

MRS. CLAUS: And your hands are like ice--you'd better have some chill pills, too.

NARRATOR: She gives him a big dose and he sneezes again.

SANTA: Kerr-chew. You see--all this medicine--it's making me worse! How much longer have I got to sit here dangling my feet in this hot water? I ought to be down in the workshop. The elves are good workers but without me to direct them, they're apt to get into mischief. Why don't they come up here and report?

NARRATOR: He turns his head and shouts for his elves.

SANTA: (SHOUTING) Jingle--Dingle--Winky--Blinky!!!

MRS. CLAUS: Stop shouting, my dear!

NARRATOR: Santa ignores Mrs. Claus, lifts one foot out of the pan as if to get up and yells again.

SANTA: (YELLING) Holly--Jolly--Mistletoe!!!

MRS. CLAUS: (IN AN IRRITATED VOICE) Stop it! You'll lose your voice--and don't take your feet out of that hot water!

SANTA: It isn't hot any more--it's getting cold.

MRS. CLAUS: Well, the elves are bringing more.

SANTA: What's that? Just as I thought--when they ought to be down in the workshop getting things ready--packing the sleigh...

MRS. CLAUS: Now, now -- all of them are except Jingle and Dingle--but I don't see much sense to it. If you can't go on your trip...

SANTA: Can't go? Woman, what are you talking about? Don't you realize? It's Christmas Eve. What would Christmas be without Santa Claus? I've got millions and millions of presents to deliver!

MRS. CLAUS: Nonsense. You can't go climbing down chimneys tonight--no in your condition. Think of the ashes and soot. Why, you'd besneezing all the dust up your nose.

NARRATOR: Santa sneezes again.

SANTA: Kerrrrr-chew!

MRS. CLAUS: And besides, you'd wake up all the children with all your sneezing.

SANTA: Well, so what? Maybe some of the boys and girls would like to see Santa Claus for a change.

MRS. CLAUS: Humph. They'd never recognize you. Where are your twinkling eyes and the dimples they always talk about? You're in an awful humor and besides, your nose is red.

SANTA: My nose is always red. It's supposed to be!

MRS. CLAUS: But a cheerful red--not a fierY red. Here, you'd better blow it.

SANTA: Oh, very well.

MRS. CLAUS: And don't look like such a martyr. I'm only trying to make you better.

NARRATOR: Two elves, Jingle and Dingle enter carrying a tea kettle of hot water and a big box labelled "mustard." They look at Santa and shake their heads.

JINGLE AND DINGLE (TOGETHER): Oh dear, oh dear.

JINGLE: Oh, Santa has the sniffles--and it's very sad to see;

DINGLE: If Santa has the sniffles, what Christmas will there be?

SANTA: (SNEEZING) Ker-chew!

MRS. CLAUS: (CLAPPING HER HANDS) Jingle, Dingle--stop that nonsense. Now, quick, the hot water--the mustard.

NARRATOR: The elves run to Santa. Jingle pours some hot water in the pan and Dingle sprinkles some mustard into it from a box. Santa starts to pull his feet from the pan, and then jerks them out quickly as the elves pour in the hot water.

SANTA: Ouch--Ouch, it's hot! It's hQ~! Get out of here, both of you!

JINGLE: But Mr. Santa...

DINGLE: We're only trying to make you well.

SANTA: You ought to be down in the workshop--both of you--packing dolls--packing drums--packing candy-

JINGLE: Yes, sir, we'll go at once, sir.

SANTA: And send Winky and Blinky up here. I want a report on how things are going. It's getting late. I'll have to start soon.

DINGLE: Yes, sir!

NARRATOR: Jingle and Dingle run out to fetch Winky and Blinky.

MRS. CLAUS: (FIRMLY) You'll not stir an inch out of this house until you're better. It's snowing harder and it's colder than ever. I stuck my head out of the door once and got icicles in my hair.

SANTA: What's new about that? It's always cold at the North Pole.

MRS. CLAUS: But it's worse tonight.

SANTA: All the more reason to let me go. I could soon be in a warmer climate!

MRS. CLAUS: Yes, and catch double pneumonia. Sudden changes like that are bad for people with the sniffles.

SANTA: Oh, stop fussing! Why did I have to catch this cold anyhow?

MRS. CLAUS: It's your own fault. I told you not to go out last night in the sleigh-

SANTA: But I had to exercise the reindeer. Dancer and Prancer are getting fat and Comet and Cupid and the rest of them are getting lazy. They had to be in trim for tonight.

MRS. CLAUS: I could have exercised the reindeer.

SANTA: You? Mrs. Santa Claus? A woman?

MRS. CLAUS: Women are doing lots of things these days. All kinds of jobs. It beats me--you go out into the world every year and still I know more about what's going on out there than you do.

SANTA: That's because you're always listening to the radio...

MRS. CLAUS: Yes, and I think I'll turn it on now, Santa. It'll take your mind off things.

NARRATOR: Mrs. Claus goes across the room and switches on the radio. Immediately you hear the strains of "Jingle Bells."

SANTA: (CROSSLY) Take my mind off...

1st RADIO VOICE (CUTTING OFF SANTA IN MID-SENTENCE) "'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there."

SANTA: What did I tell you? All the children are expecting me--they're waiting now--they're waiting for Christmas to begin...Turn that thing off. It makes me nervous.

MRS. CLAUS: I'll switch it to another station...

NARRATOR: She does, and another voice comes on.

2nd RADIO VOICE: "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy."

MRS. CLAUS: That's what the New York Sun wrote to that little girl so long ago.

2nd RADIO VOICE: "Alas, how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus."

SANTA: Certainly it would be dreary--of course it would be dreary!

MRS. CLAUS: Oh dear, I'd better turn it off.

NARRATOR: Mrs. Claus gets up again and switches off the radio.

MRS. CLAUS: I'd like to have listened. It's so beautiful. But it's making you nervous.

SANTA: Naturally--at a time like this! Don't you see? If I don't get started on my trip soon, people won't believe in me anymore. They'll think there isn't any Santa Claus.

MRS. CLAUS: Oh, perhaps if you didn't go this year, they'd appreciate you more than ever. After all, you've never missed a Christmas before.

SANTA: And I'm not going to miss this one! Where are those elves? I thought I told them-

NARRATOR: Just then, Winky and Blinky run in, interrupting Santa.

WINKY AND BLINKY: Here we are, Santa!

WINKY: I'm Winky!

BLINKY: I'm Blinky!

SANTA: Never mind--what difference does it make if I can't tell you apart! How are things in the workshop? All finished? What about dolls, drums, candy canes, sleds, Nintendo games?

WINKY: There are millions of sleds and millions of drums-

BLINKY: And millions of dolls and sugar plums.

SANTA: Have you got some red-headed dolls?

WINKY: Oh, yes, Santa Claus.

SANTA: Some of the little girls like red-headed dolls.

BLINKY: And Holly and Jolly have given all the dolls permanents this year.

WINKY: Then if the little girls take them out in the rain, the dolls won't lose their curly hair.

SANTA: Fine--and what about ponies?

BLINKY: The ponies have already been sent on ahead. They're waiting in neighbor's barns all over the country.

SANTA: Well, I'll need some long ribbons--yards and yards-

WINKY: What for?

SANTA: Well, you can't put a live pony on a Christmas tree, so I'll loop a ribbon around its neck and then run the ribbon through a window and tie it to the tree with a knot.

BLINKY: Wonderful!

WINKY: Great idea!

MRS. CLAUS: Excuse me, but it's very foolish making all those plans, Santa Claus, when you know as well as I do-

NARRATOR: Suddenly two other elves, Holly and Jolly, dash in.

HOLLY: I'm Holly!

JOLLY: I'm Jolly!

HOLLY: And we have come to say-JOLLY: That we've finished packing all the toys-

HOLLY: You can soon be on your way.

MRS. CLAUS: Santa, I tell you there's no use-

NARRATOR: Another interruption as Jingle and Dingle run in from outside with snowflakes all over them.

JINGLE: I'm Jingle!

DINGLE: I'm Dingle!

JINGLE: We're hitching up the reindeer-Dasher and Dancer and Vixen;

DINGLE: And Comet and Cupid and Prancer-And also Donner and Blitzen!

NARRATOR: Just then the seventh elf, Mistletoe, enters, also covered with snow.

MISTLETOE: I'm Mistletoe! I've been putting on the sleighbells-Did you hear them ring? Oh, the sound makes me so happy-I could fairly sing.

NARRATOR: All the elves begin dancing around the room.

JINGLE: I'm Jingle.

DINGLE: I'm Dingle.

HOLLY: I'm Holly.

JOLLY: I'm Jolly.

WINKY: I'm Winky.

BLINKY: I'm Blinky.

MISTLETOE: And I'm Mistletoe.

ALL ELVES: Oh, we've made the toys the whole year through For every girl and boy; And now it's time for Christmas-For Happiness and Joy.

NARRATOR: Santa catching their excitement, tries to get up from the chair.

SANTA: Yes--Yes, of course it is--it's time for me to be off! It's getting late-

MRS. CLAUS: Now, Santa, you stay right there in that chair. You know as well as I do that you can't go anywhere tonight. It's impossible-

SANTA: Nonsense--I've got to go.

ALL ELVES: Come on, come on, oh, Santa dear-O'er all the world you'll fly; We'll help you get onto the sleigh-You'll be off in the wink of an eye!

SANTA: Yes--Yes! No--No--I don't know. I feel dizzy. My head's stuffed up and my nose---Ker-chew--ker-chew--ker-chew!

MRS. CLAUS: There, you see? You're sneezing again. Now you just stay right there in

that chair.

JINGLE: But Mrs. Santa Claus-

DINGLE: What about Christmas?

WINKY: It's time for Santa Claus to go.

MRS. CLAUS: It's no use--he can't go. He knows that as well as I do. Here, let me tuck your blanket around you, Santa.

BLINKY: You--you mean there won't be any Christmas this year?

MRS. CLAUS: Of course there'll be a Christmas, but he won't have any part in it. Now Santa, don't you try to get out of your chair again!

NARRATOR: Mrs. Claus tucks Santa in his chair one last time and heads out of the room.

SANTA: Mrs. Claus, just where are you going?

MRS. CLAUS: Never you mind, Santa!

HOLLY: Oh dear--no Christmas, Jolly.

JOLLY: I can't believe it, Holly.

BLINKY: Oh, Winky, I'm going to cry.

WINKY: I know, Blinky, so am I.

JINGLE: Oh, Dingle, what can we do?

DINGLE: Jingle, I wish I knew.

MISTLETOE: I, Mistletoe, feel so blue!

NARRATOR: Santa begins to sneeze again and the elves run to him.

ALL ELVES: Oh, poor Santa! Can we help?

SANTA: No--no. I Just feel miserable--utterly mlserable! No Christmas- imagine it--no Christmas this year.

JINGLE: (WAILING LOUDLY) No Christmas!

DINGLE: (NOT QUITE SO LOUDLY) No Christmas at all.

WINKY: (FAINTER VOICE) No Christmas anywhere.

BLINKY: (STILL FAINTER, AND SADLY) No Christmas for the children.

HOLLY: (PRACTICALLY A WHISPER) No trimmed trees.

JOLLY: No filled socks.

MISTLETOE: No Santa Claus!

JINGLE: But there must be some way ... What can we do, Mister Santa? You ought to be able to figure something out!

SANTA: I'm sorry--there just doesn't seem to be any hope.

DINGLE: But Mrs. Claus said there'd be a Christmas, didn't she?

WINKY: How can there be a Christmas without Santa Claus?

BLINKY: But what did she mean then?

HOLLY: Maybe--maybe she's going to send all the presents to the children-JOLLY: Why, yes! Through the mail-

MISTLETOE: Special delivery.

SANTA: No--No, that wouldn't do at all. The children get presents through the mail from their aunts and cousins and grandfathers. They're used to that kind of presents--it wouldn't mean a thing to them.

NARRATOR: Suddenly Mrs. Claus enters the room wearing a long, white, bushy beard just like Santa's and dressed in one of his red suits, a cap, and carrying a big pack over her shoulder.

JINGLE: Why--why, it's Mrs. Santa Claus!

DINGLE: And she's wearing--she's wearing trousers!

MRS. CLAUS: Certainly--I'm going to deliver the presents!

SANTA: But Mrs. Claus, I won't have it. You've got on my other suit.

MRS. CLAUS: Certainly I have--as Dingle said, I'm wearing trousers.

SANTA: Well, I simply won't have it. I won't have it, I tell you. Such a thing never happened at the North Pole before!

MRS. CLAUS: Now--now, dear, don't get so excited. It's not good for your delicate condition. Lots of women wear pants out into the world--only they call them slacks. I'm going to do your job tonight!

SANTA: But it's unheard of-

MRS. CLAUS: And while I'm gone you and the elves can get Christmas ready here the way I usually do. Here's a list.

NARRATOR: Mrs. Claus hands Santa a long list of things to do.

SANTA: But--but...

MRS. CLAUS: Now, now,--no buts! Roast the turkey, fill the stockings, mash the potatoes, don't burn the gravy--well, it's all there. Just follow directions. I know it's more work than you usually do but at least you'll be here in the warmth. I'll be back in time for Christmas dinner.

SANTA: I won't allow it. I won't allow you to go-

MRS. CLAUS: Would you rather there not be any Christmas and have all the children disappointed?

NARRATOR: She pauses, waiting for an answer, and hearing none, says:

MRS. CLAUS: I thought not.

SANTA: (WEAKLY) But--

MRS. CLAUS: Now don't argue. Lots of women take over their men's jobs when they have to. And I ought to be on my way.

SANTA: But have you got the addresses? Will you know-

MRS. CLAUS: Of course I'll know. Just stop at every house.

SANTA: But certain things go certain places.

MRS. CLAUS: I won't mix them up, and even if I did, someone might like a surprise!

WINKY: Yes--yes.

BLINKY: A surprise!

NARRATOR: Mrs. Claus starts for the door but turns once more for a last word.

MRS. CLAUS: Well, I'm off! And if any child peeks there'll be no harm done. I guess I can pass for Santa Claus. Merry Christmas.

NARRATOR: The elves all run to the window and relay information to Santa Claus who is leaning forward in his chair, anxiously.

JINGLE: She's climbing into the sleigh

DINGLE: The reindeer are all pawing and prancing now

WINKY: She's getting all wrapped up in the big blanket-

BLINKY: She looks merry as can be!

HOLLY: Her eyes are twinkling-

JOLLY: And her nose is getting red from the cold.

MISTLETOE: She's off! There they go! Listen!

NARRATOR: In the distance you can hear Mrs. Claus' voice calling to the reindeer.

MRS. SANTA: (VOICE GROWING FAINTER AND FAINTER): Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer, now Vixen. On, Comet, on Cupid! On Donner and Blitzen!

ALL ELVES: Yes! There's going to be a Christmas after all.

SANTA: Yes, yes--but dear me, I don't know what to think. Of course I'm glad the children are going to have Christmas, but to have Mrs. Santa Claus take my place....

DINGLE: It's all right-

JINGLE: Just this once.

MISTLETOE: Just for this year.

NARRATOR: Santa thinks this over very carefully.

SANTA: Hmmmmmm-m, you never can tell with women. Now she may want to do it every year. You'd be surprised--she's getting more and more publicity all the time. Last year several store windows featured Mr. Santa Claus.

WINKY: Oh, but you too, I'll bet, Mr. Santa!

BLINKY: Of Course.

HOLLY: There'll always be a Santa Claus.

ALL ELVES: And there'll always be a Christmas. (WAVING) Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!

SANTA: (WAVING TO ALL) Merry Christmas to all!