

Father Christmas has the flu

A play for children of 7 to 77

DULCE RODRIGUES



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Father Christmas has the Flu

A play in two acts
plus one
for children of all ages



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Cover book illustration by the Belgian painter Willoos

**FATHER CHRISTMAS
HAS THE FLU**

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Father Christmas

Mother Christmas

Elf

Young man, Father Christmas' substitute

Saint Nicholas

Narrator

Three children

Butcher

Chorus children

The action of acts one and two takes place inside the Father Christmas house in Sweden and lasts only a few hours.

The action of act three spans over a period of seven years.

ACT ONE

*Father Christmas's living-room in Sweden; decorated
Christmas tree and other seasonal ornaments.*

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Elf, an elf, packs and wraps the Christmas presents. Father Christmas is sitting on a sofa.

Father Christmas, wiping his nose with a handkerchief:

Oh dear! I'm getting ill!

Mother Christmas enters the room:

You are already ill!

Father Christmas:

Of course not! It is just that . . . *(He sneezes)* Atchoo!

Mother Christmas:

Bless you! You've just got the flu . . .

Father Christmas:

No! I can't be sick, I've got to . . . *(He sneezes again)*

Atchoo! . . . *(Sneezing once more)* Atchoo! Atchoo!

Mother Christmas:

You've got to, you've got to . . . What you do have to do is stay in bed and take care of yourself!

Father Christmas:

What about the Christmas presents? Who is going to . . . to . . .
(*He sneezes again*) Atchoo! . . . distribute them?

Mother Christmas:

Who is going to distribute them? Well . . . somebody else!

Father Christmas, wiping his nose:

But who? (*He sneezes*) Atchoo!

Mother Christmas:

We'll have to find someone to replace you!

Elf, coming towards them:

I can do it.

Mother Christmas:

You? How can you do it?

Father Christmas:

You are too . . . (*He sneezes*) Atchoo! Atchoo! . . . too small!

Elf:

I'm not! I can replace Father Christmas!

Mother Christmas:

You're an elf. And an elf is too small for this kind of job.

Elf:

Do you have a better idea then?

Father Christmas:

I don't really know . . .

Mother Christmas:

I do.

Father Christmas:

Then speak up. We don't have much . . . *(He sneezes)*
Atchoo! . . . much time.

Mother Christmas:

We'll place an ad.

Father Christmas:

That's a good idea! *(Addressing the Elf)* Get me a sheet of paper
and a pen. Quick!

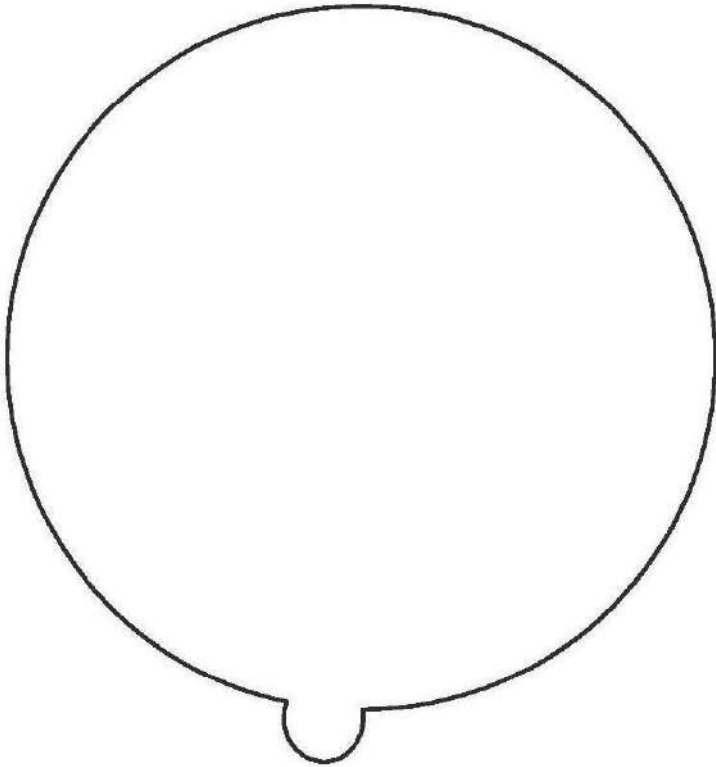
Elf:

But I can replace Father Christmas ok!

Mother Christmas:

I don't think so!

Christmas tree ornament ball



About the Author

Dulce Rodrigues was born in Lisbon, Portugal. After a professional career that took her to other European cities and countries, she now spends her life either travelling or among books; writing for children is for her a rewarding challenge and an engaging act of creation.

Following the publication some years ago in Belgium of her first book for children, now available also in English as “Barry’s Adventure”, Dulce Rodrigues created the pedagogical project www.barry4kids.net that opened the way to collaborations in different European countries, namely France, Belgium, Luxembourg and even Romania.

Dulce Rodrigues has university courses in the field of science as well as languages and literatures, and she was awarded two scholarships. A few of her children’s tales and stories were awarded literary prizes in France at European level contests. She speaks six living languages and writes regularly in at least three.

Her books have been published in more than one European country, and performances of her children’s play “Penguin and the Fig Tree” have already taken place in Romania and Luxembourg. The Portuguese version of “Father Christmas has the Flu” was performed in Portugal and her recent kids’ play “Há Festa no Céu” was also performed in Luxembourg.

Books by the Author

Books for children

Era uma Vez uma Casa, 2011

Há Festa no Céu, 2011

Piloto und Lassie – Romeo und Julia, einmal tierisch anders, 2011

Der Weihnachtsmann ist verschnupt, 2010

Piloto e Lassie, uma outra estória de Romeu e Julieta, 2010

Barry's Adventure, 2010,

Il était une fois une Maison, 2009

O Pai Natal está constipado (bilingual), 2008

Le Théâtre des Animaux, 2008

A Aventura do Barry, 2001 – CD-Rom

L'Aventure de Barry, 1999

Play scripts (available in English)

The Miracle of Saint Nicholas

The Little Ladybird

Other books

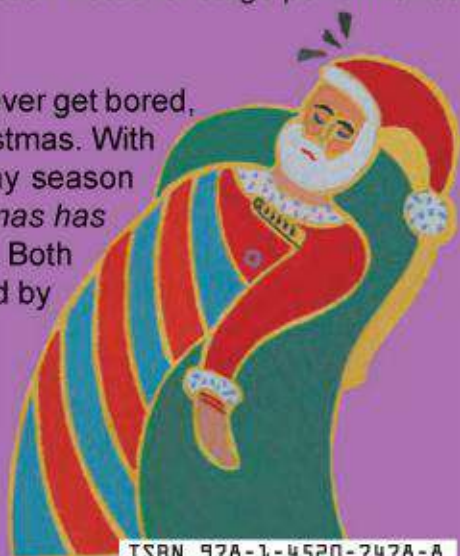
Travelogue – Egypt through the Eyes of a Western Woman

Set in Father Christmas' house in Sweden, this charming play by Dulce Rodrigues takes place in that holiday season. Regrettably, Father Christmas has come down with the flu. How will he deliver the presents? His assistant Elf dreams of playing Father Christmas for one night but Mrs. Christmas and her husband don't think it's a good idea. Instead, they place an ad for a substitute, and a young man who had once replaced the Finnish Father Christmas shows up.

Angry because the Christmases did not think he was responsible enough to deliver the presents, Elf plays a prank on the substitute... Yet Father Christmas has no idea that this has happened until his replacement arrives in desperation. After confronting him, Elf confesses what he has done... and he is badly suffering the consequences...

The book also features the story of Saint Nicholas, this mythical white-bearded gift-giving figure who entered our imagination in the form of Father Christmas or Santa. The Christmas carol "We wish you a Merry Christmas" is sung at the end of the play; a recipe for Mother Christmas Chocolate Cake and a few easy drawings for Christmas decorations are also included. Included are also production notes for stage performance in a classroom.

If there is a character with whom we never get bored, that character is no doubt Father Christmas. With its twist on characters from the holiday season and its foreign setting, "*Father Christmas has the Flu*" may appeal to a wide audience. Both adults and children may be entertained by this charming play.



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