



Once upon A time, far away on a tiny island..

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22nd December 2015 ~



stood a quiet mansion that once was majestic. Now vines grew all over it, with dusty windows which seemed to have never been cleaned for at least ten years. Inside the mansion lived a man, and from his properties, he seemed a billionaire. Yet, he did not look happy. In fact, he was miserably depressed. This man had always had a positive outlook on life and lived very well with his beloved wife. They threw loads of parties especially when it was around Christmas, and their mansion was always filled with bright lights and warm spirits.

Until five years ago, the man's life drastically changed. His wife passed away due to severe lung cancer. Without the love of his life, the man thought nothing more about the value of joy. From then on, he shut the front door tight and never opened it for anyone except using it to exit and enter just for himself. He stopped all parties on any occasions be they special or not, and not even bothered about the New Year. His friends and relatives slowly backed off and avoided going near him, let alone visiting him, as he was never pleasant to be around with. He told all his servants to pack and return home, and he never hired new ones. He never cleaned the house or tidied things up. When something fell to the ground, he would just let it be without picking it up or tending to it. He did not even bother to shave and slowly grew a beard. As days passed, his beard turned as white as snow.

The old man's life had become increasingly meaningless. Every day he just went to the same local bar for breakfast, lunch and dinner. He ate like a robot, and it did not matter if he was repeating the same dish. Everything tasted bland to him.

It was a week before Christmas Eve. One morning when he was heading towards the bar as usual, he saw a woman walking along the street with her child. He overheard the child moaning, "Mummy, Christmas is no fun at all. It's so boring. Nothing's new. Nobody holds parties and gets presents anymore. Adults just singing around the Christmas tree, and nothing else happens. Mummy, I wanna do something different this year."

The young boy reminded the old man about his own grandson. His eyes started to well up as he recalled those great times he had had with his grandson before his wife died. He had always loved that cute little boy, but he had not been in touch with his family ever since he shunned them out. He now suddenly had a desire, wanting to see every child smile at Christmas. He got a brilliant idea for the kids this Christmas after hearing what the boy had said.



But first, the old man would need to disguise himself so the kids would not know his leaden heart had softened. He bought a thick coat that was red as it was his favourite colour, and it is a Christmas colour. He sewed some white trims along the hem. He also made an elf hat to match his red suit, as well as some red boots for walking in the snow. Lastly, he bought a huge sledge and a couple of reindeer to carry him all around America.

The old man then set out to hang some big posters everywhere that read "To all children in America, please write your wish and your name down on a piece of paper, and then hang it on the Christmas tree in Central park two days before Christmas Eve. Your wish will be granted."

Deep into midnight before Christmas Eve, he collected all the scraps of paper. To his amazement, there were over ten thousand!! He spent half a day reading all of them and then slipped out to some huge department stores to get all there was on the kids' wish list. You might now wonder why the old man was so stupid to have bought all the things the kids had wished for without a wink. The fact was when he was reading the kids' notes, he was deeply touched by how the little ones had trusted him and all of them wished for a memorable Christmas. They also wished him a merry Christmas and that warmed his heart because he was a total stranger to them. So he decided to make good use of his vast wealth to make the kids happy.

The old man memorized each and every child's wish so he could easily deliver all gifts without a hiccup. To make his mission a surprise, wherever there was a chimney pot, with the help of his reindeer and the sledge, he would land on the roof and slip down without being seen. When all was done, he returned to Central Park. He was in such jubilation that he yelled "Ho Ho Ho! Merry Christmas everyone!" over the sky.



On Christmas day, all the children in America cheered and cried for joy as their wish really came true. This charitable deed made headlines in all the newspapers, both local and overseas. Back in his mansion, the old man could not stop smiling as he had succeeded in fulfilling his goal. He realized his priority and remembered the true meaning of life. He changed back to living a normal life in his now clean and tidy mansion. He welcomed his family back for regular visits and he had such joy seeing his grandson again.

Although he does not have that many parties as before, he still gives out gifts secretly year after year at Christmas to cheer all the children in the world.

And who is this guy? Yes, you have guessed it right. He is Santa Claus!