



# To Every Thing There Is a Season: A Cape Breton Christmas Story

*Alistair MacLeod*

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## **To Every Thing There Is a Season: A Cape Breton Christmas Story** Alistair MacLeod

The story is simple, seen through the eyes of an 11-year-old boy. As an adult he remembers the way things were back home on the farm on the west coast of Cape Breton. The time was the 1940s, but the hens and the cows and the pigs and the sheep and the horse made it seem ancient. The family of six children excitedly waits for Christmas and two-year-old Kenneth, who liked Halloween a lot, asks, "Who are you going to dress up as at Christmas? I think I'll be a snowman." They wait especially for their oldest brother, Neil, working on "the Lake boats" in Ontario, who sends intriguing packages of "clothes" back for Christmas. On Christmas Eve he arrives, to the delight of his young siblings, and shoes the horse before taking them by sleigh through the woods to the nearby church. The adults, including the narrator for the first time, sit up late to play the gift-wrapping role of Santa Claus.

The story is simple, short and sweet, but with a foretaste of sorrow. Not a word is out of place. Matching and enhancing the text are black and white illustrations by Peter Rankin, making this book a perfect little gift.

For readers from nine to ninety-nine, our classic Christmas story by one of our greatest writers.

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