

The glue which held his felt smile to his face was getting old. His pasted on grin was slowly peeling away from his glass head. The red Styrofoam ball, once shiny and bold in color, was now faded and chipped away to reveal flecks of white from underneath its coat of red paint. The white beard that wrapped around his chin was no longer the fluffy sea of clouds that it once was, instead, it had turned into a matted down mess of flattened curls. But, to the children who visited him, none of this mattered. For it is what he held inside of his body that they treasured. He had no working ears, but he could only imagine the sounds of joy that emanated from the children as they pulled off his head and reached inside of his body. It was the highlight of the year for him. Sadly, though - that is because it was the only time he was able to come out of his storage place.

He was a candy jar, in the guise of a Santa Claus. As Christmas only comes but once a year, he too was only a once a year occurrence. But, for that short one-twelfth of the year, he was filled with M&M's and Reese's cups and Dots and all manner of other candies, and as his owner's grandchildren rushed into the house for a visit, he was always the first one they ran over to see. Did they truly love him? Were the greedy children only using him for his access to free candy? The answers didn't matter, firstly because inanimate Santa Claus candy jars do not have these types of feelings, and secondly, because he wouldn't have cared anyways. He was just proud that he was able to fulfill his job description (not to mention the children's tummies) with everything he had to offer. He was proud of his duty, no matter who gave him a hard time about it.

For eleven months, the candy jar sat in dusty darkness. Storage. He was often ridiculed by the other holiday decorations for his status in the house. There were the 'modern' decorations, which considered him to be outdated and useless. What sort of decoration doesn't use electricity, anyways? Then there were the 'classic' decorations, who saw his pathetic felt smile and crumpled nose as the signs of something that had tried to be a classic, but had failed miserably and was unworthy of their attention. And finally, there were the 'expensive' decorations, who looked at the simple glass candy jar as a cheap novelty item and nothing that deserved to be prominently displayed in the midst of crystal Santas and golden reindeer. There were, however, a group of decorations that loved the old candy jar. He was, in some ways, their leader – the one they looked up to and respected. This ragtag group was made up of a crayon drawing of something that was either a reindeer or Mount Rushmore during a thunderstorm, a handmade clay model of a snowman that was nothing more than three white clumps stuck on top of each other, and an old wooden nativity scene that was missing a baby Jesus and had replaced the Star of Bethlehem with the logo of an old StarSystem television set. This misfit group of pathetic and, in all honesty, crappy decorations had one thing in common with the glass jar. They had maintained their decoration status all of these years not because they were beautifully constructed or because they were expensive. They had lasted because they were filled with love and memories. And that, as the other decorations could never figure out, is what makes the holidays special.