



WHITER THAN SNOW

An adaptation of *Treasures of the Snow* written by Patricia M. St. John
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NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Display each illustration where indicated in text, laying volume aside when the story line continues beyond the picture.

Chapter 1



Show Illustration #1

The mountains are steep and almost always covered with snow in winter in the beautiful land of Switzerland. It was one such cold, snowy morning that a young girl stretched one arm after the other over her head and yawned. It was cozy warm under the feather bed and eiderdown quilt. Annette turned over and was about to go off to sleep again when suddenly she sprang out of bed, remembering that this

was Christmas morning! She must not be late getting breakfast ready. Her father would be coming in from the barn cold and hungry, and Grandmother always expected her coffee to be ready when she hobbled into the kitchen.

Annette took time to arrange her long blond braids. Shivering, she then threw a shawl around her shoulders and turned to look at the little five-year-old brother she supposed was still asleep in the other bed.

But Dani's bed was empty. The little brown bear made of cookie dough was still where she had placed it for him the night before. It looked cold and lonesome. Dani must have gone off in a hurry to have forgotten the little Christmas bear every child in Switzerland loved to get on Christmas Eve.

Drawing her shawl more closely around her shoulders, Annette hurried down the long flight of steps and into the warm kitchen.



Show Illustration #2

There she saw Dani kneeling on the floor. Kneeling beside him she saw her father—long legs beside Dani's short ones, and broad shoulders hunched over something in one of Dani's red slippers. As she got closer Annette saw a tiny white kitten, curled up in the rabbit-fur lining in the slipper. Father was feeding it warm milk from a teaspoon.

"See, Annette," Dani whispered, "Father Christmas did bring me a present. You said he only brought presents to rich boys, and Father said he did not think he would come to a chalet (house) so high in the mountain. But I put my red slipper outside last night—just in case. And look, he brought me the nicest present I have ever had." The kitten began to squirm around a little as it felt the warmth of the fire. Both Dani and Father watched it closely. "I am going to call it 'Klaus'," Dani said.



Show Illustration #3

Annette sat down in Grandmother's rocking chair and watched. She knew she should have breakfast ready before Grandmother, lame with rheumatics, hobbled into the kitchen. Yet she sat there as though she were unable to move.

Annette's thoughts went back to a Christmas Eve just five years ago. She remembered well how, as a child of seven, she had gone to church with a neighbor woman and the woman's son, Lucien. Lucien was about the same age as herself. She remembered how she had come from church joyfully hugging her little brown cookie bear.



Show Illustration #4

Lucien had eaten his bear greedily and then begged for a bit of Annette's. But Annette would not take, nor give, even a tiny bit of hers. "I shall never eat him. Never! Never! Never!" And she had pulled her bear closer under her warm coat. She did not like this greedy, disagreeable, dark-haired boy.

Now as she sat watching Dani and her father care for the kitten, Annette remembered how she had come home, all filled with the wonder and joy of Christmas. Yet, as soon as she had seen her father's face she had known something was wrong. "Is Mother worse?" she had asked.