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Santa Claus' Busy Day

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY

Z. HARTMAN

Author of "Santa Claus Behind the Times"

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18 Vesey Street New York

FN 6120
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Santa Claus' Busy Day

CHARACTERS

FAIRIES

SANTA CLAUS

MRS. SANTA CLAUS.....*His wife*

MISS TRIXY

MISS NIXY

MISS PIXY

}*Santa's secretaries*

ZERO, *a grouchy old fairy*.....*The doorkeeper*

AJAX.....*Foreman of the toy factory*

STABLE BOY.....*Who tends the reindeer*

JACK FROST.....*The snow fairies' uncle*

MISS PERKY PERIWINKLE, *An elderly fairy; Polar Supervisor of the Amalgamated Christmas Charities of the World*

SIX SNOW FAIRIES (*girls*).....*Who dress dolls*

SIX SNOW FAIRIES (*boys*).....*Who make mechanical toys*

HUMAN BEINGS

PROF. E. CYPHER FUSSBUTTON, *Representative of the North American Association for the Scientific Investigation of Unscientific Myths*

PETER POSSUM.....*The runaway boy*

TIME:—Five days before Christmas. LOCALITY:—Kris Kringle Land.

TIME OF PLAYING:—Thirty minutes.

SCENE

Very simple interior. Santa's office.

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JUL 17 1924

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SYNOPSIS

It is SANTA'S busy day in the toy factory and he wants no disturbance. Nevertheless, the interruptions are many. One of them is a boy who declares he is lost; he is allowed to stay and work in the toy factory. SANTA thinks his toy factory is a model one until a strike breaks out. He does not know what to make of such behavior and sends for JACK FROST, who takes the SNOW FAIRIES' temperatures, finds them feverish and locates the trouble. It is the new boy who built a fire in a toy cook-stove and so raised the temperature that the SNOW FAIRIES almost melted. The boy is dragged before SANTA, confesses the motive for coming was his greed for toys, and is sent home in disgrace. SANTA then returns to his neglected correspondence.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

SANTA and MRS. SANTA. The conventional red Santa Claus suits trimmed with white fur for SANTA, with color scheme repeated in MRS. SANTA'S suit. High fur-trimmed boots for SANTA.

SIX DOLL DRESSERS or SNOW FAIRIES. White paper muslin dresses with short skirts made full and stiff to stand out; pointed elfin caps and a pair of small white tarlatan wings to be adjusted between the shoulders of each child.

SIX TOY MAKERS or SNOW FAIRIES. White paper muslin elf suits with pointed elfin caps and a pair of white tarlatan wings between the shoulders.

MISS TRIXY, MISS NIXY and MISS PIXY. Santa's secretaries. They may be distinguished from the other fairies by wearing blue paper muslin suits with longer skirts, and by the following badges of erudition: A quill pen behind MISS TRIXY'S ear; a pair of smart eye-glasses on MISS NIXY'S nose, and a green shade over MISS PIXY'S eyes.

ZERO. A grouchy old fairy with rheumatism. Elf

Santa Claus' Busy Day

suit of gray paper muslin and cap of same material; no wings. He wears a gray beard and walks all humped over and limps like an old man.

AJAX. Elf suit and cap of gray paper muslin; he also wears a large gray work apron. No wings.

STABLE BOY. Elf suit of gray paper muslin and cap of same material. No wings.

JACK FROST. White paper muslin hat with small brim and pointed crown; long white mantle of somewhat heavy, clinging material that entirely envelopes him, trailing behind; white wig and long white beard. Mantle, hat and beard should be sprinkled heavily with artificial snow to give a frosty appearance. He carries a thermometer about a foot and a half long.

MISS PERKY PERIWINKLE. An elderly fairy in horn-rimmed glasses with a twinkle in her eye. Wears a poke bonnet and a Mother Goose cloak; carries a list of names.

PROF. FUSSBUTTON. A bustling little man, goggle-eyed in immense horn spectacles.

PETER POSSUM. A regular boy's suit.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES

Large, heavy-rimmed, reading glasses for SANTA.

Six half-dressed dolls and six work-baskets for the SNOW FAIRIES.

Heavy rimmed spectacles, note-book and pencil for PROF. FUSSBUTTON.

A large thermometer, about a foot and a half long, for JACK FROST.

Quill pen for MISS TRIXY.

Eye-glasses for MISS NIXY.

Eye-shade for MISS PIXY.

Visiting card for ZERO.

STAGE DIRECTIONS

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, C. D. means door in center of rear; D. L., door at left; UP, toward back of stage; DOWN, toward footlights.

Santa Claus' Busy Day

SCENE.—SANTA CLAUS' office. Door in center of rear stage, also a door DOWN L. which leads into the work-room of the toy factory. SANTA'S desk is DOWN R. Telephone, writing material and a huge ledger on desk. A large table at which SANTA'S SECRETARIES work is UP R. A big stack of letters on table. Six stools UP L. between C. D. and D. L. DISCOVERED SANTA CLAUS writing at desk, TRIXY, NIXY and PIXY busy at table sorting letters. Door at L. is open, and an air of bustle and business pervades the room.

SANTA (*calling*). Mother, how are the snow fairies working?

ENTER MRS. SANTA D. L., *bustling in*.

MRS. SANTA. Fine, Santa, fine! The foreman thinks we shall get through the Christmas rush in plenty of time for your trip.

SANTA (*with a sigh of relief*). That's good! Don't let anyone disturb me to-day, mother. I never had so much work to do in my life before.

MRS. SANTA. All right, my dear, I'll shoo 'em away from this door and Zero shall have his orders about the front door. (*Calls*) Zero, Zero!

ENTER ZERO at C. D. Standing in doorway, he stares glumly at MRS. SANTA.

MRS. SANTA. Zero, this is Santa's busy day. Don't let anyone disturb him.

ZERO (*growling*). I'll make 'em tell their business. I'll keep 'em out, I will! (*Limps out, closing door and muttering to himself*)

MRS. SANTA. I must have those doll dressers right here under my eye, or they'll never get through. (*Beckons into the workroom*) Come, snow fairies.

ENTER from D. L. six SNOW FAIRIES, each with a half-dressed doll on one arm and a work-basket on the other. They gather around MRS. SANTA, chattering.

DOLL DRESSERS (*all talking at once*). Oh, Mother Santa, please show me about this! Is that right? Look at this, Mother Santa, etc.

MRS. SANTA. Sh! Not so loud! You'll bother Father Santa! (*They sit in a semicircle on stools UP L. while MRS. SANTA shows them about their work in dumb show*)

SANTA (*meanwhile has put on a pair of reading-glasses and is studying a huge ledger which he has spread open before him. To his SECRETARIES*). Let's get on with the mail. Miss Trixy, you read the first letter.

TRIXY. This seems to be from a very poor child, Father Santa. She says: "Please, I should like to have a handkerchief and a popcorn ball. And could you bring me a new pair of shoes? My toes stick out of the old ones. And I need some mittens. Mine are ragged and get my hands cold. This is all, from your little friend, Clara Roth."

SANTA (*making note of it in ledger*). Bless her heart! How little she asks! She shall have it all, and we'll throw in a few extras! Read the next one, Miss Nixy.

NIXY. You'll like the tone of this one, Father Santa. "Dear Santa,—We are a little girl and boy that have lots of toys already. Please take the toys you meant for us and give them to the Brady children, that live on the street behind us. They are terribly poor and won't get a single present unless you remember them. We don't want anything except a pair of skis apiece from Kris Kringle Land, to remember you by. Yours

truly ——” (*Scuffle at C. D. interrupts her. ZERO appears, trying to hold back the STABLE BOY, who breaks away from him and bursts into the office. SANTA, annoyed, turns to look at him*)

STABLE BOY. Father Santa, those reindeer have the Old Nick in 'em! That ornery Dancer has kicked Prancer so hard that now Prancer has gone lame! Shall I give him a good rub-down with liniment?

SANTA (*worried*). I should say so! I can't have Prancer laid up now, with my Christmas Eve trip only five days off! Use the liniment, and then give him a dose of Dr. Pip's Patent Reindeer Remedy if he doesn't improve.

STABLE BOY. Yes, sir; I'll fix him up!

[EXIT C. D., *running*.

SANTA. Oh, what an anxiety those reindeer are! Sometimes I think I'll sell 'em and get me an automobile for my trips!

MRS. SANTA (*vexed*). Why did that boy have to bother you about Prancer? Zero shouldn't have let him burst in like that!

SANTA (*mildly*). He couldn't help himself, my dear. (*To NIXY*) That's a good letter. I like to hear from children who think of someone beside themselves. They shall have their skis, and a toboggan as well. (*To PIXY*) All right, Miss Pixy, read the next letter.

PIXY. You won't like this one at all, Father Santa. It says: "I am a boy that can use a lot of toys. I want a train of cars and a toy ship and a baseball bat and a catcher's glove and a sweater and a new pair of boots and the biggest Chinese kite you have. Then I need a collar for my dog, and a sword and belt to go with my soldier suit. Of course I want about a barrel of candy and nuts ——"

SANTA. Hold on, there! That's enough! Of all the nerve! Why doesn't he ask for all the toys in the Kris Kringle country and be done with it? What present shall we lay aside for this young hog, mother?

MRS. SANTA (*severely*). A ring for his snout! (SEC-

RETARIES and DOLL DRESSERS *giggle and nudge one another*)

SANTA (*shaking his head and turning over the leaves of his ledger*). I'm afraid I shall have to scratch all these greedy children off my list. What's the name of this hoggish boy, Miss Pixy? (PIXY *looks at the letter again and is about to speak when ZERO thrusts his head in at C. D.*)

ZERO. Father Santa, there's a boy out here that wants to see you. He says he's lost, and he's cold and hungry. But he doesn't want charity. He says he'll work for you. I reckon he's a young imp, all right! Shall I bring him in?

SANTA. Well, I can't turn away a lost child who is cold and hungry. Bring him in, Zero.

[ZERO EXITS C. D.]

MRS. SANTA. Now, Santa, you know you're too busy —

RE-ENTER ZERO C. D., *ushering in PETER POSSUM, who shivers and looks scared.*

SANTA (*surveying the BOY over his glasses*). Well, young man, you are from the world down there, eh? How did you happen to get lost in the Kris Kringle country? [EXIT ZERO C. D.]

BOY (*awe-stricken*). Please, Mr. Santa, I was traveling around the North Pole, visiting the Eskimos. I got caught in a storm and wandered away from 'em. A fisherman told me I was near your place, so I kept on till I found you.

SANTA. I shall have to send you back home in charge of one of my snow fairies. The trouble is, we are all so busy we don't know where to turn; so it's hard to spare any fairies now. My factory is running night and day, getting out the Christmas toys.

BOY (*eagerly*). Oh, Mr. Santa, please let me stay and work for you in the toy factory. I'd love to help! I could go home with you Christmas Eve when you make your trip.

SANTA. What do you know about making toys? You'd only be in the way, youngster.

BOY. I know how to use a chest of tools. I made my mother a fine rolling-pin! I'd do exactly as you told me, Mr. Santa. You needn't pay me regular wages. I'd—I'd a lot rather you'd pay me in toys!

SANTA. Well, I need help very badly. I'll give you a trial. What's your name, boy?

BOY (*stammering and confused*). P-Paul!

SANTA (*briskly, yet kindly*). All right. Mother, get Paul something to eat, won't you? Then take him into the factory and tell Ajax to put him to work. (EXIT MRS. SANTA *with* BOY D. L. SANTA *to his* SECRETARIES) Well, let's get back to our letters, young ladies. Now about this boy that wants the earth——

ZERO (*pops head in at c. d., apologetically*). Father Santa, will you see Miss Perky Periwinkle? I told her this was your busy day, but she says her business is very important.

SANTA (*frowning*). Who is Miss Perky Periwinkle?

ZERO (*holding up a visiting card and reading pompously*). It says, "Polar Supervisor of the Amalgamated Christmas Charities of the World."

SANTA. Oh, yes, the charity agent. I remember her now. Show her in, Zero.

ENTER ZERO C. D., *ushering in* MISS PERIWINKLE; *she bobs a funny little curtsy to SANTA and lays a paper before him.*

SANTA. Well, Miss Periwinkle, I see you've been hustling around as lively as usual.

MISS PERIWINKLE (*businesslike*). Yes, Father Santa, I've been working very hard to get you that list of poor children you asked for. (*Points to items on the paper*) Here's a group of orphans that won't have the tiniest bit of Christmas unless you remember them. The children of this next group are from families so poor that their parents can't even give them enough to eat. Our

association will supply these tots with Christmas dinners, and we rely on you to provide the presents.

SANTA. Now this is exactly what I wanted. (*Hands the paper to TRIXY*) Miss Trixy, please copy this list and have it ready for me when I start out Christmas Eve. Miss Periwinkle, I'm forty times obliged to you! (*Shakes hands with her*) Come back some day when I've lots of time. You see, this is my busy day!

MISS PERIWINKLE. I'm a pretty busy person myself, Father Santa. I'll admit, however, that just now you are probably the busiest fairy in Christendom. (*Backs toward c. d. with bobbing, jerky little curtsies which SANTA returns with equally jerky bows*) I must hurry on. I wish you a very successful trip on Christmas Eve, my dear sir!

SANTA. Much obliged, Miss Periwinkle. (EXIT MISS PERIWINKLE C. D. SANTA *sits at desk again*) Great Scott! What a lot of time I'm losing! Now that letter, Miss Pixy——

ZERO (*poking head in at c. d.*). Father Santa, there's an old codger out here that insists on seeing you. I've been trying to shoo him away, but he won't go. Says his name is Professor E. Cypher Fussbutton, and he's come all the way from—some crazy place in North America that I can't remember, to investigate you. He says he won't go back till he's seen you.

SANTA (*astonished*). To investigate me!

ZERO. Yes. Some crack-brained society or other has sent him up here to find out whether you're real!

SANTA (*springing to his feet with an indignant roar*). What! To find out whether I'm real? I'll show him whether I'm real! I—— (PROF. FUSSBUTTON *appears behind ZERO, swinging him bodily out of the way*)

ENTER PROF. FUSSBUTTON C. D., *rushing forward to greet SANTA with his right hand extended, and his left hand clutching a note-book and pencil.*

PROF. FUSSBUTTON. My dear sir, this is a great pleasure, a very great pleasure! To think that I should see

you face to face! I am E. Cypher Fussbutton, accredited representative of the North American for the Scientific Investigation of Unscientific Myths, and I am preparing for them a treatise on the subject, "Is Santa Claus a Myth?" My visit to you, therefore, is in the nature of research work —

SANTA (*very dignified and cold*). My dear Professor Fussbutton, you must excuse me. I haven't time to waste on persons that think I'm a myth! This is my busy day! I have to handle tons of letters from the children of the world down there, and see that my factory turns out millions of toys to be distributed on Christmas Eve.

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*who has begun to write busily in his note-book*). Good! Excellent! My dear sir, your words ring true! How surprised my society will be! Will you be so good as to tell me more about your establishment? You spoke of a—er—toy factory. I should be most delighted to see it. Do you make all the toys yourself?

SANTA. Certainly not! I need a great deal of help. My snow fairies do most of the work.

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*dropping his pencil in his amazement*). Snow fairies, my dear sir? And who are they?

SANTA (*shortly*). They are the nieces and nephews of my friend Jack Frost.

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*enthusiastically, writing*). Wonderful! Splendid! How interested my society will be! I should like to see some of these—er—fairies at work, my dear Mr. Santa, if you would be so good —

SANTA (*indicating the DOLL DRESSERS, working quietly in their corner*). Here are some of my snow fairies. They are dressing the Christmas dolls. (*To FAIRIES*) Salute Professor Fussbutton, my dears! (*Indicating SECRETARIES*) Also my secretaries, Jack Frost's own cousins. (*FAIRIES rise and drop PROFESSOR FUSSBUTTON a curtsy, resume seats, and go on with their work. The SECRETARIES bow. PROF. FUSSBUTTON bows*)

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*surveying FAIRIES with delight*).

Ve-ry remarkable little creatures, Mr. Santa, very! They look almost human!

SANTA (*softening toward his visitor*). I'll take you through the factory and show you the rest of my workers, if you are interested. I really have a model factory and model employes. They —

ENTER MRS. SANTA D. L. *She is breathless with haste and does not see PROF. FUSSBUTTON.*

MRS. SANTA (*to SANTA*). My dear, I don't know what can be the matter with the ball-and-top makers. They have actually stopped work! They told me they didn't feel like working and asked me for a vacation!

SANTA (*aghast*). What! Why, I never heard of such a thing! (*Recollecting himself*) My dear, don't you see Professor Fussbutton? He comes all the way from the world down there to see our factory. Professor Fussbutton, Mrs. Santa Claus. (*PROF. FUSSBUTTON bows low. MRS. SANTA nods*)

MRS. SANTA. Oh, Professor Fussbutton, I'm afraid you've come at a bad time! I never saw the snow fairies act so queer before. Really, Santa, I think you'll have to speak to them.

ENTER AJAX D. L., *hurriedly. He looks anxious.*

AJAX. Excuse me, Father Santa, but I don't know what to do! The doll-furniture makers have quit work and say they want to go coasting. And the sport-toy makers are really soldiering on the job! They say they're tired. I don't know what's come over the whole pack of 'em. I think they aren't right in their heads!

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*writing diligently*). Ve-ry remarkable! A strike among Santa Claus' fairies! So like home and mother! Ex-traor-dinary!

SANTA (*pounding his desk with his fist*). Ajax, you go right back to the workroom and tell those fairies I'll give 'em just five minutes to stop their nonsense and get to work. Great hokey! To have this happen in the

midst of our Christmas rush! Ajax, can you remember when you noticed the first symptoms of this trouble?

AJAX (*scratching his head*). Let's see, I believe they began to act crazy shortly after Mrs. Santa brought in that boy ——

SANTA (*startled*). Thunder! I had forgotten all about the boy. What about him, Ajax?

AJAX (*blankly*). I can't say I've seen anything wrong with him, Father Santa. He seems a fair worker, though he asks too many questions, like all those earth children.

MRS. SANTA (*seizing SANTA'S arm in sudden hope*). Santa, I have an idea! Let us send for Jack Frost. He can handle his nieces and nephews if anyone can!

TRIXY (*taking down 'phone receiver*). Arctic 0032, please. (*Pause*) Is this Jack Frost? Well, this is the Kris Kringle factory. Father Santa wants you to come over right away, Cousin Jack.....Yes, it's very important.....All right. (*Hangs up receiver*) He's coming, Father Santa.

MRS. SANTA (*has been looking into the workroom, utters an excited cry and turns around*). Here they come! It's the mechanical-toy makers, Santa. Well, of all the impudence!

ENTER *six* SNOW FAIRIES *who are the mechanical-toy makers, single file, with a rush, almost upsetting AJAX and MRS. SANTA. With arms akimbo, they skip around the stage twice, grinning at SANTA CLAUS as they circle past him.*

SANTA (*sternly*). Stop! What do you want, fairies?

LEADER OF TOY MAKERS. We don't want to work, Father Santa. We want to ride the reindeer!

SANTA. Don't be foolish! You know I wouldn't let you ride my reindeer. They must be fresh for my Christmas Eve trip!

LEADER OF TOY MAKERS. Then let us make ourselves toboggans and coast down the giant icicles!

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*examining FAIRIES through his*

eye-glasses, then writing). Mar-velous! What a story I shall have for my society!

SANTA. Of course you may slide down the icicles to-night after you've finished your stint of toys. Now run back to your work like good fairies.

FAIRIES (*in chorus*). Want to coast now! (*Shake their heads and grin impishly, dancing around SANTA and off the stage through D. L.*)

SANTA (*throwing up arms in despair and pacing distractedly up and down*). And this is my busy day!

ZERO (*popping head in at C. D.*). Hey, there, Father Santa, Jack Frost is here!

SANTA. Thank goodness!

ENTER JACK FROST C. D. SANTA *rushes to meet him from one side, and MRS. SANTA approaches him from the other. PROF. FUSSBUTTON stares at him curiously and makes another entry in his note-book.*

JACK FROST. Well, well, what's all this rumpus about, Santa? Zero tells me that my nieces and nephews have been making nuisances of themselves.

SANTA. They've suddenly taken a notion they won't work, Jack. I can't understand it at all!

JACK FROST (*brisk and businesslike*). They must be feverish. I'd better take their temperatures. (*Draws out a big thermometer from under his long mantle, looks at it critically and tucks it under his arm*) I'll just step into the workroom and have a look at them. No, you stay right here, Santa. I can work better alone. Ajax will show me the way, eh, Ajax?

AJAX. You bet I will, Uncle Jack.

[EXEUNT JACK FROST and AJAX D. L., *talking and gesticulating in dumb show.*

SANTA. Well, Mr. Professor, it looks as if you'll not get to inspect my model factory to-day! (*Sits at desk dejectedly, with head propped on hands*)

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*writing rapturously*). Don't apologize, my dear sir! Never have I been more edified

in my life. Dear, dear! When this story is published, won't all our rival scientific societies just die of envy!

SANTA (*discouraged; to SECRETARIES*). Well, young ladies, I suppose we'd better get back to the correspondence. Yet what's the use? If I can't get the toys finished, the letters might as well go ——

JACK FROST (*in the workroom, shouting at someone*). Hey, there, you young limb, don't you try to escape me! (*Calls to SANTA*) Well, Santa, I've located the trouble.

ENTER JACK FROST D. L., *dragging the BOY by the collar and brandishing thermometer. BOY alarmed and sheepish, wriggles in his grasp.*

SANTA. The boy! Ajax suggested that. Well, what's he been doing?

JACK FROST. He made a fire in the toy cook-stove that goes with the doll furniture set. Then he put the stove inside the doll house, so that Ajax never found it. The heat made my snow fairies light-headed. No wonder I found them feverish! A little more and they would have melted!

SANTA (*severely*). Why did you do that, young 'un?

BOY (*sniveling a little*). I was cold. It's terribly cold in there!

SANTA. Of course it is. The snow fairies must have it cold. Why did you want to work in my factory, young man, if you couldn't stand the cold?

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*staring at the BOY very hard through his eye-glasses, suddenly cries out in amazement*). Why, bless my soul, it's little Peter Possum, who ran away from home! I know your father well, Peter. He and your mother have been searching everywhere for you.

SANTA. Aha, young man! So you've been fibbing to me, with your pipe-dream about visiting the Eskimos. And here you're nothing but a runaway boy who is afraid to tell his right name!

BOY (*squirming uneasily*). Well, I did stop with the Eskimos a while ——

PIXY (*bursting out excitedly*). That's the name, Father Santa. Peter Possum! It's the same boy!

SANTA. What are you talking about, Miss Pixy? What name?

PIXY. The name of the boy who wrote that greedy letter. Here it is. (*Shows him letter*)

SANTA (*looking it over and spreading it out before the BOY*). Is that your letter, Peter Possum?

BOY (*faltering*). Ye-yes, sir.

SANTA (*folding his arms and glaring at the BOY very fiercely*). So that's the reason you wanted me to pay you for your work in toys. Well, you *are* a grasping little animal!

BOY (*bawling, with his fists in his eyes*). Well, I was afraid you wouldn't bring me all the things I asked for. And I was afraid the other kids would get more than I got! I knew I could get a lot extra by working for you.

SANTA (*disgusted*). Take him away! Professor Fussbutton, you say he lives down your way. Do me the favor of taking him with you. I wouldn't have him around here at any price. He'd corrupt my snow fairies! Come back some day when I'm not so busy, my dear sir, and I'll show you through the factory.

PROF. FUSSBUTTON (*shaking hands with SANTA and MRS. SANTA*). Thanks very much, Mr. Santa. Very obliging of you! I shall certainly come back. Dear me, what a sensation my report will make! (*Pockets his note-book and seizes the BOY by the hand*) Come along, Peter Possum. Your parents will be overjoyed to see you again. Great jumping Jehoshaphat, what a good time your father will have spanking you!

[EXIT PROF. FUSSBUTTON C. D., *dragging PETER after him*. PETER'S howls are heard as ZERO closes the door on them.

SANTA. I hope they won't be too hard on the little imp. (*Anxiously to JACK FROST*) Well, Jack, how did you leave the snow fairies?

JACK FROST. Getting along fine. As soon as I had frozen the cook-stove up as tight as a drum and seat-

tered a little frost about the workshop, the fever left them. They'll be working at their old pace in a short time. (*Goes toward C. D.*)

MRS. SANTA. Heavens, what a relief! Now you can get back to your work, Santa. Well, Jack, you aren't going so soon?

JACK FROST. Sorry, Mrs. Santa, but I must go. I have my hands full getting the Christmas weather ready. Santa, I'm going to give you a nice hard crust for your Christmas Eve trip. So long!

SANTA. That's great, Jack. So long!

[EXIT JACK FROST C. D., *waving thermometer in farewell.* ZERO *lets him out at C. D.*

SANTA (*diving into his ledger*). Maybe I can get something done at last. Zero, if anyone else calls, tell him I simply can't be disturbed. This is my busy day! (*ZERO nods and EXITS C. D., limping out*) Now, young ladies, the letters. Miss Nixy, will you read the next one? (*He is still talking as*)

CURTAIN FALLS



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