

*A Picture
of the Past*



A Picture of the Past

The icy roads challenged the little boy and his grandfather as they walked hands clasped
Delicately maneuvering through the tire tracks packed firmly in the freshly fallen snow.

Brightly decorated wooden houses framed the frosty road as
Tired trees sagged serenely beneath the overwhelming weight of crystal icicles.
Their frozen, lanky branches beckoned the pair homeward along the icy path.
Twinkling white stars punctuated the blackened sky as the silver moon illuminated
Their way across the train tracks and down the long driveway
To their small white house in a little colonial town.

Leaving the bitter cold of the wintry night, the sweet smell of Christmas cookies greeted them as
They removed their frozen gloves and entered the welcoming warmth of their home.
Yuletide carols played softly on the record player, their scratches crackled like a warm winter fire.
A Lionel train circled a Christmas Village slowly on a timeless, endless journey.
Its whitened puffs of smoke dissipated swiftly as its shrill whistle summoned
The young parents to prepare their four boys for the annual Christmas photograph.
Along a small stairway they assembled; their youth and innocence shined clearly in their faces.
An uncertain future awaited them, but their foundation of family was secure.

Moments later, the home began to hum as uncles and aunts
Arrived to express their love and respectfully share the traditions of Christmas with their father.
At the holiday table they ritually chose the same seats that were theirs as children.
Young cousins quickly devoured dinner and rushed rowdily from the crowded table,
Their youthful excitement and eager anticipation ignited the room.
Hours later, Midnight Mass beckoned all of them to rest, reflect, and honor Him.
As eight sleepy eyes gazed up at the stained glass windows surrounding the Christmas Altar,
The overflowing congregation provided them with peace, security, and the comfort of faith.

As the years swiftly passed, the young boys became men and scattered across the country.
Parents became grandparents, brothers became parents and
Their blossoming young families forged their own Christmas memories.
And now, aging men gather with their grown children around their colorful Christmas tables to
Listen and to reminisce, sharing the many stories and precious parables of the past.
The lessons and guidance once so generously given to them
Are now proudly passed on to new generations, reinforcing
The love, respect and continued traditions of family.

With the holiday season upon us, a multitude of memories are stirred by
An ornament from a friend, a picture from the past, a nativity set treasured through the years.
Although the people in our daily lives may change with time, we are continually drawn home
By the memories of a walk in the wintry wind with a beloved grandfather,
By the smell of a loving mother's Christmas cookies,
By the careful craftsmanship of a proud father's train village,
And by the tremendous excitement and hopeful anticipation of four young boys
Dreaming of what they could become....

May this Christmas season bring you the warmth of memories of your past.
May you be stirred by the promise of the future and
Challenged to create your own tradition of love, hope, and faith.