



On This Christmas Eve — The Night Was Black, And Cold



By Judi Jarvill

ONCE UPON A TIME on Christmas Eve, in a nearby place, Mr. and Mrs. Gonzalez and their six children could be seen walking down a snow-covered road. The night was black, and cold. The wind was blowing and the snow came down in large white clusters.

Papa went ahead to look for a place to spend the night. At the top of a hill he looked down in a valley. "Look!" he called to his family, "I see a light not far away." Mama and the children hurried to see what Papa had found.

As they drew nearer they saw a farm house. But the lights were out and the house was quiet. The only sound heard was that of the heavy wind blowing against the screen door. Papa said to his family, "We can not stay here. There is no one home." He looked at his wife and motioned for her to take the children and head back for the road. "We will find a place," she said.

Suddenly, Roberto, the oldest son, came running from behind the farm house. "Father," he cried, "There is a camp behind the house and there is a light on in one of the cabins."

There was a light as Roberto had said. Father went up to the door and knocked.

"Hello!" said the man.

"I am Jose Gonzalez," said Papa, "And this is my family. Our car broke down up on the highway and we have no place to stay."

"Won't you come in?" said Mr. Valdez, "You may stay with us."

Mrs. Valdez was nice too. She said that they didn't have much, but what they did have would be shared with the Gonzalez family. She fixed some food for them and showed them where they could sleep.

After the children were asleep Mama and Papa began to worry. What would they do? They had no money, and no way to get gifts for their children. They decided that a warm place to stay was as nice as any gift.

Early the next morning Mama and Papa Gonzalez were awakened by the noise of children laughing. They dressed quickly and went to see what the excitement was. To their amazement they found the Valdez children, and their own children opening Christmas gifts. But, where did they come from?

Mama and Papa looked at each other in great surprise. Who had done this? They wondered. Glancing to the right they found Mr. and Mrs. Valdez smiling at them.

The spirit of Christmas filled the room. Again, one family helped another, and this was a Christmas that would not be forgotten.

