

The Toyshop Revolt

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Narrator: This story takes place in Santa's Toyshop at the North Pole on a wintry December 23rd, just two days before Christmas.

(Santa is sitting at his desk. Mrs. Claus is tidying up before bedtime, shooing the sleepy elves off to bed, etc. The elves respond by yawning and saying, "Good night, see you in the morning," etc. and exit stage right.)

Mrs. Claus: One more day until Christmas and there's still so much to do before we pack up the sleigh. Let's see . . . bows on the teddy bears, bonnets on the baby dolls, stripes on the candy canes . . . Oh well, *(She pauses and looks at Mr. Claus, sitting at his desk.)* Will you go to bed soon, Mr. Claus? Tomorrow will be your busiest day of the season.

Mr. Claus: Yes, yes, of course, my dear. Just as soon as I read this letter that arrived by special messenger today. It came with a package of some sort. *(Points with thumb over his shoulder, opens letter, adjusts glasses and mumbles as if he's reading to himself.)* Dear Santa, hmm, tsk, tsk, tsk. My dear Mrs. Claus, I may need your special touch with this one. Listen to this.

(Lights fade on stage, Spot on Susie, stage left, at desk as Susie writes to Santa. Spot on Santa and Mrs. Claus, stage right.)

Susie: Dear Santa,
Christmas is coming, and I've been very good.
But not as careful as I think I should.
I left my dolly outside in the rain,
And I thought I'd never see her again.
But I looked and looked all over the place.
And finally found her with mud on her face.
Her dress is torn and she's lost her shoe.
That's why, dear Santa, I'm writing to you.
Her legs won't work, so she cannot walk.
But worst of all yet, she doesn't talk!

Chorus: Sing first two verses of *The Dolly Who Could Not Talk*

(Light off the girl, Susie, and spotlight on the Clauses.)

Mrs. Claus: Come, dear, there will be plenty of time for fixing that poor dolly tomorrow.

(She helps him to his feet and they exit stage left, talking as they go about what they'll need for the poor dolly. Dim lights.)

Narrator: As you can see, Santa has just received a last minute letter from a little girl named Susie, whose only Christmas wish was to have Santa fix her torn and tattered doll.

Now, every good story has a problem and this one's no different. Santa's toys have overheard the letter to Santa and react with dismay. When they examine the package on the floor, they are shocked by Polly's condition and soon decide that Christmas isn't for them, especially if some careless child is going to treat them as roughly as Susie has.

(Gradually raise the lights to signal the beginning of movement of the toys in the toyshop. The dolls and stuffed animals move slowly towards the package on the floor by Santa's desk, stage right, open it and take out poor Polly.)

Betsy: Oh, my!

Barbie: Have you ever seen anything like it?!

Soldier: Look at her dress! It's torn to shreds. What on earth could have happened to her?

Baby: What a mess! Poor dear!

Teddy: Who are you? How did you get here?

Dog: Hello, hello . . .

(Pause, no answer)

Ballerina: She doesn't talk! *(as if shocked)* What's the matter with her?!

Betsy: Weren't you listening when Santa read the letter? She was left outside in the rain, forgotten by a careless child.

Barbie: What a horrible thing to go through! Why, my dress would be ruined and my hair would be a fright!

Soldier: If that's what it's like to belong to a child, I'm staying here tomorrow night. Why, the rain would ruin my colors and my sword would rust! I'll just order my men to stay here, too. Yes, sir, I've made my decision.

Baby: Me, too, and besides, I'd really miss the toyshop and Mrs. Claus.

Dog: I don't hold up very well in the rain.

Teddy: Our stuffing gets wet and our bodies get very lumpy.

Others: We're not waterproof, you know.

Barbie: Well, I have no intention of ruining my pretty dress or losing my shiny new shoes, and what about my curls? Humph! I'm **not** going when Santa packs up the sleigh tomorrow night. *(Pause)* What about the rest of you? *(Looks around at the other toys.)*

Betsy: I have an idea! Here's what we'll do. We'll untie all the bows on the teddy bears, take the suspenders from the solders, unstuff the stuffed animals, and . . . and . . . and . . . why, we'll revolt. That's what we'll do! *(She smacks the top of the Jack-in-the-Box)*

Jack: Oh, thank goodness! Someone finally let me out. What's going on out here? What's all the fuss about?

Soldier: We've all decided to stay here for Christmas. We have evidence here in this box that children are careless and our lives are at stake.

Jack: How are you going to manage that? Santa and the elves will never stand for it! Oh, me, and I might have to stay inside this box forever!

Betsy: Well, Jack, here's our plan . . .

(At this point, they join heads in a circle and talk quietly about their plans.)

(Fade to Mouse, stage left, coming from the mouse hold near the doll trunk.)

Mouse: Now wait just a minute! *(The toys turn around and sit down.)* You can't do that! All of the boys and girls are waiting for you. You can't disappoint them now! I've never heard of such a thing!

Teddy: What do you know, Mr. Mouse? You're not a toy! You can go wherever you want, whenever you want.

Baby: Yeah, come and read this letter. It's from the little girl that belongs to this poor little dolly.

Ballerina: Children are careless, Mr. Mouse! Who will take care of us out there? Who will tuck us in at night? At least we know that here in the toyshop we have the elves and Santa and Mrs. Claus to look after us.

Jack: It may get boring for some of us, but at least it's dry.

Soldier: They do have a point, Mr. Mouse. You're not a toy. You can move **all** the time, not just when everyone else is sleeping.

Betsy: I agree with Baby. I think you should read the letter.

Dog: Where is it?

Others: There it is. I'll get it for you!

Mouse: Humph! I've already heard Susie's letter. As a matter of fact, I was there when she wrote it. I personally delivered it to Santa myself! That's why I'm here. And I **do** want to keep one eye on Polly to make sure that she's okay. But say, listen, you toys simply can't stay here. Why, you'd ruin Christmas! I know, because I've been there.

(Dolls and toys begin to mumble among themselves again.)

Soldier: Maybe he's right. Let's listen to see what he has to say and then we can decide what to do. Let's be fair about this. I say let's hear him out.

Mouse: Well! Let's see . . . where shall I begin? Ah, yes . . . I know. You see, over the years I've been in many houses and seen lots of Christmas mornings. Last year I even helped Santa with his mail from boys and girls. I read their letters, so I **know** what children want . . . like dolls . . . oh, yes, all **kinds** of dolls.

Barbie: Do they want pretty dolls with curly hair and frilly dresses?

Baby: And what will they do with baby dolls like me? I need someone to take good care of me!

Mouse: Well, let me see if there is a letter in here that can tell us a little more about dolls at Christmas time. (*Searches through Santa's mailbag.*) Here's one. It begins . . . "Dear Santa,"

Susie: (*Sings "Christmas Doll" and the kindergarten dolls answer her.*)

*Susie:
Christmas comes just once a year,
Bringing toys we love so dear:
Boats and balls and baseball bats,
Skates and kites and kitty cats.
But all I want is just one thing
Dear Santa, please bring
The toy I love the most of all,
A brand new special Christmas doll.
I'll sing to her a lullaby.
"Mother's near so don't you cry.
Go to sleep, now hush-a-by."*

*Dolls:
Christmas comes just once a year,
Bringing toys she loves so dear:
Boats and balls and baseball bats,
Skates and kits and kitty cats.
But all she wants is just one thing
Dear Santa, please bring
The toy she loves the most of all,
A brand new special Christmas doll.
She'll sing to us a lullaby.
"Mother's near so don't you cry.
Go to sleep, now hush-a-by."*

Baby: Oh, that sounds wonderful! What do you think, Betsy? Barbie?

Betsy: Well . . . maybe I'd go. I don't know yet. I don't like to take naps all the time!

Barbie: Me either! My dress would get wrinkled!

Soldier: Wrinkled, smrinkled! You girls and your dresses and hairdos!

Mouse: (Chuckling) Why, Betsy, Barbie, haven't you seen Mrs. Claus making all the pretty dresses to send with you on Christmas Eve?

Betsy: Yes, but . . .

Barbie:

Mouse: Well, that means that you'll get to go to tea parties, for rides in the park and lots of other places. At this very moment, I'm sitting on a trunk full of goodies that are going with you. (*Point to her nametag on the trunk.*) There are dresses, shoes, a brush and comb, and lots of other surprises. I just know that some little girl will take good care of you!

Betsy: Hmm . . .

Barbie: Tea parties?

Teddy: Hey! What about the teddy bears? Do we get to go tea parties with the dolls?

Mouse: Look, here's a letter from a little boy who got a teddy bear for Christmas last year.

Ballerina: What does it say? Is he sending it back?

Soldier: Will you read it to us, Mr. Mouse? For Teddy's benefit, of course, and for our peace of mind?

Teddy: Yes! Yes! Read it to us, please?

Mouse: It starts out with the usual, "Dear Santa," (*Mumbles as if reading the letter to himself*). Why, he just **loved** his teddy bear! Listen. "Dear Santa . . .)

(Teddy Bears sing "My Teddy Bears." Spotlight on first grade teddy bears.)

*Sometimes I'm all alone, and don't know what to do,
So I look for my friend that's old, not new.
He's missing an eye and one ear is gone,
And his leg looks like it's been chewed upon.
But I would know him anywhere.
He's my very best friend.
I would know him anywhere . . . my teddy bear.*

(two more verses)

Jack: Nice song, Teddy, rather sentimental, but catchy.

Teddy: Oh, Teddy, someone will love you! We all do!

(Other dolls agree.)

Teddy: Well, I won't go without making sure that my friends are taken care of. What about the soldiers? Is there a place for them?

Ballerina: Oh, yes, Mr. Mouse. See if there's a letter in there about toy soldiers! Someone must want such fine men.

Soldier: Yes, will you look, Mr. Mouse? I would be most grateful. I **am** concerned about the welfare of my men. After all, we are impeccably dressed, well mannered, intelligent and ready to serve, but we require a special kind of placement and a certain element of respect.

Mouse: Hmm, no . . . well, maybe . . . Pac Man? Humph! **That's** no doll! Oh, yes, here's one. Listen, you can almost hear them!

(Second graders parade down the center aisle, singing "Toy Soldiers" and exit through front side door.)

Soldiers: Well, it certainly sounds like I can take my men with me. We'll go! And you can count on my men. They'll be in perfect formation!

(Dolls clap, getting more excited about Christmas.)

Mouse: Well, that takes care of the dolls, teddy bears, toy soldiers. Let's see . . . what's left? *(thinking)*

Dog: The animals! You know . . . lions and pandas, monkeys and frogs, and . . and . . . and . . .

Others: And me!!

Mouse: Okay! Okay! I know for a fact that there are hundreds and hundreds of stuffed animals. If they're good . . .you know . . . no growling at tea parties or biting, they get to do the things that dolls do.

Dog: Oh, boy! I love tea parties! But are you sure that the children want us?

Mouse: Some children consider their stuffed animals their favorite things.
Third graders sing "My Favorite Stuffed Things.")

Dog: Sigh

Mouse: Okay, toys, it's almost morning and I really need to get some sleep. What do you think now? Are you going to go through with this toyshop revolt and ruin Christmas or are you going to go with Santa tomorrow night?

Barbie: I've made up my mind to go. I can't wait to try on my pretty new dresses and go to tea parties and goodness knows where else!

Betsy: Maybe we'll even see each other in the park for a picnic! Won't that be fun?!

Ballerina: I think we all agree with Betsy and Barbie, but what **about** careless children like Susie? She ruined poor Polly! **She** shouldn't have another doll!

Soldier: Oh, yes . . . quite right.

Mouse: I would almost agree with you. Susie **was** careless to leave her Polly out in the rain. But . . . you didn't hear **all** of her letter to Santa, did you?

Dog: Here it is, on Santa's desk where he left it. What else does it say?

(Dolls all ask him to finish reading it to them.)

Susie: (Susie writes, spot on Susie)

Dear Santa, please don't bring me anything.
Just fix my dolly so she can talk
And give her some shoes that can make her walk.

Ballerina: Then she **does** love her dolly. I vote we all go with Santa!

Mouse: All in favor, say, "AYE!" *(Toys all say aye!)*
Now, can we get some sleep?

Jack: Will someone please close my lid? This has been too much for me!

Ballerina: Certainly, Jack. Goodnight, everyone.

(Dim lights and everyone falls asleep.)

(Morning comes, light on and Mr. and Mrs. Claus and several elves come in, ready to work.)

Santa: *(Looking at his desk for the letter from Susie)*
Now where did I put that letter? And what happened to Polly?
Mrs. Claus, did you work in here last night after I went to sleep?

Mrs. Claus: Why, no, dear. This toyshop certainly is a mess this morning, and I know that I tidied up last night. Hmm, there must have been a little mischief in here.

Santa: Elves, how about you? You've already worked too hard!

Elves: Oh, no, sir. I fell asleep in here last night.
Mrs. Claus tucked me in.
Are you kidding? I'm still tired.
Not me.

Santa: Here's the letter and poor Polly. Why, I've never seen such a mess. We'll fix you up, Polly, and take you home with some brand new clothes and a shiny comb.

Well, let's get busy, elves. We've got a lot of work to do.

(Everyone scurries around, humming "Jingle Bells" while Mrs. Claus begins to work on Polly.)

Chorus: *(Sing all the verses to "The Dolly Who Could Not Talk.")*

Santa: Look what time it is! Bring in the sleigh! It's time to get ready for Christmas Day!

(Elves bring in the sleigh, singing "Pack up the Sleigh.")

Santa: Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night. Merry Christmas!

Curtain