

ANTA CLAUS OF ANTARCTICA Serialized



21. A Long Summer's Nap

Meanwhile, on the South Pole, Anta Claus led his team of yaks into the barn. He unhitched the sleigh and fed each yak a bucket of turnips.

“A splendid Christmas Eve, lads,” he said. “I added the extra turnips I promised you.”

Grumbling, Anta Claus traipsed to his cottage. The morning was breezy and crisp. The sun sat at its usual spot on the horizon. The blades of the windmill spun in a blur.

In the hallway, Anta removed his black hat and coat and hung them on hooks. He pulled off his white boots and left them on the floor.

“Morning,” he called to the trolls.

Tis and Twas stood in the workshop, tinkering with a new wind turbine.

“Merry Christmas, Anta,” Tis said.

“How were the deliveries this year?” asked Twas.

Anta sat in his rocker before the fireplace. He picked up his travel journal.

“Not the usual trip,” he said. “I had a passenger part of the way. Her name was Carol Snow.”

Tis handed Anta a mug of hot cocoa. Two marshmallows floated on top. “I remember Carol’s name from the Naughty List,” she said.

Twas brought Anta his yak wool slippers. “Carol Snow was a sneak,” he said. “We packed an old sneaker for her.”

“Oh! Oh! A sneak no longer,” said Anta. “Minutes before dawn, Carol’s name switched to Santa’s list.”

“A rare think on Christmas Eve,” said Tis.

“How did Carol make it happen?” Twas asked.

Anta took a sip of cocoa. “She apologized for her sneakiness, and the Four

Winds were convinced she was sincere,” he said. “I hope Carol is home right now enjoying Christmas morning with her family.”

Anta wrote a few pages in his journal. At length, he stood and stretched his stiff arms and legs.

“Christmas season is finally over,” he said. “it’s time for my long summer’s nap.”

“You deserve it, Anta,” said Tis.

“When should we wake you?” asked Twas.

“Mid-March on the first day of autumn,” Anta said. “Until then, have a good summer.”

On the way to his bedroom, Anta hummed a tune.

“*Oh! Oh! Oh! Anta’s on his way,*” he sang. “*With his eight air-yaks and his big black sleigh.*”

He stopped and scratched his whiskers. “Great bother, this,” he grumbled. “I can’t get that carol out of my head.”