

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

LOOKING
BACK, FOR SOME
IS A FAVORITE PASTIME
RECALLING A PASSED TIME
BITTERSWEET THIS LONGING
FOR LONG AGO, THAT, THOUGH
WE MAY GROW OLDER, WE NEVER
QUITE OUTGROW YET WHEN IT'S CHRIST-
MAS TIME, WITH ITS MERRY, CHEERY, RED
AND GREEN SEASONAL HOLIDAY GLOW, I'M
TEMPTED WITH A YEARNING NOT FOR SOME
CHRISTMAS LONG AGO MORE LIKE A FEEL GOOD
FANTASY BORN FROM MY OWN PARTICULAR BRAND OF
IMAGINATION NURTURED BY MY TECHNICOLOR DREAMS
("JUST LIKE THE ONES I USED TO KNOW") BUT NEVER HAD,
NEVER EXPERIENCED
BUT OFTEN WISHED
I COULD
AND SO ...

*Like a child who sends his wishes to Santa Claus
And hopes with all his heart that they'll come true
I wish just once to have the kind of Christmas
The sort they have in story books or even in old movies
With love and happy endings and a miracle or two
With family and a fireplace and smiling faces everywhere
So joyful to be together just to have the time to share
I can see it in my mind and wish I could be there
And yet I realize, if I'm not mindful I may echo Marley's ghost
Who, when it comes to Christmas, says
"That's the time I suffer most"
Spending time and energy on what has never been
Overlooking the miracles I have known
And the wonders I have seen
So I'll offer a word to all of us
The wistful, the ones who yearn
For the Christmas's that never were
For the ones we hold dear in our hearts
That, alas, can never return
As we sit there in reflection
Each in our own way*

*Let us not forget the child
The namesake for this day
If we're going to take backward glances
(As I certainly love to do)
Then perhaps in our reflections
We could try a different point of view
Remembering what happened in a smelly, dirty stable
With a young mother, and probably, a flustered carpenter
Recognizing this is no fairy tale or ancient myth or nursery fable
It's a story that, thro' the ages,
Holds a unique and undeniable place
In our history
With God doing something only God could do — or would do
For the sake of humanity
With much less pomp and in the strangest of circumstances
He came to us
Wrapped up in a blanket, minus the blue ribbons
A perfect, picture postcard of love from the heavens
To cherish and sing songs to and be wonder-filled by
He came to us
And this year and every year we can relive it anew
The first, the dearest, the most precious
The best of all our Christmas memories*

George Gagliardi, December, 2008

Some Holiday Snaps from around the house-

