The season of new perspectives

The most joyous season of the year in my home is Christmas. The family gets together, gifts are exchanged, we give thanks for all that we have. This Christmas however, was one that I will never forget. If it weren't for the help of a stranger, turning my perspective on the meaning of the holidays.

This year was hard among most, myself included. My family had their difficulties, my father was away working in Europe over the holiday and winter season. The hustle, bustle and jostle of the holidays were in full spin, the frustrations of the neighbours snowed-in cars, the general hurry within everyone.

The date was December 22nd, my winter break at the time wasn’t like most kids my age. Since my father was away, I spent plenty of time taking care of my siblings over while my mother worked. My grandmother wasn’t the most exciting babysitter, gathered from her lack of interest in anything children. She was an amazing cook, however, her patience tightened with age. Only being twelve years old, I had little curiosity in taking care of my five-year-old brother, I missed my dad and I was beginning to get frustrated with the tantrums over my brothers toy truck. At this point, I called my mother on the phone.

“Mom! Aaron is not listening again, his tornado of mess is spreading throughout the house.” I exclaimed, hoping to hear some good news or something that could help the matter.

“I will be home soon, Claire Bear, you can let him watch television with you if you’d like. I love you. I asked your Nana to take you guys to pick out a Christmas tree, ours is looking rather frail,” she replied, hoping to get me excited about the Christmas events ahead.

“Okay, I will ask her, see you soon,” I answered, happy to hear some good news.

“See you soon, Claire Bear.” my mother says goodbye.

I began to feel better, imagining the aroma of the fresh scent of a crisp, pine, tree. I jumped down the stairs, only to find grandmother, reading her book.

“Nana, could we maybe go get a new tree? Mom suggested that it is looking rather lifeless.” I ask, hoping for a enlightening response.

“We’ll see, maybe after lunch,” she replies blankly, without looking up from what she’s doing.

She hadn’t realized the great importance of this tree. My father always takes my family and I to pick out a Christmas tree. I always knew it was Christmas when I was at the tree farm with my father. Before he left in his business trip, he took us to buy one. Since it was early to be buying one, its lifelike form didn’t last. I began to become frustrated with my grandmother, all I wanted to do was keep the tradition for my father, yet she didn’t realize how important it was. *Why must she be so stubborn!* Heartbroken at the loss of the Christmas tradition, I moved on. I knew very well that the only way to get my grandmother to do something is to get her to either come up with the idea on her own or wait for her to come to her senses. I settled with the second option, so I could enjoy the joy of Christmas with my siblings. I waited. I patiently waited for her to see the joy.

To my luck, we went out into town, where a nearby tree farm was conveniently located.

“Claire Bear, when is dad coming home?’ my brother asked, gleaming with a hope that I would reply with a soon date.

“Soon, Aaron, soon,” I answered, looking down in the worries in his eyes.

I held his hand crossing the street, my sister followed behind. I learned plenty of things taking care of my younger brother over the holidays. For starters, I never knew how much work it entails taking care of someone else, or how it takes an hour to do what I ask of him.

We passed by the Christmas tree farm, perfumed full of the winter pine. I never missed my dad more than in that moment ; the odor brought back many memories. I was gratified, yet still hoping to be hugged tightly by my father. The pit in my stomach grew stronger, my eyes started to water, tears went down my cheek. I never thought I would be this upset over a tree, *There are many trees in this world!* I thought to myself, using the glove to wipe the tears off my face. I remembered how much pleasure Christmas brings me, the pure hope of New Years. My New Year’s resolutions, “*study harder, eat healthier*” *like that’d ever happen*. Realistically, I was thankful to have family in my life like my parents, and extended family. My early New Year’s resolution was to enjoy the things that make me who I am. I remembered, trying to keep myself together.

Out of my despair, I began to become happy in those short moments walking down the snow-filled populated street. To my surprise a young man, dark eyes, yet sparkling eyes. Caught my eyes looking up and down the silhouette of the dim green tree, he noticed my young brother in hand, along with my sister.

“if you like it so much, just take it from me!” he cheerfully expresses,

“I’m sorry, I will be on my way” I murmur, feeling embarrassed and remorseful.

“I’m just messing with ya, darling, but if you’re really interested I’d like you to have it,” he insists, gazing into my eyes.

I smile, quickly observing the kindness of a pure stranger.

“I couldn’t, I...” I reply, trying to resist the offer.

The kind stranger taps my grandmother on the shoulder, her being distracted by the older fella to the right of the tree farm, it doesn’t happen right away. He finally gets her attention.

“This tree, is going for free, can I interest you in it?” he asks, hoping she didn’t mind the interruption from her ditzy daydreaming.

“Oh, why not, as long as you get the handsome fella over there to help me bring it to my car” she charmingly replies.

My Nana always was a player.

Missing my dad more than ever, I still enjoyed the holiday season, funny stories and plenty of love to go around. The Christmas tree was decorated. From the gift of a stranger I learned that a tree doesn’t make Christmas, it’s the people you surround yourself with. As cliché as it sounds, it’s true. The kindness of strangers am I right? The blessings of Christmas are shared between the people you love, not with materialistic or universal items. Few can say that they’d enjoy the holiday season without these things, but other perceptions can affect our lives for the better cause of society as a whole.