

## OLE MARY'S CHRISTMAS STORY

by Duane Starkey

I was headed cross town planning a story to write. Wanting one that was appealing for Christmas Night.  
Snow falling on crowds hustling down the walk, all rushing at Christmas with no time to talk.

Then I saw a bag-lady hobbling along, with a smile on her face and humming a song.  
I stopped her and asked where she was headed, not sure if her answer was one I dreaded.  
Her eyes were twinkling instead of blurry, filled with peace instead of worry.  
She pointed down in her basket at little bundles of paper, proud of her efforts and all the labor.  
Brushing blowing hair and shuffling cold feet, she said these are presents for my friends on the street.

This is a scarf for Henry a crippled VET and that's a pair of gloves for old Lynette.  
This is a comb for young Suzy, even though she thinks I'm an old floozy  
This is a cap for Bill, cause he's confused in his mind and losing his will  
She paused for a moment and spoke with pride, struggling with pain and tears to hide  
This picture frame is for me, so when I get my son's picture everyone can see  
What a fine man he has turned out to be. I don't know where he is and I don't have anything to give him  
but my prayers. She brushed the tears and gave a twisted smile, then she asked about me.  
Where is your family and are you going to spend Christmas with them?

My thoughts turned inward as I struggled to say, I'll be alone this Christmas Holiday.

Then the woman took me by the hand, then said you are welcome to visit us if you can.  
My name is Mary and I would love to be your friend, while ole Saint Nick comes round the bin.  
I gave her my card as I walked away, promising to visit them on Christmas Day.  
My thoughts were mixed as I planned what to say, all about values of story themes to play.  
Choose a famous star visiting children center or fireman saving dog in frozen winter.  
Either of these would attract both screen and **Net**, suffering children or drowning pet.  
Fortune and fame for one or the other, or lil ole Mary's unselfish love for sister and brother.

So I chose Mary's story to tell, like the original **Mary** Christmas story so well  
Unselfish love given by a stranger, born of low estate sleeping in a **manger**.

12-23-2013