

hooded her sweet and blooming little self ; and she listened to the lusty wind, and she put a most adorable little nose out-of-doors to sense the frosty weather, and she fluttered about the warm room in search of her mittens, and then she turned down the lamp, chucked a log in the stove, put on the dampers like a prudent householder, and, having made quite sure that the door was latched, scampered off to town in vast and twittering delight with the nipping frost, with the roistering wind, the fluffy snow, the stars, the whole of God's clean world, and with herself, too, and with the blessed Night of the year.

She was exceedingly cautious ; and she was not observed—not for the smallest flash. The thing was accomplished in mystery. Before she was aware of it—before her heart had eased its agitation—she was safely out again ; and there, in plain view, on the table, in Pale Peter's living-room behind the saloon, lay the gift of silk and fawn-skin for Pale Peter's bartender's baby—a Christmas mystery for them all to solve as best they could.

Pattie Batch peeked in at the window.

"I wonder," she mused, "if they'll *ever*—if they'll *ever in the world*—find out I done it !"

Presently Pale Peter's bartender came in. This was Charlie the Infidel. Pattie Batch rose