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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Poor Santa Claus

Judd Mortimer Lewis

I have always had a notion I wished I was Santa Claus.

I have always had a notion I would like
to be, because it would be such fun a-goin' down the
chimneys all around, tiptoein' into bedrooms, stoppin' at each
little sound, with my ears pricked up to listen for the
little fellers' tread, peekin' out between the curtains, peekin'
into each wee bed, harkin' to the talk of daytimes of each
eager little tyke, an' then, Christmas, fetchin' to 'em all the
pretty things they like.

I have always had a notion I would like to
get his mail, and read every little letter till the stars got
dim and pale every morning. I imagine he gets just the
quaintest pile of wee notes that it's no wonder that he
always wears a smile; but I've also got a notion, just a sort of
faint surmise, I can see a little sorrow 'way back in his
laughin' eyes; an' it's that there look of sorrow gets me
feelin' glad because I am only me, and do not have to be a
Santa Claus.

I'm a fool! For when the presents had been
scattered everywhere, and been clasped to breasts of babies with
night's tangles in their hair, when 'twas the day after Christmas, the
morn after Christmas morn, with the glad girls with their dollies, with
the boys each with a horn,

With the sun a-shinin' brightly, and with
glorious New Year's Day
seemin' to wait for us laughin' only just a
week away, I would turn from it a-sighin', put my
empty knapsack by, an' wish I could take my smile off an' go
off somewhere an' cry.

Cry for letters all unanswered, cry for
stockings all unfilled, for child voices raised in hoping, now in
disappointment stilled. I should want to go off somewhere by my

lonesome just to grieve for the little bits o' stockings hanging
empty Christmas Eve, that would hang empty and cheerless by
the cold grate in the morn, when with joy the world was ringing and
the Christmas Day was born. I would feel bad for the babies with their
little cheeks tear-wet,

Standin' grievin' Christmas mornin', thinkin' Santa could forget.

I am glad that I'm not Santa, glad that I
don't have to be; there won't be no little babies Christmas
morning blamin' me 'cause their little baby stockings were all
empty in the light of the morning, that were hung up filled
with hoping overnight. I can feel bad and be grievin' all of Christmas Day
because of the disappointed babies without being
Santa Claus; an' if I was him I reckon I could never
play the part, for the thought of them I couldn't ever
reach would break my heart.



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