

No. 13

A Christmas Tale

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(Junior category)

It had been snowing for over a week and the houses and gardens were covered in snow. With only two days to Christmas Eve it looked like it would certainly be a white Christmas.

Ella was in the garden with her older brother James making a snowman, and was so interested in making a head for the snowman she forgot all about the cold.

They had used up most of the snow at the bottom of the garden so Ella walked over towards the house to collect some that had blown up against the house as it looked so fluffy . She dug her hands in to the snow and scooped up a large amount of snow and carried it to the snowman. Putting it on the ground so she could roll it in to a ball for the head, she noticed something green and red in the snow. Thinking it was a piece of rubbish, she pulled it out, only to her surprise to find it looked like a small pixie doll. It seemed to have a bluish face which was soft to the touch and small hands and feet in little boots.

Forgetting about the snowman, she ran in to the house, kicked off her boots and ran upstairs to her bedroom, collecting a dish cloth from the kitchen on her way. Once in her bedroom she gently cleaned the small doll and then noticed the face. Although the eyes were closed, it had bushy eyebrows that looked like real hair, a small turned up

nose, thin lips and the ears were a funny pointed shape, It looked so real, but sleeping. She decided that she was not going to tell her brother what she had found as he had a collection of goblins and elves ornaments and knew that it would end up on one of his shelves.

Lifting it gently, she placed it in a shoe box near the radiator, and ran down the stairs to rejoin James in making the snowman. Once the snowman was completed they began a snow ball fight until their Mum called them in to the house for their tea.

Ella went up to her bedroom to change out of her wet clothes and then went to warm her fingers on the radiator.

She then thought she heard a small cough, but decided it was from outside, then it happened again, looking down in to the shoe box she saw the small doll like figure move and this time it sneezed. At first it frightened Ella. Bending down she gently scooped up the figure and noticed its eyes had opened and they both screamed with surprise, both asking at the same time.” Who are you”? “I am a Christmas sprite .Can you really see me?” asked the doll “My name is Ella and of course I can see you silly” replied Ella. “Well you aren’t supposed to. What happened to me? The sprite asked. “I don’t know I found you under some snow” said Ella. The sprite was silent for a while and then as if it was talking to itself said “I must have fallen of the roof and banged my

head that will be why this child can see me. I must collect my thoughts and become invisible again” then looking up at Ella he asked “ what is the date” Ella having heard the sprite say that it was going to disappear replied “ Only if you promise me that you won’t disappear and tell me what you are doing here”

The Sprite quickly realised that this little girl meant what she said and agreed, knowing that they could never break a promise but he had no choice. “All right tell me the date and I will explain and not disappear”. Ella knew she had no choice but to trust him “It is twenty third of December. “ Oh no” cried the sprite “oh dear I must have been in that snow for two days, what am I to do”. “Well I can’t tell you until I know what you are supposed to do can I? Ella replied.

The Sprite began to tell Ella his story. “My name is Sproggy and I am one of many hundreds of sprites who Santa sends out around the world to collect letters and lists, that children like yourself, write to Santa. We also check to see that all the children are well behaved, well reasonably well behaved, and make a note. If any child is really badly behaved then they don’t receive all the presents they ask for. Which is only fair on the nice children don’t you agree” Ella nodded in agreement. He went on.” My area was the north west of England and I had finished my task in your street when I had my accident. If I don’t return to Lapland

soon then no one in the North West of England will receive any presents and that will mean you young lady". Oh dear that is bad" replied Ella, We must get you back to Lapland quickly. "To do that, I will have to disappear "he replied. "Well what are you waiting for get going now" Ella shouted. O.K but I did promise not to" replied the Sprite. "Just go and sort out my presents" Ella replied.

The sprite stood up and closed his eyes and said goodbye, but nothing happened. He tried again and again still, he remained in view. "Oh dear something happened when I fell, I must have hit my head on something and lost the power to become invisible and travel to Lapland.

"Surely there must be a way for you to get in touch with Santa in case something goes wrong? Asked a worried Ella. Picturing in her mind, that she would have no presents to open on Christmas day. "Cant we send a message on the internet with facebook or something." " I don't know I have never used a computer before but it is worth a go, anything is worth a try I suppose.

Ella could hear her brother coming up the stairs so quickly covered the Sprite with a handkerchief. "Who are you talking to Ella" asked James, " Just listening to music" she answered which seemed to satisfy her brother.

Ella sat and thought really hard. It was all right saying try the internet but she had forgotten that the computer was in

the living room and her parents could see what she was doing and could catch her and spoil it all. The only other computer was her brother's laptop, perhaps if she was nice to him then he may let her spend a little time on his.

Ten minutes later, and at the cost of a bag of sweets, Ella had James's laptop in her room. Now she had the laptop, she had to find out a way of finding Santa's address. It was a pity he didn't have an e-mail address then she could have e-mailed him. Ella tried by putting his name in the Google search but after checking through found them of no use. In desperation she went on to her Facebook page and typed in "If anyone knows the address of Santa could you let me know as Sproggy has a message. Ella then closed the laptop down and returned it to James and a very sad Ella returned to her bedroom to tell Sproggy what had happened. Later that evening, James shouted "Do you want to check your Facebook before I close down" This surprised Ella as her brother wasn't usually this kind. O.K Thank you James" Ella almost ran into her brother's bedroom and quickly logged on her Facebook page. She saw that she had loads of replies, from her friends, but they were silly and of no help. Then she came upon one which said "How do you know Sproggy? Ella was excited, and then thought that it may be just someone playing games. However there was nothing to lose so she typed in "He is with me" and sent the

message. A reply came back straight away. "Ask Sproggy who his best friend is". This really excited Ella who put down the laptop and ran in to her bedroom. Trying her best to keep her voice down she asked Sproggy the name of his best friend. Sproggy began to ask why she wanted to know, but Ella told him to just give her a name and she would explain later. Sproggy gave her a name and Ella quickly returned to the lap top and typed in "Budgie" and sent the message. Straight away a message came up. "Ask Sproggy if he has his lists and reports and if so can you let me know your address and then place them near the fireplace so I can collect them, further instructions to follow." Ella couldn't contain her excitement and replied "Yes he has and it will be where you said" and sent the message before rushing to tell Sproggy the good news

Later that evening just before going to bed, Ella slipped back down stairs, saying that she had forgotten her book and when no one was looking slipped the note from Sproggy near the fireplace then ran back upstairs. Her mum came in and gave her a kiss and put out the light not noticing the little sprite lying beside Ella, perhaps he was still invisible to grownups after all.

The next morning Ella as always up early and went down stairs in to the living room. There was no one else there so she quickly checked the fireplace to see if the note was still

there. To her dismay the note was still there, so Ella picked it up, but when she looked at it closely she saw that it was in fact a new message from Santa. It said. "Thank you Ella. Check tonight on your computer where I am on my travels. I will have a message for you." Ella ran up the stairs to tell Sproggy the good news and began to sing some carols. "My Ella is in a good mood this morning for a change her Mum said to Ella's dad. "Yes it must be Christmas" he replied.

That evening Ella's excitement was showing and when she asked James to check where Santa was on his journey. His reply of " Later" was met with a rather sour face. Eventually James logged on to the web page. He was about to skip the first page which showed a scene of Santa in his sleigh and go to the world map, when Ella asked him to stop on the page a little longer. Ella looked at Santa who turned his head and winked then on the back of the Sleigh she saw the words. " I will pick Sproggy up near your fireplace tonight Merry Christmas." Ella looked again and the message was gone. She looked at James but he showed no sign of noticing the wink and the message, perhaps he hadn't seen it after all.

The next morning Ella and her brother ran downstairs as soon as they awoke to see the presents that Santa had brought them, followed by their Mum and Dad.

“Look Mummy a laptop of my very own” shouted a excited Ella. Her Mum and Dad looked very surprised. Her Dad said “That wasn’t on her list” Then James shouted “Look an X Box”, which puzzled their parents even more. Santa had been extra kind this Christmas.

The End