

Santa's Little Helper : A Memory

by Daniel Curzon

I was seven when I last went to see Santa Claus. It was at the mall near

where I lived. I was just a typical kid, small frame, nervous, with big dark eyes,

big dreams for Christmas. The line waiting was quite long, and many of the kids

were cranky. So were their parents. So were mine, standing off to the side.

Finally I got my turn on Santa's lap. He was a very big Santa, and his

white beard was real, I think. "And what's your name?" he asked.

"Danny."

"Well, Danny, what do you want for Christmas?"

"I want new pants," I said. "Corduroys."

"Not toys?"

"Can I have toys too?" I said.

"Of course you can. You sound like a very good little boy, asking for

clothes!" He looked down at my sweet, little face.

I didn't say anything. You weren't supposed to brag.

"Anything else?"

"Can you bring some presents for my parents?"

"Aren't you just *wonderful!*" Santa exclaimed. "You even think of others

at this holiday season!" He gave me a gentle pinch on my cheek and adjusted

me on his lap. "My, you're heavy," he said, chuckling.

"And don't forget some gifts for the pagan babies," I said.

Santa grinned and shook his head, just very taken with me as a very

special little boy, I guess. He set me back down on the floor.

"Bye, Santa." I waved and started to turn

away.

"Now you come back here and give Santa a big hug, what do you say?"

"Okay," I said. I was shy, though.

He held out his arms. "Come on now!"

I moved back between his legs and gave him a big hug around his big

belly. But I let go at once.

He smiled. "You got another for Santa?" he said, squeezing me. "Just

one more?"

"If you want," I said.

"You bet I do!" He put his arms around me, and I put mine around him

again, or at least as far as I could reach. This time I squeezed real hard.

"Ho! Ho! Ho!" said Santa as he released me. "You come again next

year, you promise?"

"I promise."

Somehow, just as I turned away, I looked down at Santa's crotch. I

don't why exactly. Because it had been so warm? Anyway, there was a wet spot

right there, where his zipper must have been. The wet spot got bigger and

bigger until he crossed his legs. It looked sticky.

“And thank you for the lovely present you gave me,” Santa exclaimed

as I walked back to my folks, and he took a break. The waiting kids began to

cry and cry.

I guess he was talking about the hug? Oh hell, it was a crummy job. Who

else but parents or pedophiles would put up with children?

