

The Elves Who Saved Christmas



Illustration by Josiene Saibrosa da Silva

By

Mrs and Mr Sproulle

The Elves Who Saved Christmas (by Mrs and Mr Sproulle)

“Santa’s had an accident,” announced Egbert. He was the Head Elf and it was his job to keep the other elves posted.

“What?” cried Elvis. “How is that possible? Christmas is only three weeks away!”

“What are we going to do?” cried Editha. “All those children will be so disappointed!”

The elves asked how the accident had happened.

“Well, Santa and the reindeer were taking the sleigh out for a test run and Rudolph - you know, the red-nosed one - bolted when a flock of geese flew across. Knocked Santa out cold. Won’t be sliding down any chimneys this Christmas. And the sleigh’s broken, too!”

“I’m sure it wasn’t his fault,” said Ellie, who was very fond of the cute reindeer. “It could have happened to any one of them!”

“Well, what are we going to do?” asked Ernie. “Those presents need to be delivered if we’re going to have Christmas.”

“Of course, we’ll have Christmas!” said Egbert. “Nothing’s going to stop Christmas! We’ll just have to deliver the presents ourselves.”

“Without a sleigh?” chorussed Ethel and Elvis. “We’ll need to repair that. Or build a new one!”

The elves looked at each other and wondered, “How are we going to do that?” They scratched their pointy heads and wiggled their pointy ears.

Then Ernie and Ellie said, almost in unison, “Why don’t we build some smaller sleighs and each take a reindeer, or even two, and deliver the presents. It will go so much faster than one big sleigh!”

“Hmmm,” reflected Egbert, “that might just be possible. It will need a lot of organisation.”

“But we can do it!” said Editha, the sensible one. “We’re Santa’s elves, remember? First of all, we’ll need a map of all the children: the good, the not-so-good and the naughty - they’ll get their presents last.” The elves agreed that this, indeed, was a very sensible plan.

They set to work, round the clock, making presents, building sleighs, finishing lists. But when Christmas Eve came, they found they only had six reindeer. The other six had been injured and were still resting.

“They’re just being lazy,” mumbled Elvis. Ethel, who thought he was being rude, gave him a clip round his pointy ears.

“Well, six will have to do,” said Egbert. “I’ll take Rudolph, he’ll lead the way.” He didn’t look happy about it. Neither did Rudolph. “The rest of you follow.”

Editha, Elvis, Ethel, Ernie and Ellie got into their sleighs. Presents were loaded, sleigh bells jingled, and whips - if needed - were ready to crack.

But Rudolph wouldn’t budge. He just stood there with his head bowed, shaking it.

“What’s wrong now?” shouted Egbert, worried about being late. “He is not budging.”

“Well, he’s just going to have to do as he’s told,” said Elvis, equally frustrated.

“Rudolph hasn’t heard Santa’s ‘Happy Travels’ poem yet,” said Ellie.

“You know,” said Ernie to a confused-looking Egbert, “the poem Santa whispers in Rudolph’s ear so he will lead the other reindeer.”

“I’ll do it,” said Ellie, getting down from her sleigh. This is what she whispered into Rudolph’s ear:

“Christmas Eve has come at last
Presents we’ll deliver fast
When we fly, we fly at speed
So take heed, my gentle steed.”

Rudolph looked behind him, nodded to the other reindeer and off the sleighs set.

Soon the elves were flying quite high, nearly touching the skies, sleigh bells jingling, elves singing, reindeer grunting.

Egbert was using the map they had drawn up to see where to deliver the presents. Suddenly Rudolph gave a jump - another goose! The sleigh jolted and Egbert dropped the map.

Down, down, down it fluttered right onto the head of Austin who was walking along below. He bent down, picked up the map and wondered what it was.

"We need that map, give it back!" cried Egbert, and to Austin's surprise, he was surrounded by elves in sleighs pulled by reindeer.

"The kids at school will never believe this," he said to himself. He didn't believe it either.

"We need that map!" repeated Egbert.

"Please give it to us," begged Ellie and Ernie. "The children will be so disappointed if we don't deliver their presents."

"Well, this boy isn't getting any," muttered Elvis.

"But it's mine!" said Austin. "I found it and I'm keeping it!"

Rudolph gave a loud, angry grunt and Austin backed away.

"How about - you give the map to us," suggested Editha, the sensible one. "And you get to ride in Santa's sleigh."

"Santa's sleigh?"

"Well, lots of sleighs," said Ethel. "Take your pick."

"Alright then. I want to ride in that one, the one with the red-nosed reindeer."

“Oh no! No, no, no, no! He’s not riding in my sleigh!”

“Please, Egbert,” begged the others. “Otherwise Christmas will be ruined.”

“Oh, alright then.” There was lots of grumpy muttering.

Austin, who was happy, climbed into the sleigh of Head Elf, who was not. Rudolph didn’t mind either way.

“Right, off we go!” And with a clatter of hooves, more jingling of bells and crying of “Heigh ho, reindeer, away!” they sped off into the night.

You’ll be happy to know that all the presents were delivered, Austin returned home safely, the reindeer got special treats, and Christmas was saved.