

**Concurs  
de creație literară  
în limba engleză**

*High School*

**WINTER**

**WONDERLAND**

ediția a VIII-a



BIBLIOTECA JUDEȚEANĂ

*Gh. Asachi* IAȘI

2018





## *Winter Wonderland*

Lucrările premiate la a VIII-a ediție a Concursului de creație literară în limba engleză *Winter Wonderland*, organizat de Compartimentul *American Corner* al Bibliotecii Județene „Gh. Asachi” Iași



**Juriul** a fost format din:

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  - *Sofia Rivera*
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- 
- Lucrările publicate respectă variantele originale transmise de către participanți
  - Juriul a punctat, în principal, creativitatea, originalitatea și implicarea autorilor

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**ISSN 2458-0287**

**ISSN-L 2458-0287**



# WINTER WONDERLAND



BIBLIOTECA JUDEȚEANĂ  
*Gh. Asachi* IAȘI  
2018

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*Highschool*





## *A miracle from heavens*

**Petrovici Andreea**

10<sup>th</sup> Grade, Administrative  
Business Highschool, Iași



It's morning again ...but it's not an ordinary morning, it's the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> of December, the Christmas Eve. I'm looking outside my window and I see the abundant fluffy snow covering the frozen ground. The cold winter wind is slightly moving the empty tree branches.

While shining flowers of silver are sewing themselves on the windows, a cheery fire is slightly cracking in the fireplace. On the hill, sleighs appear in a line. It's the children who have no worries and are enjoying the winter landscape.

I lazily come out of my house and find myself immersed into the ocean of snow which surrounds me; from time to time the oppressive breath of the blizzard makes its presence known.

What is Snow? Frozen Tears. That's what the children said when I asked them, as they were hurrying back to the hill. I step forward on the soft and fluffy snow carpet ...

I stop randomly in front of a house and look through its window. In there I see two children running joyfully through the house while their mum is kneading with love the dough for the sponge cake. The father is arranging the last ornaments into the Christmas tree... a happy family. The snow is squeaking under my feet as I am heading towards a group of children that are rehearsing their carols which they are going to sing at people's houses, sharing the burning heat in their hearts.





The dusk stretches and the blizzard grows more and more powerful, but the Christian homes are full of warmth; and this warmth does not come from the greedy stoves that devour log after log.

I return home, while the snow gently falls, like sifted flour. I step slowly towards the armchair near the window, with a mug full of steaming hot cocoa. I look through the window, deepened in my thoughts, when I suddenly see a bright light that splits the sky. There are two wonderful creatures, surrounded in purity and in dazzling white. They have wings and with small steps through the heavy snow, they are advancing towards my house...They are angels!

Amazed by what is happening, I run to the door to welcome them. They smile and tell me that they are on a mission on Earth: they are about to help an orphan who is living under the bridge nearby. I invite the angels into my humble home and I bring them gingerbread and hot cookies, freshly taken from the oven. The angels say that the poor child is in great need of a loving family and that there is no one to take care of his needs. My heart breaks into thousands of pieces when I hear that that little boy is all alone, in this terrible frost. Together with the angels, we decide to go from doorstep to doorstep to find someone who could help him.

We walk therefore through the heavy snow and through the cold wind that blows hard and we knock on every door, to ask for help from the people with gentle hearts. Everyone is willing to help and they give us food, thick clothes and warm drinks. We feel a little disappointed that we cannot find a home for the little boy, but to our surprise, the last door that opens is our luck. There lives a young widow, who welcomes us into her home smiling. When she hears our story, she offers to take the boy under her roof and to take care of him properly, from now on. When the boy first sees his future mommy, he loves her from the first moment. And the woman loves the boy mutually.

We leave the two hugging, and the angels fly back to their heavens. I feel happy, realising that I was able to help the poor thing and offer him a home.

Now, I'm looking at the snowflakes that wander the greyish night sky and smile, knowing that everyone has quieted down to their homes, bearing peace within their souls. It is Winter Wonderland!





## Winter Wonderland

**Dediu Amelia-Bianca**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Varlaam Mitropolitul"  
Highschool, Iași



I'm an actor... Every year, for Christmas, I become Santa Claus... I visit different families and play my role for their children. Each year, I meet all kinds of parents and children. I hear a lot of emotional stories and I see how differently the children react to their parents' surprise. Some of them laugh, some of them cry, some of them can't believe their eyes... It's magical to bring joy in some children's souls... It's pure happiness... I always tell them stories about my reindeer and my elves, but now... This is my story.

I have always been crazy about Christmas and I believed in Santa's spirit my whole life. When I grew up, I wanted to see how Santa feels like when he brings smiles and happiness in people's houses, so I decided to be one of his disciples. When I put on the red clothes that always smell like gingerbread cookies that the kids make for me, I feel like a new person, I feel like the Christmas spirit is wrapping me with its warm, loving arms.

Around 2 years ago, in the middle of December, my phone rang. As soon as I answered, a very sweet and melodious voice approached me and asked me if I was free in that evening because the woman who called wanted to surprise her niece. Firstly, I was a little sceptical because it was way too sudden, but I accepted because I knew that I would make someone happy around Christmas and I thought that it would be an experience full of enthusiasm and cheerfulness.

When I arrived at the address that the young lady gave me, by the window I saw some very big eyes, full of gayety and a very bright smile. I immediately knew that it was the right choice to make. I was about to make that adorable little girl the happiest in the world, even though it could last only a few moments. The joy on her face was contagious.

Exactly right after I stepped in the house, she said "look, aunt Sarah! Santa Claus is here and he came for me!!". That words made me realise how important and how priceless are the moments when we feel pure gladness... they are so rare... after telling stories with little Emilia, she fell asleep in my arms. It was 2 hours past her curfew. Her aunt took the girl and carried her in her bedroom.

After coming back, she gave me a cup of hot chocolate and some homemade biscuits. They were absolutely delicious. Sarah, the girl's aunt told me that she is taking care of Emilia because her parents died in a car accident when Emilia was only 3 and she thought that Santa would cheer her up, but this idea crossed her mind a little too late and she apologised for that. That story made me tear up and right after I left Sarah and Emilia's house, I called my parents and thanked them for everything that they had done for me. I was thankful that they were alive.





That little girl was so strong and so mature for her age. She had to be... this is one of my most emotional stories that I heard since I started doing my job.

After the visit at Sarah's and Emilia's house, I realised that on Christmas, I am always alone, I do not have anyone, expect from my family. I wanted to have someone by my side. I fell asleep thinking about my future... what am I going to do?

The next morning, I opened my phone and I saw that I had a missed call from a number that I didn't know, so I called back because I thought that it is a parent who wants me to come for their children. It was the same voice... sweet and melodious, like the night before, and all of a sudden, I became very excited to hear it. I didn't know why I was so happy to talk to Sarah... it never happened to me before... what if... I start to fall in love...? I loved her personality, I loved her laugh, I loved the way she was talking about her niece and how kindly she assumed to take care of Emilia like she was her own child... I loved everything about her.

She called to thank me for coming the evening before and asked me if I wanted to come over and drink a hot tea with her and Emilia. I accepted without even thinking. I couldn't wait to see them. I got attached to them really quickly and it was amazing, especially because it was the first time it was happening to me.

This time, I went without my costume, but before going to them, I stopped and bought some gifts for both: I bought Emilia a teddy bear and a box of chocolates and I took for Sarah a very big and soft pillow on which was written "Winter Wonderland" and a bouquet of some colorful flowers.

When I saw them in front of their house waving at me, I felt so happy and so excited. I hugged them tight as if I have known them for my whole life, which is my true feeling. I think I'm in love...

That visit was perfect... the cozy atmosphere and the flavored tea, the stories and the laughs were the best thing that you could do with your loved ones when the weather outside was as cold as it was that day. The hours passed by and it was very late, so I had to leave, unfortunately. As soon as I got in my car, they started waving again and smiling at me, but when I tried to start the car, it wasn't working. Because it snowed a lot that day and it was very cold, my engine froze. I didn't have any solution but wait with the girls until my engine would start working again. I had to stay overnight with them because my car still couldn't start. It was the 24th of December, the Christmas Eve. Sarah and Emilia asked me if I would like to spend the Christmas with them and if I would like to help them make some cookies. I knew that it would be the best Christmas that I would ever have, so I accepted without hesitating.

We had a flour fight, I painted Emilia's face with icing and we went out and played with snow. I felt like I was part of their family. Since then, we became closer and closer and after a few months I was sure... I knew she is the girl that I have been waiting for since ever. She was the one...

A year later, on New Year's Eve I proposed to her, she became Mrs. Claus and Emilia was our Christmas fairy.

I'm so glad they accepted me in their family. It was the perfect Christmas and the perfect story.





## Winter Wonderland

**Ciobanu Andreea Otilia**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, “Ștefan cel Mare”

National College, Hîrlău



Once upon a time there lived bunny named Sabrina. She, her family and friends spent the holyday like every year.

– Put it there! Not there, on the last branch, said Sammy the hedgehog. –

They were decorating the tree like every year to welcome the winter along the rest of the forest.

– I know, I know. God... why do we have to do this every year? asked the upset little rabbit while trying to put the ornament on the tip of the tall tree.

– It is as a matter of facts a very small gesture in exchange of the most wonderful time of the year, said Mrs. Lena her mother while sewing a hat.

– If it is such a phenomenon then how come it did not snow yet? complained Sabrina getting down.

– Just believe in the miracles and everything will become much clearer, said her father Mr. Ashton.

– As if that changed anything in better.

– Just because Grandma Anne died last year around this period does not mean that the holiday is cursed, told Axel the fox as joined.

When the bunny heard that she stared at the fox, she ran away not looking back.

– Wait! screamed Sammy.

– You cannot go by yourself so far! continued Mr. Ashton.

She did not listen as she made herself lost from their sight.

– I did not mean to sound like that.

The rabbit was running without knowing where, she wanted to be as far as she could from them, to be alone. After some time she fell to the ground powerless and drifted off.

– Wake up.

The bunny slowly opened her eyes and she found herself in her room. She noticed a squirrel with an old fashion necklace.

– I am the phantom of the past and I brought you here to show you the true meaning of this holyday. Follow me.

Sabrina did not say anything and followed her. Suddenly a sweet flavor filled her nostrils. Her grandmother cooked her favorite: carrot pie.

– Grandma!

They cannot hear, touch or even see you; this is just one of your memories.



She nodded sadly while looking. She along with her friends and family just finished decorating the tree and now they were happily telling stories and eating.

– Grandma, said her younger self, what is the meaning of this season?

– Being around the loved ones, enjoying and being thankful even for the little things because everybody deserves the comfort and warmth this holyday brings especially in the hard times.

After the sentence was finished the memory had changed. The squirrel place was taken by a bird.

– I am the phantom of the present and I will show you what happens right now.

The atmosphere changed. She saw everyone looking for her in the woods. All of them were supposed to enjoy their time having a nice dinner with their family not looking in the cold weather and even crying for her.

– Come home sweetie. Please! said Mrs. Lena while searching with tears in her eyes for her daughter holding her husband’s arm.

Then the sad rabbit saw that the image changed and she found herself in a different place, dark and lonely.

– Where am I? she asked.

– This is your future, spook a solemn voice.

When she turned around she saw a scary wolf and wanted to hide but he did not let her.

– I know you are afraid of me; after all I am the phantom of future. Every decision you take and everything you say affects your future and the way you will it.

– What happened to me?

– You pushed everyone away, you did not want to hear or believe in anything anymore. You wanted to be alone so now you are.

– No! I want my family, my friends.

After that her vision changed again. She found herself back where she falls asleep. Axel was there, he ran to her.

– I am sorry!

– It is fine. You were right. I will try to be more positive and believe.

Then a snowflake falls on her nose. She looked up and saw more of them coming down.

– This really is a miracle, she said enchanted by the spectacular weather.





## *Saint Nicholas' Eve*

**Costandache Cosmina Elena**

10<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Vasile Alecsandri"  
Highschool, Iași



The story I'm about to tell is not the usual "goodnight story" your parents read to you as a child. It's a much more interesting, perhaps rather peculiar one, about what happened the night before Saint Nicholas' Day. You may have heard about the terrible and horrendous Krampus, if not, I'll tell you this horned half-goat, half-demon is a folklore figure often described to have obscenely large horns, a thick furry body, massive hooves and the devil's eyes. As the story goes, Krampus will come out, punish the naughty children and then bring them down into the underworld with him where they will never be seen again.

Lisa has always been nice, that is simply how everyone would describe her. This is the day she has been waiting for the last couple of months, all day she helped her mother, her neighbours and pretty much everyone who she thought needed her help with the hope that she would get extra points in Saint Nicholas' Book for being nice all year.

The girl waited the sun to set before cleaning her red shiny boots and very cautiously coating them with the very strong odored shoe cream and placing them carefully behind the cherry wood door of her cozy bedroom, for Saint Nick to see and fill with wonderful gifts and lots of delicious candies. After she did the usual ritual she kissed her parents goodnight and went right to sleep to wait for the Saint to make an apparition. Lisa tried and tried to fall asleep but it seemed impossible now with all this excitement filling her body for the presents she would receive because she had been good all year. Staring at the white ceiling of her bedroom, Lisa heard something that sounded something like her mother's heels, but that couldn't be it, no, she was fairly sure both her parents were asleep at the moment. But what on Earth could it be? Lisa doesn't have any animals nor she was





planning on having so that was out of the question. She was beginning to feel her heart race in her chest and sweat was dripping down her forehead as the tapping sound on the floor started to intensify in volume meaning that it was closer and closer to her. With the covers over her head Lisa peeked through a tiny hole, being too frightened to fully look. She couldn't see much, in her mind it should've been Saint Nick bringing her presents. So she silently got out of her warm and comfy bed, with a little drop of fear in her heart and began to look around. Lisa wasn't really sure where the sound was coming from, it stopped for a bit, sensing that something wasn't quite right when she heard a faint breathing followed by a muffled growl. Raspy and deep. Her eyes wide open and with one hand over her mouth she froze for what seemed like forever before slowly turning around to face the demon-eyed beast now standing in front of her with enormous pointy horns a mouth full of sharp yellow teeth with thick red cracked lips a blackish brown dirty fur covering his gigantic figure. Even in the dark he was horrifying. Lisa tried whispering a "hello" but it sounded more like a babble. He didn't respond, didn't move, but simply watched her trembling with terror. Lisa tried again to say something, to scream for help but nothing was coming out of her mouth. He finally moved from the dark corner towards the girl keeping his basket over his shoulder and handed her a piece of old paper with something written on it. She took the paper with hesitation and looked at it trying to decode the message. Written with black ink was "Be good because you want to, not because of a reward. -S.N." When she looked up from the paper she felt a hand on her forehead.

Then, she woke up with a headache glancing at the watch beside her showing 8:45 am. She jumped out of the bed to see the presents, paper still in her hands remembering Lisa that what had happened last night was as real as ever.

## *The Secret of Snow*

**Iordache Monica Andreea**

11<sup>th</sup> Grade, Sports Highschool,  
Iași



Have you ever wondered why snow is white? Well, science can easily give you an answer, but there's another one that few know about, an answer that I'm going to tell you right now, a short story.

It is said that right above the clouds there is a place named Kumo, a place where time flies slower, a place where living beings, neither humans nor gods, live. They are called Tenkimamorus.

A long time ago, four young Tenkimamorus have been chosen as the Shikos, the ones who will have the absolute control over the seasons. Their unique personalities were





reflected upon the seasons. Haru has a romantic soul that pushes him to spread the sweetest scents in the fresh air of spring. He carefully melted the snow and quickly dried off the land so our feet can't become dirty. With his patience and calm he led the clouds and winds so we can enjoy our time outside. The energetic Kigo loved warmth and fluffy clouds. Everyday he shaped the clouds differently and brought us enough heat not to give us displeasure or make our land too dry. Aki loved plants and playing with their colors.

He loved the rainbow and the smell after rain, he loved to watch how leaves are dancing in the wind. He never gave us too much rain or powerful winds, instead he gave us tasty, colorful foods and nature paintings. Fuyu, the youngest of them, was fond of colors and coldness. He was born with a very warm body, and the feeling of snow's coldness made him linger for more. But that didn't make him to give us too much of his beautiful colored snowflakes. His purity put the human's needs and wishes above his. A bond thicker than blood has been formed between the four and that bond ensured the equilibrium of weather.

One day, Fuyu saw a little human lost in the burning desert. Fearful, Fuyu brought a cloud over the child's head and poured a few purple snowflakes on him. He led the cloud through the desert, and at the same time the child, to a safe place. Worried about his faith, he watched him everyday.

Not a very long time after, the child fell ill. Fuyu's heart couldn't take it so he went to Shirotake to find a Wartasuke, a bad helper. He found one named Tamashi. Tamashi accepts to save the child, but if his heart turns into black, then Fuyu has to endure the consequences. Believing that a heart as pure as the child's can never be stained, Fuyu agrees.

Seasons have passed and the child became an adult. Fuyu observed that he wasn't that innocent anymore, he knew his heart wasn't as pure as before. One night, Fuyu became nostalgic and decided to take a look at the desert where the adult was found. A black silhouette was walking with what seemed like a blanket in her hands. He took a closer look and realised the silhouette belonged to the adult. He left in the coldness of the desert a little soul wrapped in a thin blanket. He left the child and never came back. Seeing such things, Fuyu's heart ached so badly he couldn't bear the pain. The heart of his dear human became black and a terrible curse has been unleashed upon Fuyu. He will never see the sun again; with his frozen heart he will forever stay alone in Shirotake. Fuyu became an immortal recluse that lost his colorful snowflakes, they turned as white as his heart. He is doomed to spend the eternity without ever seeing again Haru, Aki, Kigo or anyone or anything else except icy white walls. Since then, the equilibrium has been lost and the weather shows no mercy anymore. The only thing that can break the curse is our souls. If we all live with a pure heart, then Fuyu can be freed and the equilibrium restored.

Everytime I see snow, I wonder if it's possible for us to match its purity. Then I realize that the true difficulty isn't to achieve, but to maintain. It's so easy to stain white, it's so easy for us to sin.





## Winter Wonderland

**Mihăilă Maria Denisa**

11<sup>th</sup> Grade, “Ștefan cel Mare”  
National College, Hârlău




Everyone knows the white and the unique season, which is also the most wonderful time of the year. When everything is covered by a blanket of snow, all white and clean, the freezing is all over you and the carols or the cheerful voices of the children who are playing in the snow are everywhere, then you know it's really winter.

The frozen tears of the sky dance like lovers after they kissed children's cheeks, huge waves of white pure snow flood the streets and the shining snow is covering up all the houses and trees. A fresh scent of pine fills the air as the bright snow gently lands on the tip of your nose and the sight of every white pine tree around you takes your breath away. I think that each of us loves snow just because it makes the earth look like a picturesque panorama and also I love the paintings of the winter: icicles, the sculptures made of ice, the snowflakes which are set on the little sprigs of the fir trees. All of these, all of details made with such a finesse make from winter a wonderland.

Also, in Alecsandri's poems, the snow is compared to a crop of diamonds brushing under your feet. Even if winter is generally compared to death, cold and slowness, it doesn't matter because the beauty and the happiness that this season is giving to us are more remarkable than a little bit of cold.

So, what do we usually think of when we hear the word „winter”? Obviously, we think about holiday, Christmas.

This beautiful time of the year which is about giving and getting love, makes us happier and more grateful. The traditions, that both me and my family are respect, are changing this celebration in something deeper for our hearts. Every year, my little brother and me decorate the Christmas tree together while we are listening to and singing the best known carols. After we finish, just like an ancient and respectable ritual, my little brother, who is so in love with this season, puts his warm clothes on and his snow boots and rushes downstairs. He starts playing in the snow with an extraordinary happiness and, because in the meantime we are downstairs too, he has a snowball fight with us. When we finally get tired of all that fun, we run inside towards a steaming cup of hot chocolate mixed with floating marshmallows that we happily contemplate upon the surface of the little chocolate lake. Of course we also enjoy our work done for the Christmas tree and are so proud of ourselves. The aroma of the hot chocolate is like a breeze of fresh air. We can feel its blessed warmth fill our bodies. Our hearts are radiating the same warmth and kindness as we comfort our hands near the heat of the sparkling fire nearby. And we all know the



specific smells of winter and Christmas: the smell of cinnamon, of oranges, of fir tree and the unique smells of the Romanian traditional food that our mothers or grandmothers are making in this time of the year and fully enjoy them

I think each of us had at least once the snowman experience,when you feel that happiness of the winter,even if you hands and your nose are frozen and you don't give up until you „give life” to your snowman. Also you feel that happiness when you make angels in the snow and you feel grateful for everything that God gave you. Only in this wonderland we can do many sports that we adore (sledging,skiing or snowboarding;and when the time comes,the children go carolling and awassaling.

Just imagine how you wake up one morning and you see ice flowers on your window and you already know that this is the first sign. With the heart full of gladness,you run outside and you see everything white and clean. The snowflakes are falling everywhere and are covering the whole earth with their beauty. The sun beams through the snow creating sparkles like a diamond.You know that the world turns soon into a wintery paradise and you are sure that your heart smiles.

Then you really believe that winter is a beautiful wonderland because all these details make the difference between this season and the others; wherever you will look for them, you will never find this beauty,all this happiness and all the opportunities that winter gives us.



## *Winter Wonderland*

**Popouțanu Elena**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, “Ștefan cel Mare”  
National College, Hârlău



On Christmas Eve, me and my friends, Daria and Adelina, decided to go on a hill close to the forest from our village , to ride a sleigh and to have fun before the Christmas



holiday. The hill was so high that you went down in two minutes and it took you half an hour to climb up again.

At some point , half way down the hill , a beautiful and huge fir tree , taller than everyone else, appeared from nowhere right in the middle of the road. It was too late to avoid it , so we closed our eyes ,hoping that nothing would happen.

We didn't know how long we kept our eyes closed, but when we opened them, we were in a very large house similar to a workshop; probably the fir was a kind of portal . There were many little elves dressed in red and green . Most of them were in panic, but some were working at toys in spite of their fear .

We saw a huge screen on which was a video with Santa wrapped in green ropes and locked in a cage decorated with globes, little fir trees , light and snow . I was looking shocked at the screen when from the back of the cage appeared a man and a woman . They said they were Michael and Helen , two treasure hunters who kidnaped Santa as revenge because he hadn't given them presents when they were little so they would not free him until Christmas.

When the elves observed us finally , they asked us :” Who are you and what are you doing here ?”. We told them what happened and after they thought at this , they said that the Universe Fir probably chose us to help and free Santa . We accepted that task, they said . They dressed us as Santa , gave us his sleighs and some little things to help us , things like Magic Dust ” Fall Asleep ” or ”Decreased”, a cloack for invisibility, to let us enter houses without people seeing us. Finally , before starting, the elves told us that that was very dangerous and they asked us to be very very careful because the hunters were on the list of naughty ones since they were five years old. We tried to get courage and went to the world.

While we were above Siberia on our way to Moscow, Rudolf and Dasher were hit by an arrow in the foot ...the sleigh fell into the snow rolling , the gift bag broke and the presents, too . Daria looked for a medical leap, she cared for the two reindeers , but it was clear they couldn't fly anymore. It was cold , dark and we were late. Suddenly from afar , appeared Snow Queen with her sleigh. She helped us by borrowing us hers. , so we went further and she went with Santa's sleigh back at workshop.

Finally , kids from all over the world received their presents ,Christmas passed and Michael and Helen let Santa go. Fortunately , seeing the plan did not come out, the hunters were beaten and they said that they would never kidnap Santa in future, but help him, of course he told us to keep his secret .

Now I am staying and thinking at this situation , I am happy and proud and seemingly I appreciate Santa even more.






## Winter Wonderland

**Vlad Alexandra Cristina**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, Economic Tourism  
Technological Highschool, Iași



“Sleep tight, Aria!” The mother slowly closed the door, letting her daughter rest. But something kept her up at night. She was dreaming about the next day. She would be unwrapping a lot of presents under her Christmas tree and she would be surrounded by her loving parents and her sweet little sister. The thought that there were children alone, with no presents or family to be happy with was keeping her awake. She felt so sad and she looked out of the window, watching the snowflakes dancing in the cold air. She heard her cat purring next to her, and finally fell asleep.

The next morning she woke up, smelling Christmas cookies baking in the oven. She said hello to her parents and sister. They happily told Aria that Santa had visited them last night and had left many presents for her. She quickly ran in the living room. Under the big tree, which was decorated with many colourful lights, bells, bows, stars and golden garlands, there were many boxes wrapped with red wrapping paper and big bows on top. She opened them with care and saw that Santa kept his promise and brought her everything she asked for. She went to her parents and hugged them tight, showing them her new toys.

Suddenly, Aria’s big smile turned to a sad face. She started telling her parents about the thoughts that had kept her up last night, about the kids that had no one to share the happiness of Christmas day with. Her parents suggested that she could choose some of her old toys that she didn’t play with anymore and donate them to the children at the local orphanage. She agreed and ran to her room, choosing the toys that brought her a lot of happiness not many years ago. Even though she still liked them, she knew that other children would enjoy them more than her. She wrapped them in boxes and paper and everything was prepared very carefully. She bundled up, ready to go out in the snow to the orphanage.

When she entered the building, she took her boxes and put them under the tree. She watched the cheerful children open the boxes and joined them in playing games and having fun. They took the fun outside where they merrily jumped and sang, enjoying the snow. Aria and her new friends started building a snowman, using a coal from the fire-place inside the orphanage to make its face and a carrot her mom bought especially for the snowman. They named him Snowy. They sat on the ground and started moving their arms and legs, creating snow angels. When it got dark, she left promising her new friends that



she would visit them again soon. Big snowflakes were then slowly falling from the sky and there were Christmas lights hanging everywhere.

Aria and her family got home and warmed up next to the fireplace. They sat on the couch, listening to Christmas carols, humming the melody. Aria felt more delighted than ever because she could bring joy to other children and also made life-long friends. That day, she brought them a bit of her *Winter Wonderland*. Her eyelids felt heavier now and she fell asleep, exhausted from the day of fun she had. Aria's dad carried her to bed, wrapping her up in a warm blanket and kissed her forehead, wishing her good night.





## *The Christmas Spirit in everyone souls*

**Vasilache Laura**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Vasile Alecsandri"

Highschool, Iași



As I widely opened my bedroom window and looked out at the white snow covering my garden, I could see a reindeer smiling at me.

I went quickly outside to him and I could see that he was hurt. One of his front legs was red at the knee. I wanted to touch him but I was afraid that he would bite me. While I was thinking out loud about the way he got hurt, I heard a strange voice. After ten seconds, I realized that it was he that was talking. He told me that when Santa's sleigh started to fly, his rope broke and he fell in the cold snow. My mother was looking through the window at us and she could see me talking to the reindeer, but she couldn't hear or see him, because she didn't believe in the Christmas Spirit, so her soul was empty of any Christmas Spirit. That is why she thought that I am crazy, just because she saw me, through her foggy thinking, speaking to the frozen air. She came outside and she brought me back in my room. She looked me there and I started crying because I couldn't help my new friend. The night came, it started to snow with big and magnificent snowflakes and my parents fell soon asleep. The reindeer was still there, in the fluffy snow, with his leg broken and he was waiting for me to help him with his crystal brown eyes. I wanted to jump through the window, because the door was locked, so I took the first aid bag, I said a prayer, I opened the window, I closed my eyes because I was petrified when I saw the height from my window to the ground... and I jumped! I didn't feel anything and when I opened my eyes, I realized that I was flying! Was it because of the prayers? I didn't know anything, I was just thrilled because I was flying. I got down to the reindeer, and I immobilized his leg with a quite usual band. Then, something even more strange happened! I saw a small light coming towards me and it was getting bigger as it was coming closer. When it was close enough, I could see that it was Santa Claus, who was coming back with his impressive sleigh for his lost reindeer. He talked to him in another language and then he told me, in my language, that he was very pleased with my work. Santa told a quickly unique spell, and suddenly the reindeer could walk again. He thanked me and gave me a second gift: a modern bag for first aid, of course with magical instruments for a better health, and the power to talk to all the animals, no matter how big and strong they are or how small and harmless they are; all that matters is not to judge them by their appearance and everyone should help a friend who is in need.

It was the best winter ever, because not only that I gain some magical powers, but I learnt how to see through the appearance, directly in the soul of that creature and to empathize with everyone, not only with the human beings, but with any kind of animal in this World!



## *Winter Wonderland*

**Sandu Ion Cristian**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Ștefan cel Mare"  
National College, Hârâlu



From a distance you could hear screams. It was the nature suffering from winter's wrath. Snow was falling fast on the ground choking it, everything was white, deserted. Trees were falling down as they could not hold the painful wrap. The sky was dark, covered in harsh heavy clouds and the air was almost unbreathable because of the thick fog.

I was looking outside in disgust. My shutters froze and fell. I was afraid the windows were next and I was going to freeze to death. That was my last concern though as worse thing had happened to me and my dog in the past. After my parents died when I was little, I remained alone in the wilderness, learning to survive. I always wanted to escape this wasteland, but the winter was too rough, it's like I got cursed after becoming an orphan. My dog, Ben, was my best friend, my only friend. He is full of life and friendly, the only reason why I'm still living.

We were hungry and with no food left. I got dressed and we left to hunt but I had no hope of finding anything in this miserable weather. The woods were close to my house. Hours passed by and finally we heard something behind a bush. I got my gun ready, targeted the animal and shot it. I could not see it very well because it was dark outside. It was a deer! I put it on the sled, got Ben by my side and went home. We climbed the bridge and saw something in the distance, two glowing eyes. I knew that it was a wolf, or more, because they never go alone. I told Ben to run as I was pulling the sled with all my strength. Useless... The wolves were too fast and caught up and circled around us. My dog is a fighter and jumped to attack one of the 4 wolves and I screamed and told him to





get back but it didn't work. Then I remembered I had my gun and shot one of them. They all ran and I got fast to my dog. He was bleeding very bad. I pushed the deer from the sled and put Ben on it, then ran home with tears in my eyes, telling myself that that was not how he was going to die, he would not leave me alone. With every step I took, I felt like everything was collapsing around me, that it was the end.

I arrived home, carried Ben to the bed and ran in the kitchen to prepare an ointment after my mom's recipe. I prayed and told him to hold tight because everything was almost ready. I bandaged him and looked in his eyes. He was in pain. I never cried that much ever. I knew if I lost him then nothing would have had a meaning anymore, I'd rather die with him than be alone the rest of my life. I grabbed him by his paw, and laid my head on his soft fur. His heartbeat stopped. I could feel my body shaking and with my weak voice my last words were: "It's ok buddy... I'm sorry I couldn't offer you too much, maybe we will meet each other somewhere else... somewhere in a winter wonderland..."





## Winter Wonderland

**Teleagă Victoria**


10<sup>th</sup> Grade, “Garabet Ibrăileanu”  
National College, Iași



Do you know what the biggest disappointment of a child is? What suddenly makes him or her losing hope and stop dreaming? It's the discovery that Santa Claus isn't real and he has never existed. It's a feeling of an inner emptiness which can significantly change the children and may affect their confidence and way of thinking. I just can't understand how parents think lying their kids about someone's existence, no matter if it's Santa Claus or the tooth fairy or the Easter bunny is okay. Yes, it can develop children's imagination and creativity but still, I don't think it's the right thing to do. However, in my opinion Santa Claus did exist. Just as dinosaurs existed and people created dragons out of them, in a similar way I think Santa was created. And here's how I think it happened.

In a very distant land of eternal winter, at the North Pole, there was a small village where, even if it was extremely cold and snowing all the time, people lived in peace. Everything there was of a blinding whiteness. White to the left, white to the right, everywhere. The only way the villagers can move was with the dogsleds or by foot. People were rather poor than rich, and many children have been abandoned because of that. Orphanages were full of kids who had no longer a house, a family, a happy life. However, there was a rich man, an elderly man in fact, named Nicklaus with a long white beard, who lived not very far from the village and who was always wearing red, because he was very vain and wanted to be noticed. The man had a very big house filled with lights of different colors to stand out obviously and he also had a gorgeous sleigh with 8 reindeer. He had a huge toy factory which he was very proud of, even though his toys were way too expensive for the locals to buy, and that's why he was selling them in the southern neighborhoods. He didn't really stand people, although he had a grandson, the only one of his relatives, whom he loved and always gave presents and toys to.

One day his beloved grandson got sick and eventually died. Nicklaus became very gloomy and unhappy. He remained with absolutely no one. He decided to go to the village to find some comfort there, but people didn't really like him and didn't want to talk to him. He missed his kid so much that he chose to go to an orphanage. What he saw there truly terrified him, because all the children were miserable, they were wearing tatters and had no hope. It was only now that he opened his eyes and saw the reality. He immediately went to his factory and ordered the toys to be taken and given to the children of the village. He delivered them himself with his sleigh during the night not to be seen by anyone



and made hundreds of kids happy, getting back their hope and belief in magic. It was such a wonderful gesture. Every year, in the memory of his grandson he gave presents to the needy and well-behaved children.

And that probably lasted for some years but people are not immortal and maybe parents wanted to continue the tradition of giving presents because that undoubtedly makes kids happier. This idea sounds great with the exception of kids finding out that Santa's not real. During winter with its cold weather, winds and frost, people do want to believe in wonders and that everything is possible but more than anything they need love, care and warmth. So, in conclusion, instead of lying about someone's existence, why won't we offer caring and affection and personally give presents to the kids and to the people we love?

## *Winter Wonderland*

**Macovei Ioana**

11<sup>th</sup> Grade, Administrative Business  
Highschool, Iași



Winter Wonderland ... another name for the magic of Christmas, I guess. I know most of you would say that the word Wonderland is totally different from Christmas but hear me out. I'm sure I can change your mind...

When Christmas comes the plain and boring city from the last season becomes a place full of lights and joy. Everybody just wanders around admiring the white and fluffy blanket which has covered the small town protecting it from the cold wind of the cold season. The beautiful lights mixing with the clear snow transforms the simple city into a crystal kingdom ready to welcome everyone who wants to visit it... Still you don't believe me? Well, don't worry about it. I have more arguments to convince you.

Even though the beautiful sights may captivate you, that is not all that Christmas can offer you. Not even the beautiful gifts or the glowing lights are the true spirit of this holiday. Christmas is not only aesthetic, it is a lot more than this. It is about joy, kindness and especially hope. Hope for better days and for future happiness.

Christmas is that time of the year when the best of you comes out, when you do things for the others without wanting anything in return, not because you are forced to do it, but because you want to do it. How this all works may sound weird, as if I hadn't done anything good or useful the entire year and now, at the end of it, I have become a good person out of nowhere? The answer is yes! Don't ask me why or how it works, but that's just how it is. That's what the Christmas spirit does. And maybe for the others it sounds strange, but for me it sounds magical. Everyone knows what magic is. You see it



in TV shows and films, under the form of wizards and witches or even magicians, but when we get to the real world, for the most of us magic doesn't exist anymore, at least not how the television describes it. But magic does exist and not only in wands and magic hats, but in the hearts of each of us. And this magic is revealed especially at Christmas...

Maybe the title doesn't correspond with everything I have just told you and perhaps when you read "Winter Wonderland" you just imagine a story about a kingdom of ice, some heroes ready to save the world and/or an evil queen or king and you think that everything is possible in wonderland. Everyone has their own idea of magic when it comes to stories and that's alright, but let's not forget that the most powerful magic of all lies in yourself and in every little thing in your ordinary life.

I hope I have changed your mind but if I haven't, there's something else that you can try. On Christmas Eve go out with your friends or family or even alone and just take a long walk around the city till the sun sets and then just let the magic cover you. When you're done, read this again. I'm sure we will be on the same page this time.





## Winter Wonderland

**Zaharia Sabina**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, “Varlaam Mitropolitul”  
Highschool, Iași



For the first time in 50 years, it was snowing in a little village from France. Everybody was mesmerized, looking at the little snowflakes falling from the cloudy, grey sky. The grown ups were amazed and happy, and the children were on top of the world. They have never seen snow before, so these little silver butterflies were their new playing buddies. They were slowly, but surely starting to discover the joy of snowball fights, building a snowman... Everybody was happy. Except one person. There was an old man living on top of the hill, who hated snow ever since he last saw it, 50 years ago. A long, long time ago, when he was a little boy, he was walking home from school, when it started snowing. It was the first time that he had seen this phenomenon. All the children started laughing, giggling and playing in the snow. He, on the other hand, was a bit confused, because he didn't know what it was. So he started asking everybody what was the reason of their joy and what was that white thing covering the ground. The children started laughing, because they thought it was absurd that someone didn't know what snow is, and started making fun of the poor little kid. So, he ran back home, telling his parents what happened. They tried explaining to him that the kids were not bad intentioned, and also told him what snow was. Even though the children apologised to him the next day, at school, he was not completely fine with the presence of snow. He wasn't seeing it like the other kids were. For him, snow meant cold, mocking and bad weather.

The years passed by, and the little boy grew up to be a bright and handsome young man,

who got married to a beautiful lady(who absolutely loved the snow fall from back when they were kids ).Together, they had a kid, Mark, whom they raised as best as they could, they loved from the beginning and taught all the important values in life. This year, he was turning 18, officially becoming an adult.

The man wasn't very happy when he saw the snow starting to fall, and he tried stopping Mark from going outside. Thankfully, his wife was there too, and she also had something to say. In her opinion, there was nothing wrong with playing in the snow, so she encouraged Mark to go outside and have fun.

At the end of the day, Mark got back from outside, tired, but satisfied.

His father wasn't happy, because he could see the happiness and excitement from his son's face, and he started reliving everything from 50 years ago. He still couldn't un-



derstand why everybody was so happy about it. His wife noticed that, and tried explaining to him why snow is a reason of laughter and gratitude. In the end, she said: “How about you join me outside for a little surprise?”. First, he said no. After the insistence of his wife, he finally agreed. When he got outside, a snowball hit him in the arm. His wife was challenging him to a snowball fight! He wasn’t very excited, but after hearing his wife’s complains and arguments, he finally decided to just go with it. After they finished, he was actually feeling a little happy, but he decided not to tell anyone, and stay grumpy.

Years have passed, and Mark graduated from college. At the time he was with a very beautiful, smart and ambitious girl, named Rachel. They celebrated graduation together with both Mark’s and Rachel’s parents, and everyone was feeling joyful and blessed.

While they were eating, Mark’s father noticed something curious. Outside it was snowing, with puny, little snowflakes. He was feeling a bit funny, which was weird, because normally, snow makes him feel sullen.


Mark decided to become a doctor, and Rachel decided to be a journalist. After a few months, they have already succeeded, having well paid jobs. Given his financial status and love for Rachel, Mark decided to propose. He only told his father his intention, and shared his plan. They were going on their first weekend away together, in Greece. He was going to arrange a trip to Edessa waterfalls, when he will get on one knee in the boat and confess his love. His father agreed, because he thought that Rachel was the right girl for Mark.

The couple left on Friday morning, by plane. Everything was set, he was going to propose the next day. After they got to the hotel and settled, Mark called to check if the boat was ready for the next day. Apparently, everything was fine. They had a lovely dinner, and then took a romantic walk on the beach. The next day, he “casually” proposed a trip by boat to the waterfall. Rachel agreed, and they took a bus to the destination. Unfortunately when they got there, they were told that the boat was not running that day. Disappointed, Mark decided that since they already got there, they could as well see the waterfall from the side. Then, he had a revelation: it didn’t matter how or when he proposed, it only mattered that Rachel said yes. So he got on one knee, told her that he loved her, and confessed that he wants to spend the rest of his life with her. With tears in her eyes, Rachel said: Yes, yes, a million times, yes!

When they got back, they gave everyone the good news, and all the parents were joyful. Mark’s father was extremely happy, but trying not to show too much enthusiasm. The wedding was going to take place 3 months from then, in Rome.

Finally, after months of preparation, the big day arrived. In Rome, everybody was nervous and impatient. When the wedding started, everybody calmed down, and started enjoying it. The bride was absolutely gorgeous, and the groom as well. You could see the pure innocence and happiness on their faces. The groom’s father was starting to get a bit emotional, but was still acting tough. At the end of the wedding, he noticed something that truly surprised him. It was snowing! In Rome! He was on top of the world, and couldn’t hide it anymore. He was, in fact, happy about the snow.





After 6 years, the house of the beautiful couple filled with crying and laughter, excitement and responsibility, but most importantly, love. A baby was born. Rachel and Mark raised him with lots of love, gratitude and fondness.

When the baby reached the age of five, he had his first contact with the snow. This time, his grandpa offered to take him outside, play with him, laugh with him... . For the first time in his whole life, Mark's father felt complete, truly and indubitable happy.

## Winter Wonderland

**Stan Mihai Gabriel**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Ștefan cel Mare"  
National College, Hârlău



A critic begins to feel from mid-day, a thunder begins to compose me out of the blue, everything begins to darken, the wind blows, a very windy and very hot wind. The first little snowflake falls, like a silver star and very playful. The second, then the third ... It's like snow, like some small crystals, falling from heaven to the ground by freezing it. It's a sign that the winter came.

With the coming of winter, the clouds gathered in the huge sky like a polycarbonate and shining like a diamond began to search in silver stars, which began to fall from the sky like margaritas. Snow falling like a snowy ocean was snowing like a white white cloak in white and soft carpets. The Craiasa wearing a dress sewn with ice needles and embellished with silver stars and a silver star wreath, weaved on the glass shimmering silver flowers and shawls on the streets. The pond, which, at times, full of life because of the animals that visited it, was now left behind as a wandering mirror.

The short, small, rounded flower, a miracle of a second, put the branches on the gouache, dressing the pines and pines with heavy snow coats. Large flakes like cotton wools began to roar around the whitewashed air. Trees like mute and cold soldiers with ice rays, mountains like giants asleep under the shield are the guards of hibernating earth like Martin. The houses have put their white fur hats, small chimneys have begun to come out, and the trees have clothed their coats of arms like old giants.

The houses are also snowing under the fluffy layer and thick. The sugarcane branches are cooked with tartar. The gray and heavy clouds start to blow out on the chimneys, and the children run and scream playing in the snow. A wonderful gift for them from Craiasa Zapezii.

The rain of white butterflies intensifies and the rhythm of the dance clings. Large flakes and puffs fall in the speed of the sky and form whirlwinds that threaten the earth.



As soon as the white carpet is frozen, she tries hard to get up again, but the effort is made with one with the already dead.

Scarves, hats and gloves find their owner. The hunts leave the storehouses and bridges and compete in the snowy hills, racing for the first place at speed. Some children fall, they hurt, but come back to play cheerfully. They roam in the snow, angry with snow and snowmen. Children's wrinkles froze, but they do not care, the sleighs are just theirs. The joyous chats fill the hills of joy. Here's how a snowman makes us shy with his hand.

In the air, the smell of firs and fluffy cakes are freshly removed from the oven. Familiar children make lists for Santa Claus. Mosul, it's Mos, comes black every year. He gives gifts to all children according to merit. They will get sweets, books, toys, and the earliest, maybe even tablets or phones.

Therefore, winter is a gorgeous season in which all nature is sleeping under a thick layer of snow.

## *Winter Wonderland*

**Costiuc Antonia Denisa**

10<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Mihai Eminescu"

National College, Iași



Dear Santa,

I've decided to start writing to you because Christmas is close. I don't know how close it is, I lost count a while ago, but I sure know it is approaching. Maybe... a few days away? My mom told me that there is this "Christmas spirit" running through everyone's hearts this time of the year and I can feel it. So, Christmas must be happening soon and that means it's just the perfect time to write to you some letters.


To be honest now, lately I've been really bored. For some reason mom and dad are not around and, I was happy to be all alone for the first couple of days, but it's boring now. Even though I have all I want and a lot of friends to play with, my parents are way more fun! Can you believe that I miss my mom's cooking? That's insane! But I really do... I don't know where they went but I hope they'll be back soon. I really miss them...

With love, me!

Dear Santa,

Today! Oh dear, today was strange! Let me tell you. I was wondering around the park when a thick fog suddenly appeared. Really thick! I felt as swimming in all that fog. Suddenly, right in front of me, I saw my dad. I could only see his back, but I recognised his old football themed shirt very well. I started calling him, asking him to look behind but





he didn't hear me and walked away, disappearing into the mist. I was sad that he did not notice me, but I thought he's getting old and his hearing is not the best. I just hope next time I see him, he'll be fronting me so he could see me.

Thanks for listening to me!

Dear Santa,

As I was playing in the park, I tripped over and fell. But it didn't hurt me at all. I am so strong! I bet you're proud. My parents sure have been...

Have a good day!

Dear Santa,

I think my parents want to prank me. Dad appeared again but he didn't look at me a moment! He waded along the alley in the park and, when he got to the lake, he just stood there and looked in the water for seven full minutes. Seven! And he didn't get bored at all. I would have fallen asleep, I swear. After all those seven insanely dull minutes, from the water, rising slowly like an angel was mom! She truly looked angelic. I think she had been diving for something because in her closed hand she was holding a necklace. When I tried to approach them to say "hi", they disappeared. Poof! Like magicians do in their shows.

What do you think, Mr. Santa? Don't you think their little prank is kinda stupid? Sorry for using a bad word, but it really is. But it's fine, they seem to be having fun.

Happily, me!

Dear Santa,

Can you tell my parents to stop with their prank? They're not fooling anyone and it's getting annoying.

Bye.

Dear Santa,

Today I nearly died of fright! I was playing in a sandbox in the park and out of nowhere I heard my name. I looked around and nobody was there, but the voice kept calling my name. It was familiar too, so I just thought it was mom. I screamed her name and wondered around to find her, but she was nowhere and every time she called me, her voice became more and more unfamiliar. Then it just stopped. Then, out of nowhere, a big thunder hit right next to me! I got so terrified that I started crying like crazy and all I wanted were my parents. I cried so much that my eyes hurt but no matter how sad I was they didn't come. For a moment, I felt abandoned and I just needed a hug. I still need a hug. Would you like to give it to me?

Waiting for a hug, me...

Dear Santa,





This is the last letter I'm writing to you. Not because you did not answer or because I got bored, but because I'm leaving. Today, as I was looking at the lake my dad was a little behind, that strange mist appeared again as thick as the last time. Actually, it was so dense that everything around me vanished, I could barely see in front of me. Then, I heard my name, but it was clearly said by my mom. I know her beautiful voice very well. I went the way the sound came from and she was looking at me, smiling. She could finally see me. I grabbed her by the waist and hugged her strongly, though not enough to show her how much I had missed her. While in her arms, two other arms wrapped around us too. It was dad, in his old football themed shirt. I loved it! After a few seconds that I wished to last forever, we all retreated. We looked like a happy family. Dad grabbed mom's hand, they smiled at each other and asked me if I was coming. I didn't know what they were talking about but I wanted to go anywhere if we were to go together. I grabbed the hands of both of them and we walked away. I'm not sure where I'm going but I bet it's a better place than any other in the world.

So, I won't be able to write to you anymore. Please, forgive me. I promise I won't forget you.

With love, us!





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ISSN 2458-0287

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