



The great Father
Christmas robbery



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The music in the audio recordings was composed by Rachel Jamieson – find out more at www.racheljamieson.com.



The narrator was Christopher Jamieson – www.christopherjamieson.co.uk.



Some of the pictures were drawn by Samantha Purkis. Find her etsy shop at www.etsy.com/uk/shop/LittlePaperTrails.



The legal bit

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Before you start



These booklets contain ...

The text of the story, in case you'd like to read it to your child yourself.

A sheet for colouring in while listening to the story.

Some simple sentences inspired by the story, for new readers.

Some quiz questions and activities.

You may want to print the colouring-in sheet. In some cases, you may want to print the activity sheet too. These are always in black and white, so they should print on any printer, and won't use much ink.

Do make sure you visit our website – www.edgartheelephant.com – from time to time for the latest stories. You can also pick up the audio book for this story there.

Donations



These stories, audios and pictures are available free of charge. If you'd like to make a donation, though, we won't say no! Please go to our website – www.edgartheelephant.com – and use the link in the page footer.

Picture gallery

We'd love to display your child's own pictures of these stories in our Facebook gallery. Simply send us a photo of the picture along with your child's first name to <mailto:edgartheelephant@critos.co.uk> and get a personalised email from Edgar to your child!



The great Father Christmas robbery

Bill the burglar was stretched out in his favourite armchair in front of the fire, with a cup of tea and a comic. "There's nothing like a good rest after a hard night stealing things," he thought to himself, as he helped himself to another chocolate biscuit.

Suddenly, one of the stories in the comic caught his eye. He read it carefully several times, getting more and more excited, and then jumped up and shouted out, "Spike!"

Spike came in from the kitchen. "Yes, boss?"

"Look," said Bill, pointing to the comic. "What do you think of this?"

Spike looked at the story. He wasn't actually very good at reading, but he managed to get a rough idea of what it was about by looking at the pictures. "Oh, yes," he said. "It's about Father Christmas. I remember Father Christmas coming when I was little. Nice sort of bloke – used to bring toys an' fings."

"Yes," said Bill impatiently, "but don't you understand what it means?"

Spike thought for a long time. "No," he said at last, "unless it means that you want me to go and get you a Christmas present."

"Look," said Bill. "This chap goes around climbing down people's chimneys, right? Doesn't that tell you anything?"

"Only that he must be daft," said Spike. "Why doesn't he just knock at the door like everybody else?"

"For goodness sake," said Bill. "The point is that he goes in any house he likes, and nobody would dream of trying to stop him."

"So?"

"So if we pretend to be Father Christmas, we could go anywhere *we* liked too. Look, he even carries a big bag with him. We could climb down any chimney we liked, steal everything we saw, and then put it in the bag, and even if they saw us, no one would try and stop us. How's that for a plan?"

"Boss, you're brilliant," said Spike.

"I know," said Bill. "Now, then, I'll make out a list of things which we'll need, and then I want you to go out and get them."

It was already Christmas Eve by the time that Spike had collected all the things on the list. "I'm afraid I couldn't get a reindeer," said Spike. "I went down to the zoo, but they were all locked up. Will this do instead?" He pointed to a large, grey, thin-looking animal.

"What on earth is that?" asked Bill.

"It's a greyhound," said Spike. "I thought perhaps we could stick some bent coat-hangers on his head to look like antlers."

"No, it definitely *won't* do," said Bill. "I don't want a stupid greyhound. Get rid of it straight away."

The greyhound growled and glared at Bill.

"I don't fink he likes you calling 'im stupid," said Spike. "Anyway, it's this or nuffink – I haven't got time to go and get anyfink else now."

An hour later, all three of them were in the garden. Bill was looking very smart in a bright red coat and a big white beard. The greyhound was looking slightly less smart, with a metal coat hanger taped to each side of his head, and a small wooden sledge tied to a length of rope round his neck. Spike didn't look smart at all. He was squeezed into an elf's outfit, with a red pointed hat, a yellow jacket that wouldn't button up properly around his tummy, and trousers that only went half way down his legs.

"Have I *got* to wear this?" he asked. "I feel a right twit. And these trousers are going to split if I bend over."

“Well you wouldn’t wear the fairy’s outfit, and that’s all that’s left,” said Bill. “Anyway, everyone expects Father Christmas to have an elf with him. You’ll be fine. Come on now – let’s go.”

“But it’s Christmas,” said Spike. “Couldn’t we take a day or two off?”

“No,” said Bill, “we couldn’t.”

It was just before midnight when they got to the first house. Bill parked the sledge in the back garden and took the ladder and a length of rope, and then he and Spike climbed up on to the roof.

“Right,” said Bill. “You tie this rope around your waist, and then I’ll lower you down the chimney.”

“What me?” said Spike. “Look ‘ere, it was your idea, so you ought to go.”

“We haven’t got time to argue,” said Bill. “Just get on with it, will you, or it’ll start getting light.”

Spike grumbled a lot, but eventually he climbed down the chimney. After a long while, there was a bump at the bottom of the chimney, and then an “Ow!!”

“Are you all right?” called Bill.

“No I’m not,” said Spike. “It’s all dirty and smelly down here, and I burnt my bottom on the fire. Anyway, I’ve got some things, and I’m coming back out again. And *you’re* doing the next one.”

Then for a long time there was the sound of scrabbling and scraping in the chimney, and then at last Spike’s head reappeared, covered in soot and cobwebs. And a little bit later his body reappeared, and then his feet.

“Here,” he said, passing over the sack. “And I hope you’re satisfied.” And with that, he sat down very heavily on the sledge, with his arms folded.

When they came to the second house, it didn’t *have* a chimney.

“That’s a pity,” said Bill. “We’ll have to go on somewhere else. Your turn again.”

“But that’s not fair,” said Spike.

“Of course it’s fair,” replied Bill. “I do all the even numbers and you do all the odd numbers. Nothing wrong with that.”

So Spike had to go down the next chimney. And the next one, because Bill said he’d lost his glasses. And the next one, because Bill told Spike that he’d hurt his leg.

By the time they got to the tenth house, Spike was pretty fed up, and very dirty.

“Look,” he said. “This is the last one. I’m not doing any more houses after this. If you want to carry on, you can do it yourself.”

“All right, all right,” said Bill. “I do wish you’d stop complaining. I’m only doing all this for you, you know,” and he lowered Spike down the chimney.

Spike wasn’t the only one who was feeling fed up. Police Constable Smithers wasn’t very happy either. “Fancy,” she said to herself, “stuck out in the middle of Christmas Night, all on my own in the freezing cold with nothing to do except walk and walk and walk. Why did I have to get stuck with the Christmas patrol?”

As she was saying this, she happened to look up, and caught sight of a figure in a red coat on the roof of a nearby house. “Goodness me!” she said. “Isn’t that Father Christmas?”

“Coo-ee,” she shouted, “Father Christmas!”

Bill didn’t know what to do. “Er, h-h-h-ho, ho, ho,” he said, rather half-heartedly.

“It’s very nice to see you,” said PC Smithers. “Hope everything’s going well.”

Bill relaxed. Clearly his disguise was working. He let go of the rope and waved. There was a tremendous crash from inside the house, followed by Spike’s voice saying, “ ‘Ere what do you fink you’re playing at?”

“BE QUIET!!!” hissed Bill down the chimney.

“It’s all very well for you,” came the voice from the other end. “You haven’t just fallen twenty feet into a fire.”

“WILL YOU BE QUIET!!!” shouted Bill. “There’s a police lady out here.”

“Did you say police lady?” said the voice very loudly.

“Yes,” said Bill. “Now, will you shut up!”

He waved again, and hoped that the police lady hadn’t noticed. He was lucky, because by this time PC Smithers had caught sight of the sledge. “Oh, a reindeer,” she said. “I’ve never seen one of those before.” And she went up and patted it on the head.

“Woof!” said the reindeer, and bit her.

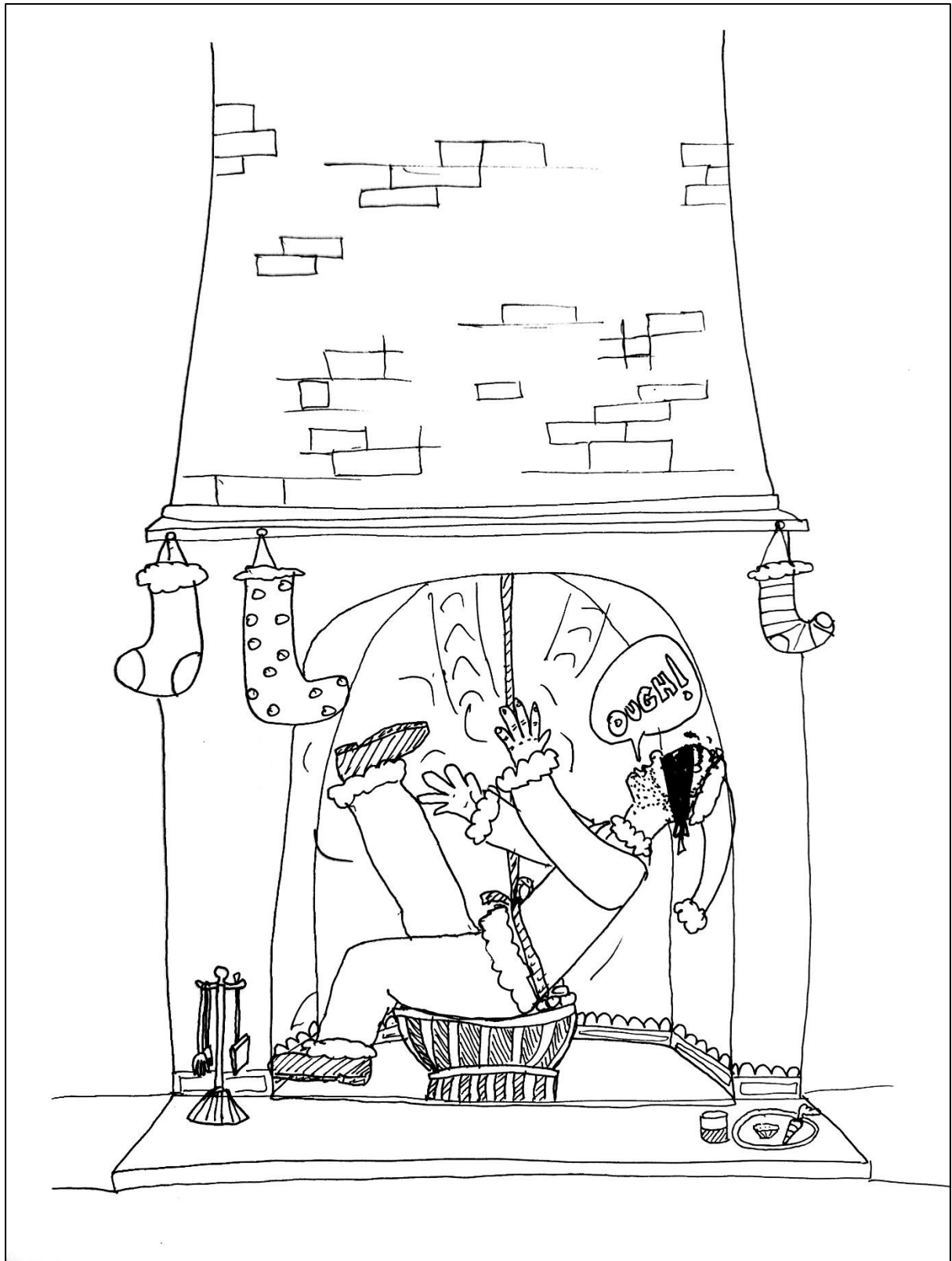
Bill, Spike and the greyhound were sitting in prison the following week, looking at their photographs in the paper.

“Father Christmas Arrested” ran the headline. “Local PC suspicious after being bitten by reindeer; finds stolen goods in sack on sledge.”

“You stupid greyhound,” said Bill.

The greyhound bared its teeth and growled.

“Do you know somefink, boss?” said Spike. “I still fink that we should have taken Christmas off.”



For new readers

This is the tree.

The tree has a star.

There is a box by the tree.



Here is the box.

The ball was in the box.



The man is made of snow.

He has a hat.

He has a scarf.

But he must be cold.



Here are some quiz questions. You get ten points for each answer you get right.

Some questions about the story

Who was Bill the Burglar going to pretend to be?

What was the name of Bill's friend?

What did his friend get instead of a reindeer?

How did they try to make the animal look like a reindeer?

What happened to them in the end?

Some other questions

Sometimes people put your presents under the Christmas tree. Where else do they put them?

How many special things can you think of that you have to eat at Christmas time?

Where does Father Christmas live?

What is the name of the prickly green plant with red berries which people hang up at Christmas?

Can you help Father Christmas?

All the labels have fallen off Father Christmas's presents. Can you help him work out which one is which?

Which one hasn't he got a label for?

That's the end of the quiz. How many points did you get?



Boat

Robot

Rocket

Train

Kite

Rocking horse

Teapot

Bike

Teddy

Guitar

