Can Mrs. Claus Save Christmas?

By Ruth Ann Pattee

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Pioneer Drama Service, Inc.
CAN MRS. CLAUS SAVE CHRISTMAS?

By RUTH ANN PATTEE

CHARACTERS
(In order of appearance)

TELEVISION REPORTER
MRS. CLAUS
SANTA CLAUS
SHIMMER .......................... an elf
TWINKLE ........................... an elf
GILBERT BATES ..................... multi-millionaire video game manufacturer
OSWALD ............................ Gilbert’s assistant
HARRIET ............................. Gilbert’s secretary
HAWAIIAN DANCER #1
HAWAIIAN DANCER #2
ELF #1
ELF #2
ELF #3
EXTRAS ............................. additional ELVES and BATES’ HENCHMEN

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

TIME: The present

Scene One: Television studio and Santa’s workshop
Scene Two: Gil Bates’ office
Scene Three: Santa’s workshop
Scene Four: Gil Bates’ office
Scene Five: Santa’s workshop
Scene Six: Gil Bates’ office
Scene Seven: Television studio and Santa’s workshop
SETTING

The stage is divided into three sections. The smallest area is STAGE RIGHT and represents Gil Bates' office with a chair and a desk with a phone. The door is STAGE RIGHT. If possible, a backdrop showing the city of Los Angeles out of a window would be a nice touch, but the walls of the office should be cold and drab. CENTER STAGE is Santa's workshop at the North Pole with two or more workbenches (tables) and tools and toys scattered around. STAGE LEFT is Santa's home, indicated by Santa's recliner and Mrs. Claus' wooden chair with a table and lamp in between. Holly and wreaths decorate the inside of Santa's home. There is an entrance DOWN LEFT leading to the rest of Santa's house. UP LEFT is the front door. The television station is played in front of the curtain or EXTREME DOWN RIGHT if no curtain is available.
CAN MRS. CLAUS SAVE CHRISTMAS?

Scene One

SPOTLIGHT UP: We see a TELEVISION REPORTER who stands in front of the curtain (or EXTREME DOWN RIGHT if no curtain is available). He or she is dressed professionally and stylishly and reads from a news brief.

REPORTER: (Reading from the news brief.) Our special report tonight is on Christmas Eve. In just two weeks Santa will make the big trip around the world in just one night with his magical sleigh loaded with millions of toys for millions of good children. Here lies one of the biggest mysteries of our time. How does he do it? Even as I speak I’m certain he and his elves are working feverishly to be ready for that all-important night. (SPOTLIGHT FADES OUT as REPORTER EXITS. CURTAIN UP [or LIGHTS COME UP] to reveal SANTA seated in his chair, holding a newspaper but having a hard time keeping his eyes open. After a beat he falls asleep and begins to snore loudly, the paper falling over his face. MRS. CLAUS ENTERS DOWN LEFT with an armful of toys.)

MRS. CLAUS: Santa! Wake up, Santa! You’ve fallen asleep again. (She crosses to put the toys on a workbench then returns to SANTA and shakes him.)


MRS. CLAUS: No, it isn’t Christmas Eve. There are still two weeks left, but at the rate you’re going, you’re going to sleep right through it.

SANTA: I’m sorry, my dear, but I just can’t seem to keep my eyes open. After all, I’ve been making toys for eleven and a half months.

MRS. CLAUS: We all help.

SANTA: Yes, of course you do, but now I don’t think I have the energy for Christmas Eve.

MRS. CLAUS: I know it exhausts you. You should take some elves with you to help deliver the presents.

SANTA: Oh, no, I couldn’t. It has to be Santa who delivers the presents.

MRS. CLAUS: Why?

SANTA: Why? Did you say “why”?!?

MRS. CLAUS: Yes, I did. Why can’t it be one of the elves, or even me, Mrs. Claus?
SANTA: Oh, no, no. What if someone should see?

MRS. CLAUS: Who?

SANTA: Who? Did you say “who”?

MRS. CLAUS: Yes, I did. I thought all the children were in their beds with visions of sugar plums dancing in their heads.

SANTA: Any more, it's more like visions of video games dancing in their heads. (SHIMMER, an elf, ENTERS DOWN LEFT. SHIMMER carries a list and is about to ask SANTA a question but stops instead and listens in on the conversation. SANTA and MRS. CLAUS do not notice the elf’s presence.)

MRS. CLAUS: Stop changing the subject. Why couldn't someone help you deliver the toys?

SANTA: Well... uh... you see... (He sighs.) I don't know. It just doesn’t seem right. It takes away the magic of Christmas.

MRS. CLAUS: (Not giving up.) Even if one of the children should wake up and catch a glimpse of us, don't you think they would understand that you need help?

SANTA: Perhaps.

MRS. CLAUS: I would think a child would feel pretty thrilled to see an elf or even me.

SANTA: Maybe. I’ll think about it. But it's been just me for all these years, and that’s the way it’s suppose to be. (SHIMMER EXITS DOWN LEFT without ever saying anything.)

MRS. CLAUS: But it tires you out so much! Tell you what? Why don't we take a vacation this year right after Christmas? Where would you like to go?

SANTA: (Without hesitation.) Hawaii!

MRS. CLAUS: (Dubious.) Sounds... tropical. (Changes subject.) But right now it’s time those elves came off their lunch break and started working on these toys again. (She crosses DOWN LEFT and shouts out.) All right, let’s go. Back to work! (She EXITS DOWN LEFT as SHIMMER and TWINKLE and all the EXTRA ELVES ENTER DOWN LEFT. They talk amongst themselves and go to the workbenches to work on the toys. SANTA wanders over, examining their work.)

SANTA: Good job, everyone!

ELVES: Thanks, Santa!
SANTA: Keep up the hard work. We still have a lot to do in the next two weeks. *(He EXITS DOWN LEFT.)*

SHIMMER: Psst! Twinkle!

TWINKLE: Yes, Shimmer?

SHIMMER: I want to talk to you, private-like.

TWINKLE: Okay. Over there. *(They move DOWNSTAGE, away from the others.)*

SHIMMER: I don’t like the way Santa looks.

TWINKLE: Do you think he should shave?

SHIMMER: No! I mean he looks tired and sick.

TWINKLE: He always gets run down this time of year.

SHIMMER: I overheard Mrs. Claus telling him he should take some of us with him to help deliver the presents.

TWINKLE: What?!

SHIMMER: Shhh! If everyone knows, they’ll all want to go.

TWINKLE: Do you want to go?

SHIMMER: Of course I want to go!

TWINKLE: I’d love to go!

SHIMMER: The thing is, we’ve got to be extra nice to Santa. Help him relax, get him cocoa, rub his feet—

TWINKLE: Rub his feet?!!

SHIMMER: Well, maybe not, but you know what I mean. Maybe then he’ll take us with him on Christmas Eve!

TWINKLE: Okay, let’s try it. *(They go back to work and the LIGHTS FADE OUT. SPOTLIGHT UP on the REPORTER, who ENTERS EXTREME DOWN RIGHT, carrying his news script.)*

REPORTER: *(Reads from news script.)* In other news, multimillionaire video game manufacturer Gilbert Bates has introduced a new game just in time for the holidays. The game is said to show Gil Bates himself as Santa Claus, and the player helps him deliver all the presents around the world in just one night. Obstacles include broken chimneys, a tornado, black ice... *(Looks up from script.)* Hey, is this for real? *(Calls OFF RIGHT.)* Will someone please tell me if this is real news or a joke? *(SPOTLIGHT OUT. The REPORTER EXITS.)*
Scene Two

LIGHTS UP: The office of Gil Bates. The HENCHMEN line the walls like Secret Service agents. BATES is seated at the desk, drumming his fingers impatiently. He calls out the door.

BATES: Oswald! Oswald, are you back yet? Where can he be? How long can it take to get the mail? (The HENCHMEN shrug and ad-lib among themselves.)

OSWALD: (Rushes IN STAGE RIGHT empty-handed.) I’m back, sir!

BATES: Well?

OSWALD: There wasn’t any, sir.

BATES: There wasn’t any? There wasn’t any?! How could there not be any mail? I’m Gil Bates, multi-millionaire video game manufacturer! How could I not have any mail?

OSWALD: There just wasn’t any today, sir. I’m sure there will be some tomorrow.

BATES: No. No, I have to face it, Oswald. There’s no mail because no children have written to me. They don’t like my new game. I have almost everything in the world already. Now, all I want is for children to like the game. To like me. To love me!

OSWALD: Oh, no, sir, I’m sure it’s just that—

BATES: They don’t like the new game, and I know why.

OSWALD: You do?

BATES: (Rises.) It’s not enough for them that I’m playing Santa in a video game. It’s not enough that they watch me out-maneuver tornadoes and UFOs in my quest to deliver presents. The asteroid probably isn’t realistic enough.

OSWALD: I think it’s very realistic, sir.

HARRIET: (ENTERS STAGE RIGHT, carrying an envelope.) Mr. Bates, sir! This was just sent over by special messenger from the post office. (She hands him the letter.)

BATES: That’s more like it! (Rips open the envelope and reads the letter aloud.) “Dear Mr. Bates, My name is Tommy and I’m ten years old. I played your new Santa Claus game at my friend Steve’s house and we both think it’s the stupidest game we ever played. You are kind of scary as Santa and the effects aren’t very real. And why would Santa have to race with Godzilla anyway? Couldn’t he just outfly him?” (He groans and flops in his chair. HARRIET takes the letter from him and continues to read.)
HARRIET: “I won’t be asking the real Santa for your game this Christmas. Yours truly, Tommy Jones.” (Looks up from letter.) Oh, sir, I’m sorry.

BATES: No, Harriet, it’s okay. As I was saying to Oswald, I know what’s wrong.

HARRIET: I think the little boy just told you what was wrong.

BATES: (Ignores her.) It’s not enough that boys and girls ages five and up can watch me loop-the-loop in Santa’s sleigh. They want more!

OSWALD: More?

HARRIET: What more?

HENCHMEN: More?

BATES: (Rises.) They want me to be Santa! Only then could I actually do all the things they see in the game. Only then would they love me... love me the way they love Santa!

OSWALD: Uh... sir? Isn’t there already a Santa?

BATES: Oh, there is now. But it’s still ten days until Christmas. (Suddenly sounding sinister.) Anything could happen.

HARRIET: Happen, sir? You mean... an accident?

BATES: No! I don’t want anything to happen to him. I just want to talk to him. Learn how he does it.

OSWALD: Does what, sir?

BATES: What do you think... that I want to learn how to make toys? No! I want to know how he makes it around the world in one night! How he delivers millions of presents to millions of children in one glorious night!

HARRIET: But, sir, why would Santa tell you?

BATES: Because I’ll make him tell me! Because I’m—we’re going to kidnap Santa!

OSWALD/HARRIET/HENCHMEN: No!!!

BATES: Yes! It’s the only way. When the children find out that I’m really Santa, they’ll love me! (He looks around. ALL are speechless.) And here’s how we’re going to do it... (ALL gather around BATES as the LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

End of Scene Two
Scene Three

LIGHTS UP: Santa’s workshop and house. MRS. CLAUS is seated in her chair, making checkmarks on a long list. The EXTRA ELVES are working at their benches, but there is less to do now. SHIMMER and TWINKLE pack toys into a large sack.

MRS. CLAUS: I can’t imagine where Santa could be. He never lets his list of good children go unchecked, yet here’s his Naughty and Nice list, unfinished. Shimmer, do you have that doll for Susie?

SHIMMER: Already packed in the sack, Mrs. Claus.

MRS. CLAUS: Good. I don’t know what I’d do without you.

SANTA: (Bursts IN from UP LEFT.) You’ll never believe it! Ho, ho, ho!

MRS. CLAUS: (Pleased.) Santa! That’s the first time I’ve heard you “Ho, ho, ho” in months! What’s up?

SANTA: I’ve been at the North Pole post office. They called about an hour ago and said they had a special delivery package for me.

MRS. CLAUS: Why didn’t they bring it here, like all the letters from the children?

SANTA: Ho, ho, ho! They said I had to pick it up myself, and now you’ll see why! (Two HAWAIIAN GIRLS, dressed in hula outfits, ENTER UP LEFT.)

HAWAIIAN GIRL #1: We bring you an invitation, Santa, to visit our lovely isle.

HAWAIIAN GIRL #2: To see a marvelous new toy and hope you’ll rest a while! (She hands SANTA a letter. Hawaiian MUSIC PLAYS, and they hula dance while SANTA reads.)

SANTA: Listen to this! “You are cordially invited to the islands of Hawaii to preview an exciting new top-secret toy. We’re sure you will bring great happiness to every child that receives this toy on Christmas Eve, but the toy will only be available for the next three days. Accept our invitation and we will fly you to Hawaii right away!” (MUSIC OUT.)

MRS. CLAUS: You’re kidding! Fly you to Hawaii a week before Christmas to see a mysterious new toy? That’s crazy!

HAWAIIAN GIRL #1: It could be the best toy in the world!

HAWAIIAN GIRL #2: It could make all the kids happy!

MRS. CLAUS: Santa, you know it’s the gift of your generosity that should make them happy, not the toys themselves.
SANTA: I know, I know, but think of it! Something new! Something totally unexpected!

TWINKLE: What if it’s no good?

SANTA: No good? A toy that’s no good? Well... it does happen, I suppose.

SHIMMER: (Whispers to TWINKLE.) We’re supposed to be helping Santa, remember? (Out loud.) I think it’s a great idea, Santa!

SANTA: There, you see? And how are things going in the workshop?

TWINKLE: Almost every toy packed in a sack and ready to go, Santa!

SANTA: Good, good. (Back to MRS. CLAUS.) And you, my dear, you’ve been checking off the list? (She nods affirmatively.) Thank you.

MRS. CLAUS: You’re welcome.

SHIMMER: See, you could go and look at this new toy and bring back a sack-full if it’s all it’s cracked up to be.

TWINKLE: And if it’s not, you’ll still be back in plenty of time for Christmas.

SANTA: Sounds great to me!

MRS. CLAUS: It just doesn’t seem right, leaving the North Pole a week before Christmas.

HAWAIIAN GIRL #1: (To MRS. CLAUS.) Santa could get some rest before the big night.

HAWAIIAN GIRL #2: Think how relaxed and ready for Christmas he’ll feel.

MRS. CLAUS: I suppose. (To SANTA.) But if the toy is good, you’ll really need our help delivering all those extra toys.

SANTA: We’ll cross that bridge when we come to it. But what do you think, my dear? Shall I go to Hawaii?

MRS. CLAUS: You might as well. I can tell your mind is already made up. But don’t forget, you owe me a vacation after Christmas!

SANTA: It’s a deal! Come on, girls, let’s go meet that plane! (He rushes OFF UP LEFT with the HAWAIIAN GIRLS. LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

End of Scene Three
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES

ONSTAGE, Bates’ Office: Desk with phone, chair or two.

ONSTAGE, Santa’s Workshop: Two or more workbenches, tools, toys.

ONSTAGE, Santa’s Home: Recliner, small wooden chair, table with lamp, holly and wreaths.

BROUGHT ON, Scene One: News brief (REPORTER); newspaper (SANTA); toys (MRS. CLAUS); list (SHIMMER).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Two: Envelope with letter (HARRIET).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Three: Long list, pencil (MRS. CLAUS); large sack (SHIMMER); letter (HAWAIIAN GIRL #2).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Four: Blindfold (SANTA); rope [from desk drawer] (HARRIET); pad of paper, pen (OSWALD).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Five: List (MRS. CLAUS); large sacks (ELVES); letter (TWINKLE).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Six: Cups of coffee (OSWALD); FedEx uniform, sack of mail (MRS. CLAUS, SHIMMER, TWINKLE); hat (SANTA); [optional] cell phone (BATES).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Seven: News brief (REPORTER); two plane tickets (MRS. CLAUS); small wrapped package (SHIMMER).

SOUND EFFECTS

Hawaiian music, knock on door, offstage commotion.

COSTUMES

The costumes for this production should follow the standard protocol of traditional attire for SANTA, MRS. CLAUS and the ELVES. Predictably, BATES should wear a power suit and a wristwatch. OSWALD, HARRIET and the REPORTER should also wear standard business attire. The HENCHMEN could wear secret service type garb, and naturally the HAWAIIAN GIRLS will wear grass skirts and leis.
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