

THE NIGHT OPERATOR

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TODDLES, in the beginning, wasn't exactly a railroad man—for several reasons. First, he wasn't a man at all; second, he wasn't, strictly speaking, on the company's pay roll; third, which is apparently irrelevant, everybody said he was a bad one; and fourth—because Hawkeye nicknamed him Toddles.

Toddles had another name—Christopher Hyslop Hoogan—but Big Cloud never lay awake at nights losing any sleep over that. On the first run that Christopher Hyslop Hoogan ever made, Hawkeye looked him over for a minute, said, "Toddles," short-like—and, short-like, that settled the matter so far as the Hill Division was concerned. His name was Toddles.

Piecemeal, Toddles wouldn't convey anything to you to speak of. You'd have to see Toddles coming down the aisle of a car to get him at all—and then the chances are you'd turn around after he'd gone by and stare at him, and it would be even money that you'd call him back and fish for a dime to buy something by way of excuse. Toddles got a good deal of business that way. Toddles had a uniform and a regular run all right, but he wasn't what he passionately longed to be—a legiti-