

A BOY CALLED CHRISTMAS

THE MAGIC OF GIVING



By Matt Haig

Matt Haig's story of how a little boy from a remote part of Finland grew up to become Father Christmas is a magical story full of love and adventure. This extract is from near the end of the story when Nikolas is an old man and is thinking about what he can do to spread happiness further. He goes to the Elf Council to suggest an idea which involves a sleigh, and a reindeer with a red nose...

It takes some people a long time to work out exactly what they are here for. In Nikolas's case it took him another forty years.

He was now sixty-two years old. He had not only kept his beard, as the Truth Pixie suggested, but he had been leader of the Elf Council for A Very Long Time.

In that time he had preserved and expanded happiness in Ethelton. He had started a weekly spickle dance (with singing Tonttegubbs) in the village hall, given free toys to every newborn elf, converted the towers into a toy workshop, established a University of Advanced Toymaking, expanded the School of Sleighcraft, set up the Pixie-Elf alliance, signed a peace treaty with the trolls, invented the minor pie,



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and cherry, and gingerbread men, and had raised the elf minimum wage to five hundred chocolate coins a week.

But he still felt he needed to do more. He knew he needed to do more because he was still getting older by the day. Most elves – with the exception of Father Tops and a few others – had stopped aging at around forty, and it was getting a bit silly. He was taking so long to find his purpose. He loved helping the elves, but it was time to help the people that part of him still belonged to. The people he had left behind in their world, one that was too often full of loss and pain and sadness. He could nurse them. He would lie awake in bed at night and hear their voices in his head. He could feel the whole world in there. The good and the bad. The naughty and the nice.

One Sunday night in spring, when there was no moon, he took Blitzen from the field and flew beyond the mountain.

There was no better feeling than flying through the sky on the back of a reindeer. Even after a lifetime of doing so, Nikolas – who was now so comfortable with the name Father Christmas he called himself Father Christmas – loved the magical feeling of zooming through the sky. They kept flying. Right across Finland, across the forest where he last saw his father, searching for him, the way he always searched for him whenever he flew. It was foolish. His father had died long ago, but it was an old habit. They flew on into southern Denmark, over towns and cities, over the small fishing port of Helsinki, where travelers and other boats waited for the fishermen who would take them out onto the rough seas again.

Father Christmas desperately wanted to speak to one of his own kind, but he had long vowed to the elves that he would keep their secret. He knew they were right. Humans probably still couldn't be trusted to know about elves and their magic. But that was only because human lives could be so hard.

Online Dogs Literary Anthology British Library

Brendan G. Carr



Online Dogs Literary Anthology British Library:

Serials in the British Library, 2007 *Dogs* Catherine Bradley, 2015 Edinburgh Companion to the First World War and the Arts Ann-Marie Einhaus, 2017-05-24 A new exploration of literary and artistic responses to WW1 from 1914 to the present This authoritative reference work examines literary and artistic responses to the wars upheavals across a wide range of media and genres from poetry to pamphlets sculpture to television documentary and requiems to war reporting Rather than looking at particular forms of artistic expression in isolation and focusing only on the war and inter war period the 26 essays collected in this volume approach artistic responses to the war from a wide variety of angles and where appropriate pursue their inquiry into the present day In 6 sections covering Literature the Visual Arts Music Periodicals and Journalism Film and Broadcasting and Publishing and Material Culture a wide range of original chapters from experts across literature and the arts examine what means and approaches were employed to respond to the shock of war as well as asking such key questions as how and why literary and artistic responses to the war have changed over time and how far later works of art are responses not only to the war itself but to earlier cultural production Key Features Offers new insights into the breadth and depth of artistic responses to WWI Establishes links and parallels across a wide range of different media and genres Emphasises the development of responses in different fields from 1914 to the present **Library & Information Science Abstracts**, 2005 **The Primary English Encyclopedia** Margaret Mallett, 2017-02-24 This newly updated user friendly Primary English Encyclopedia addresses all aspects of the primary English curriculum and is an invaluable reference for all training and practising teachers Now in its fifth edition entries have been revised to take account of new research and thinking The approach is supportive of the reflective practitioner in meeting National Curriculum requirements in England and developing sound subject knowledge and good classroom practice While the book is scholarly the author writes in a conversational style and includes reproductions of covers of recommended children s books and examples of children s writing and drawing to add interest The encyclopedia includes over 600 entries many expanded and entirely new for this edition including entries on apps blogging and computing short definitions of key concepts input on the initial teaching of reading including the teaching of phonics and the other cue systems extended entries on major topics such as speaking and listening reading writing drama poetry non fiction bilingualism and children s literature information on new literacies and new kinds of texts for children discussion of current issues and input on the history of English teaching in the primary years extended entries on gender and literacy important references for each topic advice on further reading and accounts of recent research findings and a Who s Who of Primary English and lists of essential texts updated for this new edition This encyclopedia will be ideal for student teachers on BA and PGCE courses preparing for work in primary schools and primary school teachers Anyone concerned with bringing about the informed and imaginative teaching of primary school English will find this book helpful and interesting *Playback* British Library. National Sound Archive, 1999 British and Irish Poets

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