

The Magic Stocking

I recall a Thanksgiving weekend some time ago. I visited my daughter, Amanda and my four year old granddaughter at the time, Kaileigh in Colorado. During my visit, we went to a craft store to gather supplies to decorate my granddaughter's tree for her room. She wouldn't leave the store without taking home one of those little red furry Christmas stockings with the white tops--one just right for her size.

We got everything home and together crafted decorations to place on the tree using sparkles, doilies, ribbon and glass beads. Quite pleased with our efforts, we stood back and admired the happy little tree. Kaileigh said it needed just one thing to make it perfect. She took this little red stocking, looped its tie over the top branch of the tree and claimed it, HER tree!

Since my Thanksgiving visit to Colorado would serve as our Christmas together, the adults decided to place their presents under the tree to open after Kaileigh's afternoon nap. To complete our surprise, I placed a gift of watercolor paints in Kaileigh's little red stocking at the top of "her" tree. Later in talking it over we decided nighttime would be a better time to exchange gifts. Hurriedly we gathered all the gifts before Kaileigh woke and placed them in the front closet to await this evening's festivities.

Just as we were finished tucking away the presents, Kaileigh woke from her afternoon nap. Her mom and I were in kitchen preparing a snack when we heard this little gasp. Kaileigh raced into the kitchen, her face aglow with the golden radiance of a child's joy.

"Nana, Mommy---guess what...I have a magic stocking. Look what the stocking gave me! He brought these paints. I have a magic stocking! Aren't I lucky?" Amanda and I smiled each other as we realized I had left the paints in the red stocking when we gathered the gifts for evening.

I peaked around the corner to watch Kaileigh race back out to the tree in the living room and reached her little hand deep inside "her stocking" to see if there were more goodies. She shrugged her shoulders when she came up empty handed. Happily accepting what was, she hugged the paints tightly to her heart and rocked them lovingly as though they were a new-born babe.

On the plane half-way home, I found myself struck by the memory of Kaileigh's stocking. I thought wouldn't it be wonderful when we reached our hand into the stocking of the unknown and the new of life, we could experience the same positive expectation of a child as gifts appearing in her Christmas stocking? And wouldn't it be wonderful if we could be as grateful as Kaileigh for whatever small miracle the stocking of life offered us--even though we might have anticipated more.

I am very blessed by Kaileigh and her magic stocking and the rekindled wonder and magic they gave me.