

Full House Fan Fiction

Yes Stephanie, There is A Santa Claus

By: Doug Fowler

YES, STEPHANIE, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS

(Book fans will note I've decided to use Allie. I think this makes sense - Stephanie's bridesmaid in "Middle Age Crazy" and possibly the girl next to Stephanie in 4th grade in Double Trouble look and act a lot like Allie is described.)

Seven-year-old Stephanie Tanner ignored the second tardy bell. She was too busy telling her friend Allie Taylor about something funny that happened at home as school began. "...so, my Uncle Jesse and Joey have to say 'pork and poultry' for the commercial they're doing. But after almost a hundred times, they still can't get it right. Finally, they ask me. Only I can't say Mike's meats right. So, guess what happens?"

Allie shushed her, glancing shyly at the teacher.

"Well, you see..." continued the chatterbox.

"Stephanie Tanner," the teacher said sternly. "It's time for school."

Stephanie sighed. She'd had such fun telling Allie this funny story. The only problem was, she'd rambled on with every little detail. So, she hadn't had time to finish it. "Sorry," she mumbled sadly.

"Before we begin, I need someone to collect funds for the class Christmas party. Walter?" As Walter went around with a can getting everyone's money, Stephanie barely resisted saying that she was paying his bill. The whole class had gotten in trouble for calling Walter "duck face" and quacking at him earlier in the year. Even Allie, who was normally pretty shy. Although, Stephanie considered, Allie hadn't gone as far as she had. Stephanie had actually been throwing pieces of bread at him.

Still, she laughed at the "bill" joke. And, the teacher noticed her chuckling. "Stephanie, I was going to ask which of the men would host the party, since it is your family's turn. However, since you're giggling, I assume it's Joey."

Joey Gladstone was a very funny comedian. When Stephanie was 5, her mother had died in a car accident. Joey had moved in to help her dad Danny raise her and her sisters, D.J., now 12, and Michelle, who had turned three last month. Also moving in was her uncle, Jesse Katsopolis.

Stephanie ad libbed, something she was good at. "He's got some funny ideas. Maybe tongue twisters, after what happened this weekend. It was so funny..."

The teacher smiled. Stephanie could tell she wanted to get to the heart of the matter. "So it will be Joey?"

"Probably. My Uncle Jesse might be spending the day with his girlfriend, Becky. He says women are impressed by that sort of thing. Of course, he also says women are impressed by men who love kids. So maybe he'll be here."

The teacher chuckled. "Stephanie, the next time you have a funny story, I hope you write it down. Not while we're in class, of course. But, you don't just love to talk. You have many great ideas. I think someday, you could be a great writer." Stephanie beamed as the teacher began her lesson.

Out on the playground, Allie eagerly listened to the rest of Stephanie's story. "So, it was sort of like a family commercial, huh?"

Stephanie nodded. Allie was an only child. She knew it was hard for her to fathom such a full house. "We put it all together and it worked."

Allie and Stephanie swung on the swings. "So, who does get to be Santa Claus?"

Walter walked by them. "Come on, there's no such thing as Santa Claus."

"Yes there is," hollered Stephanie. "Joey says there is."

"He probably thinks road runners really go as fast as rocket ships," Walter kidded her. Joey loved cartoons.

Allie had become less shy since Kindergarten. She still spoke a good deal less than Stephanie, though, especially in class. However, even Allie had to answer here. "I'm sure Joey knows cartoons aren't real."

Stephanie stared at Walter. "That's right! He knows the difference between the road runner and Santa Claus. And you better start believing in him, or he'll put a lump of coal in your stocking."

Later that day, Stephanie entered the Tanner household. "Hey, everybody. Daddy, you're home early," she remarked as he picked her up and hugged and kissed her.

"I couldn't wait to get home and see my adorable little girls. Plus, there was a power outage at the station, so we all had to come home."

D.J. and Joey entered the living room. "Hey, Steph. Joey's giving me pointers on comedy. He offered to direct the Middle School Christmas play this year."

"It's a comedy version of the Nutcracker," Joey explained.

Danny looked very puzzled. "Joey...how do you do a comedy version of a ballet?"

"Well, it's simple. They don't have any lines to begin with. So, instead of dancing, we tell the story in the form of jokes. You should see the toy soldiers. They're told to start marching, but then they keep getting their numbers mixed up."

"Where'd you get a crazy idea like that?" Danny wondered.

Michelle came marching in from the kitchen, pretending she was in the Army. "1, 2, 3, 5, 6...wait, let me start over." She turned around, then came back in. "One, two, buckle my shoe...no, that's not it." She went back into the kitchen."

Danny turned to Joey again. "Joey, that's the cutest, most adorable idea." He followed Michelle into the kitchen. Jesse came out.

Stephanie gave Joey a sad face. "Joey, I was hoping you would help me with my party."

Joey knelt down to her level. "Well, Steph, D.J. needs some help, too. You're not the only one who enjoys having me help them."

"But I wanted you to tell Walter the difference between the Roadrunner and Santa Clause," she said sadly.

"Oh, well that's easy." Joey counted on his hands. "Santa Clause has a beard, the Roadrunner has feathers. Santa wears a red suit, the Roadrunner doesn't. The coyote chases the Roadrunner, he's never chased Santa Claus."

Stephanie still felt bad that Joey couldn't host it. But, at least she was laughing now. "Joey, that's not what I mean. I mean, I want you to tell him the Roadrunner's a cartoon, but Santa Claus is real."

Jesse led Stephanie over to the couch and told her to sit with him. She did. "Look, Steph...I know something like this is hard. Why, I remember the first few Elvis sightings right after the

king died. I was so excited, I thought maybe he wasn't dead after all. But, after a while, I came to realize that it's all make believe. And Elvis really is dead."

"Santa Claus is not Elvis!"

"No, but Elvis sure got as fat as him at the end," Joey joked. "Look, I'm sure Jesse will have a great time hosting your Christmas party."

"Christmas party? What Christmas party?"

"My school's Christmas party. Uncle Jesse, you've gotta come do it," Stephanie pleaded.

Jesse smiled. "Sure, kid. I'll help you"

Stephanie told him the time. "And wear your Santa suit." Stephanie could tell Jesse wasn't sure. "Uncle Jesse, you've gotta be Santa Claus."

"Well...look..." Jesse thought a minute. "Look, I've got an idea of a great game we can play there. Tell me what song this is. 'Cincinnati's Russian shortstop is aware of precipitation, Darling."

Stephanie rubbed her chin. "Hmmm, we learned about weather early this year. Precipitation is rain." She looked stumped for a moment.

Joey told her "Cincinnati's baseball team is the Reds. So, the shortstop is a Red"

Jesse waved his hand in a circle. "Right, Joey. Something the red..."

"Red and rain, red and rain..." Stephanie continued to talk it out. "Something the red is aware of rain...wait. The Red knows..." Her eyes suddenly lit up. "Rudolf the Red-Nose Reindeer," she shouted triumphantly.

Jesse gave her a high five. "Hey, you got it!" They hugged.

"That's so cool, Uncle Jesse!"

"Thanks. I got a sheet with about 25 of those, the band and I used 'em last Christmas at our party. I think your class'll love 'em." He added something else. "I even came up with lots of Elvis ones. Bet you can't guess this one. 'My sincere desire is to be a toy named after a president.'"

Michelle walked into the living room and sat tiredly on Jesse's lap. "I wanna be your teddy bear," she said.

"How'd she get that so fast," Stephanie wondered adamantly.

Jesse picked Michelle up and carried her upstairs. "I think she's saying she's ready for her naptime song. Come on, little munchkin, let me take you upstairs." He sang as they went up the steps.

Stephanie and Allie walked up the front walk of the Tanner home the next day. "The teacher didn't mind when you said Joey wasn't doing it?"

"Well, I told her the truth. I didn't know Joey was helping D.J.." They entered the door. "We're home."

Joey got up from the couch. "Hey, D.J. just got in, too, I'm gonna go help her now. Allie, if you wanna call your mom the phone's free."

"She's not gonna be home," Allie explained.

"Oh, emergency came up," Joey guessed.

Stephanie shook her head. "No, she had a doctors' appointment. I told her she could come last week."

"Sorry, I guess I didn't hear about that," he explained.

Stephanie shrugged. "That's okay, I didn't tell anyone. I knew it would be okay."

Joey sat back down in front of Stephanie. “Steph, you need to tell us these things ahead of time. Like about the school party. Maybe Jesse could have helped D.J., and...oh, no. He’d have had them doing a rock and roll Nutcracker. With lots of Elvis songs”

Allie scrunched her face. “Ouch.”

Stephanie nodded slowly. Allie’s mom had taken her and Allie to the Nutcracker last Christmas. That would have been far worse than a comedy one. “Trust me, Joey. I’m glad Uncle Jesse’s doing our party.”

Joey agreed heartily. “My point is, maybe we would have planned something not knowing about Allie’s mom. And we might have expected you would be able to go to Allie’s after school. Then, you’d be there all alone. And you know that should never happen.”

Stephanie reluctantly agreed. She hadn’t thought of that problem. “Sorry, Joey. I’ll tell one of you next time.”

“Great. Anyway, how’d it go with Walter and that bit about Santa Claus?”

Stephanie began to explain, but Michelle interrupted. She walked past them carrying Mr. Bear. “Freeze.” Michelle stopped. “What are you doing with Mr. Bear?”

“Playing with him.” Stephanie took him. “Hey!”

“Steph, maybe you, Allie, and Michelle can all go upstairs and play with Mr. Bear in her room. I’m going to be helping D.J., your dad’s still at work, and Jesse’s over at Becky’s.”

Stephanie thought a minute. She and her friend Harry liked to get really silly. They would have tea parties, but pretend the tea was poisoned by some evil witch that they had to stop, for instance. But, Allie - while she was getting more into that kind of play - enjoyed quieter stuff. The kind that Michelle would enjoy. Then, they wouldn’t be roughhousing with her favorite animal - which was really a best friend, too. “Okay, Michelle, we can all play together with him. But, he’s staying dressed.”

Michelle pouted a little. “Aw nuts. I wanted to put a dress on him.”

Allie giggled.

“Put a dress on Mr. Bear?” Stephanie rolled her eyes. She thought Michelle was a little too young yet, or she would have said “how rude” to her.

“Okay, girls, come on. Let’s go upstairs,” Joey suggested.

After a while, Danny entered Michelle’s room to say hello. Stephanie spoke after she and Danny embraced. “Daddy,” Stephanie complained, “I tried telling Walter Santa Claus has a red suit and the coyote never chases him because he’s real and the Roadrunner isn’t, but he still doesn’t believe Santa Claus is real.” She noticed Danny’s sad look. “Daddy...Santa is real, isn’t he? He’s gotta be, he’s just gotta be,” she insisted.

Danny smiled sadly. He suggested that Michelle go play with Joey and D.J. in Steph and D.J.’s room. She left. “Allie, do you want to hear this, too?”

Allie spoke skeptically. “Well, I’m not so sure.” She shrugged. “My mom didn’t know what to say when I asked her yesterday if Santa was real. She just started crying.”

“How could there not be,” Stephanie wondered. She tried to convince herself of his existence. “Like Harry. He said it’s his parents who deliver his presents. I say ‘no way.’ Harry’s parents could never get down all those chimneys in one night.” Santa Claus must be real, she told herself.

Danny and the girls walked downstairs and sat on the couch. Stephanie sat on Danny’s lap, Allie sat beside them. “I want to tell you a little story.”

“No offense, Mr. Tanner,” Allie began. “But...well, I know where Stephanie gets her imagination. You can’t tell a *little* story.”

“You’re right. Let me tell you a big story. But, a true one. You see, another name for Santa is Saint Nicholas, you know that, right?” She nodded. “The real Saint Nicholas lived in Turkey around 430.”

Stephanie looked at her watch. “I knew he was real, Allie. That’s only 15 minutes from now.”

“Let me finish. He lived around 430 AD, and he got his start because a very poor man needed help. A man who was raising three girls.”

“Just like you, Daddy,” Stephanie remarked.

Danny smiled. “Just like me. But, he had no money to give anyone who wanted to marry his girls.”

Allie’s mouth flew open. “You mean he had to pay someone to marry them?”

“They must have been some pretty bad girls,” Stephanie told her friend.

“No, Steph, that was just custom in those days. It’s called a dowry. The father of the bride would give a couple money to help them live on for a while,” he remarked.

Stephanie understood as he spoke. Money was very important to these people. But, the men controlled it. Women weren’t allowed to handle money. If one had a huge dowry, he could marry his daughters off to very rich nobles. But, if he didn’t, they might never marry. Or worse, they could have to be sold as slaves. That was this one man’s worry.

Stephanie’s mind soon drifted back to the Dark Ages.

Kimmy Gibbleria walked into the stone hut. She was the best friend of D.J. Tanneria. “Hey, Tannerias. Hey, Mr. T.”

Danny kept looking down at his paper. He was studying his news report for the next time he acted as town crier. He even had a famous opening line - “Wake up, Antioch!”

“Oh, hi, Kimmy.” He glanced up, then looked shocked. Kimmy was wearing nothing but a toga! “Kimmy, what are you wearing?”

“Just came from the bath houses. Lots of cute boys down there.” She noticed D.J. walking down the steps. “Hey, Deej. Wanna go out and see who’s invading the town this week? Might be some cute Huns crossing through.”

Danny stood. “I’m raising my daughters to be responsible women, not wives to some miscreants who care about nothing but looting and vandalizing?”

“And what, Dad,” D.J. wanted to know.

“Vandalizing. I came up with that on the spur of the moment on the show, after the Vandals passed through last month.” He smiled. “It’s fun to be town crier at a time like this. I had some people tell me later they thought that word might actually catch on.”

“Too bad they don’t have property rights to words,” Jesse remarked, coming in in traditional Roman garb, but with the same Elvis hairstyle. “What am I saying, the Roman Empire is crumbling. It wouldn’t matter, anyway.”

Kimmy nodded. “Yeah, hair boy. But, Mr. T. wouldn’t need the money from it. He says he’s raising his girls to be respectable. So, he’s obviously got some huge dowries stashed somewhere. Well, see you later, Deej.” Kimmy left.

Stephanie and Michelle came down the steps next. “Dad, I hid with Michelle. I thought a pillager was coming through.”

“Naw, that was just Kimmy,” Danny said.

“What’s the difference,” Stephanie wondered.

“Can I have some ouce cream,” Michelle wanted to know.

“Sure...but it’ll take me a couple hours to make it,” Danny said.

“But I want some now,” Michelle declared.

Jesse looked dejected. “You’ve got it easy, shorty. Rock and roll won’t be invented for another 1500 years. I’ll be a really old man by then.”

“Well, while you’re waiting, make me some ouce cream.” She grabbed his hand and led him into the kitchen.

Joey walked into the hut. “Hey, where’s Jess, I got a great idea for our next ad campaign - Meek’s Mikes, er, Mike’s meats is the name of the pace...er, place.” He threw up his hands. “Aw, rats, I won’t be able to say the idea right if I live another 1500 years. I had enough trouble saying polk...pork and portry...aw, skip it.”

Danny sighed. “Good idea. We need to talk about something else. We’re never gonna make enough to find a decent dowry for even one of the girls, let alone all three.”

D.J. suggested they try music. “Maybe Jesse should go back to trying to perform. Elvis made lots of money.”

“Deej, there’s no way Elvis would make that kind of money now.”

Jesse poked his head into the room again. “Hey, man, are you kidding? Elvis is Caesar.”

“He’d probably be better than the one we have now,” Danny said as Jesse left again. “Look, girls...I know everyone wants to have a decent dowry, but it just might not happen. All I’m saying is, don’t get your hopes up.”

“But what if we become house servants for someone like Kimmy,” whined Stephanie.

“I know how you feel.” Danny walked around the room slowly. Stephanie suddenly began raising her hand and saying “I know, I know” as he spoke. “Look, all I’ve ever wanted is to be able to give you girls a decent dowry so you can marry some rich prince. But, I just don’t see how it can happen. I mean, I’m just a lowly town crier. Folks like us, we don’t stand a chance with the Huns and other marauders. It used to be so much better, I know....Steph, what is it?”

“Why don’t we just ask someone to give us the money?”

“I wish it was that simple,” Danny admitted.

Later, Stephanie and Michelle were with Joey in a marketplace. “Hey,” Stephanie said to Michelle. “There’s a big old nobleman on a throne - look at his big white beard.”

“Whoa, baby,” Michelle said.

“Let’s go ask him for money for Daddy.” Stephanie led Michelle over to the man, and both surprised him by getting on his lap. “Kind Sir, may we ask a favor of you?”

The nobleman looked at them curiously. “Well, I suppose.” He saw Joey waving to him, grinning goofily. “What do you want?”

Stephanie began to explain. “Well, our dad’s the town crier, Danny Tannreia. And, he has three girls. He doesn’t have enough money for one of us, let alone three, to have a good dowry. We don’t want to be old maids, or worse yet, be slaves of Kimmy. So, we were wondering if you had some gold laying around.”

The nobleman said it would be tough. “But...well, I’ll see what I can do.”

Stephanie excitedly went home and told her dad. “Daddy, guess what? We asked this guy for gold, and he said he’d what he could do.”

Danny grinned proudly. “That’s very sweet, dear, but I don’t think...”

Suddenly, there was a knock at the door. A stranger, with dark hair and a white coat, stood there. “Are you Danny Tannreia?”

“I am.”

The man pulled out a large bag of gold. “I have heard that D.J. is interested in this one prince, who also loves her. Here is a bag of gold to use as her dowry. It is free of charge.”

Danny was stunned. As Stephanie bounced excitedly behind him, Danny tried to speak. Finally he said “how...how can this be? Who are you?”

“I will only say that I am a devout Christian, named Nicholas. And I have seen your distress, and it has burdened me to give to many others of the great wealth I have inherited. Fear not, though, for when your other two daughters are ready to be married, I shall come back with bags of gold for them, too, so they may use for their dowries.”

Danny completed the story with both girls gazing lovingly at him. “And so, they learned they could all be that giving, in other ways if not in money. So, the family all became Santa Clauses, in their hearts. And they carried the tradition forward to this day. And all three girls married wonderful, loving princes. And they all lived happily ever after.”

“Wow, nice story. Thanks, Mr. Tanner,” Allie said simply.

“That was such a cool story, Daddy,” Stephanie exclaimed.

D.J. opened the door. It was Mrs. Taylor. “Hey, Mrs. Taylor, come on in.”

“Mommy!” Allie ran to her, and the two hugged. “Mr. Tanner just told us all about the real Saint Nicholas.”

Danny walked up to Mrs. Taylor. “Steph’s been asking questions. Sounds like Allie has, too, from what she said.”

Mrs. Taylor nodded sadly. “I couldn’t bring myself to tell her last night...we’re not planning any more children, so this is my baby. And, I just wanted to keep her believing in Santa as long as I could. Just to keep one more piece of that precious childhood.”

“I know how you feel, Mrs. Taylor. I hate to see any of mine grow up,” Danny said.

Stephanie bounced happily, not caring that the others were sounding sad. “Daddy says we can all be Santa Claus.”

“That’s right, Stephanie.” Mrs. Taylor looked back at Danny. “Thanks so much for watching Allie today.”

“No problem; it was our pleasure.”

“And just wait till next week. We’re gonna have a Christmas party for the class, and every one of us can be Santa,” Stephanie proclaimed.

Stephanie stood in front of her second grade class the following Friday. They’d had lots of fun passing out little presents. The oddly named Christmas songs were a big hit. The students needed lots of hints, but the fun part was, so did the teacher. The class even enjoyed singing “Winter Wonderland” with Jesse impersonating Elvis.

“And now,” Stephanie began, “let me tell you a story. Because some people, I won’t name any names, having been saying that there is no such thing as Santa Claus. Well, I’m here to give you the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.”

Stephanie told the story much as her dad had. She added some parts, to make it longer. The students sat spellbound as Danny, Joey, D.J., and Michelle entered. Stephanie had hoped to be finished before they came back from D.J.’s rehearsal, so Michelle wouldn’t hear. Now, she had to ad lib.

“The real Santa Claus is all of us. Each of you can be Santa. For my sister Michelle’s sake, let me say that that means that any one of us could be the real Santa. Just like you see all those at the store, and you don’t know which is the real one.”

“But, there isn’t really a real one, is there,” Walter asked triumphantly.

“D.J., maybe you should take Michelle to the bathroom,” Stephanie said.

Michelle shook her head. “I already went.”

Stephanie tilted her head. “You know, I’m pretty sure I saw some ice cream in there.”

Michelle ran out the door, with D.J. following her closely.

One Michelle was gone, Jesse explained. “Walter, what Stephanie means is, Santa is a fun thing to think about. Because he’s just part of the spirit of Christmas. You know, whether you’re talking about the fantasy of flying reindeer, or the true story of God giving His Son for all of us, this time of year is all about giving. It’s about giving time, talents, anything, for others. Just like when I gave of myself to set this up.”

“Yeah, didn’t my uncle put together the coolest party,” Stephanie exclaimed. Everyone agreed. Michelle stomped back into the room angrily. “There’s no ouce cream in there.”

“Ice cream,” the class declared.

Michelle looked at Stephanie and held out her hands. “See, they want some, too.” She shook a finger at the teacher, who giggled. “You need to have ouce cream here.”

“We’ll get some on the way home, sweetheart,” Danny responded.

“What that all true, what Stephanie said,” Walter wanted to know.

“Everything except about Elvis,” Stephanie admitted.

Jesse held up a finger. “Hey, if he had played back then, he still would have been great.”

“That’s exactly right. And, Saint Nicholas was really just following the spirit of giving that started it all.” Danny chuckled. “Although I’m really not sure about the man being the inventor of the word ‘vandalism,’ either. Then again, someone had to, so who knows?”

The teacher smiled warmly at Danny. “Well, that part doesn’t matter. This just proves what I have always said - your daughter may talk a lot, but that’s just because she has so many clever ideas.”

“Thanks. She really gets it from me. You know...” Several parents came to pick up their children as Danny spoke. Finally, he stopped, a little embarrassed. “I guess I should stop, huh?”

“It’s okay, storytelling is a fun gift.” Stephanie looked at Michelle. “I got a gift of a great little sister. And you’ve gotten great gifts, too, Michelle?”

Her eyes lit up. “Like Mr. Bear?”

“No, nobody is getting Mr. Bear.”

“Aw, nuts,” Michelle proclaimed.

“Hey, that’s okay.” Danny knelt down and hugged the two of them. “We’ve got love. And, that’s the best gift of all.”

“You said it, Daddy,” Stephanie remarked as they left. “Merry Christmas, everyone!” Shouts of “Merry Christmas” rang out as they left the building.