

# **Christmas Every Day**

**By Stephen DeCesare Copyright 2002**

**Based on the story by William Dean Howells (1892)**

Curtain is closed. Anna's father's desk is pre-set. The children's choir can be placed far right or left of the stage. Anna's father is in his den at his desk (SR), trying to get some work done. His daughter Anna comes into the room (SL), sneaks behind her father, and puts her hands over his eyes.

**Daddy:**

Now, I wonder who could be behind my chair.

**Anna starts to giggle and the father playfully pulls her around and puts her in a hold to kiss her head.**

**Daddy:**

Good morning, angel.

**Anna:**

Morning daddy. Whatcha doing?

**Daddy:**

I thought I would catch up on some work.

**Anna:**

You don't want do that.

**Daddy:**

Oh? And what do you think I should be doing?

**Anna:**

I think you would rather tell me a story.

**Daddy:**

I'd love to, Anna, but, I really need to get this done.

**Anna: (with puppy dog eyes)**

Oh, please, please, please, please, please, please, please.

**Daddy: (pause)**

Oh, all right. But just a little one.

**Anna: (she hops on her father's lap)**

Yeah!

**Daddy:**

Well---once there was a little pig--

**Anna puts her hands over his mouth.**

**Anna:**

Uuugggh. No more little pig stories. I'm sick of them.

**Daddy:**

Well, what kind of story shall I tell, then?

**Anna:**

About Christmas. It's getting to be the season. It's past Thanksgiving already.

**Daddy:**

It seems to me that I've told you stories about Christmas as often as I have about pigs.

**Anna:**

But Christmas is so much more interesting.

**Daddy: (rousing himself)**

Very well! Then I'll tell you about the little girl that wanted it Christmas every day in the year. How would you like that?

**Anna:**

Hot dog! That's fine.

**She nestles into comfortable shape in his lap, ready for listening.**

**Daddy:**

Very well, then, this little pig---(She pounds him on the shoulder) Oh, what are you pounding me for?

**Anna:**

Because you said little pig instead of little girl.

**Daddy:**

I should like to know what's the difference between a little pig and a little girl that wanted it Christmas every day!

**Anna: (warningly)**

Daddy! If you don't tell it right, I'll bop you one.

**Enter Sarah in front of the curtain**

**Daddy:**

Once there was a little girl, named Sarah who liked Christmas so much that she wanted it to be Christmas every day in the year, and as soon as Thanksgiving was over she began to send postcards to the old Christmas Fairy to ask if she might not have it. But the old Fairy never answered, and after a while Sarah found out that the Fairy wouldn't notice anything but real letters sealed outside with a monogram--or your initial, anyway. So, then, she began to send letters, and just the day before Christmas, she got a letter from the Fairy, saying

**Fairy: (voice over)**

Dear Sarah, you may have your wish. You will have Christmas every day for a year, and then we will see about having it longer.

**Daddy:**

Sarah was excited already, preparing for the old-fashioned, once-a-year Christmas that was coming the next day.

**Sarah:**

I CAN'T WAIT 'TILL MORNING RIGHT AT BREAK OF DAY.  
MY WISH WILL START OF CHRISTMAS COMING EVERYDAY.  
THERE'S SO MANY THINGS TO DO. I CANNOT EVEN PAUSE.  
MUST GET THINGS READY FOR GOOD DEAR OLD SANTA CLAUS.

I'LL LEAVE HIM MILK AND COOKIES AND A PIECE OF APPLE PIE.  
CAUSE IF I DO HE'LL LEAVE ME PRESENTS STACKED TO THE SKY.

TOMORROW CAN'T COME QUICK ENOUGH. I WISH IT WAS HERE.

TODAY IS DRAGGING; IT'S THE LONGEST DAY OF THE YEAR.

WHEN TOMORROW COMES AT LAST, I'LL SHOUT HOORAY!  
FOR IT WILL BE THE START OF CHRISTMAS EVERYDAY.

**Sarah puts on her housecoat.**

TOMORROW CAN'T COME QUICK ENOUGH. I WISH IT WAS HERE.  
TODAY IS DRAGGING; IT'S THE LONGEST DAY OF THE YEAR.  
WHEN TOMORROW COMES AT LAST, I'LL SHOUT HOORAY!  
FOR IT WILL BE THE START OF CHRISTMAS EVERYDAY.

**Daddy:**

She went to bed early, so as to let Santa Claus fill the stockings, and in the morning she was up the first of anybody (**open curtain**) and found hers all lumpy with packages of candy, and oranges and grapes, and rubber balls, all kinds of small presents--but most of all, the big Christmas tree, lighted and standing in the middle.

**Kids Choir:** CELEBRATE! IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME! CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE!  
RING THE BELLS! CHIME THE CHIMES!  
SOUND THEM LOUD AND CLEAR!  
IT'S A DAY OF GREAT REJOICING, OF SINGING AND LOUD VOICING  
THE HAPPY SOUND THAT CHRISTMAS IS HERE!

CELEBRATE! IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME! CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE!  
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THE HAPPY SOUND THAT CHRISTMAS IS HERE!

**During the song, Sarah's parents, brothers and sisters will enter and they will all start exchanging presents**

**Daddy:**

Sarah had a splendid Christmas all day. She ate so much candy that she did not want any breakfast, and the whole afternoon she went round giving the presents she had got for other people, and ate turkey and cranberry for dinner, and plum pudding and nuts and raisins and oranges.

**The kids start running around the house, shooting each other with guns, etc., then quickly leave SL.**

**Daddy:**

When the day was finally over, Sarah ate so much that she ended up with a stomach-ache, crying. (**Sarah parents lead her off-stage**) After Sarah was tucked in bed, Sarah's parents looked over the mess that the day had brought.

**Mama:**

What a mess. This house is a shambles.

**Papa:**

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTMAS?  
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE WAY THINGS WERE?  
WHEN THIS WAS SIMPLE AND NOT CHAOTIC;  
THAT WAY I MUCH PREFER.

**Mama:**

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTMAS?  
WHEN DID THIS HOLIDAY BECOME A CHORE?  
THERE'S WAY TOO MUCH COOKING AND CLEANING TO DO.  
I CAN'T TAKE THIS STRESS NO MORE!

**Papa:** WELL, THIS IS ONE THING I CAN PROMISE YOU,  
I WON'T LET IT BE THIS WAY NEXT YEAR.

**Mama:** I WISH I HAD A NICKEL EVERY TIME  
YOU HAVE SAID THAT LINE, MY DEAR.

**Both:** WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTMAS?  
WHEN DID THE NOSTALGIA OF THIS DAY JUST END?  
IT SEEMS ALL THINGS SIMPLE JUST UP AND DIED;  
NOW WE WORK AND OVERSPEND.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTMAS?  
I DON'T THINK I COULD GO THROUGH THIS AGAIN.  
WE NEED A BREAK FROM THIS HOLIDAY;

**Papa:** CAUSE THE MADNESS,

**Mama:** AND THE COOKING,

**Papa:** AND THE CLEANING,

**Mama:** AND THE SHOPPING,

**Papa:** AND THE CREDIT CARD BILLS,

**Both:** HAVE TO END!

**After parents leave, Anna pounds her father on the arm**

**Daddy:**  
Well, what now? Did I say pigs?

**Anna:**  
You made them *act* like pigs?

**Daddy:**  
Well, didn't they?

**Anna:**  
Doesn't matter; you shouldn't put it into the story.

**Daddy:**  
Very well, then, I'll take it all out. Sarah slept very heavily and very late, but she was wakened at last by the other children dancing around her bed with their stockings full of presents in their hands.

**Siblings:**  
Christmas! Christmas! Christmas!

**Sarah: (rubbing her eyes sleepily)**  
That's ridiculous! It was Christmas yesterday.

**Brother:**  
We don't know about that. It's Christmas today, anyway. C'mon downstairs and see.

**Siblings leave**

**Daddy:**

Then all at once it hit Sarah that the Fairy was keeping her promise, and her year of Christmases was beginning. She was dreadfully sleepy, but she sprang up and darted downstairs. There it was again! (**open curtain**) Books, and boxes of stationery, and dolls, and bracelets and...

**Anna:**

You don't have to go over it all, Daddy; I guess I can remember what was there.

**Daddy: (continuing as though he doesn't hear)**

Well, there was the Christmas tree blazing away, and the family picking out their presents, but looking pretty sleepy, and Sarah's father looked very much puzzled, and her mother ready to cry.

**Mama:**

I'm sure I don't see how I'm to dispose of all these things.

**Papa:**

It seems to me we just had something like this yesterday. I suppose I just dreamed it.

**Kids Choir:** CELEBRATE! IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME! CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE!  
RING THE BELLS! CHIME THE CHIMES!  
SOUND THEM LOUD AND CLEAR!  
IT'S A DAY OF GREAT REJOICING, OF SINGING AND LOUD VOICING  
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THE HAPPY SOUND THAT CHRISTMAS IS HERE!

**Daddy:**

This struck Sarah as the best kind of a joke, and so she ate so much candy she didn't want any breakfast, and went round carrying presents, and ate turkey and cranberry for dinner, and plum pudding and nuts and raisins and oranges...

**Anna:**

Daddy!

**Daddy:**

What now?

**Anna:**

What did you promise, you forgetful thing?

**Daddy:**

Oh! oh, yes!

**The kids start running around the house, shooting each other with guns, etc., then quickly leave SL.**

**Mama:**

What a mess. This house is a shambles.

**Papa:**

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTMAS?  
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE WAY THINGS WERE?  
WHEN THIS WAS SIMPLE AND NOT CHAOTIC; THAT WAY I MUCH PREFER.

**Mama:** WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTMAS?  
WHEN DID THIS HOLIDAY BECOME A CHORE?  
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WE NEED A BREAK FROM THIS HOLIDAY;

**Papa:** CAUSE THE MADNESS,

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**Mama:** AND THE SHOPPING,

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**Enter group of people looking down right moody.**

**Daddy:**

Now, the next day, it was the same thing all over again, but everybody getting crosser, and at the end of a week's time so many people had lost their tempers that you could pick up lost tempers anywhere, they perfectly strewed the ground. Even when people tried to recover their tempers they usually got somebody else's, and it made the most dreadful mix.

**Kids Choir:** CELEBRATE! IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME! CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE!

**Group:**

Shut up!!!

HOW COULD SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPEN?  
THERE MUST BE AN EXPLANATION.  
WE'RE STUCK IN SOME DEJA VU;  
FOR WHEN MORNING COMES, IT'S BACK TO SQUARE ONE.

SOMEONE MUST HAVE ASKED FOR THIS.  
SOMEONE MUST HAVE WISHED FOR THIS;  
THEY THINK THAT THEY CAN RUN AND THEY CAN HIDE.  
BUT WHEN WE FIND OUT WHO'S TO BLAME  
FOR MAKING US ALL QUITE INSANE:  
A LYNCHING IS WHAT WE PLAN TO PROVIDE.

THIS HAS GOTTEN WAY OUT OF HAND  
AND WE COME TO YOU AND DEMAND  
WHO'S THE PERSON. TELL US NOW A NAME.

WE WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES;  
TO FIND OUT WHO HAS MADE THE MISTAKE  
OF MAKING US ALL SUFFER THROUGH AN ENDLESS CHRISTMAS DAY.

**Vamp for people to ask audience 'who did it'. When Sarah enters, people freeze.**

**Sarah:** LOOK AT ALL THE ANGRY PEOPLE. DID I CAUSE ALL THIS TO HAPPEN?  
I THOUGHT CHRISTMAS EVERY DAY WOULD BE A PIECE OF HEAVEN.

BUT IT SEEMS IT HAS GONE AWRY. I THINK THAT I WON'T EVEN TRY  
TO TELL THE TRUTH AND SAY I AM TO BLAME.

I THINK I'LL KEEP IT TO MYSELF AND YOU JUST KEEP IT TO YOURSELVES  
AND MAYBE ALL OF THIS WILL GO AWAY.

**People unfreeze and Sarah gets scared and hides.**

**People:** THIS HAS GOTTEN WAY OUT OF HAND  
AND WE COME TO YOU AND DEMAND  
WHO'S THE PERSON. TELL US NOW A NAME.

**Sarah peeps out of her hiding place and says:**

**Sarah:** DON'T SAY ONE WORD.

**People:** WE WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES  
TO FIND OUT WHO HAS MADE THE MISTAKE  
OF MAKING US ALL SUFFER THROUGH AN ENDLESS CHRISTMAS DAY.

**Group leaves and Sarah comes out of hiding and is left on the stage alone.**

**Daddy:**

Sarah began to get frightened, keeping the secret all to herself, she wanted to tell her mother, but she didn't dare to, and she was ashamed to ask the Fairy to take back her gift, it seemed ungrateful. (**Sarah leaves the stage**) So it went on and on, and it was Christmas on St. Valentine's Day and Washington's Birthday, just the same as any day, and it didn't skip even the First of April, though everything was counterfeit that day, and that was some little relief. After a while turkeys got to be awfully scarce, selling for about a thousand dollars apiece.

**Anna:**

Daddy!

**Daddy:**

What?

**Anna:**

I think you're lying.

**Daddy:**

Well, *two* thousand, then. They got to passing off almost anything for turkeys. And cranberries--well they asked a diamond apiece for cranberries. All the woods and orchards were cut down for Christmas trees. After a while they had to make Christmas trees out of rags. But there were plenty of rags, because people got so poor, buying presents for one another, that they couldn't get any new clothes, and they just wore their old ones to tatters. They got so poor that everybody had to go to the poorhouse, except the bakers, and the storekeepers, and the book-sellers, and they all got so rich and proud that they would hardly wait upon a person when he came to buy. It was perfectly shameful!

**Baker, Storekeeper and Bookseller come out jingling and shaking bags of money.**

**Baker:** DOESN'T MONEY MAKE A WONDERFUL SOUND?  
BETTER THAN A SYMPHONY.

**Storekeeper:** IT'S PLEASING TO MY EARS, THAT MUCH I AGREE;  
AND PLEASING TO THE EYE.

**Bookseller:** AND WITH THIS HOLIDAY NOT ENDING,

**All Three:** WE HAVE NEVER BEEN IN SHORT SUPPLY.  
AS OF NOW WE'RE RICHER THAN MIDAS.  
WE'RE SWIMMING IN MONEY.  
WE THREE ARE THE RICHEST PEOPLE THERE ARE IN THE CITY.

AND WITH ALL THIS MONEY YOU'D THINK WE HAVE ENOUGH.  
BUT WE'LL KEEP SELLING, SO YOU'LL KEEP BUYING  
'TILL WE GET ALL YOU GOT.

**Bookseller:** I CHARGE THE PEOPLE FOR THE PRIVILEGE TO BROWSE;  
THAT BRINGS IN SUCH A TIDY SUM.

**Baker:** AND WHEN A PERSON BUYS AN ITEM FROM ME,  
I CHARGE 'EM BY THE CRUMB.

**Storekeeper:** AND OUR RULE OF THUMB IS DON'T TAKE CREDIT.

**All Three:** CAUSE WITH THE CASH WE ALL OUR GUARANTEED  
TO ALWAYS BE RICHER THAN MIDAS; BE SWIMMING IN MONEY.  
WE LIKE BEING THE RICHEST PEOPLE THERE ARE IN THE CITY.

AND WITH ALL THIS MONEY YOU'D THINK WE HAVE ENOUGH.  
BUT WE'LL KEEP SELLING, SO YOU'LL KEEP BUYING  
'TILL WE GET ALL YOU GOT. 'TILL WE GET ALL YOU GOT!

**Open curtain and find a rag Christmas tree and presents wrapped in newspaper**