

# I Saw Mommy Killing Santa Claus

It's Christmas time again and the toy department at Lacy's is selling more merchandise than its chief competitor, Tidewater's Toys. The main reason for this explosion of sales is Elmer Ellsworth, Lacy's holiday Santa Claus. Before Elmer was hired for last year's Christmas season, Lacy's toy receipts were so bad that the store was ready to stop selling toys altogether. Now, business is booming because Elmer makes Santa come alive to young and old alike.

In a daily holiday ritual, kids hug Santa and mothers give him kisses as photos are taken for Christmas albums. But, in the midst of parents and children lined up to tell the jolly old elf all about their wish lists, Elmer stands up, utters a faint "ho, ho, ho," and falls to the floor in front of his chair. He is dead. Someone has done in the department store Santa before he could grant everyone's wishes.

## The suspects ...

### **Yul Tidewater**

The owner of Tidewater's Toys. Elmer used to work for Yul until they had an argument and Elmer took his talents to Lacy's. Tidewater's sales immediately took a dip.

### **Mary Mostly**

Christmas tree lot owner and the mother of five. Last year, Elmer promised that Santa would bring her brood everything they asked for. When the presents didn't materialize, Mary's Christmas turned chilly.

### **Kip Ringle**

The former Santa at Lacy's. When Kip was replaced last year by Elmer, Kip got a job as the Santa at Kimble's Department Store, located directly across the street.

### **Ginger Redman**

Seamstress and costume maker. She supplies all of the stores in the area with Christmas costumes for Santa and his elves.

### **Mick Flashburg**

The photographer at Lacy's. During the Christmas season, he takes photos of children sitting with Santa and sells the prints to proud parents.

### **Holly Hall**

Elmer's high school sweetheart. He left her standing at the altar on Christmas Eve many years ago. She's never forgotten how he destroyed the holiday season for her.