



THAT BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS BY FRANK H. SWEET

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It was the night before Christmas—and stormy. "Squash, squash!" went the wheels of the carriage in the mud. "Whew-ew-ew!" whistled the wind. And it blew Peter's hat out into the middle of the road. "Whoa!" yelled Peter and climbed down from his high seat. The princess poked her head out of the window. "What's the matter?" she asked. "My hat blew off," Peter told her, "and the wheel is stuck in the mud, miss."

"Peter is going to find some one to help with the carriage, and I will stay until he comes back." And when Peter had gone the princess slipped off the long red cloak, and underneath it she wore a shining silken gown, and around her neck was a collar of pearls. "And now if you will lend me an apron," she said, "we will pop the corn."

going to give them such a Christmas?" "The little girls, miss?" "Yes. They are so sweet and brave! And I have the presents in my trunk that I was going to carry to the other children. But they will have so much that they won't miss them, and I shall spend my Christmas in a plain little house, but it will be a joyful house, Peter."

Little girls with twinkling eyes. "Oo-oh!" cried the little girls, who had never seen a Teddy bear before. And that was the beginning of the most wonderful day of their lives, for all day the tree went "tinkle, tinkle," as they foraged in its branches for bonbons. And the chicken dinner was a delicious success. And in the afternoon they all took a ride in the princess' sleigh, with Peter driving on the box, and when at last he set them down on their own humble doorstep and lifted little Jessie in his arms the princess smiled at them radiantly from under her plumed hat.

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