

written for, had been waiting for him in the nursery. It occurred to him, now, that he could use that post to put Santa Claus to the proof. He tore a sheet from his scribbling book, and after a half-hour's labor achieved a letter which was intended to read: "Dear Santa Claus—Please write me a letter. Miss Morris laughed because if I believed in Santa Claus and I want a letter because I never saw you. You won't let us see you. I will write to-morrow or some other day about what I want for Christmas. Please excuse mistakes. I must now say good-bye. So good-bye."

The act relieved him like a prayer; for, of itself, it gave Santa Claus the reality of a being to whom a petition could be sent. He dropped his letter into the crack of the attic floor and felt himself confirmed in his faith.

But Miss Morris, as an educator, held that children should not be brought up on lies; and every day she explored his mind for more of this "nursery nonsense"; and every day, she let the cold daylight of common sense in on some cherished corner of his twilight world. The snow that had begun to fall, melting, on the warm earth, had *not* been shoveled over the edges of the clouds by any celestial gardeners cleaning the walks. Jack Frost was *not* a little man with a blue nose who came at night to breathe on the window panes. The dreams of a boy in a warm cot were an affair of the stomach, and there was no such place as Nannie's "Slumberland." Don took refuge behind an obstinate silence from which