

Santa Through my Childhood Years

What are you talking about? Santa Claus? Of course, there is no Santa Claus.

Riding on the school bus in grade one, I heard my friends talking.

"I wrote a letter to Santa and asked for a sleigh," Autumn said.

"I made a list of what I wanted," Mary said.

Didn't they know their parents were Santa and Mrs. Claus? I had figured that out a long time ago. For one thing, Santa can't fit down our chimney. That's just stupid. And how can he go everywhere by reindeer on a sleigh in just one night? It's not logical.

I must say, when I was four and maybe even five, I believed Santa came and brought Julie and me matching dolls. We left cookies and milk like Mom and Dad told us to do. In the morning, it was like magic. The cookies were gone, and we found presents under the tree.

Julie's doll was a blonde baby doll, and mine had brown hair. The next year Santa brought us bride dolls with pretty bridal dresses. Again, Julie's was blonde with a white dress and mine was a brunette with a blue dress. Harry's presents were things he could build something with, like Meccano or tinker toys.

One year later, I received verification of my belief that there was no Santa. Dad had just finished building our new house, and we were strapped for cash. Dad and Julie didn't let me into the living room. In fact, they closed the doors. There I was, trapped in the kitchen. I heard them whispering to each other, like what they were doing was secretive. Curious, I crept over to the fresh air vent between the kitchen and the living room. I lay on my tummy, peering through the grate. What to my wondering eyes did appear? Julie and Dad building me a cradle for my doll out of an orange crate. Two days later, it was under the Christmas Tree with my doll lying in it with a new homemade blanket on top.

That led to other Christmases when I found a little grey desk I had asked for in Mom and Dad's closet before Christmas. There must have been some assembling required. Mom and Dad being Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus made sense to me. They always asked what we wanted for Christmas, although they didn't ask me to make a list or send a letter to Santa.

Not believing in Santa Claus didn't spoil Christmas for me. I loved to buy presents for Mom and Dad, Julie and Harry. We drew names between cousins, aunts and uncles. It was fun to figure out what they might want.

Every Christmas was different as we grew older and eventually Christmas became a time when family could be together and the presents were just an added enjoyment.

Santa came back to life again when I had my first child. Now my Dad, who was now a Grandpa, held my son on his knee at Christmas. Aaron was four, and he knew he was special to Santa.

