

## **CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY**

# AND THUS HE CAME

A CHRISTMAS FANTASY

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#### A Christmas Fantasy

#### **Cyrus Townsend Brady**

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www.jazzybee-verlag.de www.facebook.com/jazzybeeverlag admin@jazzybee-verlag.de

#### And Thus He Came

### I - The Baby

#### "A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM"

The heavy perfume of rare blossoms, the wild strains of mad music, the patter of flying feet, the murmur of speech, the ring of laughter, filled the great hall. Now and again a pair of dancers, peculiarly graceful and particularly daring, held the center of the floor for a moment while the room rang with applause.

Into alcoves, screened and flower-decked, couples wandered. In the dancing-space hands were clasped, bosoms rose and fell, hearts throbbed, pulses beat, and moving bodies kept time to rhythmic sound. Suddenly the music stopped, the conversation ceased, the laughter died away. Almost, as it were, poised in the air, the dancers stood amazed. One looked to another in surprise. Something stole throughout the room which was neither music, nor lights, nor fragrance, but which was life—a presence!

"Do you see that child?" asked the wildest of the dancers of her escort. "There," she pointed. "He looks like a very little boy."

"I see nothing," said the man, who still held her in the clasp of his arm.

"He is strangely dressed, although I see him indistinctly, vaguely," whispered the woman. "He wears a long white robe and there is a kind of light about his face. See, he is looking at us."

"I see nothing," repeated the man in low tones. "The heat, the light, the music, have disturbed you; let me get you—"

"I want nothing," interposed the woman, waving the man aside and drawing away from his arm. "Don't you see him, there?"

She made a step toward the center of the room. She stopped, put her hand to her head.

"Why, he is gone," she exclaimed.

"Good," said the man, while at that instant the room suddenly rang with cries: "Go on with the music, the dance is not half over." He extended his arm to the woman again. "Our dance is not finished."