

CHRISTMAS STORY

Search for the King

part two

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Illustration by
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If you remember, the evil wizard Graxfazzel had cast a spell on the King, making him disappear and sending the Queen and her children Tina and Jason into the streets as common people.

"Where am I?" asked the puzzled Queen, who didn't even remember who she was.

Then her children began to cry from the cold and hunger.

"I know you're my children and I love you. Just wait, I'll get you some food."

She sold the jewels she was wearing and asked the merchant to hire her to work around his store. And from that day on she worked as hard or harder than anyone in the kingdom.

The lonely and confused Knight found he could not work for the new king, Graxfazzel.

"I know I owe loyalty to a king, but not this evil man," he said as he left the castle.

For days he wandered around, looking for his King and Queen but the townsfolk, who couldn't remember even that much, said he was crazy and wouldn't help him.

Finally, one day when he was hungry, lonely and tired, the Knight fell from his horse when it was startled and he fell in front of Tina and little Jason.

"Mother, come quick!" cried Tina as she saw the poor man fall from his horse.

She and Jason ran to his side and made sure he wasn't hurt and then helped their mother to bring the stranger inside.

Now, their home had four people who couldn't remember who they were.

Oh what a mess their lives had become.

Their mother worked very hard to support her children — to buy them nice clothes and to put good food on the table. She even earned enough money so the children could have toys.

But all this meant their mother had to work very hard. For as long as they could remember, their mother was sad because she was doing all this, almost alone.

The strange Knight helped and was almost like a brother to the children — most of the time. Sometimes, when they misbehaved, as even the best of children do, he growled at them to bring them back into line.

One day, when they were troubled over their mother's sadness, Jason said, "Let's do something special for her for the Christmas — something that will make her smile again."

But time passed and Christmas came closer and closer.

"The snow's almost down to the valleys!" Tina said one day.

"If we're going to get mom a gift, we'd better come up with an idea pretty soon!"

But the harder they tried, the more difficult it was to think of an idea because Graxfazzel's curse was still working.

"If we join hands while we say our goodnight prayers, and make a special one, maybe our prayers will be answered," Jason said one night.

They tried that.

Quite by accident, at the same time Graxfazzel called upon the evil spirits to help him too.

Even though the evil magician had made himself king, that didn't mean he was a good one. The people hated him and he was so afraid somebody would take the kingdom away from him, just as he'd stolen it.

Well, because the wishes were made at the same time, the replies got stuck together, as the good forces and the evil forces answered together.

An both sides heard both answers.

Graxfazzel was told he would have to conquer the spirit of the King and the children were told that their father and mother were the deposed King and Queen.

Tina and Jason were also told that the spirit of the King would return some day, but he wouldn't look the same.

All three — Graxfazzel in the castle and the children in their home — asked the same question: "How will we know the King?"

For all three the answer was the same: "You will know him by those who love him."

What kind of answer was that? (To be continued)



The Knight, tired from his search for those to whom he owed loyalty, falls from his horse.

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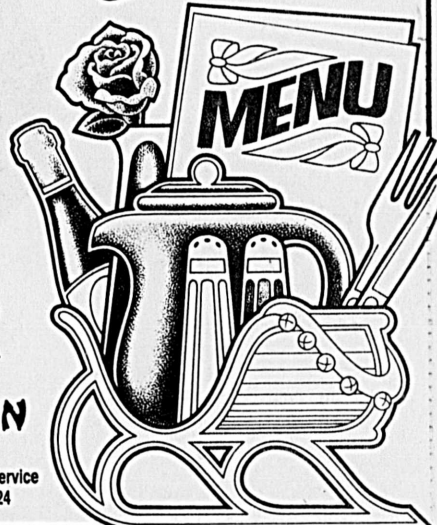
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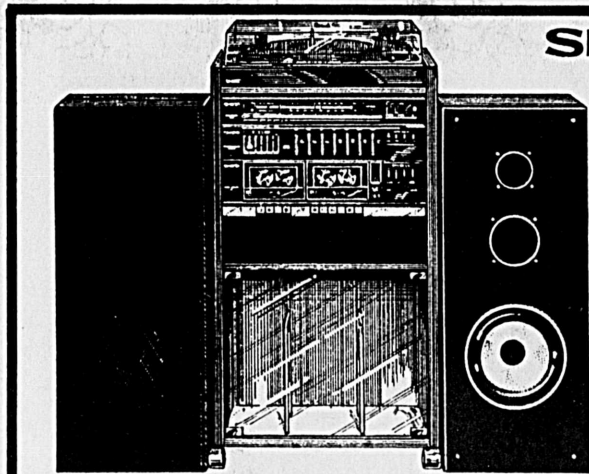
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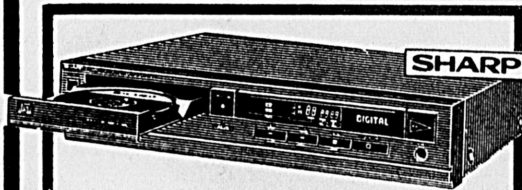
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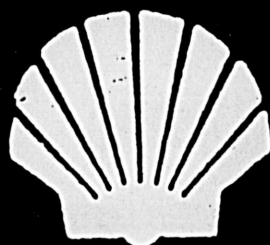


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