

# IGGY, YUGO AND SAM EXPLAIN EVERYTHING A CHRISTMAS CONFESSSIONAL



An Iggy, Yugo and Sam Adventure



**IGGY, YUGO AND SAM EXPLAIN EVERYTHING**

**A CHRISTMAS CONFESSSIONAL**

## **IGGY, YUGO AND SAM ADVENTURES**

*A Christmas Caroline*

*A Christmas Time Tale*

*Everyone Needs A Little Space at Christmas*

*A Christmas Mystery*

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*Christmas Night of the Evil Walking Living Dead*

*Iggy, Yugo and Sam in the War on Christmas*

*Iggy, Yugo and Sam Explain Everything*

In which Iggy fills out some forms,  
Yugo finds some spare clothes, and  
Sam falls out a window.

And in which Iggy, Yugo and Sam each save Christmas.

Who-who-who-who that, who that I-G-G-Y  
That do that, do that, I-G-G-Y  
Who that, who that, I-G-G-Y

-Iggy Azalea, *Fancy*

North Pole man  
Come out of the storm  
North Pole man  
Gotta get you warm

-Over the Rhine, *North Pole Man*

I don't need doors, I got chimneys,  
Gimme cookies,  
Cuz I'm Santa

-The Dollyrots, *Because I'm Santa*

Even Mrs. Santa Claus  
wants this one!



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This Christmas... give a Rid-Jid Knee Room  
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A Tale of 'Citement and 'Ventures

# IGGY, YUGO AND SAM EXPLAIN EVERYTHING

It was a chilly winter evening at the North Pole. This is a meaningless way to begin a story, since it is always winter at the North Pole, and the weather outside is always frightful. But there is not much that can be said of winter evenings at the North Pole, save that they are chilly.

Unlike other places, evenings are not always dark at the North Pole. In May and June, it is rather bright in the evening. The sun rises in the North Pole sometime in March and does not set again until September. Despite the long, sunny days, the North Pole is no place to get a tan, for there is always a winter chill about the place, even on a sunny summer evening.

But this was not a sunny summer evening; it was a chilly winter one. It was the night after Christmas, and it was very dark outside indeed. And chilly.

It was warm and bright enough indoors on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor of a glass and steel office tower that stood exactly on the North Pole. This was where Santa Claus keeps a big office behind two walnut doors with a brass plaque that said:

**Santa Claus**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Beside the heavy walnut doors were three folding chairs, upon which sat three uncomfortable looking elves. The chairs were uncomfortable enough, to be sure, but that was not what had the elves shifting and squirming in their seats. At any moment, the big walnut doors would open and Santa Claus himself would call them in to explain everything.

The elf in the first chair was Iggy. He was slight and tall, for an elf. His arms and legs were long and skinny, with pointed elbows and knees. Indeed, everything about him was pointed. He had a pointed nose, a pointed chin and pointed ears. Even his crown of dark brown hair pointed in all directions.

Beside him sat Yugo, a stocky elf with a thick black moustache. Yugo was dressed in overalls, with a screwdriver and a slide rule poking from his chest pocket. He was a clever elf, with quick clever hands and a ready, clever smile.



Sam squirmed in the last chair. He was a chubby elf with curly red hair and a perpetual scowl. The little folding chair was far too narrow for his considerable backside and he squirmed even more uncomfortably than the others.

“Stop squirming, Sam,” said Iggy.

Yugo nodded. “You’re making me uncomfortable.”

“Why don’t you stop squirming yourself,” said Sam, frowning.

“I can’t help myself,” said Iggy, squirming.

“Me neither,” said Yugo. “We’re really in for it this time.”

“I’d stop squirming if I had a bigger chair,” said Sam.

“I’m sure the chairs are bigger in Santa’s office,” said Iggy.

Sam squirmed uncomfortably. “Thanks anyway. I’ll stay right here.”

The sound of heavy boots pacing across thick red carpet drifted through the doors. The three elves squirmed even more earnestly than before.

One of the doors swung open and Santa Claus leaned out. He looked much as one would expect. Chubby and plump; cheeks like roses, nose like a cherry and dressed all in fur from his head to his foot. But there was no merry dimples, no jolly mouth drawn up like a bow and definitely no twinkles of any sort in his eyes.

He scowled at the three elves twisting in their uncomfortable chairs. “You three have some explaining to do,” he said.

The three elves sighed collectively and stood up.

Santa Claus held up one mittened hand. “One at a time,” he said. He pointed at Iggy.

Iggy gulped and followed Santa Claus into the office.

The door slammed shut and Yugo and Sam were left in uncomfortable, squirming silence.



## IGGY'S STORY

Iggy was right. The chair across from Santa Claus' expansive desk was much more comfortable than the little folding one in the hallway. Yet, as comfortable as his chair was, Iggy still squirmed as he began his story.

"It was another Christmas evening at the North Pole," he began. "It was dark. There was a winter chill in the air."

Santa Claus leaned back in his big black chair. It looked extremely comfortable. He pulled his mittens off, laid them carefully on his desk and then pressed his fingertips together and leaned forward. "Get on with it," he said.

Iggy took a deep breath and then he told his story.

There's a toy, he said. You know the one I mean. It isn't like any other toy that has ever been made. Yugo built it, and you know how he is. He's clever and he's crafty. He's a builder of clever crafts.

Yugo had this idea. He wanted to build the best toy there ever was. Not a doll or a puzzle or a game but all of those things. Something with lights and buzzers and spinning wheels. And plushy with big eyes and a soft voice. Something educational, but it wouldn't feel like learning when you played with it.

Every kid has a favourite toy. Something they hold on to for years until they fade and break and the plastic eyes fall off. The kind of toy that is your best friend. That's what Yugo made. A toy that would be every kid's best friend.

He only made one of them and it was very experimental. We couldn't very well have every kid in the world unwrap the greatest toy ever built on Christmas

morning until we'd finished testing it. For safety. And for fun. I mean Yugo worked it out on a blackboard, but it was still all theoretical. The greatest toy ever made might have been as much fun as a book.

I don't mean to say that books aren't fun. Some of them are. But some of them are just dull. Have you ever tried to read *Moby Dick*? I gave it up after chapter three. I've been meaning to get back to it, but it's been gathering dust on my bookshelf for the last 200 years.<sup>1</sup>

I guess what I mean to say is that books are good and all, but who wants to get a book for Christmas when they could get a really great toy instead? Maybe a comic book would be okay. But still. Getting a book for Christmas is only a little bit better than getting socks or underpants. And sure, we all need socks and underpants, I suppose, but at Christmas what everyone really needs is a great toy.

Yugo's toy is a really great toy. A really great toy. It's plush and soft and it knows your name and it lights up and the buttons make noises when you press them.

But we hadn't tested it yet. So that was a problem.

But there was an even bigger problem. We always run into big problems at Christmas time, but what can you do? That's when the problems always seem to happen.

But this time it wasn't our fault. I know that it's our fault sometimes, but not this time.

The problem was really with the naughty and nice list. You have a real database management problem. I know it's a big job to keep track of every kid in the world, but we have computers now, you know? We shouldn't have a list that we have to check twice.

But it's a good thing we did check it twice, because that's when we spotted the mistake.

There were these twin girls in Norway, but only one of them was on the list. You know how some parents give their twins matching names? Like Carl and Carla? Or Annie and Danny? This was like that. Inga and Inka Goldersohnsonn. Two girls, but because their names were practically the same, only one of them was on the list.

It was an easy mistake to make, but they both belonged on the list. They just turned six and they are always nice and hardly ever naughty. I mean, sometimes they switch places with each other to fool people, but that's not

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<sup>1</sup> *Moby Dick* was published in 1851, but that first printing was limited to 500 copies which were largely ignored by the reading public. It was not until the 1920's, long after the author's death that the book attracted public notice and acclaim. Iggy's claim that the book had languished on his shelf for 200 years must be an exaggeration. If not, the copy on his shelf is a very valuable volume indeed.

really naughty. And no reason for one of them to be on the nice list and not the other.

But then we didn't catch it until pretty late on Christmas Eve. The sled was already on its way, but with nothing in your sack for little Inka Goldersohnsonn.

I knew something had to be done, so I raced straight away to find Yugo. Yugo is the smartest elf I know. He's the smartest elf anybody knows, really.

Yugo realized right away that there was only one thing we could do. We were going to have to get a Christmas gift to little Inka by ourselves. We don't have a sled and eight tiny reindeer, but we did have Yugo's snowmobile.

Yugo headed to the hangar where he keeps his snowmobile to get it ready and sent Sam and me back to the workshop to find something we could deliver to little Inka.

When we go there we found that the workshop had been entirely cleaned out. No dolls or puzzles or cars. No toy trains or chemistry sets. Everything single thing we had made had already been loaded on the sled. There weren't even any jing tingers or floo floopers.

"I guess that is that, then. There are no toys here anywhere," said Sam. "We might as well call it a night and head to the pub." He was talking about the *Walrus and Ulu*, where most of the other elves had gone to celebrate Christmas Eve.

"We can't give up yet," I said. Sam is always such a pessimist, but I was still hopeful we'd find something we could bring to Inka. And that's when I remembered Yugo's new experimental toy. That would work. It looked like it would be a lot of fun, even if it hadn't been fully tested yet.

There was no Santa Claus around, so it was not like we could ask for permission from anybody. But Inka's Christmas depended on us, so we had to do something.

Unfortunately, the new toy was locked up in the experimental toy room. We had no idea who had the keys and there was no time to lose. So we forced the lock and got inside.

Of course an alarm started ringing. It was really loud and I was sure the elf police would be there any second, but Sam grabbed a hammer from a nearby workbench and smashed the alarm to pieces.

We waited for a bit, but nobody came around, so we went into the room, picked up the toy and headed back to Yugo's hangar.

Yugo had already started up the snowmobile by the time we arrived. At first, Sam did not want to get in. "That thing is dangerous," he said. "Can't we just call a cab or something?"

"It's Christmas Eve," I said. "You'll never get a cab."

“And a cab can’t get us where we’re going. Only the snowmobile can do that.” Yugo was right, of course. His snowmobile is the most incredible machine you’ve ever seen. It’s shiny and red with big rubber wheels for getting through the deep snow. There is a heated passenger compartment and once Yugo gets it up and running, all he has to do is hit a blue button or flip a green switch and wings will pop out of the side and the snowmobile will take off like an airplane. And it’s really fast. There would be no problem getting all the way to Norway before Christmas morning in the snowmobile.

Yugo pressed a button on his key fob and the passenger doors rose silently open on smooth hydraulics. Sam grumbled a bit more and then climbed into the back seat. He prefers it back there, because there is a bit more room and he can’t actually see where we are going.

It was pretty quiet on the streets of the North Pole at that hour on Christmas Eve, so we didn’t even stop for any red lights. Yugo just pointed the snowmobile south<sup>2</sup> and hit the rocket boosters. Then he hit a flashing red button and silver wings extended from either side of the snowmobile. In another moment we were airborne.

It is not a very scenic flight from the North Pole to Norway on Christmas Eve. In the first place, it was really dark. But even if the sun was out, the only thing that we could have seen would have been snow. Great sweeping drifts of gleaming white snow as far as the eye could see in every direction.

But we couldn’t see any of that, because it was really dark.

Before long, we had left the polar ice cap behind and were making our way across the Norwegian Sea. Dark black waves crashed on icy shores below us, sending sprays of ice crystals drifting through the air. Or at least I think that was probably what was going on below us. I couldn’t see a thing, because it was still really dark.

We had just passed over Spløttsbrøkkën<sup>3</sup> when a horn sounded and a light started flashing on the dashboard.

“We’ve got incoming,” said Yugo.

“Incoming what?” asked Sam. “I hope it’s an incoming pizza delivery.”

“It’s not pizza,” said Yugo.

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<sup>2</sup> Iggy did not explain, but the only direction the elves could possibly have travelled from the North Pole is due south. In this case, they headed south, but it was a Norwegian sort of south.

<sup>3</sup> Spløttsbrøkkën is a small island located in the Arctic Ocean between Greenland and Norway. “Spløttsbrøkkën” is an old Norwegian word that means “icy island”. That is pretty much all there is at Spløttsbrøkkën; ice, snow and a few dozen really cold people. Most of the occupants of Spløttsbrøkkën spend their time making snowmen and shivering. It will come as no surprise that the principal exports of Spitsbergen are ice cubes and popsicles.

“What then?”

“Duck!” yelled Yugo. He pulled the steering wheel hard to the right.

“What’s a duck doing way out here?” asked Sam.

Yugo turned the snowmobile back to the left as a bright light flashed past the window.

“That was no duck,” said Sam. You could hear the panic in his voice. I mean, you can usually hear the panic in Sam’s voice, but you could really hear it this time.

I turned to Yugo and asked, “what was that?”

The International Norwegian Shield Enforcement Legion. TINSEL for short,” said Yugo.

“Well that sounds jolly,” I said.

“Not really.” Yugo explained. “The Norwegians are a bit fussy about their airspace. I can’t say why, there’s plenty of air in their space for everyone, but the Norwegians aren’t very good about sharing it. They developed TINSEL to keep other people out of it. TINSEL is a sophisticated missile and drone defence system designed to see that anything that enters Norwegian airspace ends up scattered in pieces on Norwegian groundspace. We’ll be surrounded by drones and missiles any second.”

“So no pizza or ducks at all then?” asked Sam. The panic in his voice almost overwhelmed his words.

“I’m afraid not,” said Yugo.

“I’m just afraid,” said Sam, who was in full blown panic mode at this point. He pulled an airsickness bag from the seat pocket in front of him and began hyperventilating into it.

Sure enough, the darkness outside was broken by a bunch of bright flashes of light from the ground below.

“They’re launching,” said Yugo. He twisted the steering wheel and jabbed at blue, green and red buttons as fast as he could. I could see a line of brightly glowing lights heading straight for us. “I’ve got the snowmobile’s defence systems on line. But there’s so many of them.”

Laser beams shot out of the snowmobile’s front cannons. They lit up a silver winged drone right in front of us, which exploded a second later. Other laser beams shot out to the left and the right, destroying drones, well, left and right.

The shock waves from all of these explosions made things pretty bouncy inside the snowmobile, let me tell you. Sam had to grab a second airsickness bag after he had filled the first one.

“What are you doing, Sam?” asked Yugo, as he swerved around another drone.

“What do you think I’m doing?” yakked Sam.

Yugo grunted as he pulled the snowmobile up to avoid a wave of missiles coming right at us.

“I think that’s exactly what we need,” said Yugo. “Sam, there’s a blue button on the wall beside you. Press that.”

Sam did as he was told and a little panel opened up on wall beside him.

“Put the bag in there,” said Yugo.

“Which one?” asked Sam.

“Everyone you’ve got. The more the better.”

Sam pushed two very full airsickness bags into the opening.

“When I give the word, press the button again,” said Yugo.

“This is the tricky part,” said Yugo. He turned a dial and a blue light came on. Suddenly, it became very cold inside the snowmobile.

“What are you doing?” I asked.

“Turning up the air conditioning,” he said. “We need to get the snowmobile as cold as we can.” In another moment, frost has started to form on all the windows.

“That should do it,” said Yugo. “Hit the button again now, Sam.”

Sam pushed the blue button and the panel slid closed. There was a faint shoosh noise and I saw Sam’s two airsickness bags tumble out of a hatch on the side of the snowmobile. They were still warm and I could see they were surrounded by steam as they fell away.

The drones and missiles all turned in midflight and rocketed toward Sam’s two bags of sick. They all reached the spot at once and exploded with an enormous flash that shook the snowmobile all over.

“Can you make any more?” asked Yugo. He pulled on the steering wheel and the snowmobile banked hard to the left.

Sam reached for another airsickness bag. “Shouldn’t be a problem.”

Sam filled another bag, which we ejected into the path of another wave of missiles.

“The drones and missiles are all heat seeking. They will find and destroy the warmest object in the sky. The snowmobile is running cold, so right now, that’s the airsickness bags. As long as we keep the air conditioning turned up, we shouldn’t have any more problems.”

And he was right. We didn’t have any more problems from drones or missiles. It took another three full bags to get us there, but Sam was able to do it.

We were all freezing cold by the time Yugo pulled up in the drive in front of Inka's house in Oslo. There were no drones or missiles to be seen anyplace. In fact, there was nothing to be seen. No creatures were stirring. It was a silent night in Oslo.

We couldn't very well knock on the door, so we made our way in the way you would, Santa. Up on the rooftop we went and then down through the chimney. Sam got stuck once, for a minute or two, but then the three of us tumbled into the living room, covered in soot.

We may have left some tracks behind on our way to the Christmas tree. Like most Christmas trees in Norway, it was decorated with julekurver.<sup>4</sup> Sam headed straight for the tree and emptied all of the julekurvers of whatever fruits and candies they had.

"What are you guys looking at me like that for?" said Sam, with bits of nuts and candies on his chin and jacket. "I need to reload for the trip home."

I pulled Yugo's new toy out of my sack and then laid it under the tree with the other presents. I turned with a jerk, then ran back to the fireplace where Yugo was waiting for us. Yugo and I climbed back out the way we came in, but Sam just walked out the front door.

And that was how it happened. We were back at the North Pole before dawn<sup>5</sup> and as far as we knew, we had saved Christmas again.

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<sup>4</sup> Julekurver are heart shaped paper baskets that hang from Christmas trees in Norway. Everyone knows that.

<sup>5</sup> Iggy was using the phrase "before dawn" in its figurative sense. Dawn does not come to the North Pole until sometime in late March. What Iggy really meant was "before the next morning."





## YUGO'S STORY

It was Yugo's turn to sit in the big chair across the desk from Santa Claus. The chair was bigger and softer than he liked. He preferred a firm wooden stool in front of an old work bench. He was not comfortable sitting unless his backside was just a little sore. And he was even more uncomfortable than usual to be sitting in this big comfortable chair across from that big wooden desk. Santa Claus leaned forward, tapping the desktop with the sound of fingers thumping on wood.

"Let's hear it," he said.

Yugo cleared his throat and began.

Let me start by saying I did not know that Iggy and Sam had picked up *that* toy for little Inka. It was a pretty good toy, but it still had not been finished. Most important, it had not been tested. You know as well as I do that we can't be delivering untested toys to kids at Christmas time. Who knows how many eyes could be put out by untested toys.

I just figured they had picked up a leftover doll or a toy oven or maybe a blum bloop. So I just want to make it clear that I did not know we had the new toy. There must be no doubt whatever about that.

By the time we got to Oslo, Iggy had wrapped the thing up, so I never saw it then. He did a wonderful job, too. Blue paper with snowflakes on it, perfectly folded corners and topped with a bow. So I did not then see what it was that he had placed inside.

I did not learn the truth about the contents of that particular package until after we had returned to our point of origin. Sam wanted to join the party at the *Walrus and Ulu*. Iggy and I both thought that was a good idea. After all, it

had been a most extended evening for us and as far as we knew, we had just saved Christmas.

So we found our usual table, the one which is close to the bar, but at the same time close to the men's room. Iggy ordered an unsweetened water, I got a hot chocolate and Sam ordered three pints of Elfläger.

Iggy gave him a look when he placed his order, but Sam just snapped back, "hey, after what I've been through tonight, I'm a little dehydrated."

I suppose I did not blame him, but it was still early in the morning. At least it was at the *Walrus and Ulu*. It was later in the afternoon on the other side of the North Pole.<sup>6</sup>

Sam had just started on his third Elfläger when Rubert came by with a clipboard under his arm. You remember Rubert, do you not? He is the head of the toy testing department. Toy testing is most dangerous work and it shows upon Rubert's face. He has lost most of his hair and has more scars than I can count. I am afraid to say that I am responsible for a fair share of them. Some of my toy designs are really cutting edge. And I mean that. They have cutting edges.

We count on the toy testers like Rubert to find any sharp edges or other things that could put out an eye and help us get it right.

Rubert asked if he could join us and Iggy found him a chair. He put his clipboard down in the middle of the table and said, "I've got the test results for that new toy of yours."

I was most pleased to hear of this, because I felt in my own mind this new toy was the pinnacle of toy inventions. It has those coloured moving parts and makes all of those cool noises.

"Let me say one thing first of all," said Rubert.

We let him say it.

"This new toy of yours is really something. It tests off of all of the charts on our fun tests. It's the most fun thing we've ever seen."

"I told you it was a winner," said Iggy. I was pretty proud myself about this news.

Rubert cleared his throat. "Will you let me say something else?"

We let him.

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<sup>6</sup> Because of a geotemporal quirk, all time zones converge at the North Pole. A walk down the road can last only 10 minutes yet still take several hours and leave the walker with a severe case of jet lag.

“It might also be the single most dangerous toy that we have ever tested. It had the lowest score we’ve ever seen on the EPOT.”<sup>7</sup> Rubert pointed to a fresh bruise under his right eye. He picked up his clipboard and flipped to the second page. “We liked that it did not need batteries. That’s a good thing for Christmas toys.”

Iggy gave me a fist bump.

“May I continue?” asked Rubert.

He could.

“It does not need batteries because you replaced the battery pack with a small nuclear reactor.”

“That is correct,” I said. “A high performance fusion reactor will keep the lights flashing and the buzzers buzzing for the next ten million years.”

“Nine million, seven hundred thousand years,” said Rubert. “We tested that. But you powered the reactor with enhanced heavy plutonium.”

“Gives it that extra pop,” I explained.

“Yes, but if I might?”

He might.

“Your enhanced heavy plutonium is one of the most unstable elements in the entire universe. Goodness knows where you found it. But if that toy is dropped or shaken it could set off a chain reaction. In fact, if that toy is even played with, it could explode. And if it explodes, it could destroy an entire town.”

“Oh, that’s not so good,” said Iggy.

I have to confess I was pretty disappointed by that news. I suppose I knew deep down that enhanced heavy plutonium was probably not the right power source for a child’s toy.

“I guess it is back to the drawing board, then,” I said. “I’m glad that we figured that out before it ended up under anyone’s Christmas tree.”

That was when Iggy interrupted and said, “Perhaps I could say something now.”

Of course he could and of course he did. And so it turned out that we had put the most dangerous toy in the universe under little Inka Goldersohnsonn’s Christmas tree. If she started playing with it, it could level half her street. And a few other streets beyond that. Obviously we had to get it back.

“But it’s just Norway,” said Sam. “Sounds like Snoreway.”

I’m sure he did not mean it, but he was on his fifth Elfläger by then.

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<sup>7</sup> The Eye Putting Out Test.

We raced straight back to my hangar and fired up the snowmobile. We had to hurry, because little Inka could drop the new toy at any moment and if that happened, well, it was too terrible to imagine. Especially if you lived on Malmøgata Street in Oslo, and perhaps a few others beyond that.

We kept the air conditioning on, so we did not have any trouble with TINSEL this time, even if it meant a very chilly ride. But even though nobody tried to shoot us down, the moment we landed we were surrounded by the Central Armed Norwegian Defence Youth Corps and National Enforcement Service. The CANDYCANES.

These guys are even worse than TINSEL. They are an elite team of highly trained and heavily armed bureaucrats who pulled us over and demanded to see our paperwork. We showed them our North Pole passports and vehicle registration, but it was not good enough for the CANDYCANES. They raised their weapons and then presented us with a stack of legal forms and demanded that we complete them, in triplicate.

“These forms are all written in Norwegian,” said Iggy.

“Ja,” said the leader of the CANDYCANES.

“Ja, ja,” said the rest of the CANDYCANES, nodding their heads like a row of bobblehead dolls.

“We do not speak Norwegian,” I explained. But since I did not say it in Norwegian, I do not think they understood. They just kept saying “ja” and bobbing their heads.

“We’ll never get out of here,” said Sam, puzzling over his set of pages.

“Don’t you have some sort of a gizmo that can fill out these forms for us?” asked Iggy.

I shook my head no. I had built the snowmobile to fend off attacks from the most obvious sorts of adversaries, such as missiles and drones and possibly pirates. I did not reasonably apprehend that it might be faced with an attack of armed bureaucrats. But these guys were determined that we complete this paperwork, and were going to see to it that we did, at gunpoint if necessary.

The papers were filled with words made up mostly of consonants separated by the occasional ø or ú or å. I figured that the first blank was for my name, so I wrote that in, taking care to ensure that none of the letters I wrote extended beyond the space reserved for them. I had no idea what to put in the second blank, so I just put down my name again, taking care to keep it completely within the applicable box. I went through the entire first page like this, carefully filling every blank with my name.

I decided to change things up on the second page, and filled in every blank with my birthdate. On page three I filled in my address several times and then went back to using my name in every blank on page 4.

In no time at all, I had completed the forms and passed them back to the head of the CANDYCANES. He looked through the pages carefully and just said “ja.”

Sam passed his pages through the window, which were also accepted with an appreciative “ja.” He told me later that he had written “this is stupid” on every line on every page of his forms.

Iggy was still struggling with the first page of his stack, when Sam grabbed them from his hands and wrote “this is really stupid” on every line before passing them back.

The CANDYCANES leader flipped through the pages carefully and then pulled one of the pages from the bottom of the stack and waved it at Iggy while he jabbered in Norwegian. It seemed that Sam had missed a line. He snatched it from the CANDYCANES’ leader, wrote “this is really, really stupid” on that line and passed it back. It was accepted with a grateful “ja”, and the CANDYCANES waved us along.

“That was pointless,” said Iggy.

“Most government forms are,” I said. “It does not matter what you put in the blanks, so long as you fill every one of them in.”

“Those guys were more trouble than the drones and the missiles,” said Sam. I am sure that he was right. Missiles and drones can only hurt you, but these bureaucrats were absolutely murder.

We hurried away from there and pulled up in front of Inka’s place. It looked different in the daylight. By different, I mean that it looked brighter. Otherwise it was pretty much the same as it had looked the night before.

“We can’t go in,” said Iggy.

“What do you mean, we cannot go in?” I said.

“We came here to go in and get the thing,” said Sam.

“That’s what I mean,” said Iggy. “We can’t just go in and take Inka’s Christmas present. Then we’d be right back where we started.”

Iggy was right of course. We could not just walk into someone’s private residence and remove a little girl’s Christmas present. We are Christmas elves, after all.

“What are we going to do?” I asked.

Iggy ran his long fingers along his pointed chin and said, “If we take it, we have to leave something in its place.”

“What can we leave in its place?” I asked. “We did not bring anything.”

Sam held out a bulging airsickness bag. “This is all we have.”

“That won’t do,” said Iggy. “Come on, Yugo. There must be a toy store nearby. We can get something there.”

I dialed up toy shops in the snowmobile's navigation system, and sure enough, there was a Tøys R'Us a short distance away. We dashed through the snow to the end of the road, turned left, then left again and reached the shop in no time. We pulled into an empty parking lot and ran up to the front door.

Of course, it was closed. After all, it was Christmas.

"Well, we tried," said Sam. "Might as well head home, now."

"We can't go home. Not when we've come this far," said Iggy.

I leaned forward and studied the front door lock. "It is a basic magnetic lock. Its construction is exceedingly simple. I could open this in half a minute."

"We can't break into a toy store!" said Iggy, aghast. He really was aghast. "Not on Christmas day!"

"Oh for Pete's sake," said Sam and he kicked the door open. So much for the magnetic lock.

Of course an alarm started ringing. It was really loud and I was sure the police would be there any second, but Sam grabbed a hockey stick from a nearby rack and smashed the alarm to pieces.

We scrambled through the broken door and Iggy grabbed something from the first shelf he found. It was a bobblehead doll that looked like a policeman. He pulled a string on its back and the doll said "ja" while its head bobbed.

"It's perfect!" I said.

"But we can't just take it," said Iggy. "We need to leave something in its place."

"Already taken care of," said Sam. Sure enough, there was a steaming air sickness bag on the empty shelf where the doll had been.

Iggy shook his head, reached into his pocket and pulled out a 100 puffin note<sup>8</sup>. He placed that on the shelf beside Sam's bag and we hurried out of the store.

We were back in front of Inka's house in no time. Iggy had wrapped the doll up in red and green paper on the way. He even found time to affix a bow to the top.

Now we had a new problem. We had to get back into the house. It was one thing to get in and out in the middle of the night when no one was stirring, but it was quite another now that the lights were on and the house was full of people. The chimney was not an available option, for we could through the window that a fire had been lit in the hearth.

We crept around the back of the house. Iggy was out front, with the package under his arm. There was an open window on the second floor. It was quite a ways up, especially when you are only four feet all. Iggy tried climbing the

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<sup>8</sup> Puffins are the official currency of the North Pole. 100 puffins are worth about 135 Norwegian krone.

wall, but it there was no foothold and he only made it up a few feet before he dropped back to the ground.

I dug through my tool belt and pulled out a hook and some wire. You never know when you might need a hook and some wire. I threw the hook up and it latched onto the open window. It was pretty easy to climb up to the window that way.

We slipped through the open window which, as luck would have it, was the window to Inka's bedroom. She was sitting on her bed reading a book when we crept in. The new toy was resting on a desk, still in its package. Can you imagine? The greatest toy ever and there she was reading a book.

Iggy and I got into the room without her noticing, but she looked up when Sam tumbled through the window with a thud. Sam popped back up to his feet and said, "I'm okay."

Iggy raised a finger to his lips and shushed him. But it was too late, Inka was staring at us with eyes as wide as pizza plates.

"Are you ...?"

"Yes," said Iggy.

"From the ...?"

"Yes," I said.

Inka squealed. "Wow, real nisse in my bedroom on Christmas."

"What's a nisse?" said Sam.

"You are," said Inka. It turns out that nisse are what passes for Christmas elves in Norway. In fact, in Norway, it is the nisse who are believed to bring Christmas presents, not Santa Claus.

Iggy walked over to the desk where the new toy was standing in its box. "This one is no good," he explained. "So we brought you another." He passed the red and green package to Inka.

She tore open the paper and held up the bobblehead policeman doll. "How nice," she squealed. "I didn't know what to do with that other thing."

I have to admit that hurt a little bit.

Iggy passed the new toy to me and went back to the window. He tipped his red velvet hat and climbed out. I followed him down and then Sam came last. He let go of the wire about halfway down and fell onto the snowy ground with a great frosty thump. But he bounced up and grunted, "I'm okay."

And then we were back in the snowmobile and on our way home. As far as we knew, we had saved Christmas again.



## SAM'S STORY

Sam shuffled into Santa Claus' office and squeezed into the big chair in front of the desk. Across the desk sat Santa Claus, with nary a twinkle in his eye to be seen. Sam squirmed, but only because the big chair was still a tight fit.

"It's your turn," said Santa Claus.

Sam gulped.

"First of all, it's not my fault," said Sam.

"I've been hearing that a lot this morning," said Santa Claus.

"But it really wasn't my fault," said Sam.

"Perhaps you should tell me your story," said Santa.

And so Sam did.

Iggy and Yugo were no help at all when I fell out of Inka's window. I struggled to my feet, dusted the snow off of my red velvet suit and said "I'm okay." I wasn't really. It hurts an awful lot to fall out of a window, you know. I don't know why we didn't just use the front door like civilized people.

I limped after Iggy and Yugo back to the snowmobile and I climbed into my usual seat in the back. I read someplace that people in the back row of an airplane are more likely to survive a plane crash,<sup>9</sup> so that's why I always sit

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<sup>9</sup> It's true. According to a study of every plane crash which occurred in the United States since 1971, the farther back one sits in an airplane, the better one's odds of survival. Of course, the odds of survival are still lousy, but better than the fat cats in business class.



there. I'm sure that Yugo is going to crash that darn snowmobile one of these days and I plan to walk away from the wreck.

So, I was sitting back there minding my own business and wondering why Yugo doesn't keep some magazines or something in the snowmobile and Iggy passes the new toy back to me.

"Here, Sam, hang on to this," he says.

"Keep it safe," says Yugo.

Nobody asked me if I even wanted the thing and now I had to keep it safe. As if there is anyplace safe in that snowmobile. And then Yugo fired it up and we were off like a shot. It was all I could do to hang onto the thing when Yugo turned the snowmobile straight up and took off.

Then Yugo made a sharp turn north and I almost dropped it. I decided I better find someplace to stow it before it blew us all up. There are all sorts of panels and buttons inside the snowmobile. I pushed on a blue button and a little door slid open beside me. I stuffed the new toy in there and pushed the blue button again.

Look, I didn't remember that it was the garbage disposal chute. It's not like there was a label on it that said "Garbage Disposal Chute – Do Not Put Dangerous Toys In Here." So really it was Yugo's fault.

There was a shoosh sound and out the back window I could see the new toy tumbling end over end as it fell down to the ground. There was nothing to be done, so I just kept staring at the thing as it got smaller and smaller.

"What's that?" asked Iggy. He was pointing right at the new toy.

"I don't know," I said. Of course I did know. But I wasn't going to take the fall for this. Like I said, it was all Yugo's fault in the first place.

We were way up over the Norwegian Sea by then and everything would have been fine if the toy had fallen into the ocean. It would have sunk to the bottom and no one would be the wiser.

I could never be as lucky as that. The toy landed right in the middle of some chunk of ice and rock called Spløttsbrøkkën. As soon as it hit the ground there was a bright flash and then we heard a great big boom.

The snowmobile shook a little from the force of the explosion on the ground far below. Yugo had to yank back on the steering wheel and fiddle with a bunch of buttons and knobs on the dashboard to keep the snowmobile flying level.

Iggy and Yugo both turned around and glared at me. "What did you do?" said Iggy.

"Nothing," I said. But then Yugo pressed a red button and a little TV screen popped out of the dashboard. He clicked a few more buttons and there was a video of me putting the toy in the garbage chute and pressing the blue button. And I remind you, this was a completely unlabeled garbage chute.

“We’ve got it all on tape,” said Yugo, smugly. I can’t believe his stupid snowmobile comes equipped with instant replay. It doesn’t have any magazines, but it has instant replay. Go figure.

“We’ll talk about this later,” said Iggy, looking all grim and serious.

“We need to get down there and see what damage there is,” said Yugo.

“It’s just a big chunk of ice,” I said.

“I think it’s a smaller chunk of ice now,” said Iggy.

Yugo slowly spiraled down to the little island and slid to a stop at the edge of the beach.

We stepped out of the snowmobile carefully. It was dark all around and I heard the ocean pounding on the black sand. I imagined that each wave sent up a spray of ice crystals that danced in the air when it crashed onto the beach. But I couldn’t see a thing, so I don’t know if it was like that or not.

We walked up from the beach to see what the damage was. I have to tell you, the place was a mess. Every house and building had been flattened. They looked to have been made out of cardboard and sticks, so it would not have taken much to flatten them, but flat they were.

We walked up the street, which was a greasy black rutted road and completely silent. The buildings, what was left of them, were smoldering. We reached the end of the street where we found what looked like a small church, which was tipped over on its side.

We turned around and walked back up the quiet street. As we passed the wrecked buildings a second time, a few people began crawling out of the rubble. They were all dressed in tattered fur coats and looked like they had been knocked around a bit. The one with the least tattered coat walked over to us. He was a tall fellow. His weathered face had a bruise over one of his dark eyes. His brow was furrowed and I expect he was wearing his grimmest expression.

He stuck out a mittened hand. Iggy reached out slowly and shook it.

“Name’s Grünðblørr,” said the tall fellow. His bruised and weathered face broke into a grin. “Welcome to Spløttsbrøkkën.”

“Nice to meet you,” said Iggy. “Sorry we wrecked your town.”

Grünðblørr looked around. “What do you mean? It always looks like this.”

“But what about the explosion?” asked Yugo.

“Oh that,” said Grünðblørr. “That was a big bang and shook things up all right, but now that all the dust has settled, you can see there’s no damage done.”

“What do you mean no damage done?” I asked. “This place looks like a hurricane went through, followed by a buffalo stampede and then a meteor strike.”

Grünöblørr walked over and put his arm around my shoulder. “You’re too kind,” he said. “But we all know that Spløttsbrøkkën is a dump and it could never look as nice as a place like the one you just described. I mean just look around,” said Grünöblørr, and he waved his arm at the squalor. “There’s no running water, because the pipes are always frozen. There’s no heat or electricity because there’s no trees or coal to burn. Nothing but snow and ice as far as the eye can see. You could say that Spløttsbrøkkën is just about the worst place in the world.”

I looked around and I had to agree with him. Spløttsbrøkkën is the most horrible place I’ve ever been to, and I’ve been to some pretty nasty spots.

That was when a little girl in a ragged fur coat went up to Iggy. I think it was a little girl. It might have been a little boy. It was hard to tell. Anyway, this kid looks up at Iggy with these big eyes and says, “have you come to take us away from here?”

Grünöblørr looked at Yugo earnestly. “Have you come to take us away from here?”

“Please say you have,” said the kid.

So, what choice did we have? There were about 40 people living on a frozen rock with no proper houses or clothes or anything.

“We have to do something,” said Iggy. “We did blow up their island.”

“That was Yugo’s fault,” I said.

“It is a pretty hopeless place,” said Yugo. “But we can’t take them all in the snowmobile.” Then he rubbed his chin with his hand and looked thoughtful. I always worry when Yugo gets that thoughtful look. It usually ends up with me running away in terror from something.

Then Yugo’s face lit up, which is a look even more frightening than the thoughtful one. He scampered back to the snowmobile and came back carrying a big silver science-y looking thing. It had flashing lights and tubes and cables sticking out of it. Yugo set it up on a small tripod and then pressed a button on the side. It lit up with an ominous hum.

“What is that?” asked Iggy.

Yugo patted the thing proudly. I call it the Prototype Retrograde Electrical Shrink Engine Neutronic Tubolator System, or PRESENTS for short.”

“What does it do?” I asked.

“It shrinks things,” said Yugo.

That's right. It was a shrinking ray straight from a science fiction movie. Yugo doesn't have any magazines in his snowmobile for his passengers to read on a long trip, but he has a shrinking ray.

He trained the device at the huddled group of Spløttsbrøkkënians and a green beam washed over them. In a moment or two they had all shrunk down the size of toy action figures. Except these action figures could move and talk.

"I'm tiny!" said Grünöblørr, with a chirpy voice that sounded like a recording played at high speed.

Iggy grinned. "There's more than enough room for everyone in the snowmobile now!"

Yugo bundled up the PRESENTS and loaded it back into the snowmobile. He came back with a foam lined box. He bent down and helped all of the Spløttsbrøkkënians climb inside. Then he led us all back to the snowmobile.

I buckled up in the back seat and Yugo passed the box to me so he could start up the snowmobile. "Be careful with that," he said.

"And for goodness sakes, don't put it in the garbage chute," said Iggy with a laugh. He's a riot, that Iggy.

Yugo took off and we left Spløttsbrøkkën behind for good. I set the box with all of the Spløttsbrøkkënians inside it on the passenger seat beside me. There was a lot of high spirited chirping coming out of the box. It seemed to me that a foam lined box was already a step up from living on Spløttsbrøkkën Island.

Before long we were back at the North Pole. Yugo walked back to his workshop with the box of Spløttsbrøkkënians under his arm.

"Can't you use the PRESENTS to get them back to their original size?" asked Iggy.

"I'm afraid not," said Yugo. "The PRESENTS is only good for making things smaller. It is a shrinking system. To get them back to the right size, I need to use an enlarging system."

"Do you have one of those?" I asked.

"I do," said Yugo. "I call it the Shrunk Things Opposite Condition Kinetic Integrated Naturalizing Gadget, or STOCKING for short.

It did not come as a surprise that Yugo had some sort of gizmo that could unshrink things. Yugo has all sorts of doodads at his workshop. He's forever adding one modification or another to them.

"There's just one problem," said Yugo.

"What's that," asked Iggy.

"It hasn't been properly tested yet. We know a lot about shrinking things, but enlarging technology is still an unproven science."

“You mean we are going to have to keep these guys in a box forever? That’s just great,” I said.”

Yugo shook his head. “Oh no, nothing like that. At least, I hope not.”

We reached the workshop and Yugo set the box on the ground. Iggy reached in and carefully lifted each of the Spløttsbrøkkēnians out and placed them in a ragged row on the floor.

Then Yugo went over to a pile of mechanical devices at the end of his workbench. He rummaged around in those for a bit and then pulled out a plain brown box with a red button on the top.

“That’s it?” asked Iggy.

Yugo nodded. “This is the STOCKING. The very latest in enlarging technology.”

“It doesn’t look very science-y to me,” I said. “Where are the wires and the tubes and blinking lights and things. All of your doohickeys have wires and tubes and blinking lights.”

“Wires and tubes and blinking lights don’t seem to work at enlarging things,” explained Yugo. “It’s still an unproven science.”

He set the plain brown box at the edge of the workbench and pointed it at the Spløttsbrøkkēnians.

“I’m sure it will work,” said Iggy.

“Here goes nothing,” Yugo said and pressed the button. A yellow light shone on the Spløttsbrøkkēnians and then they started to grow right before our eyes. It started slowly at first but sure enough, they were all getting bigger.

Then a loud bang sounded from the inner workings of the STOCKING and the yellow light dimmed, sputtered and went out. As soon as the light went off, the Spløttsbrøkkēnians stopped growing.

They were all a lot bigger than action figures, but they weren’t as big as they were before. Grünðblørr walked over to me, put his hand on my shoulder again and looked me right in the eye. He was exactly the same height as me. All of the Spløttsbrøkkēnians were.

Then he laughed. “Will you look at this! We’re exactly alike. We could be brothers, friend Sam.”

All of the Spløttsbrøkkēnians were walking around the workshop and chattering with each other. They didn’t seem to be disappointed that they had only been half enlarged. On the contrary, they seemed delighted to be in a room with proper walls and a roof.

Yugo opened the top of the STOCKING. He groaned. “Everything has shorted out and fused together. It’s going to be months before I can get this working again.”

Grünöblørr laughed again and then shouted, “I’m the same size as my great friend, Sam. It’s a good size to be!” All of the Spløttsbrøkkēnians cheered at that. “And now,” said Grünöblørr, “what have you got to eat in this little city of yours?”

Iggy and I shrugged and led them to the *Walrus and Ulu*. As they walked along the brightly lit peppermint cobblestones of Candy Cane Lane, the Spløttsbrøkkēnians looked around in wonder at the cosy little cottages that lined the road. Smoke spilled out of the chimneys and through the windows they could see warm and happy families celebrating Christmas. They stopped beside one little house and a tear formed in Grünöblørr’s eye as a little old elf picked up a newspaper and shuffled off to the cosy little indoor washroom.

Chubby was about to close the *Walrus and Ulu* down for the night when we arrived, but we talked him into staying open a little longer. Mrs. Chubby brought out some of her famous elf pies and Chubby poured a few jugs of his famous Elfläger. Then, Grünöblørr led all of Spløttsbrøkkēnians in a round of Christmas carols.<sup>10</sup> *Frøfftý* the Penguin and *Rüdølf* the Red Nosed Penguin seemed to be particular favourites. It turns out that the Spløttsbrøkkēnians have a lot of songs about penguins.

They made rather merry well into the early morning hours and then they gradually fell asleep. Grünöblørr was the last to nod off, and I heard him exclaim, before he fell asleep, that it was the best Christmas he could remember. Then he laid his head down on the table and gave a prodigious snore.

That was how we left them. Full and happy and sleeping it off on the benches at the back, which were just the right size for them now.

So you see, it all worked out in the end. You could even say that we saved Christmas again.

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<sup>10</sup> Try reading that sentence out loud. I dare you.



## THE BEST OF THE STORY

Santa Claus leaned back in his chair. He pressed his index fingers together under his thick, snowy white beard. Then he started to chuckle. That chuckle grew into a chortle and in another moment that chortle was a full blown laugh. “Ho ho ho!” laughed Santa Claus and he shook his head.

“I brought the three of you up here to tell me just how it came to be that 45 half sized Spløttsbrøkkënians were sleeping it off at Chubby’s place. But now you’ve explained everything.”

Sam let out a long, slow and (at the very end) wheezing sigh.

Santa Claus had progressed from chuckle to chortle to laughter and from there to coughing and now choking.

“Ho ho hacklegaaargh,” hacklegaaarghed Santa Claus. He face, which was always rosy was now bright purple.

Iggy and Yugo rushed into the room at the sound of Santa’s hacklegaaargh. He leaned over his broad desk and struggled for breath. Iggy leapt onto his back and slapped him between the shoulder blades. This seemed to make things even worse, for Santa’s hacklegaaargh had become a full on geeyackackack.

“Geeyackackack,” geeyackackacked Santa Claus. His face changed from lavender to magenta and was on its way to indigo.

Yugo reached into his tool belt and found one of Sam’s unused air sickness bags. He clamped it over Santa’s mouth and hollered at him to breath.

Santa’s eyes were bulging from his face, but he nodded and started breathing into Yugo’s bag. His complexion faded back through the spectrum from indigo to rosy and the twinkles returned to his swollen eyes.

He coughed once more when Yugo pulled away the bag, then grinned and laughed, “ho ho ho.”

Iggy’s face was a mask of concern. “Are you okay?”

“Never better,” said Santa. He clapped Iggy on the back with his big hand.

Iggy choked for a moment, but never geeyackacked, so had no need for Yugo’s bag.

“You mean you aren’t angry?” asked Yugo.

“Angry? Why would I be angry?” said Santa Claus. “There’s always room at the North Pole for a few more. Spløttsbrøkkën is just about the worst place in the world. Nobody in their right mind would ever want to live there. Here at the North Pole they can have warm houses and proper food and it’s Christmas pretty much every day.”

“I told you so,” said Sam, who had not. He had been as worried as the others about the whole strange business.

“Sam’s right,” said Santa Claus. “You’ve gone and saved Christmas again. Now let’s go meet your new little friends.”

Grünðblørr and the others were just waking up from their long winters’ naps when Santa Claus arrived at the *Walrus and Ulu* with Iggy, Yugo and Sam.

“Ho ho ho!” Santa bellowed when he walked into the room. Jimmy and the Penguins were on the stage, doing a sound check for that evening’s set. Santa Claus worked his way past the stage where he found all of the Spløttsbrøkkënians huddled in the back.

He walked up to Grünðblørr and shook the little man’s ragged hand vigorously. “Welcome to the North Pole,” he said with a grin.

“His eyes are twinkling again,” said Sam.

Santa Claus introduced himself to all of the Spløttsbrøkkënians in turn, though no introductions were really necessary. Every one of them knew who Santa Claus was and he knew who every one of them was from reviewing his lists that held the name of every child in the world, even those unfortunate enough to grow up on Spløttsbrøkkën.

“Hello, Märftleġġ, welcome to the North Pole,” said Santa Claus. “And you too, Ägnèthëa. And you, BørKippš. Welcome. Welcome all of you!”

“Iggy, find these folks each a warm room,” said Santa Claus.

“I think there are some in Elves Barracks C,” said Iggy.

“Perfect,” said Santa Claus. “Yugo, see that they get some new clothes.”

Yugo looked at the group of Spløttsbrøkkënians. “I think we have something in the right size. Something in velvet I think. Mostly red and green.”

“Even better,” said Santa Claus. He turned to Sam. “Once you’ve got these good folks all settled, be sure to show them around the workshop. Christmas is coming and it’s time to get back to work!”



Iggy, Yugo and Sam Will Return In:

*Elves, Actually*

or

*Rise of the Planet of the Nisse*

or

*Bad Elves Always Come in Threes*

or

*Do You Want to Build a Snowmobile?*

or

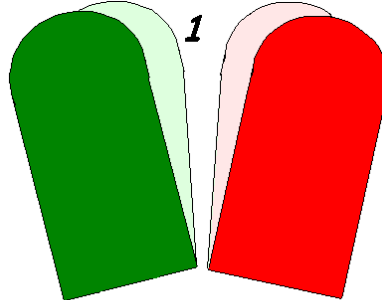
*Something Else Entirely*

## **Author's Note**

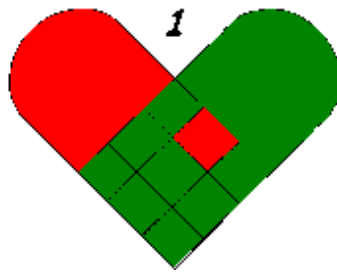
The tiny island of Spløttsbrøkkën is not a real place. There is not place in the world as awful as Spløttsbrøkkën. Except maybe Edmonton.

## MAKE YOUR OWN JULEKURVER!

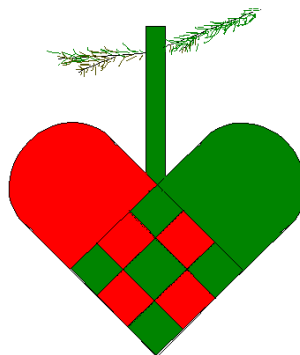
1. Take two pieces of colored paper about 8x12 cm and fold them in half (where the scissor is) before rounding the edge on the top. Cut several slots 2/3 of the way up from the bottom on both halves.



2. Weave the two sides together as shown. This isn't as difficult as it seems. Weave the strips through each other by "opening" and "closing" them. Take a green strip and "open" the first loop. Then pull a red strip through. Now open the same red strip and pull the next green strip (closed) through.



3. Make a handle and glue it to the insides of the basket.



4. Hang the basket on your Christmas tree and fill it up with nuts and candy!



[www.iggyugoandsam.com](http://www.iggyugoandsam.com)



What if you did something and then a bunch of really peculiar stuff happened. And what if it was not even your fault. Or at least not really your fault.

If you did all those things and then all of those other things happened, then you would have to explain everything.

Advance praise for

# IGGY, YUGO AND SAM EXPLAIN EVERYTHING

*• I loved this Christmas story, but you know, the haters gonna hate, hate, hate, hate, hate.*

- Taylor Swift

*• This story is just so genuine, you know? But the fakers gonna fake, fake, fake, fake, fake.*

- Still Taylor Swift

*• I want that new toy for Christmas. It sounds wicked cool.*

- Little Jimmy Redcliffe, age 16

*• I don't like this story. I wanna play Legos.*

- Ethan Rowan

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