

THE TROLLS WHO STOLE THE NORTH POLE

by Art Shulman

SETTING

The North Pole, the South Pole, and an area in a building to make toys

TIME

The present, a few days before Christmas

SCENE 1

SETTING: The North Pole. On stage is a tall white pole with a "NORTH POLE" sign.

AT RISE: FRANKIE and GRITZ enter sneakily. GRITZ is carrying a tall blue pole with a "SOUTH POLE" sign.

FRANKIE

Now come along, Gritz. We've got to steal that North Pole and replace it with this South Pole before anybody sees us.

GRITZ

OK boss.

FRANKIE

Quietly, now.

GRITZ

OK boss. But I still don't understand why we're stealing the North Pole and putting up the South Pole.

FRANKIE

I've tried to explain it before, you doofus. Soon, pilots will be flying their planes to the North Pole to deliver puffle and tuggle and paint and glitter for the elves to make toys. If we have the North Pole they'll deliver the stuff to us, even if we're at the real South Pole. Then, we'll have all the building materials to make toys, and we can sell the toys at very high prices. Ha ha!

GRITZ

That's very tricky! But Santa won't have any toys to deliver to kids on Christmas Eve, because the elves won't be able to make them.

FRANKIE

Then the kids and their relatives will have to buy our toys, won't they?

GRITZ

You're brilliant, boss.

FRANKIE

Thanks. You're not brilliant, Gritz. That's why I'm the boss and you're only the assistant.

(GRITZ replaces the SOUTH POLE sign with the NORTH POLE sign)

Now let's get back to the real South Pole before anybody sees us.

GRITZ

Won't kids around the world be disappointed when Santa doesn't deliver any toys this year?

FRANKIE

Who cares? We'll be rich, because people will have to buy our toys, at whatever prices we want to charge, and you know that will be high prices.

(GRITZ and FRANKIE exit sneakily, GRITZ carrying the NORTH POLE)

(Lights fade)

SCENE 2

(As the lights rise SANTA enters, taking a stroll. STRIPEY runs in)

STRIPEY

Santa! Santa!

SANTA

(Depressed)
Hello, Stripey!

STRIPEY

Santa, it looks like you've been losing weight.

SANTA

I'm worried, Stripey. Christmas is only four days off...

STRIPEY

(Aside, directed to the audience)
Four days?

SANTA

... and we haven't received our shipment of materials for the elves to make toys. I haven't been able to eat.

STRIPEY

But Santa Claus is supposed to be chubby.

SANTA

Well, if I lose weight, maybe my sleigh will fly faster. And I suppose I'll live longer if I'm thinner.

STRIPEY

How old are you?

SANTA

I've lost track. I must be at least three hundred and fifty years old. Hmm, I wonder if kids would prefer a skinny Santa Claus or a chubby Santa Claus. I wonder what they would say if we asked them -- how many would prefer a skinny Santa and how many would prefer a chubby Santa?

(Allow audience to express their preference)

Well, it looks as if I better start eating again.

STRIPEY

Besides, Santa, what's the point of living at the North Pole if you can't eat ice cream?

SANTA

Good point, Stripey! Now what's on your mind?

STRIPEY

Well, a pilot just landed her plane with a delivery.

SANTA

So our materials have arrived!

STRIPEY

No. The pilot is delivering something, but it's not materials to make toys!

SANTA

What is she delivering?

STRIPEY

Tuxedos!

SANTA

Tuxedos?

STRIPEY

Yes, tuxedos!

SANTA

Well, maybe kids would rather have tuxedos than toys, anyway. I wonder what would happen if we asked kids if they'd rather have tuxedos for Christmas, or toys for Christmas. I wonder what would happen if we took a vote. (*Speaking to the audience*) How many kids would rather have a tuxedo instead of toys? And how many kids would rather have toys?

(Allow time for the kids in the audience to "vote")

Well, I guess kids prefer getting toys to tuxedos.

STRIPEY

But the tuxedos are for the penguins who live at the South Pole.

SANTA

And we live at the North Pole.

STRIPEY

Exactly. Here comes the pilot now. Maybe she'll explain.

(AMELIA FAIRHEART enters)

AMELIA

Hi, I'm Amelia Fairheart, captain of the skies. I've come to deliver the tuxedos. Would you please sign this receipt here to acknowledge that you received them.

SANTA

But we didn't order any tuxedos. This is the North Pole, not the South Pole.

AMELIA

(Pointing to South Pole)
Then how come that says South Pole?

SANTA

Egads! Someone has played a flumarooonee on us!

STRIPEY and AMELIA

Flumarooonee?

SANTA

A dirty trick!

STRIPEY and AMELIA

Oh!

SANTA

I bet they've stolen our North Pole, and replaced it. So when you flew over, you thought it was the South Pole!

AMELIA

Exactly! I already delivered the materials to make toys to a place that said North Pole, but I must have delivered it to the real South Pole!

STRIPEY

And that means... goodness gracious....

SANTA

That means that kids all over the world may not get any toys this year.

AMELIA

You're Santa Claus, aren't you!

SANTA

That settles it. Stripey, you're going to have to go the the South Pole, find the North Pole, and bring it back here.

STRIPEY

You mean the North Pole is at the South Pole?

SANTA

Exactly! And you also need to bring back all the stuff to make toys.

STRIPEY

All that stuff, by myself?

SANTA

Not necessarily by yourself, Stripey.

STRIPEY

Are you going to lead us, Santa?

SANTA

Well, no. I'm needed here. Can you imagine how disappointed tourists would be if they came to the North Pole and found Santa had taken a trip to the South Pole? Stripey, I want you to round up a crew; take whoever you want -- elves, reindeer... even Mrs. Claus.... There's a surprise I want to arrange for her while she's gone. Your mission is to retrieve the North Pole and the materials, and bring them back here in time to make toys for this Christmas.

STRIPEY

I'm on my way, Santa.

SANTA

And by the way, if you happen to pass any stores that sell candy... Oh, forget it! Make haste, Stripey. There are only three days before Christmas.

STRIPEY AND AMELIA

Three days?

SANTA

Yes, time passes very quickly here at the North Pole..

STRIPEY

I'm on the case right now, Santa.

AMELIA

I'll race you there!

(AMELIA exits. STRIPEY attempts to stand on his head)

SANTA

What are you doing?

STRIPEY

Trying to stand on my head.

SANTA

Why?

STRIPEY

Well, we're on the top of the world here at the North Pole, but the South Pole's at the bottom of the world, and people there must have to stand on their heads to keep from falling off.

SANTA

Stripey..... Just get started! And take this South Pole with you!

(SANTA gives the South Pole to STRIPEY)

(Lights fade)

SCENE 3

SETTING: The South Pole

AT RISE: RUDOLPH, STRIPEY, ETHEL, MRS. CLAUS enter. They've just gotten off a sleigh.

ETHEL

Nice driving, Rudolph.

RUDOLPH

Thanks, Ethel. It's what I do best.

ETHEL

You didn't go through a single red light.

RUDOLPH

Maybe that's because there are no red lights up in the sky. Except on my nose.

STRIPEY

Well, here we are at the South Pole. And we don't need to stand on our heads!

ETHEL

It's scary. If they find out who we are, we'll be in big trouble!

RUDOLPH

We've got to find the North Pole and take it back and make Santa happy again.

STRIPEY

Mrs. Claus, we're sorry about taking you away from Santa, but we need you for our mission.

MRS. CLAUS

Thanks Stripey. You know, I wish you'd call me by my first name. All everybody ever calls me is Mrs. Claus. Even Santa calls me Mrs. Claus, or "dear".

ETHEL

I'll call you by your first name. What is your first name?

MRS. CLAUS

I don't know. It's been so long anybody's called me by my first name, I've forgotten what it is. I wonder if anybody out there knows my real first name? (*Looks to audience for suggestions*). Yes, now I remember -- it's... (*the name suggested by a child in the audience*).

RUDOLPH

Well, (*name for Mrs. Claus*), won't the bad guys get suspicious if they see our sleigh?

ETHEL

And Stripey, we have the South Pole. That's suspicious looking.

(STRIPEY removes the covering from the pole. On another portion of the stage, FRANKIE and GRITZ enter and converse silently, not seeing the OTHERS.)

STRIPEY

As you can see, I've disguised it. I painted it to look like a barber pole. We'll pretend we're opening up a barber shop, and the sleigh will be the shop.

(STRIPEY stands the pole, painted like a candy cane, near the sleigh)
Ethel, why don't you snoop around and see if you can find the North Pole.

ETHEL

Sure as snowshoes, Stripey!

STRIPEY

Get your hair cut. Get your hair cut right here.

(ETHEL walks about the stage, searching for the North Pole. SHE overhears the following conversation involving FRANKIE and GRITZ)

FRANKIE

Morning, Gritz.

GRITZ

I saw the plane land yesterday morning and deliver all the stuff to make toys -- puffle and tuggle and paint and glitter!

FRANKIE

Yes, it did. It's all in that building over there.

GRITZ

You must be really excited.

FRANKIE

No I'm not, gosh-dingle it!

GRITZ

Why not?

FRANKIE

Because we don't have anyone to make the toys. We're trolls, not elves. Only elves know how to make toys.

GRITZ

There's a difference between trolls and elves?

FRANKIE

Of course! Didn't your mother ever read you fairy tales when you were a kid?

GRITZ

No one ever read me anything. And I never had many toys. I've been the same old Gritz my

whole life. Other kids never wanted to play with me. I never fit in!

FRANKIE

You mean you were like this when you were a kid?

GRITZ

Yes.

FRANKIE

No wonder no one wanted to play with you. Now, Gritz, I want you to guard this North Pole so that nobody takes it. You can never know when some other pilot will come along and see it, and deliver more stuff to make toys. Hee-hee!

GRITZ

But you just said we have no one to make the toys.

FRANKIE

I'll figure something out.

(PATRICIA PENGUIN enters)

GRITZ

Hey, there's a walking snowman.

PATRICIA

Cool it! I'm Patricia Penguin, not a snowman... not a snowperson.

GRITZ

Hi, Patricia.

PATRICIA

Brrr. I'm cold. I need something to keep me warm.

GRITZ

Where's your tuxedo?

PATRICIA

It got all wet when I spilled Sloppy Joe on it. I had to send it to the dry cleaner.

GRITZ

If it was all wet, why did you send it to the dry cleaner?

PATRICIA

Exactly! He ruined it and now I can't go in the ice water because I have no tuxedo to keep me warm.

FRANKIE

That ice water is really cold, isn't it?

PATRICIA

If you're not a penguin or a fish, you can hardly survive in it. Hey, did I hear a plane fly in yesterday? There's supposed to be a plane delivering a load of tuxedos here.

FRANKIE

That plane delivered stuff to make toys, not tuxedos. I have no idea where the plane delivering tuxedos is.

GRITZ

Well, I think that plane is probably...

FRANKIE

Gritz has no idea either, do you, Gritz?

GRITZ

No.

FRANKIE

Say, Patricia. I've acquired a whole bunch of stuff to make toys. They're in that building over there. Do you know how to make toys?

PATRICIA

Of course not. Only elves know how to make toys, not penguins. We know how to make popsicles and those gooey drinks -- slushes. But not toys.

FRANKIE

Dag-nab it! Well, I'm going to look around for someone to make toys (*To GRITZ*) that we can sell at high prices. Meanwhile, Gritz, I want you to guard this North Pole sign.

PATRICIA

Say, why does that say North Pole. This is the South Pole.

FRANKIE

Well.. uh... uh... you know how bad at spelling folks are these days. Even the pole maker can't spell.

(FRANKIE exits. GRITZ stands watching the North Pole, but soon falls asleep)

PATRICIA

Oh, look! A barbershop. Hey, maybe they trim feathers. I'm going to find out.

(PATRICIA walks to the sleigh. Separately, ETHEL also returns to the sleigh)

STRIPEY

Haircut, get your haircut. Hey, there's a walking snow...

PATRICIA

Hi there. I'm Patricia Penguin, not a snowperson.

STRIPEY

I'm Stripey the barber. We also do manicures. This is our manicurist -- (*name given Mrs. Claus*).

MRS. CLAUS

How do you do. Trim your nails?

PATRICIA

Unfortunately penguins don't have nails.

STRIPEY

If you're a penguin, where's your tuxedo?

PATRICIA

Ruined from Sloppy Joe stains. A new shipment of tuxedos was supposed to be delivered yesterday, but they didn't come. You don't sell tuxedos at this barbershop, do you?

RUDOLPH

No, but I have an idea where they...

MRS. CLAUS

(Interrupting)

We also shine shoes. This is Rud... Rudy, our shoe-shiner.

RUDOLPH

Nice to meet you. Give your shoes a shiny buff?

PATRICIA

Penguins don't wear shoes. If we wore shoes we'd ruin them as soon as we walked into the water. You should take care of your cold; your nose is awfully red. Say, I haven't noticed you all before. You new to the South Pole?

MRS. CLAUS

Oh no. We just had our shop on the east side of the South Pole. This is the west side, isn't it?

(As MRS. CLAUS refers to the east and west sides, the OTHERS point in all different directions, and mumble the different directions)