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Christmas Day In The Morning

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Buck, Pearl S. *Christmas Day In The Morning*. Illustrated by Mark Buehner. HarperCollins Publishers, 2002. ISBN 0688162681. \$18.89. 32 pp.

Reviewer: Gabi Kupitz

Reading level: All

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Christmas; Parent; Picture book

Subject: Christmas—Fiction; Farm life—Fiction; Books—Reviews;

At four o'clock on Christmas morning a middle-aged man reminisces about a Christmas morning years ago when, as a teenager on his father's farm, he left the comforts of his bed to milk the cows as a present to his father.

The love he feels while performing this three o'clock secret act of service for his father almost causes the boy's heart to burst! After milking the cows, the boy slips back into his room. Under his covers, he hears his father call to him. It is four o'clock on Christmas morning--time to milk the cows. In a few minutes, the father and son are locked in an early morning hug as the grateful father returns from the barn to thank his son for completing all the chores. The younger children are awake. The father realizes that his farm chores have always prevented him from the Christmas day morning scene when children first see the Christmas tree. But not this year. Thanks to his son, the entire family experiences Christmas morning together.

Buck's lyrical text and Buehner's bold art pay homage to family--and gifts money can't buy. First published in 1955, this edition includes a foreword from Buehner about the Christmas in 1995 when two of his own children, in response "to their hearing 'Christmas Day in the Morning' in church" surprised their parents with an early Christmas morning gift.