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Merry Christmas, Mom —M. B.

For Sal and Emrys —S. S.





In the old days,
Santa didn't have Christmas.









All year he made toys at the North Pole,
which he loaded up in his sleigh each Christmas Eve,
then flew all over the world to place under trees.



When he got home, he slept.
And when he woke up on Christmas morning, he went back to work.
That's it.



"That's it?" asked a bear
who lived near the North Pole
and was just passing by on the way to his cave.
"Santa doesn't do anything special?"

"He sleeps in . . ." said the elves. "An extra half an hour."

The bear frowned.
"Look, I love to sleep. But still.
It's Christmas."

The elves were embarrassed.

"We should do something special for Santa,"
they said.