

Entertainment Outlook

Little Ian gets things straight with Santa

To: Mr. S. Claus, Esq., North Pole, H011010.

Dear Santa: Well, I guess it's time for my annual letter. So how are things up there at the North Pole? Cold enough for you? (HOHOHO).

How's Mrs. Claus? How are the elves? How are Donner, Blitzen, Prancer and all of the rest of the reindeer with the stupid names? (Did it never occur to you to name a reindeer something nice and straightforward, like Spot or Rex?)

As you may have guessed, Santa, I'm not in a very good mood just now.

Oh, don't worry — I'm not mad at you, or anything. It's not that I harbor any lingering grudges about the gifts you sent me last Christmas.

Heavens, last Christmas was probably the best one I've had since I was eight. That year, I asked you for a pony and you sent me the Junior Microscope Kit, the one that came complete with the pickled frog in a bottle.

And last Christmas, as you'll recall, I asked you for a Porche. Thank you for the shirts. They were very nice.

No, the plain fact is, I've been feeling guilty and miserable ever since the Christmas Season arrived, back in the third week of September.

We all knew it was the start of the Christmas Season, because everything was beginning to look so Christmassy. The leaves were starting to turn, the days were starting to get shorter, and there you were on the television in those nifty Canadian Tire commercials of yours.

I'm particularly fond of those commercials — the ones that urge us to give like Santa and save like Scrooge. What a neat concept. And presumably



Weir's View

By Ian Weir
Thomson News Service

it explains those shirts, huh?)

But the truth is that I just didn't feel brim-full of the Christmas Spirit in September. It didn't come to me in October, either, or even in November. So there's this terrible question I have to ask: what's wrong with me?

This is a particularly pressing question, Santa, considering that this is the time of year when you're making your list and checking it twice, just to find out who's naughty or nice.

And it goes without saying that people who lack Christmas Spirit aren't going to make it onto the nice list — the one that includes Mother Teresa, Fred Davis, and Mom. No, we're going to end up on the other list, along with Cyril Sneer, the Grinch, and Harold Ballard.

Oh, it's not that I'm completely incapable of feeling the Christmas Spirit. It's just that I seem to be the sort of person who's so mean-spirited that he never feels the Christmas Spirit until it's actually Christmas.

Naturally, this leaves people like me feeling terribly guilty, and morally inferior to people who start feeling the Spirit months in advance — people, say, like the owners of shopping malls

I'm not really sure why shopping mall owners are all so much more virtuous than the rest of us. But the undeniable fact is that these are people who fill right up with the Christmas Spirit almost as soon as they've finished with the Fall Clearance Sale.

So the plaintive question, Santa, is this: is there anything wretches like me can do in order to start feeling the Christmas Spirit as early as we're supposed to? Is there a way to avoid feeling shamefully un-Christmassy even when it's nearly Hallowe'en?

Could we create the proper frame of mind by resolving to do one good deed each day of the year? Or perhaps by smiling joyfully at the strangers we pass on the sidewalk? Or would you recommend buying stock in a department-store chain?

Ah, well. I'll just have to hope that you haven't written me off as the sort of hopelessly un-Nice person who doesn't deserve to get anything for Christmas at all, even a Junior Microscope Kit.

So I'd like (humbly) to place my annual gift-order. This year, Santa, forget

the Porche. I'd be quite happy with a nice new domestic model. (Perhaps that needs a bit of clarification: I'm referring to a domestic model like a Chevy, rather than a domestic model like Christie Brinkley. Although, come to think of it...)

In any case, I know that you'll take my request to heart, and — as you so unfailingly do — endeavor to fulfill my fondest hope.

As such, thank you in advance for the socks.

Your friend, etc., Little Ian.

Face in the Crowd



Take a close look; you may be a winner. If the face indicated by the arrow is yours, you're the lucky winner of a pair of Georgetown Cinemas courtesy passes. Call us at 877-2201 or 877-8822 or drop in at The Herald, 45 Guelph St., Georgetown to claim your prize. If you're not a winner this week, keep on looking. Next week it may be your turn to win.

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Certain Scenes May Offend Some

OUR LANGUAGE

by Jeffrey McQuain

Use colossal to describe something huge or gigantic. Don't lose out on this spelling clue: the middle of colossal is loss.

Fritter wastes or spends bit by bit. It's almost always followed by away, a tip you shouldn't fritter.

Q. What do people mean by the expression start from scratch? What's scratch?

A. I haven't been itching to answer

this query, because the origin of the expression is uncertain. The likeliest explanation is found in Robert L. Chapman's New Dictionary of American Slang, which points to scratch line. That's the line for starting a race, a line often scratched in dirt. Start from scratch means "begin" or "build from the ground up."

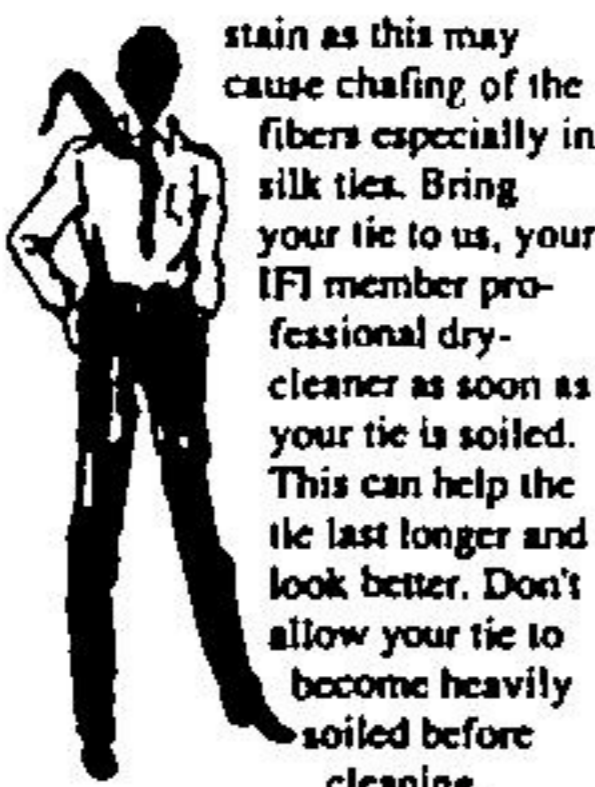
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DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS '3.95 & Up

fabric forum
Prepared by the International Fabricare Institute (IFI), the association of professional drycleaners & laundrers

Before You Tie One On...

A tie is an essential accessory to a man's wardrobe. And with quality ties costing \$25.00 and more, getting a long life from your tie is very important. Most ties are cut on the bias of the fabric, or against the grain. This makes them susceptible to distortion from pulling and stretching. To prevent distortion, knot the tie gently and always remove the knot when you take off the tie. Store your ties hanging straight.

If you spill something on a tie, blot it gently. Never rub a



stain as this may cause chafing of the fibers especially in silk ties. Bring your tie to us, your IFI member professional dry-cleaner as soon as your tie is soiled. This can help the tie last longer and look better. Don't allow your tie to become heavily soiled before cleaning.

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