

The Midnight Rider

Susanne Tenpenny





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The Midnight Rider

By Susanne Tenpenny

CAST

SANTA CLAUS: This Midnight Rider is the familiar, jolly old man with a white beard. He's ageless, wears red, and although chubby, he is physically fit and perhaps a speed demon at times.

MRS. CLAUS: A loving wife, fussy, compassionate toward animals, a singer.

COOKIE: Number one elf, has ridden with Santa for 500+ years, dry wit, easily disturbed.

CLARK KENT: A roving reporter with a secret identity.

DR. DOOLITTLE: The reindeer's vet.

COUNT DRACULA: A thirsty host.

COLLINS and NELSON: Secret servicemen, terse, and stoic.

JANSON: Secret Service woman, business-like.

THE PRESIDENT: A friendly host at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

GOLDEN OLDIES: Celebrities from the past, Bill, Marilyn, and Amelia

GRANNY CLAUS: Santa's mother, strong and sassy, bakes chocolate cakes.

KEYBOARDIST: (*or tapes*) Sets the tone of the play.

NARRATOR: Introduces plot and characters, interacts with the reporter.

VOICEOVER TALENT: Presents commercials.

TIME

The Present on Christmas Eve.

SETTINGS

Production Notes: Since this is a radio play, the stage requires no particular setting, but Christmas decor can be used. Sound effects can be recorded or can be made by actors. Locations can be indicated with signage or with simple scenery pieces. Feel free to localize the show.

CHRISTMAS SONGS

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN	Keyboard Introduction
JINGLE BELLS (<i>jazzy</i>)	Keyboard
JINGLE BELLS (<i>tape</i>)	by Barking Dogs
WHITE CHRISTMAS	Mrs. Claus
WINTER WONDERLAND	Singers/Actors

Following or during the play, singers can lead the audience in a medley of traditional Christmas carols.

SOUND EFFECTS

EPISODE 1:

A strong north wind
 A tape on fast speed (*voices of elves*)
 Multiple light taps (*elves running*)
 A dramatic note (*keyboardist or singers*)
 A door opening, groans and burps
 A door closing
 A door slamming
 A few bars of the song, "Jingle Bells" (*by the barking dogs*)
 The bong sound of Big Ben
 A whistle (*for dog team, secret service men, going up and down the chimney*)
 Other sounds: *Crashing, an echo, a big thump, a little thump, creaking*
 Jingling bells

EPISODE 2:

A Thud on a Rooftop
 Electronic Equipment (*from Santa's bag*)
 Ringing cell phones (*secret service persons, Granny Claus*)
 Struggling, Barking
 Applause and Wolf Whistles
 A Drum Roll

EPISODE ONE, Scene 1

AT RISE: *The musician enters UR and sits at the keyboard. Others pair off and enter from each side of the stage. The front row guests enter last. They are Santa and Mrs. Claus, Cookie, the reporter, narrator and Voiceover Talent. All represent Christmas season in their clothing. After everyone is seated, the keyboardist plays a few bars of a jazzy, Christmas song. The narrator struts forward.*

NARRATOR: Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to our Christmas show! Tonight, WSTC presents *The Midnight Rider*, featuring Santa Claus on his annual world tour. As Santa makes his descent on some unique housetops and slides down some unpredictable chimneys, our roving reporter will be right behind him for any 'breaking' news. We'll be joining him shortly, but right now, stay tuned for a word from our sponsor.

VOICEOVER TALENT: (*commercial*): Folks, do you suffer from sweaty, smelly feet? Well, suffer no longer. Be like Santa. Whip off those boots and lather up with Odor Off. Yes, Odor Off will change your life instantly. No longer will you be eating Christmas dinner alone in the utility room. Odor Off is the hit of the season. Pick up a package today at any of your local stores. Tell them that Santa sent you. That's Odor Off!

NARRATOR: And now--The Midnight Rider!

KEYBOARD1ST: Plays *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*

***Sound Effect: a strong north wind.*

CLARK KENT: This is Clark Kent of WSTC, reporting from the North Pole, where I'm stationed just outside Santa's toy factory. Well, Kids, this is the night, the big night you've dreamed about all year. In just a moment, the jolly old man in the red suit will make his appearance. He'll come through that door, mount this sleigh and prepare for his annual takeoff. While we're waiting, let's take a look at the goodies stuffed inside these huge red bags. Spilling out of Santa sleigh is ...Whoa! Soldiers, guns, tanks, and planes, cars, trucks, skates, and trains, robots that walk. And Barbie with growing pains. Come on Santa! Don't keep the boys and girls waiting. Has anyone seen the reindeer? By this time, they should have been harnessed and hitched to the sleigh.

ELVES: *The elves frantically running in circles.*

***Sound Effect: a tape on fast speed, fingers tapping*

SANTA: (*sound effect: door opening*): Ho! Ho! Ho! Keep your britches on! I'll be ready as soon as I say goodbye to Mrs. Claus.

ELVES: *Run to Santa, whisper in his ear*

***Sound Effect: (sound effects: a tape on fast speed)*

SANTA: What! My reindeer are sick?

***Sound Effect: (Repeat sound effect: a tape on fast speed)*

What's wrong with them?

***Sound Effect: a tape on fast speed*

(*Santa groans.*) Oh, No! How will we transport our toys to the children tonight?

***Sound Effect: A dramatic note on keyboard.*

CLARK KENT, Oh, Kids! Is it possible there will be no Santa on Christmas Eve?

***Sound Effect: door opening*

MRS. CLAUS: Santa, what's all that commotion out there?

SANTA: Mrs. Claus, the reindeer are sick.

MRS. CLAUS: What's wrong with my poor deer?

SANTA: They've been over at the candy factory, sampling the product again. They consumed so much chocolate, they had to be carried away on stretchers. The vet has been summoned.

MRS. CLAUS: I'm going over to the clinic immediately.

SANTA: I'll come with you, Dear.

CLARK KENT: Let's follow Mr. and Mrs. Claus to the animal clinic and see how our team is faring.

***Sound Effect: door opening*

MRS. CLAUS: Oh, Dr. Doolittle. How are the darlings?

SANTA: Will they be able to pull my sleigh tonight?

DR. DOOLITTLE: Sorry, Mr. Claus. They're so bloated, they'll never make it off the ground.

MRS. CLAUS: May we see them?

DR. DOOLITTLE: I wouldn't advise it. You may, however, take a quick peek through the door.

***Sound Effect: door opening, several groans and burps, door closes*

MRS. CLAUS: Poor Babies.

DR. DOOLITTLE: They'll be all right in a couple of days.

SANTA: But how will I travel? I need them now.

DR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Claus, I may have the solution to your problem in the back room.

SANTA: You have other reindeer that will pull my sleigh?

DR. DOOLITTLE: Hardly. However, I do have several canines in assorted sizes. All are enthusiastic and waiting for their one night of fame.

SANTA: Dogs! Pull my sleigh? Doolittle, you've been at the eggnog too long.

You'll want to read and perform this one!

Now buy the entire show.