



I AM LOST

By Anne

I AM LOST

I am lost. Where am I? I am confused. Will I ever find my way? It's dark. I'm lost. It's very dark.

Wait! Things are beginning to lighten up. I see a window. I see the round moon. And there's Santa's sleigh crossing the round moon. And what's that—a moon beam—a moon beam going from the moon to this window. And Santa with his sleigh of eight reindeer are sliding down the moon beam. And look at Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer in front of all the others.

They stop at this window.

"Jump in," says Santa. "We have work to do and we need you."

"Why me?" say I.

"Because," says Santa.

"Why because? Because why?"

"Just because."

So I jump in the sleigh. And it's a sleigh full of presents. Next thing I know, we are in Mexico. We are at an orphanage. We have pink wrapped presents for the little girls and blue wrapped presents for the little boys. And if you look around before giving the children their presents, you will see no one has any toys.

"Come, come children. Come get your presents," says Santa.

"Let's go get our presents," say the children.

"I love this," says a little girl after unwrapping her present. "I love this doll. It's a Raggedy Ann doll. I love it. Thank you Santa."

"And I love my present," says a little boy after unwrapping his present. "It's a soccer ball. Just what I wanted."

"Well, I'm glad all of you love your presents," says Santa.

"All the girls got Raggedy Ann dolls and all the boys got soccer balls," continued Santa. "But you can switch around for a while and play with each other's presents. But right now let's enjoy a nice hot meal."

"Yay," yell the children. "Thank you Santa."

And they all sit down to eat.

I open my eyes right before the alarm goes off. Ring... I shut off the alarm and get out of bed. What a dream!

“There is so much hunger in this world,” I say to myself. “Not just for food but for recognition and for love. How can I help make this world a better place? Don’t know. I’ll try and think of something. Meanwhile, I’ll think of getting to work on time.”

I get ready for work and then off I go.

I work at the daycare center. I go there because I love to be with children. I’m the only one working there who doesn’t have children. But I consider the children there, my children. And they ARE my children when they are with me and I am taking care of them.

“Hi Doris, hi Sally, hi Mark,” I say as I am walking through the door.

“Oh here is Andy,” I say as Andy’s father brings him in.

“Bye Daddy,” says Andy. But Andy’s father doesn’t answer him. He is too busy talking on his phone.

“Hi Andy,” I say, “How’s my little man today?”

“I’m fine,” says Andy.

“Let’s sit down at the table,” I say to all the children. “Let’s have breakfast.”

As usual daycare is wonderful. We are three teachers and twenty children. We all enjoy our time together.

After breakfast we all go out in the yard to play.

“Louise,” Larry says to me, “can you push me on the swing?”

“Sure, Larry.”

“I love to go up in the swing,” says Larry, “and see all the houses and backyards and blue sky and white clouds. Then come down and see the green grass and yellow dandelions.”

“Yes, Larry,” I say. “Come, let’s go on the swing and have an adventure.”

Swing, swing, swing—I push Larry on the swing. We are both content.

After a while Andy comes up to me.

“Louise,” says Andy, “can Larry go on the seesaw with me?”

“Ask Larry,” I say to Andy.

“Larry,” says Andy. “Do you want to go on the seesaw with me?”

“OK,” says Larry.

So I stop pushing Larry on the swing. He gets off and the two boys go on the seesaw together.

“And what is the song we sing on the seesaw?” I ask them.

And we all sing it:

“Seesaw

Margery Daw

Jack shall have a new master

He shall earn

But a penny a day

Because he can’t work any faster.”

And the two boys have a great time on the seesaw.

“Time for a story,” Teacher Patti calls out. “Let’s go inside and read a story.”

So the children go inside and sit in an area on the floor and Teacher Patti reads them a story. The story ends with a song:

“Three blind mice

Three blind mice

See how they run

See how they run

They all run after the butcher’s wife

She cuts off their tails with a carving knife

Have you ever seen such a sight in your life?

As three blind mice.”

“What does the butcher’s wife do with the mice’s tails she cuts off?” asks Alice.

“Maybe she puts it in the stew we’re gonna have for lunch,” says Billy.

“Ugh,” says Alice, “I’m not eating the stew.”

"Then what will you eat?" asks Billy.

"OK," says Teacher Patti, "let's wash our hands and sit down for lunch."

And so they do. And what's for lunch? The stew of course.

"Where are the mice's tails?" asks Alice

"You already ate them," says Billy. "But we are having ice cream for dessert. Maybe it's made with mice's milk."

"Ugh," says Alice.

"Well, if you don't want your ice cream, I'll eat it," says Billy.

"No, I'll eat it," says Alice. "Besides, I don't believe anything you say."

After the ice cream I announce, "Naptime. Everybody go to your cot and lie down."

And so they do. I wish I had a cot, I think to myself.

After naptime the children break up into small groups and are involved with different activities until they are picked up to go home.

"Hi Daddy" or "Hi Mommy," they greet their parents when they come to pick them up.

"Bye everybody," the children say as they go out the door.

Here comes Andy's dad to pick up Andy.

"Hi Daddy," says Andy.

But Andy's dad is on the phone again and doesn't hear Andy.

"We learned new song today, Daddy. I'll sing it for you."

"Three blind mice

Three blind mice

See how they run

See how they run"

"Andy," yells his dad. "Stop shouting. Can't you see I'm on the phone!"

TWELVE YEARS LATER

Another school shooting—Alarms go off in a suburban high school in a fancy suburban neighborhood.

It's Andy. He has a gun. He's in the school hallway shooting everyone he sees. Everyone rushes out of the school as fast as they can go.

Officer O'Malley is in the school hallway. He confronts Andy and also has a gun. They just look at each other. Neither of them shoot.

"Why are you doing this?" asks Officer O'Malley.

"Because I don't like them and they don't like me. BETTER HATED THAN NOTHING."

"Come here," says Officer O'Malley. "I like you. Put down your gun and I'll put down mine."

They both drop their guns. Andy rushes into Officer O'Malley's arms and sobs and sobs.

"I love you," says Officer O'Malley. "I love you."

THE END

MORE STORIES AND POEMS TO COME