

A Christmas with no fireplace.

by Connie Belanger

But,
Mommy,
how's
Santa
going
to get
in?



Three days before Christmas, while decorating the tree, Young Rachel started to worry; she cried: "This just can't be!" She dropped the tinsel and holly and began to search the house. She looked high and low; she even moved her pet mouse. But nowhere could she see, nowhere could be found, A fireplace and chimney for Santa to come down.

"Oh Daddy," she cried, "Oh what can we do?" This house has no chimney for Santa to slide through. In all of the Christmas stories he crawls in by the fireplace. But if he tries that here he'll land in the furnace — flat on his face!"

Little Luc looked around and said: "You're right, this is shocking!" Why we don't even have a place to hang our Christmas stocking!" "This is such a disaster," was all Mommy could say, "Without a fireplace, Santa can't get in on Christmas Day!"

Then Daddy jumped up and said: "We'll find out what to do. Stop crying dear Rachel, we'll help Santa get through!" So they went to the library and read all the books. They came back home and searched all the crannies and nooks. They looked and they read, and they read and they looked. All night all day until supper was cooked. They sat down at the table too upset to eat their stew They couldn't find an answer. Oh, what could they do? Oh, what could they do?

"Well," suggested Rachel, "we could chop a hole in the ceiling." But Dad didn't find that idea too appealing. "It's not that I don't want Santa Claus here But if we make a big hole in the roof, my dear, The snow will come in on our heads, on our beds, on the floor. Tell me, why can't Santa just come in the front door?"

"The door!" hollered Rachel, as loud as she could, "But Daddy, you know better, that idea's no good!"

Our roof is way up there and the door way down here. And you know where he lands his sleigh and reindeer. Do you want him to jump? He may hurt himself! I don't think he can fly and he can't send an elf. There must be another way for him to leave us some toys Just like he does for other girls and boys. We've been very good and we've tried very hard!" "I've got it" cried Dad, "He can land in the yard!"

"In the yard!" exclaimed Rachel, "But how will he know? When he arrives with his sleigh how will he know where to go?" "Well," said her Dad, "I have a terrific plan. We'll hurry out to the yard and build a runway so he can land." "Oh, Daddy," cried Rachel, so happy at last. "I knew you'd think of something, but you'll have to work fast. It's almost Christmas, and he'll be here very soon, We'd better get out there and make plenty of room! We'll have to leave directions, and an arrow in the tree. And I think we'd better mail him the front door key!"

They took Mommy's broom and some shovels and sticks. They put on their coats and their hats and their mitts. Then Daddy and Rachel and Luc cried out "Let's go!" (And Mommy came with hot chocolate and helped them pack snow.) They stamped it all down from one end to the other. They went back and forth, they tripped over one another.

But finally at last, the runway was done. Of all the runways ever, this was the best one. Next, Dad made a big arrow with some paint and some wood And Rachel climbed up the tree and nailed it down good.

Then Luc asked: "How will Santa see this at night? It's going to be dark, don't we need some light?" "Lights!" exclaimed Daddy, "I forgot about that! And the stores are all closed, oh golly, oh drat!"

The children sat down in the snow and looked sad. And Daddy cried: "After all that work, oh dear it's too bad. I thought we could do it, show Santa the way To land here and come in the front door Christmas Day."

Then Mommy said: "Cheer up gang and listen to me. Why can't we just use the lights from our Christmas tree?" "This idea may work," said Dad, "Let's try it and see..." So they took the Christmas lights out into the snow. They hung them on trees and strung them on posts, Up one side of the runway, then down the other. They were all happy then — Luc, Rachel, Daddy and Mother. "It's going to work, I know it!" Rachel said. Dad and Mom smiled, "O.K., now it's time for bed."

They hung their stockings on the knob of the front door (And hoped Santa would find them — they'd never tried this before). The children left a snack for Santa, brushed their teeth and said "Goodnight." Then Mommy and Daddy kissed them and tucked them in tight.

Well the very next morning they all rushed down to see And there were the presents...under the tree. And a letter from Santa that we have to this day Thanking us for building the world's greatest runway!

Serious little people stockings, and sho older they go a litt

by Thomas Van Dusen

What do you know about elves? Unlike leprechauns, which are Irish and around all year long, elves come out mostly at Christmas, when they make themselves useful, helping Santa deliver presents. So they are highly regarded by girls and boys.

It is true that there are some leprechauns in Canada, who arrived here in the trunks or bags of Irish immigrants and managed to slip through Customs. Since leprechauns never die, although they do get older, they are still here. They don't have that much to do, since their major duty is to help wandering Irishmen or ladies, find their way home late at night.

Elves are quite different. First, they are generally thinner than leprechauns and dress differently. Leprechauns like to eat and drink and they dress pretty well like everyone else, with sweaters and baggy pants. Generally, they have large stomachs. Sometimes, they ride bicycles. They laugh a lot, often when there is nothing funny happening.

Elves are serious. They are shorter than leprechauns, with skinny legs. They wear pointed caps and green and yellow stockings, with shoes turned up in front. Their shoes are called buskins and look something like socks.

They wear many colours, so they can slip around in the woods without being spotted. Sometimes, they run through the

—Illustration: Joel

Season's Greetings
AND BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR.
from the staff at
Griffith
CARTAGE LTD.
BOX 107 • RUSSELL, ONT. • K0A 3B0

MERRY CHRISTMAS
JOYEUX NOËL
From the staff at:
Scotiabank
RUSSELL