

he had been killed, but was firm in her belief that he was still alive. Every day in her prayers she fervently implored the Heavenly Father and His Divine Son to return her child to her. Her love for Everet was the love of loves,—a mother's love—an affection diaphanous and serene in nature, howsoever impervious and rough may be the merit of him upon whom it is bestowed. Its perseverance is isochronous with the beats of her throbbing heart.

Everet made several inquiries at the village hotel, but no one remembered his mother. As he sauntered up the street on his way to Midnight Mass, the resonant Christmas chimes fell upon his ears as the pealing bells sent forth their message of gladness away through the pale glow of the soft silver moonlight reflected from the bosom of Mother Earth, in her immaculate robe of freshly fallen snow; he revelled in the thought of how happily here were spent his childhood days.

Entering, he sat silently in the holy edifice, listening to the choir pouring out the beautiful strains: "Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis." Away over by the Crib of the Infant Jesus, he spied a little wan, distraught woman, kneeling, grey, bent with age and despondently sad. The vision of this little figure with bowed head and the soul elevated, communicating with God in empyreal fervor, prompted him to advance to the rail to say an Ave for his mother. The little woman was praying in a monotone, as old people are often wont. He overheard her: "O Infant Jesus, return to me my son Everet—" He suddenly realized that this was his mother. As he approached her, she turned and spied the Rosary he held in his hand. A little soft cry of joy was heard by those nearby as she sobbed: "My son, my son," and, swooning, fell into his arms. The Infant had answered their prayers.

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