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• Hedy's Corner

Are you sure you bought the right gift? A delightful Christmas story which I heard a long time ago and which went something like this:

A week before Christmas the Smith family and the Brown family, who were all friends, had finished their meal at Brown's place and, as usual, the men liked to have a yarn, so did the women and the children wanted to play together.

Brown had been waiting for this moment and told Smith that he had bought the latest thing in toy trains for his little son. Smith wanted to know all about this train, so out it came. Both men became quite engrossed with the lifelike intricacies of this mechanical toy, they quite forgot time. What a surprise for little son—he still believes in Santa! Upstairs, in the drawing room, the wives sat together and the conversation was on the same lines as the men's: My dear, look at this absolutely lovely doll I found for my little daughter!

"Oh," answered Mrs Brown, "and won't she be just thrilled to dress her doll in all these lovely clothes." And just no time passed before Mesdames Smith and Brown were completely absorbed in debating which dress would suit the doll best and if perhaps one could tie a sash here or a little belt there! And so they went on and on. What makes it still lovelier: the little daughter still believes in Santa!

And in little daughter's bedroom she and the girl Smith discussed what they had bought for their respective parents: "I got Mum a lovely pack of cards, such lovely cards, don't you think so? And in case she plays for money I also got these dainty cash boxes. Look how cute it is!" "But," questions the little Smith girl, "your mother never plays for money?" Anyway, this point did not matter as the two girls were quickly engaged in a lively card game, with a small pile of money beside each one; ' And to think Mum still believed in Santa!

The Smith and the Brown son also sat together in the boy Brown's bedroom. Yes, they also discussed their purchases. Says boy Brown: "You can't go wrong if you buy cigarettes for Dad. What about we share one from the box now, you and I? The funniest thing, of course, is that Dad still thinks there is a Santa!

And then came Christmas Day and everyone opened their parcels. For quite some time there was a commotion as everyone also admired the other one's gifts, however, after a while things had sorted themselves out miraculously: The dads played with the train, the Mums delightedly dressing the doll, the boys smoked cigars and the girls played cards with their pocket money at stake!

The shooting season had just opened. "Did you have any luck today?"

"Oh yes, I got a bag of thirteen ducks."

"Were they wild ones?"

"I don't think so, but the farmer who owned them was wild!"