

MERRY CHRISTMAS

—short, your life is short,” till the sound of it seemed to mingle with the measured ticking of a clock somewhere in the silent house.

Then I remembered what he had said.

“How do you know that I am wrong?” I asked.
“And how can you tell what I was thinking?”

“You said it out loud,” answered Father Time, “but it wouldn’t have mattered anyway. You said that Christmas was all played out and done with.”

“Yes,” I admitted, “that’s what I said.”

“And what makes you think that?” he questioned, stooping, so it seemed to me, still further over my shoulder.

“Why,” I answered, “the trouble is this: I’ve been sitting here for hours, sitting still goodness only knows how far into the night, trying to think out something to write for a Christmas story. And it won’t go. It can’t be done—not in these awful days.”

“A Christmas story?”

“Yes; you see, Father Time,” I said, glad with the foolish little vanity of my trade to be able to tell him something that I thought enlightening, “all the Christmas stuff, stories and jokes and pictures, are all done, you know, in October.”