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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Visit to Santa Claus Land

One night just before Christmas Kate and Brian were put to bed by their mother. But they couldn't sleep and they were upright in bed. 'Brian,' whispered Kate, 'are you sleeping?' 'No,' said Brian. 'I can't sleep. Kate, would you also want to see Santa Claus? Huh, Kate, do you hear that?'

They both held their breath and heard soft knocking on their window. And when they looked, they saw a jolly Christmas elf sitting by the window. 'Did I hear you correctly? You want to see Santa Claus?' said the elf. 'Well, you're in luck! Because I am one of his elves and I am going to Santa Claus land. If you want, I can take you with me?'



Brian and Kate jumped out of bed and yelled: 'Yes, show us the way! Show us the way!' 'Hold on,' said the elf. 'Nobody is allowed to know the way to Santa Claus land.' The elf took something soft and dark and covered Brian's eyes. Then he took something soft and dark and

put it over Kate's eyes. 'How many fingers do you see?', he asked, but Brian and Kate had no idea, because they couldn't see a thing. 'Very well, we are ready for departure,' said the elf.

He took Brian's hand with his one hand and Kate's hand with his other and they flew out of the window. They flew for a while until the elf started spinning so much that they got dizzy. The children had no idea which way they were going and after a while they stopped. 'We have arrived,' said the elf and removed the blinds from their eyes.

And what they saw was a giant, thick gate. The elf knocked on the door and the gate opened. Together they walked in, just like that into the garden of Santa. It was a remarkable garden. There were many rows of Christmas trees, all shining with decorations and instead of flowers, there grew toys in the garden. Kate immediately ran to the dolls. 'Let's see if one is ripe,' said the elf. 'Ripe?' asked Kate. 'Yes, of course,' said the elf. 'When the doll is ripe, she will close her eyes in your arms. Let's try this one.' The elf put a doll in her arms and the doll closed its eyes halfway. 'No, this one isn't ripe yet,' said the Christmas elf. 'Try this one.' He put the doll in Kate's arms and the doll directly closed its eyes. 'We'll take it,' decided the elf and put the doll in a big bag that he was carrying with him.

They walked further and saw baby dolls. 'These are ripe when they start crying,' said the elf. He softly pinched the doll and it made a funny, squeaking sound. 'Not ripe yet,' he decided and put the doll back. He tried a few more and took quite a few. Some cried, others

said 'Mommy' or 'Daddy' and others danced when they were wound up.

'Oh, look Kate!' yelled Brian. Kate ran to Brian and saw drum sets in all colors of the rainbow. 'Can we take a couple of these?' asked Brian.



'Of course, but let's see if they're ripe,' said the elf. He took a small, red drum and gave it a clap with a stick. The drum made a weird noise that made them all laugh. So they put it back. The Christmas elf chose a big, brown drum and hit it and it made a mighty sound, so they took it.

When they plucked all the drum sets, they walked towards the horns. Those were the best! Next they walked to the wind up toys. There were trains, cars, dancing dolls, climbing monkeys, hopping birds, swaying ducks and any other kind of toy you can think of. The kids stayed there for a long time, until Kate said:

'Where is Santa Claus? We want to meet him.'

'Of course,' said the elf. 'Come along,' and he led the children over a long, winding road, to the edge of the garden and pointed to a hill in the distance. 'Do you see that big white house? That's where he lives.'

The kids stared at the house. It was so white that it seemed to shine. 'Walk past here,' said the elf, 'and

then up the hill towards the house of Santa. 'Oh, we have to pass this...,' said Kate and she stared into a deep, black abyss between the garden and the hill. There was a plank to cross it. 'Be careful,' advised the Christmas elf, 'and don't look down. If you do, I'm afraid you won't see Santa tonight.'

'We will be careful,' said Brian. 'Come along, Kate!,' and he took his sister's hand and they started to walk over the plank. They were almost halfway when Brian looked down. 'Oh,' he said and pulled Kate's hand. She also looked down and yelled: 'Oh! Oh!' and together they fell down and crashed.

Suddenly they were upright in their beds and rubbed their eyes. They were at home in their own beds.

Mother opened the door and said: 'Are you awake kids?' 'Oh, mother, we didn't sleep! We were visiting Santa Claus Land and we almost saw him!' They told their mother everything that morning. And mother? She smiled.