



Christmas Story 2011: Gramma Davies Becomes Santa's Helper

By Chuck Slocum

The snow lay deep, and the hard crust glistened as six year old Joey and his dog Antler, named because of the hat he always wore, ambled over to Mrs. Davies house next door on a cold December morning.

The nice neighbor lady, Mrs. Davies, whom just about everyone called "Gramma," very much liked and frequently welcomed the child and his dog because his Mom was away working---not one but two jobs---almost all the time. Joey's father was a soldier assigned to faraway Afghanistan.

Tearfully crying on this day a week before Christmas, Joey's face was buried in his mittened hands as Antler whimpered, "My patience!" cried Gramma when she opened the door, "what can be the matter with you on this wonderful, sunny morning?"

"We don't have no good times," sighed Joey. "We can't even slide because we ain't even got a bobsled."

"Let's do something about that," said Gramma as she bundled up and took her guests to her old garage in the backyard. "Lets us look about and see if we can find something." The trio started hunting behind screens, garden tools, a mower, various barrels and boxes and other dark, shadowy items that were unevenly stacked among the cobwebs.

After what seemed a long time, Gramma said "Here we go!" as she pulled down a large, round pressed-tin cover off the top shelf. To Joey it looked like the largest pizza pan he had ever seen.

The fun ensued for the lad and his dog.

Back in the warmth of her home and looking out the front room picture window, Gramma shook with laughter to see the young boy skim swiftly over the snowy crust as Antler excitedly barked and jumped along the way. After some hot chocolate and cookies, the exhausted young man went home as an uncle arrived to look after them.

Gramma, who had very little extra money to spend, sat down and bowed her head to pray to God, asking how she could be a special Santa's helper this very year. Soon, she started knitting a particular wool item faster than she ever had.

The next day, Gramma went to see Joe, the carpenter. She wanted to enter into barter with the handy old man. He agreed to make a sled with skies if she would give him the new pair of warm, wooly socks. "It's a deal," Gramma said as the two old friends shook hands.

Several days later, when Joe finished the curved hard wood frame with the dual snow ski blades in front, Gramma carefully painted it a Christmas red with a bright yellow stripe.

On the night before Christmas, Gramma Davies pulled on snow boots and her old cloak with a red hood edged by white fur. Going outside in the clear, star-studded darkness, she looked to be a magic elf, carefully, ever so quietly, dragging the wonderful new bobsled next door.

Gramma hitched the gift to the door-latch at Joey's place and quietly returned to her home, smiling all the way, as she whispered the short prayer "Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night."



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