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MARTIN *and the*  
CHRISTMAS  
TREE *A Storybook Tale  
of the Tannenbaum*

# Home from School

Young Martin waited patiently.

It was his first day home from school for the Christmas holiday, and Martin was excited. He had planned a surprise—he was going to walk his father home from his work at the copper mine.

The wind blew cold outside, but in the small shed that served as the mine's headquarters a bright fire kept Martin warm.

Martin loved the Christmas holiday, not only because it gave him a break from his hard studies at school, but also because he loved being home with his family. Martin lived at his school—a boarding school—and Christmas vacation was his first chance to come home all year.

In years past, Martin's father, Hans, had made the long carriage trip to school to pick Martin up. But this year the work at the mine was much too busy, and Martin's father could not get away. So Martin rode with a friend and arrived home early on Christmas Eve day.







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His mother Margaret had been so happy to see him. “Merry Christmas, Martin!” she cheered when he ran through the door. She hugged him and kissed him. “Now,” she said with a joyful tear in her eye, “our Christmas can be complete. The whole family will be together to celebrate our Savior’s birth.”

“Where’s Father?” Martin asked. It was already late in the afternoon and Hans was usually home by now.

“He is still at the mine,” said Margaret. “Your father has been working long hours this year and won’t be home until late tonight. He’s fortunate to be off work for Christmas at all.”

“I’ll go meet him at the mine,” smiled Martin. “I’ll pick *him* up this Christmas holiday.”

“What a wonderful idea, Martin,” said his mother. “But bundle up tight. The mountain air gets cold.” So Martin put on his warmest gloves, wrapped a woolen scarf around his neck and set off through the snow to the copper mine.







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# Surprise

The sun had set, and Martin continued to wait for his father.

Just then, the shed door flew open and a sharp burst of winter air filled the room. In stomped Martin's father, Hans. His hands and clothes were black from a long day of digging in the mine. But his cheeks were rosy from the brisk night air.

He closed the door behind him and let out a shudder. "My, my," said Hans, "I can't remember a colder Christmas Eve."

"This fire certainly feels fine after a long day in the cold, doesn't it?" he asked, thinking Martin was one of his fellow workers.

"It certainly does," laughed Martin. "Almost as fine as the fireplace at home."

Hans' smile stretched from ear to ear. "Martin! What a happy Christmas surprise!" He picked Martin up in his strong arms and danced about the room.

"Merry Christmas, Father," Martin grinned. He didn't even notice the grime that smudged from his father's face onto his own. "I missed you!"







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# MARTIN and the CHRISTMAS TREE The Storybook of the Traditional Tale

This booklet lovingly recounts the traditional tale of how a young boy named Martin living in 16th-century Germany was inspired to place an evergreen tree in his home and decorate it to remember the starry night of Christ's birth.



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