

My new Christmas shopping plan didn't go over that well

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Not only would that make it less stressful, because I wasn't spending any money, but I'd come up with all kinds of great ideas.

And this is about a month and 10 days before I usually get started.

This particular mall already has a Santa display set up, although it wasn't open for business yet.

I stopped and looked at it a bit to get myself in the mood.

Then I took a deep breath and started on my way. There were two big department stores I was saving for last, so the first place I came to was an art boutique. I'm not buying anybody a painting, unless you know what they want for sure, because it's a personal taste item.

But, it's a fun store to look in.

There were several paintings from an artist that I thought were fascinating.

He painted modern scenes and then transposed ghost images of people in the same scene, but from maybe 100 years ago.

I forget the artist's name, but I did find out that he grew up close to that town and that he then moved to Orangeville.

That wasn't getting me anywhere, so I moved on. I came to a bulk food store, and couldn't resist checking the candy bins.

They had my favourites, which I carefully sifted into bags in order to get the colours I liked best. That was fun, but unproductive.

It was time to get down to business, so I went to a gift shop, where I spotted a little girl in a Tie Domi jersey standing with her mother, looking at some Maple Leaf clocks in a display that led out of the store.

They were kind of tacky, but I thought the little girl looking at them was cute.

But, then she said, and I'm not kidding, "I'd like to take one of those and smash it all over the place."

"You're not allowed to touch them," replied her mother calmly, as I gasped to keep from choking.

That was enough shopping for me, my head was already hurting. I got a newspaper and sat in the food court for the next hour until it was time to leave for the game.

I used the pen to do the crossword, but never wrote anything on the paper I brought.

I'm not giving up on my early shopping, though. My next plan is to go through catalogues, page by page, and write down ideas.

If all else fails, and it surely will, everybody is getting a Toronto Maple Leaf clock.

If they want to "smash it all over the place," that's fine with me.

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