

The Mystery of Grandpa's Christmas

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Nick Nichols

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The Mystery of Grandpa's Christmas Cane

Nick Nichols

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This is a work of fiction. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

THE MYSTERY OF GRANDPA'S CHRISTMAS CANE

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Written by Nick Nichols.

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[Adventures of a Mall Santa](#)

[The Mystery of Grandpa's Christmas Cane](#)

[You Can't Go Wrong Trusting God](#)

[Unexpected God Encounters](#)

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This little book is dedicated to my awesome children! Thank you for loving and putting up with your Poppy and all his stories! Love you always--Holly, Heather, Brittany, and Christian who is no longer little and much taller than I.

The Mystery of Grandpa's Christmas Cane



Little Christian started climbing up into his Grandpa's lap, causing Grandpa to yank the big family Bible he had been reading out of the way. Sitting it on the stand by his walking cane, he and Christian jostled around in his big easy chair till they were both comfortable. Christian was ready to talk, and his Grandpa was always ready to listen.

"Grandpa?"

"Yes?"

"Why do you use a cane?"



Leaning back a bit, Grandpa said, “Well, as a young man I broke my foot in an accident, and it never healed quite right.” Closing his eyes picturing the events, he said . . .

“My team of five climbers and I were halfway up Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world, when a storm started blowing in. The sky had suddenly changed from a brilliant blue to a stormy gray. As the wind blew harder, the temperature dropped, and we found ourselves trapped by the storm on the side of the mountain.

“Yelling to my team through the howling wind, I told them we have to turn back and go back down the mountain. That’s when my foot caught between two rocks, and at the same moment, the climber below me slipped on some loose ice on the side of the mountain, and . . .”

“Grandpa!”

“Once he fell, his safety rope jerked my entire body, breaking my trapped foot . . .”

“G-R-A-N-D-P-A!!”

Opening his eyes, Grandpa said, “What!?”

With a serious look, Christian said, “Tell me the truth, Grandpa!”

“Ok, a cow accidently stomped on my foot and broke it. Back on our farm when I was a few years older than you, one day when I was doing my chores, I was trying to get old Jughead into the stall to milk her, but something startled her real bad—she jumped back and smashed my foot. And it’s just gotten worse over the years.”

Christian beamed with delight catching Grandpa in one of his tall tales. Grandpa laughed and tossed Christian's hair, thinking what a sharp little guy he was. He was always so full of questions, but the older Christian got, the harder it was for Grandpa to get Christian to believe his "creative" stories.



"Grandpa?"

"Yes?"

"I know you use your cane to help you walk, but can canes be used for other things?"

"Sure can! I can use the hook part to pick things up. It's really handy for old people like me who have a hard time bending over and picking up clothes. Shepherds use the hook to gently pull sheep back in line with the rest of the flock.

"Why, you can even play with a cane . . . watch this." Grandpa picked up his cane and balanced it on the tip of his finger. This gave Christian a big smile. He always liked watching Grandpa do funny things like pulling his false teeth out, flipping them in the air, and popping them back in his mouth. Or the time in the restaurant when Grandpa put his false teeth in his sister's glass of water without her seeing him. Later, she went to take a drink and screamed so loud it scared everybody in the whole restaurant.

Grandpa chuckled mischievously, remembering the moment; he was so proud of the fact that he had gotten away with it and that it had produced the effect he was hoping for!



“Grandpa, I have another question?”

“Yes?”

“Why does your cane look like a big candy cane?”

“Ahh, speaking of candy canes, look what’s in my shirt pocket!” Christian quickly pulled out the candy cane with delight. Christian looked at his small candy cane and Grandpa’s big candy-cane-looking cane and then back to Grandpa, waiting for a response to his question.

“I, your old Grandpa, am a proud member of the Cane Club at our church, and every Christmas the ten of us old-timers get out our special Christmas canes and use them to celebrate Christmas.”

“To celebrate Christmas? How do you celebrate Christmas with your canes?”

“There’s an old story, and I don’t know if it’s true or not, Christian, but it’s said that a candy maker wanted to share his love for Jesus with the world, so he took a hard, white straight piece of candy and bent a hook in the end. The white represented the virgin birth and the purity of Jesus, and the hook was to remind people that Jesus is the Good Shepherd who loves us and takes care of us, His sheep.”

“I love Jesus!” piped in Christian. “I asked Him to come into my heart in Vacation Bible School!” Nodding with a big smile, Grandpa said, “I love Jesus, too! . . . and have for many, many, years. Jesus means everything to me!”

Continuing, “Then the candy maker added red stripes to remind people of the blood Jesus shed for us so that we can be forgiven and come to God . . . just like you did at Vacation Bible School.

“And when you turn the cane upside down, it makes a “J” for Jesus, and it’s also a “J” for Joy! The Joy of Jesus!!” Christian’s face brightened with a really big smile now, seeing his candy cane as a “J.”

“So, whenever I’m out shopping or walking in the mall during Christmas time and see another member of my Cane Club, we each hold our canes upside down in the air and celebrate the Joy of Jesus!”



Christian seemed to be taking it all in before he once again questioned...

“Grandpa?”

“Yes?”

Only this time Christian didn't say anything—he simply turned his candy cane upside down to form a “J” and held it up in the air. Grandpa reached over, got his cane, turned it upside down and held his up in the air as he said, “To the Joy of Jesus!!” In response, little Christian said, “To the Joy of Jesus!!” It was a holy salute as they gazed at each other enveloped by the eternal truth of the moment.

As quickly as it happened, it passed; Christian scampered out of Grandpa's lap with his candy cane to go play video games by the brightly lit Christmas tree and Grandpa put the big family Bible back in his lap.

With his old head bowed . . . and still taking in the magnitude of the moment, a tear fell from Grandpa's cheek to his opened Bible.

It was the Joy of Jesus!

~~ The End ~~

Bonus True Christmas Story

'Twas the Night Before Christmas— And No Presents



Over the years my mother told me this story multiple times. Even after sixty plus years, that Christmas morning remained a vivid and special memory for my mother. During the Great Depression, my mother's family was very poor. My grandfather had a heart attack at age twenty-five; that left him in a weakened condition for years. And as the Great Depression settled in, there were few jobs for someone in his condition and those he did get . . . Paid little. They had four children at the time, and life was hard.

They trusted the Lord and survived on the generosity of family and friends, most of whom lived on farms, so during the summers Grandma would can a lot of produce for the winter months. Grandpa's brother had a good job and always supplied the family with milk. Beans were the main staple since meat was hard to get and very expensive.

A pot of beans was always on the stove, and my witty aunt jokingly said they ate so many beans that she understood why we are called, "human-beans!" Staying warm in the winter was not easy, but they lived near a railroad track not far from a rail yard. All the jerking of the cars as a train started rolling would cause loose coal to fly off the open coal cars. Grandma would send the kids to go collect what coal they could find on the tracks for heating their home.

The Christmas of my mother's memory had been an especially difficult year financially for the family. The kids had their church play and received their little bags of candy, each with its one chocolate drop—the only chocolate they'd have for the entire year, so it was very special. My mom was about six years old, and that Christmas had her little heart set on getting a stand-up dolly with real hair she could comb. However, she and her sister and brothers had no idea how bleak Christmas was going to be. Grandma and Grandpa felt terrible that Christmas Eve as they gathered together their children for bedtime prayers.

Grandma was always focused on the Lord and the practical things of life, so she never spoke too much about Santa and all that business. The kids huddled around their mother as she said, "This has been a difficult year. The Lord has provided, and we still have a home and food to eat. And for this, we are grateful! Your father and I have not been able to buy you the Christmas presents you would like for this Christmas. Truthfully, it's worse . . . We haven't been able to buy you any presents this Christmas. So, let's try not to think about ourselves tomorrow morning on Christmas Day but remember the gift of the little baby Jesus that God has given to us. He gave us the Greatest Gift of all!"

With that, they said their prayers and climbed into bed. Grandma walked down the winding stairs gliding her hand along the old, worn wood banister as she descended, praying in her heart, "Oh Father, if there is some way, by some miracle you could give the kids presents for Christmas morning, I would be so grateful." And with tears, she stepped down into the living room to read her Bible for the night and pray for relatives and other struggling families.

SQUEAL, thump, BAM! Penetrated the house as metal hit the ground outside! A large truck had pulled up to the front of the house. Grandma and Grandpa heard it, the kids heard it, and then they heard the pounding at the door. On the dark porch, stood a smiling man holding a box.

Stunned, my grandparents watched as this stranger carried in the box and put it under their empty Christmas tree. Grandma saw the kids peering through the upstairs banister and told them to stay up there. Then the man brought in another box, and another, and more boxes, and then even more boxes!!

He was a local businessman who every Christmas would pick out some poor families and give them the toys he had left over from his Christmas sales. He brought in so many toys that Grandma filled a closet with them for future birthdays and the following Christmas! The kids were beside themselves with excitement, but Grandma made them go back to bed. She profusely thanked the man, and then in her heart said, "Thank you, Jesus, thank you, thank you so very much!"

Christmas morning came, and Grandma and Grandpa made the kids, wide-eyed with excitement, stand together around the gifts holding hands. Grandma prayed, "Thank you again, dear Jesus, for providing Christmas presents for our children, and may they always see your hand in their lives. In Jesus name, Amen!"

The kids dove into the pile with giggles and glee, and my mom climbed out with a long box. She opened the box, and her little heart nearly burst . . . Inside was a stand-up dolly with real hair she could comb.

“Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” —Psalms 37:4 (NIV)

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” —Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

Do You Have a Book in You?

Resources

You probably do! "According to a recent survey, 81 percent of Americans feel they have a book in them—and that they should write it." —Joseph Epstein

Everyone has something to contribute to the world—a novel, a memoir, humorous stories, poetry, a cookbook...and the list goes on. Why not get yours out there? What's stopping you? Too many hoops to jump through to get it from your mind to the published page? Well....

Now it's easier than ever!!

Oh, and don't buy into the myth that your book has to be hundreds of pages long because that's no longer true in this digital age. Amazon Kindle is proof; take a look at its "Short Reads" categories:

15 minutes (1-11 pages)

30 minutes (12-21 pages)

45 minutes (22-32 pages)

60 minutes (33-43 pages)

90 minutes (44-64 pages)

120 minutes or more (65-100 pages)

The links to the programs below are mostly programs I currently use and find to be very helpful with my writing and publishing. The few I don't currently use come from well-respected sources.

~~ Resources ~~

Please Note: *Some of the links below are free resources, and some of them are paid. The reality is that for most of the really good content you have to pay for, but it's well worth the money!*

—Are you new to independent publishing?

These links are good for beginners through intermediate-level writers who want to learn how to get their books published or how to become a better publisher.

[Publisher #1](#)

[Publisher #2](#)

[Publisher #3](#)

—Writing Software

[Software #1](#)

[Software #2](#)

[Software #3](#)

—Useful writing tools

Tools that will make your writing life easier and better.

[Tool #1](#)

[Tool #2](#)

—Online Tools

[Online #1](#)

[Online #2](#)

[Online #3](#)

[Online #4](#)

[Online #5](#)

—Book marketing

Getting your book into the right hands for sales.

[Promotion #1](#)

[Promotion #2](#)

—Get your book published for FREE!

Do you already have a book or finished manuscript? This link will show you how to get your book published for FREE on multiple platforms like Amazon Kindle, Apple iBooks, Barnes & Noble Nook, Kobo, etc.

[Publish #1 FREE](#)

—Ebook cover related.

[Cover #1](#)

[Cover #2](#)

[Cover #3](#)

—Human Editors

[Editor #1](#)

[Editor #2](#)

—Illustrate Your Book

[Illustrate #1](#)

—Additional resources

Though not directly related to publishing, you might find the following links useful and helpful.

Top Internet business training programs from some of the brightest minds in the business:

[Marketing #1](#)

[Marketing #2](#)

[Marketing #3](#)

[Marketing #4](#)

[Marketing #5](#)

A top-rated web design site:

[Design #1](#)

Reliable and affordable web hosting:

[Host #1](#)

Miscellaneous Stuff

[Stuff #1](#)

[Stuff #2](#)

[Stuff #3](#)

[Stuff #4](#)

[Stuff #5](#)

[Stuff #6](#)

[Stuff #7](#)

And remember, "**Readers make writers and writers make readers.**" —Carl McKeever

Note: The links to the programs above are mostly programs I currently use. The few I don't use come from well-respected sources. Also, I may receive a commission from some of the links above; however, the products won't cost you more, but it helps us keep the lights on. —Thank you!

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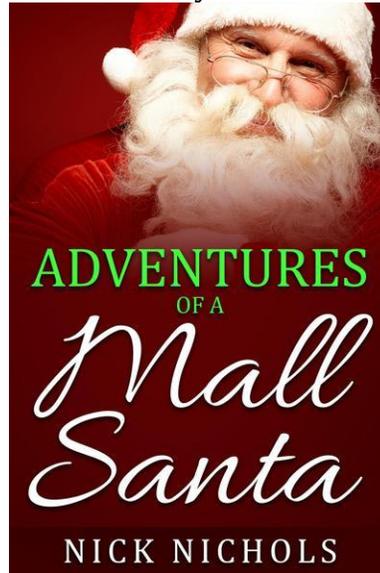
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Connecting independent readers to independent writers.

Did you love *The Mystery of Grandpa's Christmas Cane*? Then you should read *Adventures of a Mall Santa* by Nick Nichols!



Bursting into the photo lab David, the mall manager, said to me, "QUICK, put down what you're doing; our mall Santa canceled, and we need a Santa NOW!!" On our way out the door he said, "I need you to be Santa for this week through Christmas Eve," and then almost as a second thought, he asked, "Have you ever been a Santa before?"

I said, "No, and why ME??" "You're big, you don't need pillows, you laugh a lot, and your eyes even kind of twinkle a bit," he said. I was dumbstruck--thinking about myself as Santa!? The whole idea was so crazy and sudden that I burst out laughing with a "HO! HO! HO!!" to fit the moment — "SEE," he said, "That's what I mean; you'll make a GREAT Santa!!"

Right up there with enjoyable true Christmas stories and Christmas new releases, this little book will help make a Christmas to remember or in a way, a Christmas unlimited where anything is possible! Add this to your collection of Christmas heartwarmers and holiday smiles!

Now, with the season rapidly approaching, I've got to go check on my busy little elves, so.....as you'd expect, let me leave you with....."Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

Also by Nick Nichols

[Adventures of a Mall Santa](#)

[The Mystery of Grandpa's Christmas Cane](#)

[You Can't Go Wrong Trusting God](#)

[Unexpected God Encounters](#)



About the Author

Over my last thirty-three years of working life, I've been an environmental scientist, chemist, air quality modeler, consultant, and an adjunct biology and business math professor. Given my background, I'm more likely to write about Biochemical Oxygen Demand methodology or something else of interest in the field of science, but since it's Christmas time, this story came to me while thinking about my father and grandfather.

To give you some behind-the-scenes info . . . while writing this book I have watched through my office window the monkeys feeding in the jungle trees on the high hill across from our 17th floor apartment of a building complex at the top of a another high hill at the end of a road by the ocean shore on an island called Penang, off the coast of Malaysia. Great scenery and inspiration for a Christmas story...well, maybe not really "Christmasy," but it still works!

I hope you enjoyed reading this story as much as I enjoyed writing it.

And thank you for buying my little book.

Best Wishes & Merry Christmas!

To the Joy of Jesus!

Nick Nichols