



Christmas Letters

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*On a frosty, freezing winter night, a little boy in blue flannel footed pajamas
Kneels precariously upon a wobbling wooden chair.
He boosts himself up just enough to rest his bony elbows upon the cold metal tabletop,
Reaches for his favorite color crayon and watches it wander over double lined paper.
Within moments, brightly colored crumpled paper lies in wadded balls around him as
He struggles to find the proper words, to say it just the right way.
The simple salutation remains the same each time, Dear Santa. . . .
He promises to be a good boy, to listen to Mom and Dad, pledges to never fight with his brothers.
With his crayon now moving confidently, he puts the finishing touch on his thoughtful letter.
He asks for new toys, a bat and a ball, a football, and hopefully, a kitten.
He folds it swiftly, seals it with tape, and places it on a branch of the brilliant tree, where it waits for Santa. . . .
The smell of mother's traditional Christmas Eve meal permeates the air and
Summons him and his family to their holiday celebration.*

*Years later and thousands of miles away, hundreds of stars twinkle brightly in a blackened sky.
The glow of the crescent moon bathes the house of the now grown boy,
Spotlighting the Christmas lights on a home that has been transformed into a winter wonderland.
The fireplace glows comfortingly as his children kneel at the brick hearth composing their notes to Santa.
Crumpled papers of promise once again mingle with shreds of colorful wrappings as
The little children finally find the right words and tape their carefully crafted letters to the sturdy mantle.
With feet barely touching the ground, they race up the staircase, eager for the morn.
Snuggled beneath their holiday blankets, one last Christmas story is read and
The hopes and wishes spinning merrily in their head finally still as their bright eyes blink slowly and they fade off to sleep.
Father slowly descends the stairs, drinks Santa's milk, eats the Christmas cookies and reads their letters.
He takes a red felt pen, disguises his penmanship, and writes the words of wisdom passed down from his father.
He thanks them for being good and urges them to continue to grow righteous and strong and to live the spirit of Christmas every day.
Finally, he promises them that the comfort of family will always be there to keep them warm and safe.*

*Twenty years later, the church choir's angelic voices resonate throughout the colonial church.
Through cracks of light in the stained glass windows, a flurry of colorful snowflakes cascade slowly
From the sky and rest gently upon the hardened ground.
Lifelong friends and neighbors stand shoulder to shoulder as they join together to pray;
Their faith, love and hope insulate them from the chill of the wintry night.
As the church empties quickly, the aging grandparents slowly leave the traditional Christmas Eve Mass.
Christmas Carols fade in the moonlight; the only sound is the elderly couple's footsteps leaving their imprint in the freshly fallen snow.
Arm in arm, they stroll silently into the night, pausing to rest briefly on a frozen stone bench.
As they watch young children scramble from the church, they remember their boys frolicking in their flannel footed pajamas.
Stirred by the memory, he reaches reverently into his coat pocket for a recently received Christmas letter.
His now middle-aged son thanks him for being his model, his mentor, his father, and his friend.
The loving letter ends with a simple question. . . ."Do you know how much I will miss you when you are gone?"
His father smiles, warmed by the knowledge that his lessons are well received and his legacy of love and family will live on forever.*

*May this Christmas season fill our souls with a never-ending spirit of faith, love and hope as
We pause to thank and appreciate our family and friends.
May we always respect and treasure the memories of those who have gone before us,
Who have left us their lessons, imprinted our souls, and live in us forever.*