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Rough Night at the North Pole

**A Comedy
By
Craig Alpaugh**



The Dramatic Publishing Company

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(ROUGH NIGHT AT THE NORTH POLE)

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**This play is dedicated to:
Jerry Brinkman**

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

Rough Night at the North Pole was first presented by the Group Repertory Theatre, in North Hollywood, California, Lonny Chapman, Artistic Director, on December 12, 1987. The play was produced and directed by Michael Torphy.

The play opened with the following cast:

THE DANCING PRESENT	Vanessa Winfield
SANTA CLAUS	Jerry Brinkman
MRS. CLAUS	Geri Allen
EDDIE	John P. Menese
NOODLE	Christopher Winfield
MISSY	Eileen Blake
SHERIFF CLINK	David Temianka

ROUGH NIGHT AT THE NORTH POLE

**An Original Christmas Play in One Act
For Four Men and Three Women**

CHARACTERS

THE DANCING PRESENTis exactly that
SANTA CLAUS what else is there to say?
MRS. CLAUS see above
EDDIE the world's tallest elf
NOODLE a very bad boy
MISSY his reluctant companion
SHERIFF CLINK a lonely copper

TIME: Christmas Eve

PLACE: The North Pole, and a jail

[The page contains extremely faint and illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the paper. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.]

ROUGH NIGHT AT THE NORTH POLE

SCENE: *In the blackout, a spot picks up the DANCING PRESENT who taps across the stage holding a sign saying: "Santa's House." The lights come up on an empty stage. A beat. SANTA enters through the front door. There is a commotion off as he tries to shut the door.*

SANTA. Get back, Dasher! Get back, Dancer! Stop that, Rudolph! *(Calling.)* Eddie! Eddie!

EDDIE *(off)*. Yes, Santa Cruz?

SANTA. Claus, Eddie, Claus... my name is Santa Claus!

EDDIE *(off)*. Well, what is it, Santa Clara?

SANTA. Did you feed the reindeer?

EDDIE *(off)*. What?

SANTA. The reindeer! Did you feed the reindeer?

EDDIE *(off)*. I can't hear you... I'm feeding the reindeer!

SANTA *(exasperated, he shuts the door. He mumbles to himself. He looks out at the audience. A blank expression on his face. Finally.)* Line!

VOICE *(off)*. Ho, ho, ho!

SANTA. Ho, ho, ho! That's it. Ol' Santa's memory isn't what it used to be. Ho, ho, ho...

(MRS. CLAUS enters.)

MRS. CLAUS. Merry afternoon, Santa. *(She crosses and kisses him.)*

SANTA. Merry afternoon, dear. Er... speaking of memories, what's wrong with that boy, Eddie?

MRS. CLAUS. He's so concerned with becoming a real elf that that's all he can think about. How is everything going, Santa? Very merry?

SANTA. Not so merry. The elves are behind and tonight is Christmas Eve.

MRS. CLAUS. Yes, last night was Christmas Eve Eve. And the night before that was Christmas Eve Eve Eve. And the night before that was Christmas Eve Eve Eve Eve...

SANTA. I know, dear.

MRS. CLAUS. My favorite is the day after Christmas. That's when I get to say Christmas followed by 364 Eves. Christmas Eve Eve Eve Eve Eve...

SANTA. Darling...

MRS. CLAUS. Eve Eve Eve Eve Eve...

SANTA. Sweetheart...

MRS. CLAUS. Eve Eve Eve Eve Eve...

SANTA. Honey...

MRS. CLAUS. ...Sorry... I get so carried away. Well, don't worry, Santa dear. Every Christmas you bring toys to the good little boys and girls of the world without fail! Now, I'll get your lunch and then you can take a nap. How does cookies and milk sound?

SANTA *(not so wonderful)*. Cookies and milk? ...oh, wonderful.

MRS. CLAUS. You have a choice of oatmeal, raisin or chocolate chip.

SANTA. Chocolate chip sounds quite merry.

MRS. CLAUS. Chocolate chip it is! *(She exits kitchen.)*

SANTA (*aside*). Oh, boys and girls, you don't know. Cookies and milk for breakfast, cookies and milk for lunch, cookies and milk for dinner, cookies and milk for a midnight snack. Ol' Santa loves cookies and milk as much as the next guy, but... hey, do me a favor... you know when Santa comes to your house you always leave cookies and milk so that Santa can have a snack? Well, this year instead of cookies and milk, how about leaving some pizza and a coke... or a hotdog and some orange juice... or some iced tea and a dish of broccoli – maybe with a cheese sauce? Huh? Whaddayasay?

(MRS. CLAUS enters with milk and cookies.)

MRS. CLAUS (*humming*). Cookies roasting on an open fire... Here you are, dear.

SANTA (*eats a cookie, drinks some milk, crosses to the bed and lies down*). Thank you, dear.

MRS. CLAUS (*crosses and kisses him*). Have yourself a merry little nap.

(SANTA falls asleep and starts to snore to the tune of "White Christmas." EDDIE enters. He doesn't have shoes on.)

MRS. CLAUS. Eddie, where are your shoes?

EDDIE (*he looks down*). Oh, I stepped in reindeer poo-poo again.

MRS. CLAUS. I've told you a million times to be careful.

EDDIE. I forgot. Is Santa Barbara here?

MRS. CLAUS. Claus... Eddie, Claus... concentrate...

EDDIE. Claus... Claus... is he here?

MRS. CLAUS (*pointing*). He's taking a nap.

EDDIE. A nap! He only works one day a year.

MRS. CLAUS. Eddie, it's exactly that kind of attitude that causes Santa to doubt your ability to become a real elf. Santa has a very hard job. And he only takes off one day a year.

EDDIE. Christmas day?

MRS. CLAUS. No, Super Bowl Sunday. Shame on you, Eddie.

EDDIE. I'm sorry. Uh... when will I get to become a real elf, anyway?

MRS. CLAUS. Why don't you ask Santa?

EDDIE (*screaming*). Hey, Santa!...

MRS. CLAUS (*screaming*). Not now!... (*SANTA stirs.*)

EDDIE. I'll ask him later... if I can remember. In fact, I forgot why I came in here.

MRS. CLAUS. Santa will know when you're ready to become a real elf. Well, I've got to get started on dinner – chocolate milk and Oreos. Care for a snack, Eddie? I still have some skim milk and Fig Newtons left.

EDDIE. No thanks, Mrs. Claus.

MRS. CLAUS (*she exits kitchen, singing*). Christmas cookies... Christmas cookies... filled with holiday cheer...

EDDIE. Well, back to work. What am I supposed to do? (*Looks at SANTA.*) Boy, ol' Santa looks warm and cozy and comfortable in that bed. He sure looks snug as a bug in a rug. I sure would like to join him. I'm so tired. I work so hard. A little nap wouldn't hurt. Who's gonna know? (*He gets in bed with SANTA. SANTA knocks him out. He gets in on the other side. SANTA knocks him out. He gently rolls SANTA over, gets in and starts to sleep. SANTA rolls over on top of him. For a while all we can see are Eddie's arms and legs flailing*)

away. Finally, he works himself free and rolls out of bed.) Santa's a real bed hog – I should have known. I know where I'll take my nap – down under! *(He crawls under the bed. Soon they are both asleep, snoring away. At first it's like dueling snores, but eventually they become harmonious – snoring to the tune of "Jingle Bells." The lights fade to black.)*

SCENE TWO

SCENE: *Still in the blackout, a spot picks up the DANCING PRESENT who taps across the stage holding a sign saying: "A Road at the North Pole." As the lights come up we see NOODLE and MISSY trudging along in the bitter cold.*

NOODLE *(stopping).* Finally, we're here!

MISSY *(bumping into him).* Where?

NOODLE. The North Pole.

MISSY. Noodle, why did we come to the North Pole, anyway?

NOODLE. For revenge!

MISSY. Revenge! Revenge! You mean we walked for days through a blinding blizzard without food and water just so that you can get revenge?

NOODLE. Yes.

MISSY. What's revenge?

NOODLE *(bopping her).* I plan on getting even!

MISSY. Getting even... with who... with whom... with who... you know what I mean.

NOODLE. I'm going to get even with Santa Claus!

MISSY. Santa Claus! Why?

NOODLE. Because when I was a little boy Santa Claus put coal in my stockings.

MISSY. He does that to all bad boys and girls.

NOODLE. I was wearing mine at the time!

MISSY. Ooooooh! You must have been really bad.

NOODLE. Just because I wouldn't eat my vegetables? Just because I wouldn't go to bed at night? Just because I wouldn't clean my room? Just because I wouldn't change my underwear?

MISSY (*she moves away*). Ooooooh!

NOODLE. Quiet! I could have been good – but it's easier to be bad!

MISSY. But when you're bad you get punished.

NOODLE. I know. The coal was only the beginning. The Easter Bunny left soft-boiled eggs in my basket; the Tooth Fairy left someone else's teeth under my pillow; they put the wrong number of candles on my birthday cake. To this day I don't know how old I am.

MISSY. You should have been good.

NOODLE. But it's fun to be bad! (*He laughs.*)

MISSY. No, it's wrong to be bad! I'm leaving. (*She starts off.*)

NOODLE. Where are you going?

MISSY. I'm going home. It was a mistake coming with you.

NOODLE. Oh, no, you're not. You don't know the way. I've got the map. You come with me or you'll be lost here at the North Pole for the rest of your life. I can see Santa's house right over there. (*He exits.*)

MISSY (*aside*). Hey, Santa, if you can hear me, I'm sorry. I don't want to be bad. When Noodle asked me to come on this trip with him I didn't realize he was such

a rotten guy. I want to go home, but if I don't go along with him, he'll leave me stranded here at the North Pole. I'll wander aimlessly for days and nights. I already miss my Mommy and Daddy and my VCR. And then I might have to eat peanut butter and blubber sandwiches. Oh, I know what you're thinking... where the heck am I gonna get blubber at the North Pole?

(NOODLE enters.)

NOODLE *(screaming)*. Come on!

MISSY *(this startles her)*. Ahhhhh! *(She runs off to join NOODLE. They exit. The lights fade to black.)*

SCENE THREE

SCENE: *Still in the blackout, a spot picks up the DANCING PRESENT who taps across the stage holding a sign saying: "Santa's House." As the lights come up, NOODLE and MISSY enter. EDDIE wakes up and sticks his head out from under the bed. SANTA is still asleep.*

NOODLE. Well, here we are at Santa's house at the North Pole!

MISSY *(finds something on the table)*. Hey, look at this.

MISSY *(takes it)*. Santa's list! *(He looks through it.)*

MISSY *(looking over his shoulder)*. Ooooooh, every name has two checks by it. *(SANTA emits a loud snore. NOODLE and MISSY are startled. MISSY jumps into Noodle's arms.)*

NOODLE (*putting her down*). Aha! There he is! Sound asleep. This is perfect. Come on. Shhhhh... (*They tiptoe up to SANTA.*) Now, all I have to do is put my watch on Santa to put my plan into motion. (*NOODLE takes off his watch and tries to put it on SANTA. SANTA rolls around in his sleep, making it difficult for him. SANTA smacks him in the face a couple of times. Finally, he gets it on.*)

MISSY. Oh, how sweet of you, Noodle. You changed your mind. You're giving your watch to Santa as a gift.

NOODLE (*bopping her*). It's no gift, you knucklehead! It's part of my plan. Come on, we have one more thing to do and Santa will be out of the way! (*He laughs.*)

MISSY (*she laughs... she stops*). Why am I laughing?

NOODLE (*bopping her*). Because you've got cooties on your brain!

MISSY. Oh.

NOODLE. Now, come on... (*They sneak off.*)

EDDIE (*he comes out from under the bed. Aside*). Hey, what's going on? I didn't like the sound of that. Those guys are up to something – and it smells fishy. (*He pulls a fish out of his shirt.*) No wonder. Well, you know what I mean. I better follow them to see what they're up to. (*He starts off.*)

(*MRS. CLAUS enters.*)

MRS. CLAUS. Eddie!

EDDIE. Mrs. Claus, I have to...

MRS. CLAUS. The elves need you.

EDDIE. But I've got to... tell...

MRS. CLAUS. Right now, Eddie.

EDDIE. But Santa Clara's in...

MRS. CLAUS. Now!

EDDIE. But...

MRS. CLAUS. No buts! Downstairs!

EDDIE. I hate the elves' workshop – everything's so small and I'm so big. I always bang my head.

MRS. CLAUS. Don't forget to duck.

EDDIE. Don't forget to duck... don't forget to duck... don't forget to duck... don't forget to duck... *(He goes out. We hear a loud bang and Eddie's scream! MRS. CLAUS stands there shaking her head. Blackout.)*

SCENE FOUR

SCENE: *Still in blackout, a spot picks up the DANCING PRESENT who taps across the stage holding a sign saying: "Sheriff Clink's Jail." The lights come up on SHERIFF CLINK, pacing.*

CLINK. Oh, woe is me... oh, woe is me... lonely... very lonely... not much to do... nothing to do, in fact... it's not easy being the Sheriff of the North Pole. No one to arrest. Not a single person. I haven't arrested a soul since the day I took the job. My cells are empty... my jail is going to waste. It's not for lack of trying, though. I'm always looking for someone to arrest: polar bears for jay walking; penguins for loitering; mooses for disturbing the peace. Follow me? I'll think of something, but in the meantime this won't do... this certainly won't do... lonely... very lonely... *(Knocking at the door.)* What's that racket? *(Loud knocking at the door.)* I'd arrest whoever's making that noise if I knew where it was

coming from. (*Very loud knocking at the door.*) There has to be a law against all this commotion!

NOODLE (*off*). Sheriff Clink! Sheriff Clink!

CLINK. Someone's at my door. No one's ever knocked at my door before. What should I do?

NOODLE (*off*). Open up!

CLINK. That's what I'll do. (*He opens the door.*)

(*NOODLE and MISSY enter.*)

MISSY. Boy, is it cold out there.

CLINK. I should arrest you for stating the obvious. Of course it's cold out there. This is the North Pole.

Where do you think you are, Hawaii?

NOODLE. Are you Sheriff Clink?

CLINK. Are you Sheriff Clink?

NOODLE. I asked you first.

CLINK. Of course I'm Sheriff Clink. Who do you think I am, Kermit the Frog?

NOODLE. I'm here to report a crime.

CLINK. Someone broke the law? Someone violated a statute? Someone ruptured an ordinance? (*NOODLE nods.*) My prayers are answered. What happened?

NOODLE. Someone stole my watch.

CLINK. Is that a felony or a misdemeanor?

NOODLE. I don't know.

CLINK. It doesn't matter. Hooray! (*He jumps for joy.*) This is my lucky day! (*He grabs MISSY.*) I've got you now, young lady.

MISSY. Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, Sir. I didn't do it. I'm with him.

CLINK. Is she with you?

NOODLE. Yes. She's my friend, Missy. I'm Noodle.

CLINK. Do you live at the North Pole?

NOODLE. No.

CLINK. Then what are you doing here?

NOODLE. Uh... uh... uh... uh... we're on vacation.

CLINK. A vacation to the North Pole – that's against the law, I think. I don't suppose you know who stole your watch...

NOODLE. Yes, I do.

CLINK. That's what I thought... you do? Who?

NOODLE. Santa Claus. (*CLINK opens his mouth but nothing comes out.*)

MISSY. What's wrong, Sir?

CLINK. I can't even say his name. You mean you're accusing the fat guy in the red suit with the white beard?

NOODLE. Yes!

CLINK. But... but... but... I think it's illegal to accuse... (*He can't say it.*)

MISSY. Santa Claus.

CLINK. Right.

NOODLE. Is he above the law?

CLINK. No one is above the law... except Kareem Abdul Jabbar.

NOODLE. Then I demand you arrest Santa Claus!

CLINK. Can you prove he took it?

NOODLE. Someone told me they saw him wearing it.

CLINK. But to arrest...

MISSY. Santa Claus.

CLINK. Right. But the fat guy in the red suit with the white beard epitomizes good and kindness and peace on earth...

NOODLE. Sheriff Clink, do your duty!

CLINK. You're right! If he did it I've got to arrest him. Let's go bust the fat guy in the red suit with the white