

# The Real McClaus - - A Christmas Evening sketch in a department store

**By Jim Irving**  
Staff writer

SCENE — Busy downtown department store the night before Christmas. The manager, an officious and serious man, has just called to the department store Santa, who has been there for the past week.

So, ah, you'll be going back to the North Pole, then? Will it take long?  
SANTA — Not if the lights are right, it shouldn't.  
MANAGER — The lights?  
SANTA — Oh, I'm sorry,

the Northern Lights . . . the Aurora Borealis. If I catch them at just the right time, bouncing their beams off at the right angles, I'll be there in nothing flat. We have a saying up north: "No road, lane, sky or trellis has quite

the speed of the Borealis!"  
MANAGER — Ah, yes, heh, heh. Well, as I said, thanks again for everything. And if you're around this way again next year, drop in and see us.  
SANTA — Oh, I'll be

around, don't worry about that.  
MANAGER — Yes, I'm sure.  
SANTA — I haven't missed yet. (Reflectively). Not for several hundred years now. I remember

once, though, I came very close. It was in Heidelberg  
MANAGER — If you don't mind, sir, Christmas Eve or no, I think we've carried out this little farce long enough. Now, I believe you received

your own little Christmas present from Santa this afternoon, so if you'll just hand in your Santa suit to the display department, you may leave.  
SANTA — Thank you, sir. But this suit is my own. Why

there's not another one like it anywhere. Even your display department, with all its fine . . .  
MANAGER — Mr. Claus, or whatever your name is. This has gone quite far enough. Now it's the custom

of this store to supply the Santa suit every year to whatever old cod — to, ah, to whoever is playing the role of Santa. And whoever that is, is only too happy to not have to worry about having  
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MANAGER — Oh, Santa (Santa walks over). We won't be needing you anymore after tonight, you know. We're closing at 5:00, seeing it's Christmas Eve.  
SANTA — Yes, I realize that, sir.

MANAGER — I wish we could keep you longer, but even Christmas must end sometime.

SANTA — Well, nothing lasts, sir.

MANAGER — How true . . . uh, ah, what do you plan to do now?

SANTA — I have some calls to make and then I'll be heading up home and take it easy for awhile.

MANAGER — Where's "up home"? Up north? Heh, heh.

SANTA — Yes, sir.

MANAGER — Oh, up Timmins way?

SANTA — A little farther than that.

MANAGER — Well, we've enjoyed having you. Will you be back next year?

SANTA — That depends.

MANAGER — Of course, of course, you may be doing something else by then.

SANTA — Oh, no. If I'll be doing anything, it will be this kind of work. I don't really know anything else.

MANAGER — A specialist, eh? (Chuckles). But what did you do before?

SANTA — I don't understand, sir.

MANAGER — I mean, what did you do before you became a Santa Claus?

SANTA — Why, I've always been doing this kind of work, sir. It's a family tradition.

MANAGER — Well, that's nice. And I guess it really is a fulltime job, isn't it?

SANTA — It certainly is, sir. That is, if you want to make it one.

MANAGER — Well, I don't suppose it's a job that just anyone could handle.

SANTA — Sometimes I think it is, when we're just doing routine work. You know, working on production and looking in on the kiddies every now and then. That's all fairly simple. It's really this time of year, though, when it moves out of the ordinary. This is when the real work starts.

MANAGER — (warily) — How . . . how do you mean?

SANTA — People are so skeptical. They buy up every kind of present they can get their hands on, but they really don't believe in what they're doing. They give, so they can receive, so to speak. But they don't have any faith, at all. After a certain age, they don't really believe in me, you know.

MANAGER — (Somewhat nervously) — Well, I, ah, I mean, what do you expect, ah . . . ?

SANTA — I bet you don't even believe in me. You probably think I'm just some fellow from the Old Folk's Home trying to make a Christmas buck.

MANAGER — Well, I must admit, I . . .

SANTA — You know people should believe just a bit more in things without having the proof right there in black and white.

MANAGER — Red and white, in your case. (Chuckles at his joke).

SANTA — Yes, I guess that's how you should see me. And not just at Christmas; all year-round, really.

MANAGER — (Getting impatient). — Really, now, hasn't this gone far enough? After all, there's a limit to this sort of thing?

SANTA — I suppose so, sir. But this one night, anyway, is it really that hard to fall in with the spirit of the thing?

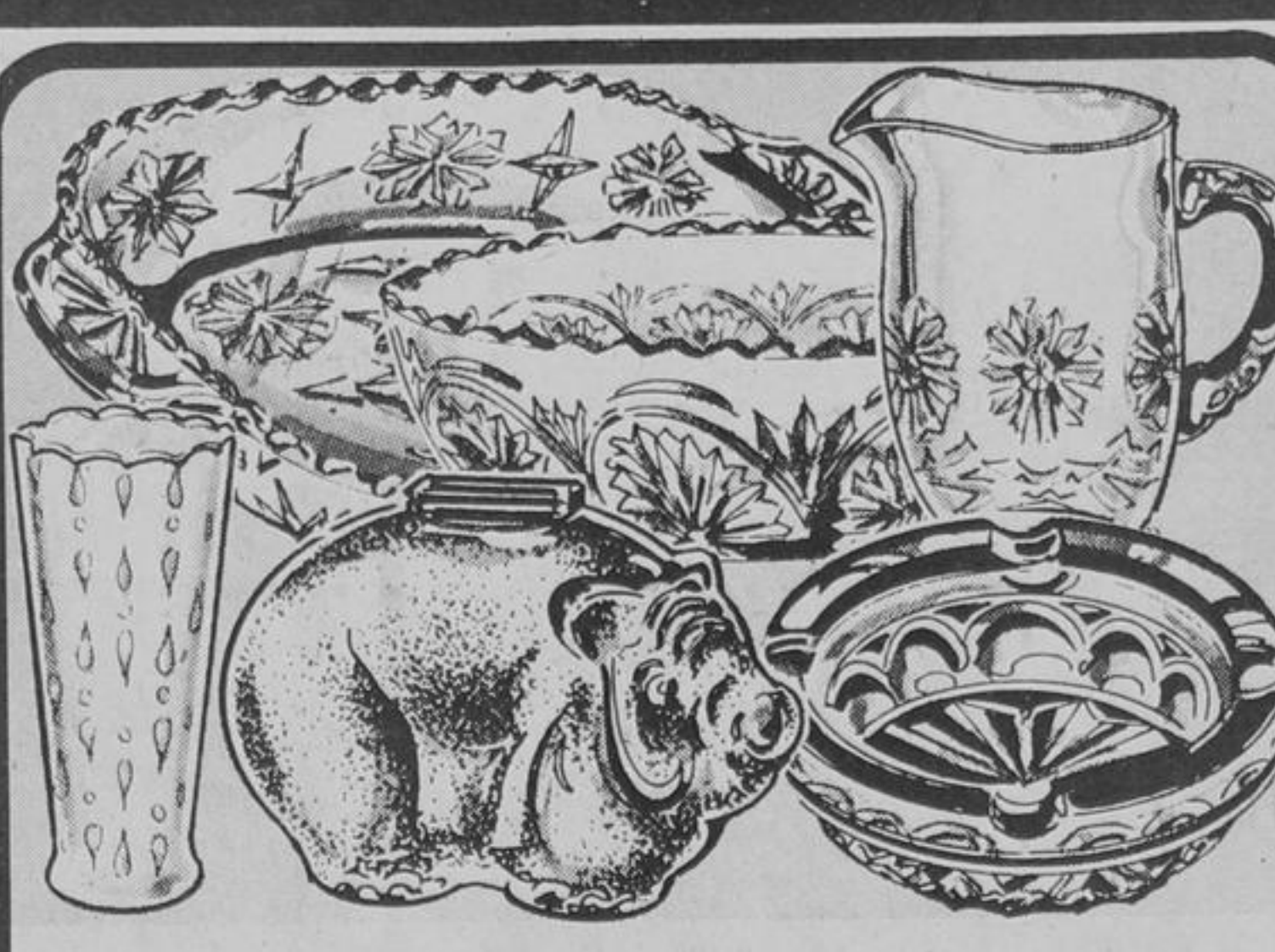
MANAGER — (Believed now) — Well, I think I have as good a sense of humor as the next man, but I don't see why . . .

SANTA — It is Christmas Eve, sir . . . Indulge an old man this one time.

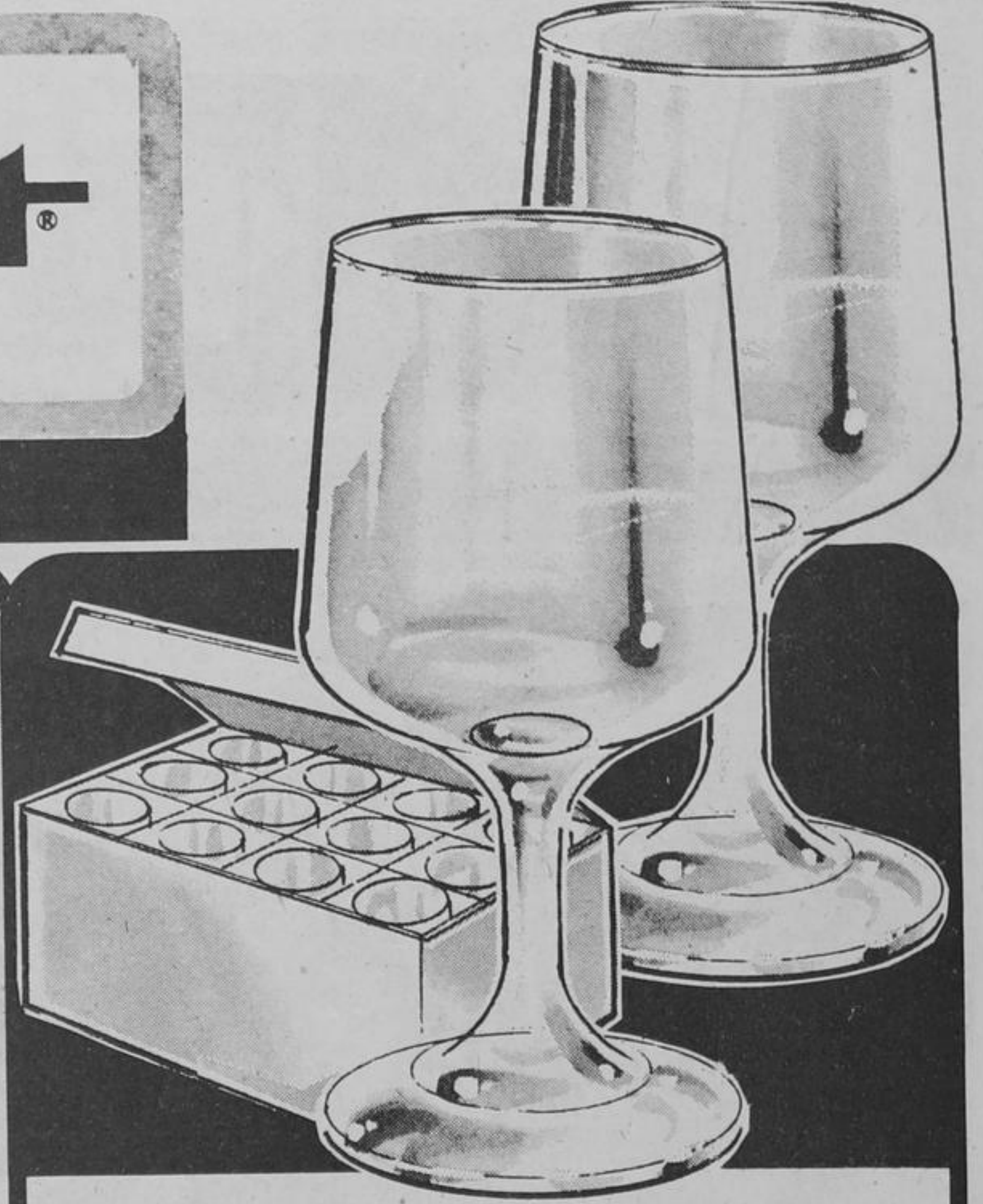
MANAGER — Indulge? Oh, ah, yes, yes, of course. Heh, Heh. Certainly . . . ah, Santa. As I say, I have as good a sense of humor as the next man . . .



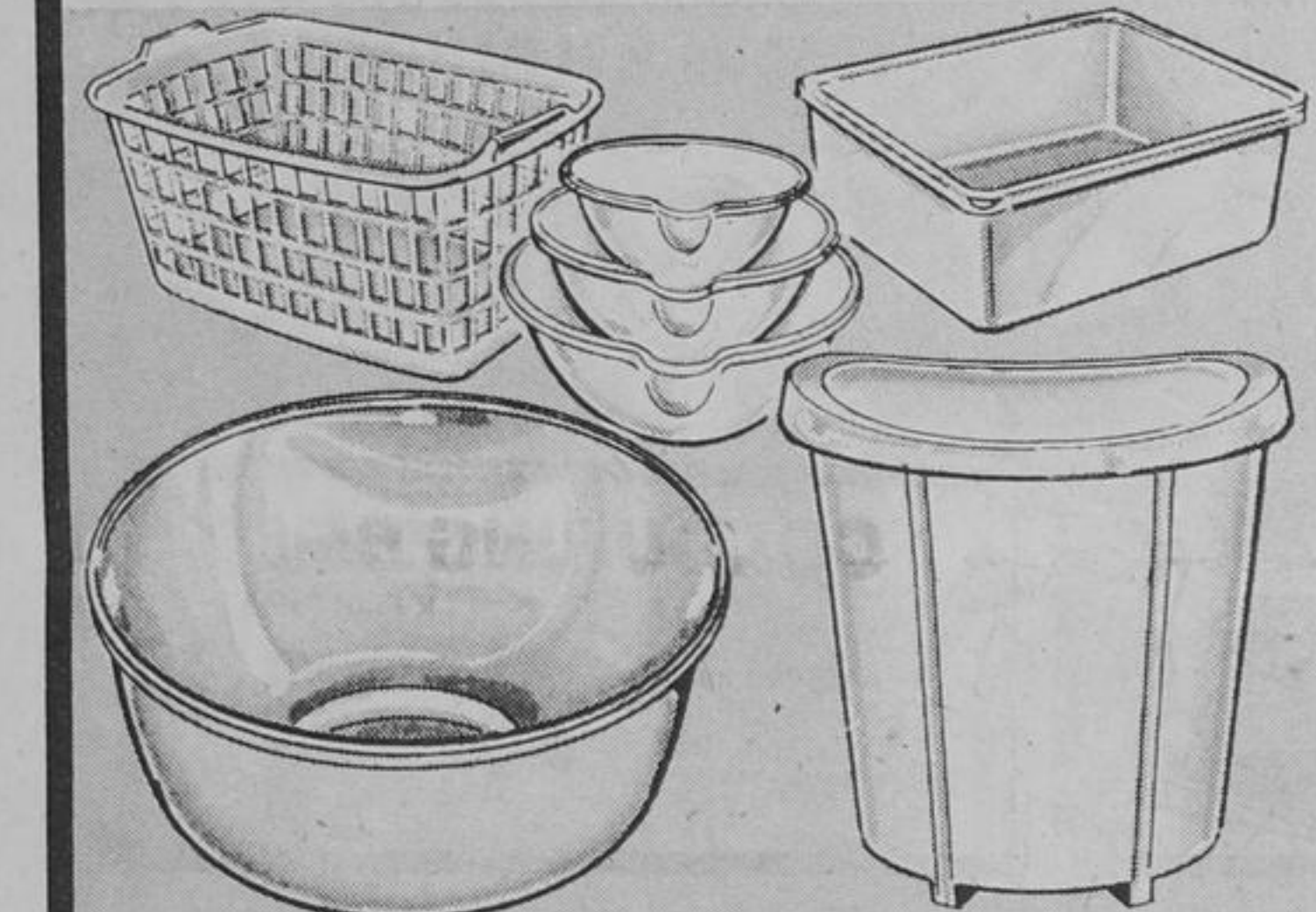
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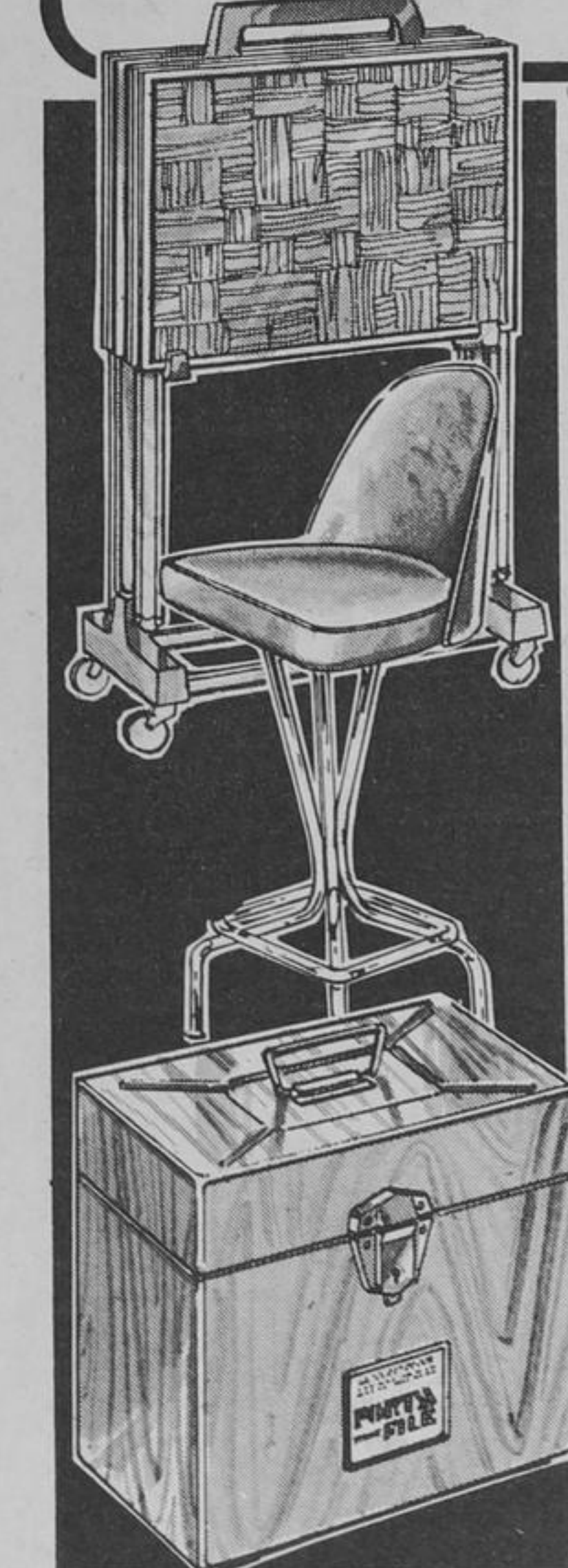
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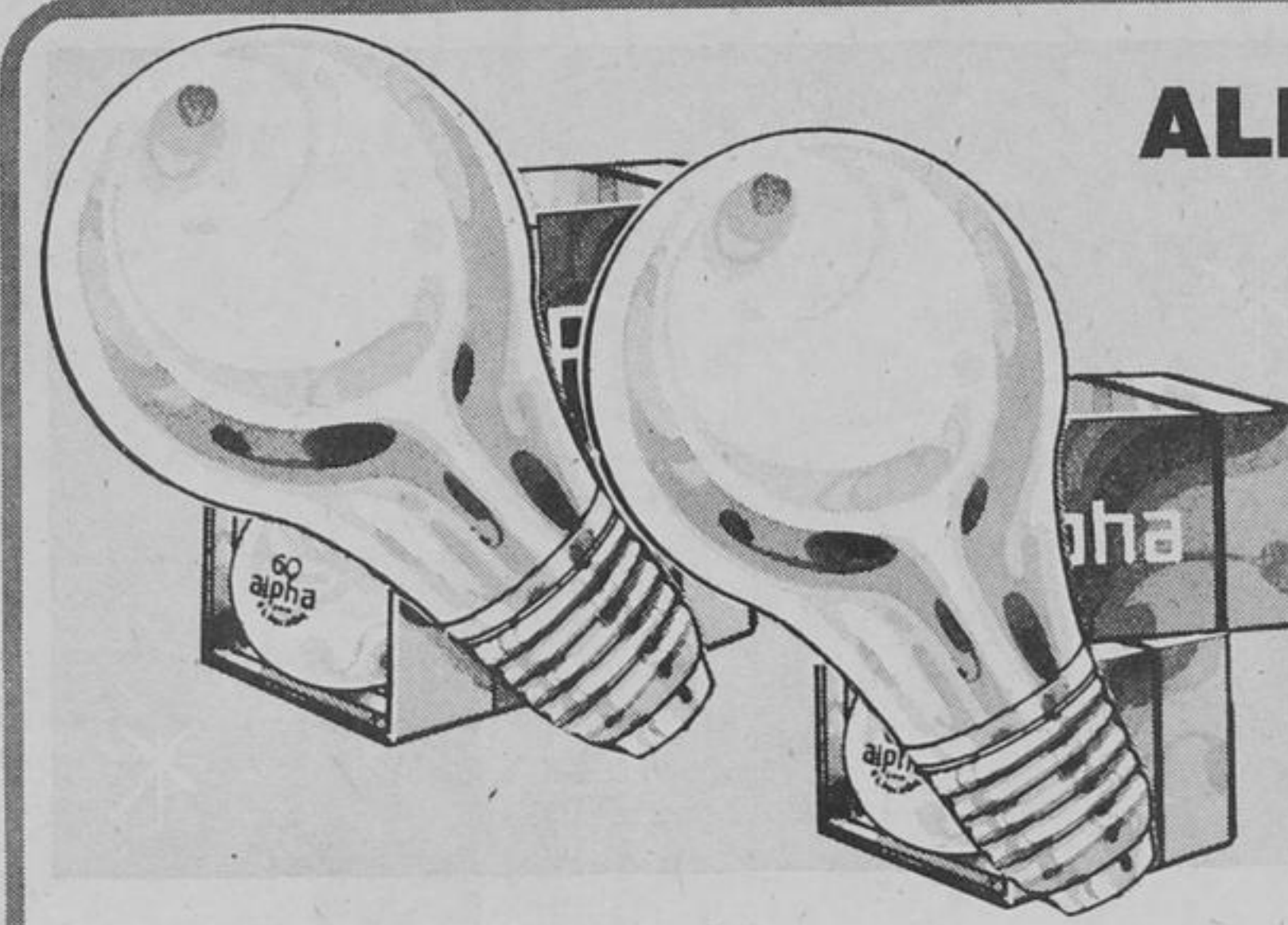
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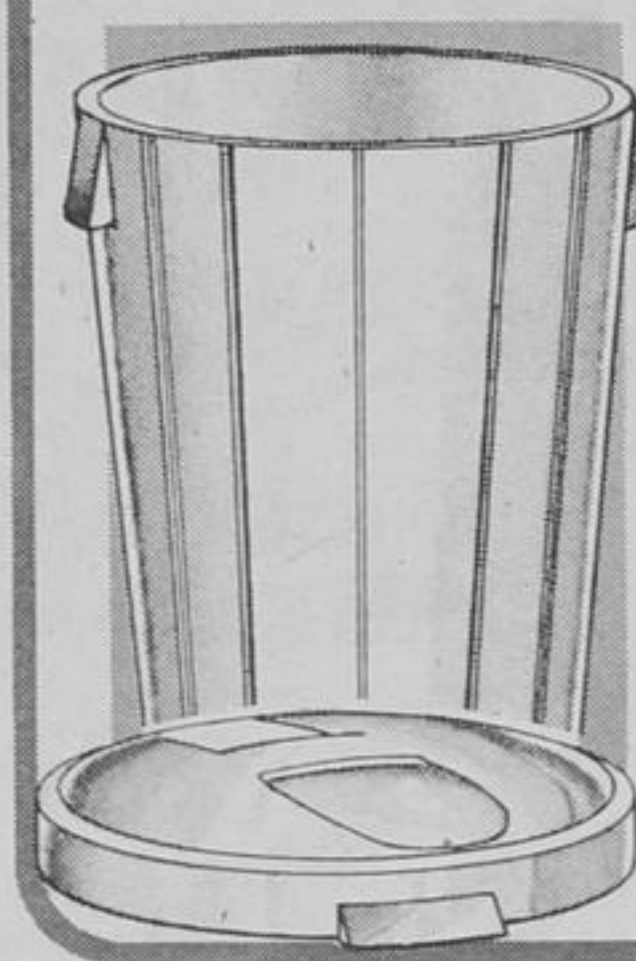
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