

A Daisy Christmas
By M.D. Smith

It was Christmas 1947 and I had just turned seven years old. I already owned and loved my Daisy Red Ryder air rifle that shot .177 caliber BBs. I had asked Santa for a



Daisy #118 BB Pistol that shot even smaller .12 caliber lead BBs. The blue steel, fixed sight model was made from 1937 to 1949 except for the war years. It was the best present I got that morning along with several tubes full of the tiny BBs. My father and I had shot it in the house into paper targets held by a cardboard box with an opening and a rubber catch backup inside. It didn't have much power and I could shoot it into my blue jeans covered leg and barely feel the sting (the air rifles would sting a lot).

Well, it was Christmas evening and my parents had left to attend a party at their friend's house, leaving the maid, Mariah, in charge of me. She was very easy going and almost anything I did wrong or otherwise, she'd always say, "Well, ain't he cute?" She was in the kitchen and I was in the living room among all the Christmas of the day, climbing under the sofa on my belly, pretending I was on a war mission behind enemy lines. But there was nothing to shoot that would react to the tiny BBs until I spied the Christmas tree with about 150 glass ball ornaments on it of every size and color. So, just to see IF it would break one, I fired off a .12 caliber round from my trusty pistol. A loud POP followed by shattering of glass rewarded my marksmanship on the first shot. Wow! What a GREAT target that was. Now, I knew my parents would not like me doing that, but I also knew I could clean up the little bit of glass, remove the hook and cap from the tree, and they'd never miss that ornament. Then, I thought, well they'd

never miss two, so another bit the dust. It was like trying to stop eating just one potato chip, so another and another exploded and came tinkling down. When I finally came to my senses, over half of the ornaments were gone, and you definitely could tell it. I cleaned up best I could, but I couldn't get inside the tree and behind it in the corner. Then my parents came home, took one look at the tree and knew exactly what had happened. Mariah entered the room and said, "Well, ain't he cute?" That didn't save me.

I got a hard spanking on the rear end, but the worst punishment was that I didn't see my trusty BB pistol for six months, almost a lifetime in the life of a kid. Lesson learned.

