

“Whoa, there, reindeer!”

Then there was a noise in the chimney. Maybe it was the wind, or maybe it was a little bird crawling in to get warm. I don’t know. Anyway, there was a noise, but the piggie children never woke up.

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And then—and then—and then—in a little while it was Christmas morning. Somewhere a horn blew. Curly Tail heard it first, and, though it was scarcely daylight, he hopped out of bed.

“Wake up!” he cried, “Wake up everybody! It’s Christmas! Merry Christmas!”

“Merry Christmas!” cried Flop Ear.

“Merry Christmas!” echoed Baby Pinky, and they all rushed downstairs.

“Mercy me!” exclaimed Mrs. Twistytail, rubbing her eyes. “Christmas so soon?”

“Yes, indeed!” shouted the children. “Oh, come and see what we have!”

Well, if I were to tell you all that happened at the Twistytail house that day, and about all the presents the children got, I’m sure I would be so long finishing that you would get hungry. But oh! everything was lovely!

“I’ve got my toy steam engine!” cried Flop Ear.

“And I have my toy auto!” said his brother.

“Oh, I see my new doll carriage—and a new doll in it—and look at her little Christmas tree!” cried Baby Pinky! “Oh, how lovely everything is!”

“Merry Christmas!” cried a voice at the door, and there stood Uncle Wiggily Longears, with a lot of bundles under his paws. “Santa Claus left these at my house by mistake,” he said. “They belong here!” and there was a sled, and skates and a football, and a rocking horse, and a jumping jack, and I don’t know what all.

“Merry Christmas!” cried another voice, and there stood Grandpa Squealer, the oldest pig of them all, and in his paws he had a lot of packages, and an extra one tied to his tail.

“Santa Claus left these at my house by mistake,” he said, “they belong here.”

And there was a blackboard and some building blocks, and a toy top, and toy horns, and a printing press and a phonograph, and oh! I don’t know what all else besides.

“Look at my auto!” cried Curly Tail. “It goes like everything!” and he wound it up, and whizz! it went right at Uncle Wiggily.

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“Hold on! Stop it! Don’t let it bite me!” cried the old gentleman rabbit, and he tried to get out of the way, but he slipped on his broomstick crutch and fell down, and a piece of prickly holly fell on him and tickled him so that he sneezed.

“Look at my steam engine!” cried Flop Ear. And he started it going, and all of a sudden it darted right for Grandpa Squealer.

“Stop it! Hold it! Don’t let it get me!” cried the old gentleman pig. But the engine went right at him and ran over his toe, but it didn’t hurt much, because it was so little—I mean the engine was, not Grandpa Squealer’s toe. But he slipped, too, and fell, and some mistle-toe got tangled in his paws, but that only made everybody the more happy.

“Merry Christmas!” cried Uncle Wiggily.

“Merry Christmas!” grunted Grandpa Squealer, and Mr. and Mrs. Twistytail and the children. And from the outside the house all their animal friends shouted the happy words, and the horns blew, and the bells rang, and it was Christmas at last.

And so to one and all of you, children and big folks, I wish you a Merry Christmas, ten thousand million of them, and one more for good luck, and may you all be happy! And Uncle Wiggily says the same thing.

So now, as there are as many stories in this book as it can hold, even with pinching and squeezing, if I tell you any more they will have to be printed in another book. And the name of that will be: “Bedtime Stories; Toodle and Noodle Flat-tail.”

The stories will be about some funny little beaver boys, and the strange things they did. Uncle Wiggily will be in that book, too, and so will many more of your animal friends, not forgetting Grandpa Whacker, the oldest beaver of them all.

So, until those stories are ready, which will be next season, I’ll bid you all goodbye!