

THE PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU  
ELMA, WASHINGTON

NO. 309

CHRISTMAS READINGS  
CHRISTMAS GOOD WILL AT THE PICTURE SHOW

Oh, John, just look at all the decorations. Aren't they beautiful? I think Christmas is simply the most wonderful time in all the year. Everybody so gay and merry. So much happiness and good will toward men everywhere you go. (Turns to crowd behind) Don't crowd please, there is room for all.

Why, John, you say you wish there wasn't so much good will and a little more hard cash? I'm ashamed of you. Of course, though, we shall need plenty of money for Christmas shopping tomorrow.

Don't the evergreens smell nice? Just look at the wonderful big Christmas Star. Oh I know we are going to love the picture tonight. Ever since I've heard of the play, "Good Will Toward Men" was coming I made up my mind to see it before we did our Christmas shopping. (To man in front) I'd thank you sir, if you'd take your heavy feet off mine -- not yours? Well, whose are they then? Someone is tramping on my feet.

John, can't we crowd in ahead of these people a bit? We'll never get a decent seat at this rate. Seems like everybody is out tonight. I should think they'd stay home and work on their Christmas presents for a change.....

No, of course mine aren't done. You know how busy I've been and then we just had to see this picture. I knew it would give me ideas for the presents I want to purchase tomorrow. Let's see. There's Aunt Ella. She always sends me some dreadful thing like a bath towel or a cake of soap. And I always buy her something I want myself. Oh John, I have a wonderful idea. I'll send Aunt Ella a box of corn removers. I can't think of anything I need more at this very minute. Oh dear, I wish I had a seat. I can think so much better sitting down.

Crowd closer, John. Don't let that couple get ahead of you. (uses elbow freely) The idea. Such nerve I never saw. I guess they won't try to get my place again very soon.

At last. The usher is beckoning us to come. I do hope he has a seat somewhere near the center. I can't feel very much good will toward men unless I can see them too. (taking seat) Well, these are splendid seats, aren't they? I'm going to take off my coat and enjoy myself. (turning to lady behind) What? You say my coat hit your eye? Why did you lean so close then? You could see I'm taking off my coat, couldn't you? Some people are always complaining about the least little thing. (looks at screen) Oh dear, I wish they'd hurry these news reels. Who wants to see homes burning and ships wrecked and the scene of some gangster murder? Fine things to put on in the Christmas spirit, I'd say. Heavens, John, someone started to rattle a candy bag. Can't people ever watch a show without rattling papers all the time? Fine consideration for other folk's feelings they have. Just like pigs, stuffing themselves continually. Suppose it's some big fat person who's already lopping over his chair onto the person beside him. (turns to look).

Yes, I thought so. Two hundred pounds at least and a bag as big as your head. John, we'll never enjoy the show here one minute. Let's move. I see two seats on the side over there. (Moves) Hurry, John, there's a couple heading toward those seats. (to couple in aisle) Oh, did I step on your foot? Well, I can't be expected to see everything in the dark. There. We foiled them, didn't we? They can sit near the candy rattlers instead of us. (looks at picture) What a beautiful scene, John. So quiet, so pleasing, so peaceful. I can just fairly feel goodwill oozing from every pore.

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John, did you hear that? GUM cracking and snapping right behind us. Anything sets my nerves on edge is gum cracking crackers. Pity they can't remember this is Christmas and not the 4th of July. Why will people give their children gum at a picture show? I think I'll HAVE to speak to them. I can't hear a thing that's being said. (turns) Saints be praised. They are just going to leave. Now maybe I can hear this scene at least. (watches a second) Are those your parcels ma'am? They have been falling over me for the last half hour. Why will some folks insist on trying to bring an entire store along with them to a picture show. Sorry, you say?...Well, you should be. Everybody is looking at me as if all this noise is my fault. Just as if I could help your old papers rattling and rolling around.

(Watches scene) Is that the three wise men, John? How funny they look. Wouldn't their clothes be a scream today on the streets? Imagine men dressed in women's clothes. Good jobs for the dress makers though. What did you say, madam? You can't hear a thing for my talking? Well, I never! I only whispered a few words to John. The very idea of your listening. I think you are very impudent, ma'am. (claps hands to ears) John, what in the world are those people popping behind us? Pop Corn! Ye gods. I thought a whole dynamite factory had exploded. I can see we'll never hear a word of this picture. There's two seats over there. Let's move. (they move)

At last, dear, we've found some decent seats. Isn't that manger too cute? I'm afraid, though, of those big horny cows. What if they bellow? You needn't laugh. It sounds to me as if they bellow anyway. John, your handkerchief quick. Do you smell that horrible odor of onions? Or is it garlic? Isn't it terrible to eat such suffocating stuff and air them on the public? It makes me fairly sick to my stomach.

(Turning aside) What? You hope they do make me sick so I'll quit talking? ....John, are you going to allow me to be insulted like this? I'm going home this minute. To think I expected to find good will toward men in this place! I'm going to wear a gas mask and stuff my ears with cotton when I come again. (They leave)

Well, of all things. John, did you hear what that man said when we left? He - he said..he hoped I wouldn't forget a muzzle for my tongue likewise. The wretch.