

7th English-language Creative Writing Marathon - Christmas edition

Students from year 9, 2nde, 1ère, and Tle came together on Friday, 6th December to unleash their imagination and craft amazing stories & poems.

With snacks shared and ideas exchanged, participants enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere where they could write freely, and seek advice from our supportive English teachers. The energy was palpable as everyone dove into their writing, and many were thrilled at the possibility of having their texts published on our school website!







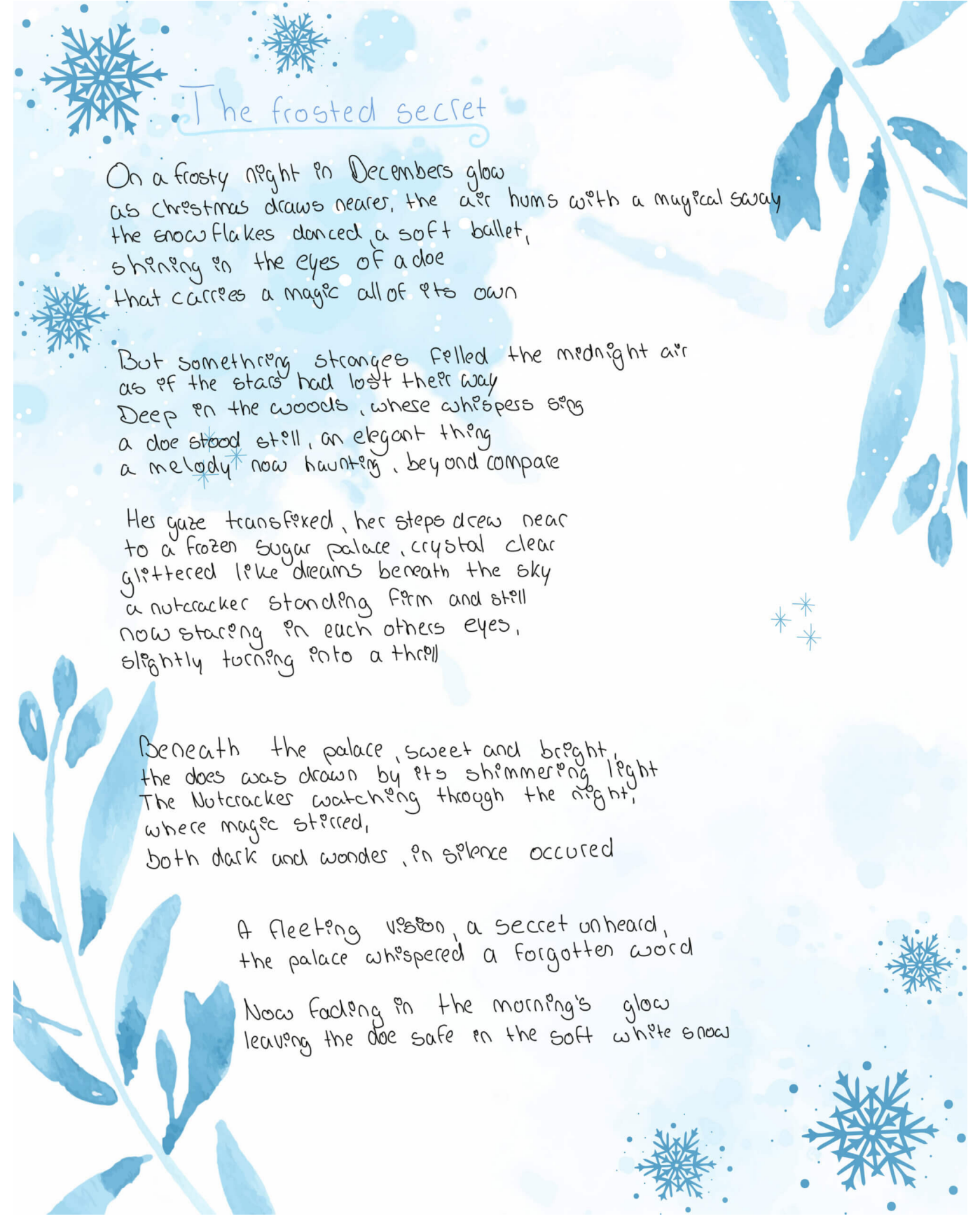






A huge thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to the success of this event. Here are some of the texts that emerged from this night of creativity:

The Frosted Secret



The frosted secret

On a frosty night in December's glow
as Christmas draws nearer, the air hums with a magical sway
the snowflakes danced a soft ballet,
shining in the eyes of a doe
that carries a magic all of its own

But something stranger's filled the midnight air
as if the stars had lost their way
Deep in the woods, where whispers sing
a doe stood still, an elegant thing
a melody now haunting, beyond compare

Her gaze transfixed, her steps drew near
to a frozen sugar palace, crystal clear
glittered like dreams beneath the sky
a nutcracker standing firm and still
now staring in each other's eyes,
slightly turning into a thrill

Beneath the palace, sweet and bright,
the doe was drawn by its shimmering light
The Nutcracker watching through the night,
where magic stirred,
both dark and wonder, in silence occurred

A fleeting vision, a secret unheard,
the palace whispered a forgotten word

Now fading in the morning's glow
leaving the doe safe in the soft white snow

The chimney

On a sweet Christmas Night, the kind when you can hear the snow flakes tingling the windows, the warmth of the fire is still hugging you dearly, the smell of that freshly baked sweet potato pie. That night, when you can still see the Christmas tree's lights under your bedroom door. I was sleeping comfortably when my body decided to turn itself against me; I had to go to the bathroom... Must have been because of all that Glühwein I drank right before. I decided to not go into the downstairs bathroom, like I normally do. There just was this weird energy down the hall, I couldn't risk it. So because this isn't a horror story, I went into the guests' bathroom and then back to bed. But then again I couldn't sleep; I just became insanely thirsty. At that point, I didn't have any other choice but go fetch a glass of fresh water downstairs. As I came down the creaky stairs, I couldn't help but imagine how cool it'd be if I died abducted by aliens, on a Christmas night, just for water. Once I arrived at the fridge's fresh water dispenser, I quickly drank it to the last sip. Recalling that moment, I think that was the best water I had ever drunk. I was just turning around to go back to the stairs, when my head snapped back and had to turn around just to be sure of what I witnessed. I think that at that moment, my heart really skipped a whole bet. There were boots in the chimney, and I think I might have even heard a deep voice coughing. In a matter of seconds, all of my senses were heightened and I grabbed the first self defence object I could find: a baguette? Doesn't matter! I did not have the time to change my weapon! „Who are you, and what are you doing in my by house, even weirder, why are you STUCK IN MY BLOODY CHIMNEY ?!“, I shouted, scared that I might even get an answer. „Come on now, state your name and your date of birth“, I then went on, like some weird scared police officer, embarrassingly attempting to intimidate him.

“Ehm... Hi, Alex, it's me... Dad” I was in shock.

“Ok, wow. I am glad to see you came back from your business trip, but what are you doing in the chimney!!” “I think that I forgot my keys.” “And, what? Your first reflex is to go down the chimney, not to call me first?” “OH!... I guess I didn't think of that... Well, that surely is a weird way of greeting your Dad back. Now hurry up and help me, I am not going to stay here forever, am I?” I thought for a moment, and then responded „You got there on your own, you're going to get out of there alone too. I am going back to bed. Goodnight, Dad.”

The End.

Friday the 24th

FRIDAY THE 24TH

By Arto Tchalikian

PROLOGUE

My name is Gabriel. Gabriel Sins. My family consists of just me, my parents, and my older sister, Emma. My parents are really kind people. Although my sister can be annoying, she is also nice. My family and I do some odd tradition of going camping every Christmas Eve. We told that to our friends, and our friends told to their other friends... In short, less and less places are available for camping.

My dad rented out a little house in a forest that is pretty far away. Other nearby forests are taken by other campers, or there's no shelter. It was pretty cold, but we came prepared. My family and I came to the little wooden house to stay until the next morning. The house was in a forest where it only had Norway Spruces. Norway Spruces are the types of Christmas trees you see almost everywhere. Apparently, the rent was pretty cheap and the house was pretty comfortable inside. The rent was so cheap because the previous owner said he was "being watched". But who in their right mind would stay out there in a forest? The previous owner must be hallucinating. It must be a squirrel or another animal.

Chapter 1: Everything is fine...

We set in the house, packed everything and so on. I tested out the sofa and it was pretty nice and cozy. The electricity was perfectly fine, and so was the water. After half a day of hard work of putting on decorations for the Christmas spirit, I was able to play outside in the snow for a bit with my sister. There was much more snow than other camping spots, we had fun together. Building snowmen, having snowball fights, etc. In the meantime, my parents found the Norway Spruce at the nearest distance from our house, then started decorating it. It was pretty big, so we did need more time than usual. We had fun on our first day. We were only staying for one night, the Christmas night. After hours of hard work, the decorations of the tree were completely finished. It gave plenty of Christmas spirit. It felt good looking at what you have achieved with hard work and dedication.

Minute after minute, hour after hour, daytime became nighttime. Daytime was shorter than usual as it is winter. We were watching a few Christmas movies together, which was pretty nice. It felt good and cozy with everyone. Although it felt like someone is watching us from the window, nobody was there whenever I looked outside. Just the cold wind blowing with the snow. Everything was fine. Until...

Chapter 2: ...right?

The lights started to flicker. They started flickering more and more often as time passed. It became frustrating the more it flickered. "Bloody hell, what's happening?" said my dad, angered of the lights flickering. Until suddenly, everything stops. The lights are turned off. The TV screen was pitch black. It was dark. Very dark. Pitch black. I couldn't see a thing. I stood up from the sofa, searching for the light switch. I found it, but it didn't do anything. It was no use. My mother took out a flashlight to light out the way.

"Seems the power's out. Guess someone's got to turn it back on. The electrical panel is in the basement. Anyone brave enough to turn it back on?" said my mom, holding the flashlight. "I could go," I said bravely, "Nothing is bad with going to the basement for some time, right?". "Sure thing, but just hurry up. The heating's off and it's getting colder every minute." Said my sister. "Well, I'll do as fast as I can, I guess. Are there other flashlights around here?" I added. "I'm pretty sure there's one on the desk next to the bathroom upstairs." Answered my dad. "Good. I'm on it!" I said before going upstairs to get the flashlight.

It was very dark, but there was a lighter nearby that I could use. I tried to turn it on. It worked, but it took some time. It was dark. I was only able to see what was near the lighter. It was dark. I felt like being watched. I stepped into the corridor blindly, without knowing what would come. The previous owner was right about feeling like being watched. The corridor wasn't going to get any brighter anytime soon. After walking into the corridor, my heart started beating fast. There's nothing to worry

about normally, but my instincts tell me that something dangerous is coming. I don't know where, I don't know what, I don't know when. As I stepped through the corridor more and more, I started seeing the flashlight from afar. I quickly grab it and rush downstairs. Something doesn't feel safe upstairs.

Chapter 3: The basement

I rushed to the basement with the flashlight in my hand and the lighter in my pocket, fearing the dangers of what could be hiding up there. If only I knew what horrors would happen next... As I rushed downstairs, my family is trying to put on a fire. I took a few winter clothes and went downstairs to turn the power back on. As I entered the basement, I carefully went down the stairs, listening if there's any unusual noise. But the only noise here are my own footsteps. As I stepped foot in the basement, noises like water dripping can be heard. I turn on my flashlight, looking for clues of where the water could be from. It seems it came from further in the basement. As I stepped further inside, I could see an electricity panel. That way, I could bring back power to the entire house. I could see a fire axe further away as well. I open the electrical panel quickly and turn on all the switches, but it made a mildly loud noise. Footsteps can be heard approaching the fire axe, then approaching me. I quickly hid away under a table, trying not to be spotted. Luckily, I was able to turn on all the lights. Now the only thing I have to do is to rush outside the basement. Doing it now won't do any good, he'll spot me. As he passes by, he starts looking around, trying to find whoever was the one who turned on the lights in the electrical panel. I hold my breath and crawl to the other side of the table while making the least noise possible. I managed to crawl to the other side and peek at who is holding the fire axe. He looked big and strong, and most likely a man. He had a mask on. One filled with holes all over the face. There are also bloodstains on his mask and clothes. It is a madman. He must've murdered people.

While trying to get up, I hit something. It made a noise. He heard it. He quickly approached me, swinging his axe to my head. And all of a sudden, I woke up. I try to catch my breath from the serious moment that I just escaped. But something doesn't feel right. I look around. I am on a hospital bed, with my hands cuffed to the bed itself. The man in my dream appeared again, slicing off the heads of many other people, including my unconscious family. It's a matter of time until it's my turn. It was all a dream. Or was it a memory?

Moon from the sun

The sun shines bright

Too bright

The moon reflects

Just perfect

The sun wants to be like the moon.

Especially in the afternoon

The moon wants to be like the sun

But then it would be a gun

Optimistic is the sun

Realistic the moon

The sun will eventually burn you
When you enjoy the view
The moon will never scare you away
in any way

Too bright is the sun
Too bright
The moon reflects
Just perfect

Blamed by earth for everything
The sun
The solution for everything.
The moon

Opposites attract
Eclipse

The sun from the moon

The moon can't express itself.
Quiet self
The sun outshines everyone
It won

Always trying its best
Never valued
Always treated like trash
Always blamed
Always bottling everything up

Explodes soon
The sun

Just a reflection
Always there
But barely noticed

Only just a reflection
Never its own light
The moon

Trying to help

Doing their best

Failing still

Exploding soon

The sun

Needs others

But others don't need the moon

Doing their best

But being too quiet to share

Overshadowed

Opposites attract

Eclipse

Frosted Delusions

It was winter 1969, when Sylvia woke up in her bed interrupted by a sound downstairs. She turned to her window where snowflakes tumbled lazily from the sky. When she looked through the window, she saw footsteps left on her snow-dusted rooftop. Everything felt different even though it was a normal winter night. She spun around, and there he was: Santa Claus himself. His crimson coat glowed in the light of the tree, and his eyes sparkled with kindness. Frightened by his presence she fell to the floor.

„Well hello there!“ said Santa in a soothing and deep voice. His smile was wide and bright just like she imagined when she was a kid. His beard was the longest and the bushiest that she'd ever seen. It was as white as the snow, and his eyes were glowing in the dim light of the fire in the fireplace. She'd never thought that she would meet him because throughout her whole life she believed that he was made up. But turns out that he was real and alive. Standing in front of her.

„Santa?“ she whispered, her voice trembling.

„Is this Michigan?“ he asked.

„This is Colorado“ she answered with a small chuckle.

And just like that they started laughing. While he was laughing from pure joy and gaiety, she was laughing hysterically and in panic not knowing if he was actually real or if she'd gone insane.

„You're Sylvia Johnson, right?“ he asked while pointing his wrinkly finger at her.

„How did you know?“ she gasped surprised, already knowing the incoming answer.

„Well what did you expect, I am Santa Claus!“ he screamed with pride.

„And because I want you to remember me I am going to give you this doll that I specifically made for you.“

She reached out, delicately looking at the doll that resembled her. She was in awe of this present. It was so realistic that she felt like she was looking at a mirror. Pleased and joyful she hugged him and thanked him for the present. From this day on Santa visited her every night telling her all kinds of stories about his life and all the places he visited. They built a strong bond and she even viewed him as a friend.

One day she encountered her friend on the street. She told her about the late night talks she's been having with her „friend“. Moments later, a familiar figure emerged from the snow-dusted street—a broad man in a red coat with a long white beard. His cheeks were rosy, his eyes bright, and his laugh,

as always, was infectious.

„Santa!“ Sylvia called, waving.

„Sylvia, my dear!“ Santa bellowed, his voice carrying over the din of the city. He pulled her into a warm hug, his coat smelling of pine and cookies. „You’re looking as radiant as ever.“

She laughed, brushing snow off his sleeve. „You’re always so full of compliments. C’mon, I want you to meet someone special.“

They strolled through the park, the snow crunching underfoot. Sylvia chatted excitedly about her life and her plans, while Santa nodded along, chiming in with his usual wisdom and good-natured humour. Finally they reached her friend, Pearl, who was waiting.

„Theres she is!“ she said, beaming with joy. „You’re going to love her.“

She walked up to Pearl with a big smile on her face and flushed cheeks from the cold. Pearl stood, curious, as Sylvia gestured next to her.

„Say hi to my friend !“ she said, but there was no one there. There never was.

The Day Santa Died

It happened one year apart.

No snow, not by any chance a “White Christmas”.

Just rain.

Tons of rain, or were those my tears?

I don’t remember.

Or do I just not want to remember?

I should have known it from the start.

When they said there wouldn’t be a White Christmas.

“Not by any chance.”

We always had snow during the holidays.

Always.

But not that year.

The year everything fell apart.

The 25th of December always had a chokehold on me.

Christmas was just magical. Something about it made me instantly happy. Christmas time was by far the best time of the year. Not only for me, also for my family. For some families Christmas is no big deal, but believe me, when I tell you that my family is special. Christmas was the biggest event, bigger than all of our five birthdays combined. Gingerbread houses, more than 20 different types of cookies, 5 Christmas trees, lights, tons of decoration (more than you could ever imagine, even our bed sheets and curtains had a Christmas pattern at that time of the year), and of course the presents! I feel like my mom started buying Christmas presents for the next year already one day after the holidays and every year, she got more creative. 2 years ago she built my little sister an automatic food dispenser for her cat Snowflake (See? Even our cat is named after a Christmas-themed thing), so she can be fed automatically when we're not at home. You can't even imagine my sister's eyes when she unwrapped that gift. For me that was the magic of Christmas. Not even the gifts that I received. For me the magic was seeing my siblings that happy and excited, because they still believed in Santa. I think that was what made it so special for them. I never thought that it would be that fulfilling to have younger siblings and it makes it definitely easier that they're not 2 but 12 years apart. Being the older sister fits me pretty well, I think. I promised my mom that I would always protect them, but I didn't know how much they would really need me one day.

The memories.

The flashbacks.

They're back.

Overcoming me like a sudden lightning.

The day after the accident. Seeing them that sad made my heart burst into two. I was heartbroken too, I almost couldn't manage it, couldn't breathe and I definitely couldn't manage the funeral, but seeing these little beings, who shouldn't be worried about anything at all, that down, made me depressed.

Okay stop it!

I want to erase these memories from my mind. This isn't supposed to be a sad story. I wanted to remind myself of the positive, mesmerising and magical effect Christmas had on me, but it's just not the same anymore. My therapist recommended writing this Christmas appreciation thing to make the holidays bearable for me this year. After everything that happened Last Christmas. But it is not useful at all. Now I hate Christmas. Everything about it makes me upset and seeing all the holly jolly faces, the cinnamon scent and all of those terribly tacky decorations make me sick! I somehow think that they don't deserve to be happy, because I will never be able again. But somehow this anger is not a big help, because only a few moments after I'm down again, all parts of my body go numb and I break down.

I still don't remember every part of the day it happened, my therapist says its PTSD, and my brain tries to erase most of that day, because the memories are too traumatising to process, but unluckily I can remember the most traumatising memories of that day as if they happened yesterday. The blood running from our chimney, my mother's terribly loud screams, my uncle trying to re-animate him, me trying to protect my siblings by running away with them and playing in my room, trying to hide my tears from them.

It could have been the most perfect Christmas of all time.

My mother invites our whole family every year, but that year was the first time everyone, like really everyone, agreed to come. We prepared our house for decades and that year we really had the biggest and brightest Christmas decorations of the whole town. We even had inflatable reindeers and a sleigh, which costed my mother 6 weeks to prepare. Even my brother, who was only 5 years old at that time, helped decorating the 8 ft. tall tree my father fell. My 7 years old sister and I prepared the dining table and helped my mother with the turkey, the Brussel sprouts, the potato casserole and of course the chestnut cake, my mother's specialty. Nearly everything was prepared when my family arrived. The atmosphere was incredibly harmonious, almost too good to be true. The only thing missing was the snow. That should have been an indicator. That should have warned me. From the most perfect Christmas Eve to the worst nightmare, the worst morning I have ever experienced.

After this great evening the morning was supposed to become even greater. My father always dressed up as Santa the 25th of December, but last year he decided to actually climb down the chimney to surprise my siblings. Looking back at it now it was the silliest, most dangerous idea he ever had, but back then it sounded perfect, funny and safe. Even in our worst nightmares we could never have imagined what happened next. Everything seemed so safe. We prepared the chimney. We made it safe for him. Everything went great during all of the rehearsals we had. We had like 10-15 rehearsals and he wasn't harmed in any of them. This morning just changed everything.

When I try to remember how it exactly happened, all I see is blur. Everything happened so fast. My mother called my siblings and promised them a big surprise. When they rushed down the stairs, my father was supposed to climb down, but he somehow got stuck. My mother tried to help him, but when she pulled him down, he fell on his head and immediately started bleeding. Now everything happened way too fast to process all of it. My mother screams, cries, calls for my uncle, he tries to re-animate him...

Meanwhile I'm frozen. It takes 2 minutes, at least, for me to realize what's really going on. As fast as I can I grab my brother's and sister's hands and rush up the stairs. My room becomes our safe place, while my heart is still beating faster than ever. I try to hide it, but I need to cry. It just overcomes me. I try to be strong for my siblings, but I can't. My sister, not knowing, what's going on, asks me: "Why are you crying? Is Santa dead now?" I'm not able to answer. I'm mentally absent.

The next 11 months were hard. But this Christmas will be a lot harder. Christmas has lost its magic. For all of us.

When will this pain and pressure on my chest go away?

Will my siblings be able to love Christmas again?

Will I ever be able to survive Christmas without thinking about him?

This Christmas not only my father, but also Santa died.

And with that also my unconditional love for Christmas.