

of light that were framed in the doorease. Frankie had compelled the oblivion of young sleep by a stubborn silence, and now breathed a regular, small breath. There was no sound of any movement in the playroom.

He debated the situation with himself. If Santa Claus should see him watching, he would not leave any gifts; his mother herself had said so. Yes, but behind the frosted glasses how could Santa Claus see him? And yet, why risk it, since an answer to the letter would be enough. Well, if Santa Claus would not allow himself to be seen, would he allow himself to write? And if he objected to being spied on, what would he think of a boy who wrote to him to put him to the proof?

He lay back on his pillows and blinked at the dim ceiling.

He was startled into staring wakefulness—it seemed only an instant later—by the sound of the glass doors being shut with caution. Someone must have looked into the room! It must have been Santa Claus making certain that he was not being watched!

Don clutched the side of his cot, frightened at the danger he had escaped and thankful that he had escaped it; and under both feelings, he was glad beyond words that Santa Claus was "really." He listened, holding his breath with awe.

A box fell in the playroom. The noise was followed by a suppressed giggle. It was Nannie's giggle. And Don had no sooner heard it than he was over the side of his cot and tip-toeing across the room, with the truth already heavy on his chest.