

The Green Elf Who Saved Christmas

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When Santa's reindeer get sick just before Christmas Eve, he has to do something to save Christmas for the children around the world. It means asking for help from someone he hasn't spoke to in a century; but for the children Santa will swallow his pride. This story was written in response to future author's short story Christmas contest.



Published on
Booksie

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Santa and his elves worked feverously to finish all the toys and bikes and assorted items that were on the lists of children all around the world.

The workshop bustled with elves wrapping gifts and filling bags of goodies; and the excitement was growing by the minute for everyone at the North Pole. Carols were played throughout the workshop to keep spirits high; and elves energetic.

This year; like hundreds before them was coming together with precision; and Santa went about checking his list and making sure not one child was forgotten. Susie's doll, the one with braided blond hair and pink checkered dress with white shoes, was carefully put into Santa's bag. Next, came the red fire truck for little Bobby and the train set for his big brother Jeff, and so it went until the big green bag was brimming over with an array of splendid new toys.

It was one week until Christmas Eve and Santa went out to the Reindeer stable to give his sleigh team their supper of fine grains and apples.

He came first to Rudolf; who seemed to be a little under the weather. His nose appeared more amber than red and when Santa filled the trough with food; Rudolph just shook his head.

"Santa, I am not feeling well. I think I must be coming down with something because I feel...ah, ahhhh chooo!"

"Oh Dear," cried Santa. I hope you're feeling better soon Rudolph or you may have to stay here at the North Pole this Christmas. Just get plenty of rest, and I'll be checking on you later."

As Santa approached the stall that belonged to Dancer, he heard a loud sneeze and then a cough.

"Dancer was that you? Don't tell me that you're getting sick too!"

Dancer lifted his head and nodded, "I'm afraid so Santa and the others aren't feeling well either. Prancer nearly blew his antlers off a minute ago with a sneeze!"

Santa took great pride in keeping his reindeer team healthy and to hear they were all getting sick was unsettling to say the least.

He pulled out his cell phone and dialed the best Veterinarian in all the North Pole. Well, in truth he was the *only* Veterinarian in the North Pole; but that's neither here nor there.

A short time later, Dr. Basil Hoofendorker arrived in Christmas Town and went straight to the stables. He proceeded to listen through his stethoscope and shine a light in the reindeer's ears; thumping on their sides and asking them to take deep breaths and blow them out again.

Santa waited impatiently while the Doctor took their temperatures and felt their noses. He finally finished his examinations of all the reindeer and approached the anxious old elf dressed in red pants, white shirt and black suspenders. I mean, I shouldn't have to describe Santa to anyone; but oh well.

"Well Santa, it's just as I suspected; I'm afraid the reindeer have Deertruibolitis!"

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“Great Ghosts of Christmas past and present; what does that mean! Are my reindeer going to be alright? How serious is this condition Doctor Hoofendorker; and can you cure them?”

“Now settle down Santa, they will be alright; what they have is reindeer flu and it has to run its course. I’m afraid. They surely won’t be well enough to fly on Christmas Eve though.”

Santa tugged at his long fluffy white beard and thanked the Doctor for his diagnosis.

“Just give them plenty of fluids and make sure they rest. They should be right as rain in a couple of weeks.” With that, the good Dr. Basil Hoofendorker jumped on his snow mobile and left.

Santa went back to the workshop to break the news to all the elves and Mrs. Claus.

“I’m afraid we may have to cancel Christmas this year. Without my reindeer I have no way to travel around the world and deliver all these presents to the boys and girls.” Santa wiped a tear from his eyes.

There was a collective gasp from the elves upon hearing that Santa would have to cancel Christmas. They all whispered and sighed as they stood looking like the little boy who just dropped his ice cream cone on the ground. They hadn’t been this sad since the other reindeer wouldn’t let Rudolph join in any of their reindeer games.

“Surely there must be some other way to get the presents to the children Santa,” said Mrs. Claus.

“Maybe we could UPS them to the children, or maybe we could charter a plane and drop them in with parachutes!” chimed in Doofus Elf.

“Oh please, Doofus use your head for something other than to balance your shoulders!” yelled Grumpy Elf. And before you ask, yes; he used to hang out with Snow White before he got laid off and came to work for Santa.

“Well, I don’t hear you coming up with any bright ideas Mr. Smarty pants,” Doofus replied.

“Now now, Elves; I appreciate the suggestion Doofus, but UPS would be too slow and well, dropping gifts from a plane would not be accurate; not to mention the broken toys that children would wake up to on Christmas morning.”

“See, I told ya, what dumb ideas you have Doofus!” Grumpy said.

Santa looked over at Grumpy and touched his finger to his nose, while peering over the rim of his spectacles. Although he never spoke a word, Grumpy knew what that look meant.

He was getting dangerously close to being demoted back to the stuffing room; where all the stuffed animal toys were stuffed with cotton.

He hated that job! It made his nose itchy and the bears always came out lumpy. The quality control inspectors would send them back and he’d have to stuff them all over again.

“Sorry Santa, sorry Doofus,” he said meekly, as he slinked away to his desk where the trucks were assembled.

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“You know, there is one solution to the problem; and although I know you hate to ask him, it could save Christmas for the children Santa,” Mrs. Claus said, laying her hand gently on his arm.

“No, absolutely and positively no, I will never ask *him* for help!” Santa replied.

“So your pride is greater than your love for the children; is that it you big bellied old coot?”

Mrs. Claus never spoke in that way to Santa and he was quite taken by surprise at her remark. She was always supportive of him and spoke in the sweetest of voice as she served him delicious meals that would fatten him up for the long night of flying around the world.

He loved it when she called him “Snookums” and gave him that special wink of hers. Now she was calling him a “big bellied old coot” and he knew he better smarten up pretty quick.

“Oh alright, I’ll go and talk to him; but I’m not promising you anything will come from it. You know what a reindeer’s behind that man is.”

Mrs. Claus smiled and gave him that wink; and so off he went to a place he hadn’t visited in at least a century. He got in his motorized mini-sleigh that he used to get around to all the workshops in Christmas Town and headed to the home of the Green Elf of Tinsel Town. No, not *that* Tinsel Town; there were no casinos where he was going.

He entered town through the big rainbow that served as an arch over the town. On either side there sat large pots filled with gold coins. *Still a show off I see.*

He gathered up all the gumption he could muster and rang the doorbell. He heard the chimes play a When Irish Eyes Are Smiling, as he waited for someone to come to the door.

What dummy plays When Irish Eyes Are Smiling at Christmas time? Oh yeah, HE does!

The door swung open and there stood the Green Elf himself; dressed in his green pants and his green coat, trimmed in “you guessed it, green fur; and wearing that gaudy gold buckle on his belt.

“Hello Green,” was all Santa said.

“Hello Santa,” was Green Elf’s only reply.

After both men, or elves to be precise, stood there staring each other down for what seemed like an eternity; Santa finally broke the silence.

“Well, can I come inside or you want me to stand out here on the porch to talk to you?”

“Humph,” he replied, and stepped back to allow Santa to enter. “What brings you here Santa; seeing as how you haven’t set foot nor hoof around here in ages?” He hiked up his pants as he led Santa to the parlor.

“Don’t give yourself a wedgy Green; I wouldn’t be here now if Mrs. Claus hadn’t begged me to come.”

“How is that dear lady doing? You don’t deserve a beauty like her you old white bearded goat.”

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That was twice in one day someone had insulted him and Santa was getting plenty tired of it.

“Never you mind how my wife is doing; you old bow-legged leprechaun. I came here to ask you for help; what I mean to say is, I came here to ask you for help; tartan and blue feathered chickens, I can’t bring myself to say the word!” Santa stuttered.

“Hmmm, could that word you’re searching for be *help*? Has the great Santa Claus come to ask his brother for help?” He chuckled.

You could see the resemblance in the belly; old Green Elf’s belly shook like a bowl of Jello when he laughed.

“I can see that this was a mistake; I shouldn’t have come here today. If it weren’t for a world of disappointed children I would have gone another century without seeing you!”

“Oh relax Santa, before you burst an artery under that beard of yours. Doctor Hoofendorker came by yesterday to warn me about the deer flu that’s going around. I thought maybe you might come to see me.”

“Then you know my reindeer are sick and won’t be able to travel this Christmas? I thought maybe; that is to say, if you were willing to let bygones be bygones, and see your way clear to give me some of that leprechaun fairy dust, I could keep from disappointing the children.”

Santa’s brother put his hands behind his back and paced back and forth for a few minutes; obviously in deep thought. He wanted to see Santa squirm a little too.

“Are you willing to admit you were wrong when you called me a gold digging scrooge who didn’t have a heart when it comes to the spirit of giving? Hmmm, are you willing to do that Santa?”

Santa’s eyes squinted tightly; and his spectacles nearly slid off his nose as he heaved a heavy sigh.

“I don’t recall saying all that exactly; I think I said something more like; with all that gold you have you might spread it around a bit to help the needy. You know; instead of making the poor buggers chase you all over creation, trying to catch you before giving a pot of it away.” Santa stammered.

“Oh no, I remember your words precisely and you called me a gold digging scrooge. Now are you willing to take it back or not?”

As much as the jolly old elf hated to admit when he was wrong; he took a deep breath of air and gulped down his pride for the sake of Christmas.

“Oh all right, I was wrong to say those things to you Green. I suppose we both give in our own ways; and I apologize most sincerely for what I said.” Santa said.

“Apology accepted. And I apologize for saying what a complete idiot you look like running around in a red suit and sliding down chimneys.”

“Say what? I don’t recall you ever saying that to me Green,” Santa replied.

“Uh, oh that’s right; I never actually said that to you, it was the reporter that interviewed me about having a brother that represented Christmas. Sorry man.”

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Santa wrinkled his nose a bit and said, "I guess I deserved it; apology accepted."

Green Elf went to the shelf by the fireplace and took down an old weathered box that had a four leaf clover carved into the lid. He turned the lock with a small gold key and took out a green velvet bag of fairy dust and handed it to Santa.

"Just sprinkle the dust over your sleigh and a reindeer team will appear to carry your sleigh on Christmas Eve. Just make sure you return and land at Christmas Town by the time the sun rises; because the reindeer will disappear when the sun hits their backs."

"No wait! I might be confusing you with Cinderella's pumpkin carriage. Well, to be on the safe side maybe you should be back before morning." He said, scratching his head.

Santa took the bag of fairy dust and stuffed it inside his coat. He stood there for a moment, with tears welling up in his eyes, as he looked at his brother.

"Tell your fairies I will leave something for them under their Toad Stools this Christmas; and for you as well brother."

With that, he opened his arms wide and the two brothers exchanged an awkward and brief hug, before Santa left to go home to Christmas Town.

Mrs. Claus was so proud of Santa that she served him a double portion of her raisin and spice rice pudding that night. It wasn't exactly what he had in mind as a reward for going to see his brother; but it *was* his favorite dessert.

On Christmas Eve, Santa did as his brother told him; sprinkling the fairy dust over his sleigh. Sure enough; a whole team of reindeers appeared ready to take him to the houses of children all over the world.

Who would have thought that a Leprechaun would ever save Christmas? Who knew that Santa and the Irish Green Elf were brothers? Who knows why Green called his home Tinsel Town? How the heck did Santa's reindeers catch deer flu? It's just one of those things that gets forgotten in history I suppose. Until someone like me comes along to tell the facts! Merry Christmas all!

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