

The Christmas Bear

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The wind was blowing and the snow was falling. The temperature was so low the thermometer couldn't read it. The North Pole never saw snow this bad. It was early morning Christmas Eve.

Santa was busy in the large barn with the Elves getting the sleigh ready for the long trip. Santa knew that this Christmas it would be hard to take off, never the less getting toys to all the kids around the world. He was up early to take the team of reindeer on a test run. He knew if he could get them up in the air it wouldn't be so bad.

Mrs. Clause was busy getting Santa's suit ready to go. The warm one was the one that Santa needed on this cold blistery night. The wind was howling and she thought how earlier she begged Santa not to go. "What on earth will all the children do on Christmas morning", he said, "if I don't make the trip". "We work all year for this one special day".

Santa's Elf foreman was an Elf named Elvis. He was a big muscular man who made his way from Poland to the North Pole. Times like this Santa was glad he asked him to stay all those years ago. Elvis didn't understand after all these years why Santa had to go. In his heart he was afraid that Santa would not make it back this year.

The team was hitched and ready to go. As usual Rudolph was in the lead. Elvis went up and tested the frightened reindeers nose. He gently whispered in his ear "take care of him". Santa wasn't in his usual red suit. He didn't want it to get wet from the icy snow; instead he had a heavy orange overcoat that Elvis let him borrow. "It will keep you warm, and show up in the snow if you go down", Elvis said.

Santa told Elvis to open the large doors on the front of the barn. It was very windy and Elvis, even though he was a very strong man had trouble getting them open. Santa said, "You must get them open, think of the children". At last Elvis made one more last push and the doors sprang open. The winds rushed in and Santa had all he could do to keep the team together. He shouted to Elvis, "see you by Lunch and tell Momma to make some hot soup", and he was off.

Every time Rudolph tried to take off the icy wind would knock him hack down. Santa feared the worse, there would be no toys for the children come Christmas Day. He called to Rudolph, you could make it make it son, and you could make it. Blitzen was with Dancer behind Rudolph and he call to Comet, Cupid, Vixen, Dasher, Donder and Prancer, " all at once up we go, and against the chilling wind they were in the air.

Santa knew that once off the ground all would be fine and his courageous team had done just that. He also knew that these were the best reindeer he ever had. They would risk their reindeer lives for Santa and the children.

Things calmed down above the clouds and Santa was testing the team over North America. He knew it took a lot to get off the ground. They handled well and he thought that he wouldn't stay up as long as he thought. Since they made it in the air this time he would take them down slowly and let them rest for the long night ahead. He also thought that a nap would be nice. Since Elvis was aboard he know he wouldn't have to worry about packing the sleigh. This year he might even take Elvis along for the ride.

Santa directed the team in a downward motion. He thought he would approach the North Pole with the wind and ride it in. It would be very dangerous, but it would help to save the reindeer's strength. Rudolph looked back and Santa and shook his head no, but it was too late the wind was taking them in. All of a sudden the sleigh started to shake in a violent way. At least Santa was glad he had his seat belt fastened tightly, but that wasn't enough, Santa's precious team of reindeer was losing control and about to crash.

They hit the snow on the ground so violently the sleigh split apart and Santa was thrown a distance from the reindeer. It was still snowing, only more so now. A search party would never get out to even look.

Back at the North Pole Elvis was busying himself putting on the finishing touches for the great ride tonight. He didn't know that Santa was planning on taking him along. He loved his job and loved helping Santa. Since the reindeer made it off the ground he knew the children would all get the toys on Christmas, and he hurried to ensure all was ready. He told Mrs. Clause (Momma to Santa) about Santa's request and she invited Elvis to sit and have lunch with Santa. The two would discuss final preparations.

Santa was unconscious under a large pine Christmas tree, the reindeer scattered about. Rudolph was walking around in a daze and his nose was no longer lit. Most of the other reindeer were banged up and only Blitzen had broken its leg. He would not make the ride tonight, if there were one at all. The team looked around for Santa, but no one knew where he was.

It was a lot later than Mrs. Clause expected Santa to be back. She called for Elvis and told him how much she was worried. He was trying to keep himself busy, but he told her he felt the worse. He would try to organize a search party and go and find Santa.

Little did Santa know but under this tree there was a bear cub hiding out from the fierce storm. This bear was no ordinary cub, but its powers wouldn't become known just yet. The bear had been sleeping comfortably with branches from the pine tree underneath him and a blanket of fallen leaves on top. He awoke to a startle when the large orange ball attacked his hiding place.

At first the cub was scared for its life. He had never seen anything so large and orange. Once he heard about sweet fruit that was called an orange, but he knew that you could hold that in your hand. This was no orange or any other piece of fruit. He wasn't hungry anyway since before the storm he feasted on some nuts and berries. He also hid some away for when the storm ended and he would need his strength to find his way.

The cub just sat there for a while and waited. The large orange object didn't seem to move so he took a closer look. He then noticed it was a man with a long white beard. He was breathing but not awake. The cub heard of a man with a long white beard called Santa Clause, but he wore a suit of red, not the orange coat.

Elvis made his way to the North Pole Police station and talked with the Chief of Police. He explained that Santa had gone up with the reindeer this morning and failed to come back. He went on to explain that he needed a search party to help find him. The Chief said "Good Luck in this weather". Elvis also feared for this, he knew no one would go out in this weather. He went back to the barn and decided he would search for Santa himself. There was only one reindeer left in the barn, Olive. She was an orphan that lost her parents from storm in the Barrens and wound up at the North Pole.

The cub got even more curious and started sniffing the large orange ball. He also got nervous because he heard hooves outside of his hiding place. The reindeer were looking for Santa even though the snow was coming down so heavily. They stayed in pairs leaving Rudolph and Blitzen back by the busted sleigh, in case Santa came back. If they didn't find him soon they would have to make their own way back to the North Pole.

Elvis finally had Olive all hitched up and ready to go. Mrs. Clause was worried for Elvis, but she knew he was the only search party available. All the other Elves were too little to handle the sleigh. She counted on

Elvis to bring Santa back. Just as Elvis was about to get onboard the sleigh Mrs. Clause came in with a basket with Hot Chocolate, some sandwiches, soup and reindeer food. She said to Elvis, “if you find them or get stranded, you’ll need this. He kissed Mrs. Clause and off he went. The snow eased at the North Pole so Olive was able to take off. According to the weather report it wouldn’t last for long.

Cupid was sniffing around the pine tree with Comet when they thought they heard someone or thing licking. Since the cub got scared he started licking on Santa. Comet got closer to the tree and took a look underneath. He startled the cub and at the same time Santa woke up. A little dazed with a large headache, nothing that Momma’s Hot Chocolate wouldn’t fix, Santa was fine. That orange coat from Elvis was not only warm but he acted as a cushion for Santa’s fall.

At the same time the little cub retreated back away from the reindeer and Santa to the center of the Tree. Santa wiped his beard and was wondering who was licking on him to wake him up when he noticed the scared little cub. He felt that it had lost its parents in the storm and was an orphan like Olive. He would like to take the cub back to Momma.

Elvis headed over Europe looking for Santa. He thought that since Santa was going to be up a while this is the way he would go. Apparently Santa didn’t set his homing beacon off if he was lost. Once set off Elvis could track Santa anyplace in the world. He also likes to use this while Santa made the yearly ride to track all the places he went. Someday Elvis wished to go to these places.

Santa helped the cub out from under the tree and put him under his coat. It was cold, windy and snowing. With Comet and Cupid on each side he went in search of the sleigh. It took almost an hour to get back to the crash sight and Santa was glad to be reunited with his trusted team. He checked on Blitzen and assured him that he would be all right. He looked around for the sleigh and all he saw were pieces thrown all around. Once again Santa got a sick feeling in his stomach that the children wouldn’t have Christmas.

Elvis found no sign of Santa over Europe and decided to check down through Africa and come back through North America. He was also sick to his stomach for fear that Santa was dead or wouldn’t be able to make the ride. It had gone through Elvis’s mind that if Santa couldn’t make the children happy he would. After all he tracked Santa all these years and had the list, he knew he could do it. At all cost the children must have toys for Christmas morning.

Santa searched through the wreckage to find the homing beacon. Since this was just a test ride he didn’t turn the beacon on before leaving the barn. Just as Elvis was crossing the Atlantic a bright red light lit up on his control panel, it was Santa’s beacon.

Elvis turned Olive north in search of Santa, meanwhile Santa gathered all the reindeer together to stay warm and think of a way out. It was getting late and it looked like Christmas would be cancelled after all, Santa needed some rest before making the long trip around the world. He cried as he thought of disappointing all the children.

Just as Santa’s mind was elsewhere the little cub was stirring in his coat. He sensed that Santa was worried about something and at the very moment he spoke to Santa and said “what is it that makes Santa so sad”. With the little cub speaking Santa lost his balance and started to fall backwards and landed in a large snow mound. This also startled the little cub because even though he knew he could talk, he never really had anyone to talk to and never heard his own voice. At the same time Santa was falling the cub started to run and hide.

Santa called to the cub “wait”, he said, “I’m sorry”. The cub stopped and came back to Santa. The cub then started to explain to Santa how he lost his parents to hunters and how he was special and he lost his way in

the storm, even though he didn't know where he was going. He also said that he had magical powers that even he didn't know how to use.

As Santa was listening to the cub he also heard the voice of Elvis yelling "Santa, Santa, Rudolph, Comet, Cupid, Vixen, Dancer, Blitzen, Dasher, Donder, Prancer, Santa even heard the bells on Olive's collar. Well all the reindeer started to make noise and tried to fly. Even Rudolph tried to make his noise light. Elvis heard them all but shouted "I don't know if I could land and make the rescue, the children will have to wait and I'll come back tomorrow". Elvis circled again and shouted "Santa I'll drop you some food for you and the reindeer that will last the night". As all the shouting and yelling was going on the little cub was under Santa's large orange coat, which by the way Elvis never spotted, wondering what he could do. The children never had to have Christmas cancelled! The cub put his mind to work and he jumped out of Santa's coat.

Elvis was getting ready to drop the supplies for Santa and the reindeer on his next pass over the spot where Santa was waiting. On the ground the little cub's eyes were closed and he started to dance around and around in the circle, he was trying to summon his powers. All of a sudden the little cub started to glow and the circle started to glow. All the reindeer moved back, except for Rudolph, he knew what it was like to be different. Santa watched with amazement and a smile came on his lips and he face lit up, he knew, he knew.

Just then a wall of calmness parted the falling snow and the icy winds. In the air above, Elvis almost fell out of the sleigh it was a miracle. Elvis reined Olive in and was getting ready for his landing. The landing was smooth and no one was hurt in this one. Elvis ran to Santa and said "Santa how did you do that", and Santa said, "it wasn't me but my little cuddly friend Here". The cub said "Hello" and Elvis stumbled and tripped over his own big feet. Santa and the reindeer started to laugh loudly at the spectacle, even the little cub started to laugh.

Then Santa said in a loud voice "Enough, we have work to do"! Elvis quickly got up and unhooked Olive from the sleigh and got the harness from the broken wreckage of the other sleigh to put all the reindeer on it. In the meantime Santa fed all the reindeer and had some soup and Hot Chocolate for himself. He gave a sandwich and Hot Chocolate to the little cub. Olive would not be able pull both Santa and Elvis so all the reindeer had to be hitched up, besides there were better off all together. Santa and Elvis then put Blitzen in the back and covered him up with a blanket Momma sent. Santa went back over to where the cub was sitting on a log and said, "Where will you go young friend". The cub just shrugged his shoulders and started to cry. Olive was in the front of the reindeer team, in Blitzen's spot and she knew what Santa was going to say.

"Come back to the North Pole with us, Momma will just love you", Santa said. A very large smile came across the cub's face and the tears dried up. At last he would have a family again. He even likes the weird person they called Elvis. Santa picked the cub up and put him in the back with Blitzen, they both snuggled under the blanket Elvis got in to drive the sleigh and Santa let out a large pot bellied laugh and said "not yet old friend, there are too many for you to handle", then Santa got in the drivers seat. Even though Rudolph still had a problem with his nose he was in the lead.

Since they still had a wall of calmness the reindeer was able to take off with out any hitches. Once they were airborne, Elvis got on the radio to inform Mrs. Clause that everyone was all right and they were heading home. As they entered the air space for the North Pole Santa looked down to see the storm still blowing on the ground. It was late Christmas Eve, very late. He still had to get home and load the sleigh, change, eat some supper and get on his way for the yearly trip. Once again he thought about canceling Christmas. His face was flush and he started shacking just thinking of disappointing all the children.

The little bear cub noticed that Santa wasn't all right. He stood up and looked out over the sleigh and he knew what was to be done. He climbed back under the blanket with Blitzen and put his mind to work. He needed to clear a way for Santa to land, he would worry about the rest later. This time it was a little harder, but he snuggled closer to Blitzen to get warm and focus. Blitzen tried to help keep the little guy warm. The little cub started to glow again. Elvis riding next to Santa once again became startled. He stood up and looked in the back

and just mumbled. Up ahead the sky parted and Santa saw his runway at the North Pole. The little cub lost conscious and fainted, no one knew this except Blitzen and he knew it would have to wait until they were on the ground.

Mrs. Clause came running as Santa pulled the reindeer and sleigh into the large barn. Santa hugged Momma and said “he was glad to be home and thanked her for the Hot Chocolate”; his big head was all gone now. Santa then said to Elvis, “lets get the team unhitched, feed and rested, we have to decide on canceling Christmas”. Once again Elvis had a bad feeling in his stomach and thought about all the children. With Christmas cancelled will they still believe, will his work be done at the North Pole, where would he go, what we he do?

While the team was being unhitched and put away Momma went to the back of the sleigh where she notice Blitzen. She knew that Blitzen had a broken leg but noticed something else was bothering him, when then she noticed the unconscious cub. “Papa come quickly”, she called to Santa, and Elvis came running too. Santa feared for the worst. He knew that the last miracle the cub worked must have made him lose conscious; quickly they put the cub inside in a nice warm bed. Mamma warmed some soup and Hot Chocolate and put some warm towels on the cub’s forehead. She told the men to take care of what had to be done and she would tend to the cub.

Back out in the barn Santa and Elvis finished putting all the reindeer in their stalls and fed them. Santa was just finishing up fixing Blitzen’s leg when Momma call out to the barn and said that the cub was awake. Both Santa and Elvis decided it was time to go in and get some supper. It was ten PM Christmas Eve. A decision would have to be made soon! One thing that Santa didn’t know was that Elvis already had the spare Christmas sleigh packed and ready to go. If the decision was made not to cancel Christmas most of the work was already done.

In the kitchen Mrs. Clause was busy fixing supper for Papa and Elvis. The little cub was already eating up a storm at the table. Along with the soup, sandwich, hot chocolate and pie, the cub ate berries, nuts, and a box of candy canes. Santa saw the little guy devouring everything in sight as he came in and let out a hearty laugh. Even Elvis had to chuckle.

Both Elvis and Santa sat down to eat with Momma and the cub, which was now eating a large piece of chicken. Elvis thought to himself, where does he put it all. What everyone didn’t realize the cub needed as much energy as he could muster to pull off tonight what he had in mind. The conversation got around to canceling Christmas. Momma was sticking to her guns and said that Santa shouldn’t go and Elvis agreed. Santa was the only one left who didn’t want to cancel Christmas and break the hearts of all the Children throughout the world. It was Christmas Eve and almost eleven PM.

Just then the little cub finished the chicken and let out a loud burp! Everyone looked his way and he cleared his throat and started to speak. Momma was startled and grabbed her chest. Both Papa and Elvis had a good laugh. The little cub then said, “I have mustered my powers twice to help Santa out, the last time making me faint.” “ In case you have been wondering why I have been eating everything in sight is because I needed my strength to help Santa again”. The little cub then went on to say that if Santa didn’t come along, when the storm was over he wouldn’t know where to go. He may just wonder around for a long time and maybe even wind up dead like his parents. Santa offered me to come home with him. Momma got me warm and filled my belly. The little cub then got up on the chair and shouted “THIS DAY IS IMPORTANT TO THE CHILDREN, IT MUST NOT BE CANCELLED”, and then he sat down.

Santa looked at Elvis and they both had a big smile on their faces. Never had Christmas been cancelled and it wouldn’t happen this year. Santa leaned back and shook his large belly and let out a loud merry HO! HO! HO! Mrs. Clause just smiled and told the little cub that Papa was just an overgrown kid, and she went to fetch Santa’s suit. He would not take a nap and instead told Elvis he would take him along. Elvis got up and started to

dance around doing some weird dance called a polka, he also shouted to Santa “the sleighs all packed and the list is in tack”. Santa knew he could count on Elvis to have everything ready to go.

Santa went into the bedroom to change to his Red Suit and Hat. He talked to Momma about the little bear cub and told her all about the parting of the snow, ice and winds. He then went on to say that the miracle was not the parting of the snow, but putting Santa under that pine Christmas tree with the cub. It was Christmas Eve ten minutes to midnight.

Both Santa and Momma went back out into the kitchen where the cub was staying warm by the fire. Momma had a small red suit in her hands and put it on the cub. She then got a green cap from the closet for his little head. Santa looked at Momma and said “we must name the little guy” and Momma said “ he saved Christmas for the children and you found him under a large Pine Christmas tree, we should name him Christmas, The Christmas Bear”!