

SANTA'S PROBLEM PUP


CHAPTER 8
By Bob Boyle

"Settle down, Miss Kay Nihn," Santa said. "Have a nice cup of tea. It's good orange pekoe tea."
"Peko, that name. I can't stand that name," she said.
"Oh, come on, Miss Kay Nihn," Santa said. "It's really not as bad as all that. I believe you're making an avalanche out of a snowball. Certainly a little pup like Peko isn't causing you that much trouble."
"Well, all right," she said. "I will have a cup of tea but we must decide what to do with THAT dog."
"By the way, where is Peko?" Santa said.
Santa looked beneath his chair and there was Peko with both front paws covering his ears.
"I don't think he wants to hear this," Santa laughed.
Miss Kay Nihn looked down and said, "Oh, well, I must admit he is cute, Santa, but he isn't obeying the rules."
"He is only a pup," Santa said.
"But he sneaked through one of my windows," Miss Kay Nihn said. "And two poodles helped him."
"Oh, then you know how he got out," Juniperperper said. "And you know we didn't help him. My, my, my, Miss Kay Nihn."
Miss Kay Nihn started to blush.
"Yes, I know how he got out," she said. "But I'm sure you elves put him up to it. I don't think he would have left otherwise."
"He is such a loving pup," Santa said. "I think he just wants to be around us."
With that, Peko jumped up on Santa's lap and began to lick his face.
"He is a nice pup," Santa said.
"But Peko must be punished," Miss Kay Nihn said. "I can't have him disturbing my kennel and getting the other pups into mischief. I have to punish him some way."
"What do you suggest, Miss Kay Nihn?" Santa said.
"I know," she said. "I'm not going to allow him to stay in the kennel any longer. He is officially evicted. He can't stay with the other dogs."
"But where will he stay?" Santa said.
"That is your problem," Miss Kay Nihn said. "I wash

my hands of the whole thing. It is definite. Peko cannot stay in my kennel. I have to leave now, so whatever you decide is all right with me."
After she was gone Juniperperper said, "Gee, Santa, where will we keep Peko."
"I think I have the answer," Santa said.
"What, Santa, what?" the elves asked.
"Peko can stay right here with me until Christmas eve." The elves cheered.
"That's a great idea, Santa." "That's wonderful."
"Hurrah for Santa."
Juniperperper walked up to Peko and patted him on the head. "Welcome to Santa's house."
"Boy, that Miss Kay Nihn is dumb," Juniperperper said.
"She is dumb, Jinkersnipies said.
"Dumb, dumb, dumb," said Jasper.
"I don't know about that," Santa said. "I think Miss Kay Nihn is pretty smart."
"How could she be?" Juniperperper said. "She said she is punishing Peko and after all, he is getting what he wanted in the first place."
"That's what I mean," Santa said. "I'm sure Miss Kay Nihn saw that Peko really wanted to stay with us but because she didn't want to say yes, she had to come up with an excuse. Her excuse is that she is punishing Peko. Actually she is doing

Peako a favor and she knows it."
"Santa, that old meanie doesn't like dogs," Juniperperper said.
"I think you're wrong," Santa said. "Miss Kay Nihn loves dogs and that is why I put her in charge of the kennel."
"She sure doesn't act that way, Santa," Jimmy said.
"Yes she does," Santa said.
"Then why is she mean?" Juniperperper asked.
"See, it is like this," Santa said. "Miss Kay Nihn does love all her puppies. But she can't get too attached to them because we give them to the good boys and girls on Christmas. It is a sad time for her. So she pretends to be mean. But underneath it all, Miss Kay Nihn is a very loving person."
"She doesn't act like a loving person," Juniperperper said.
"Suppose she cuddled and loved each and every puppy," Santa said. "Why on Christmas her heart would break as the pups left. No, Miss Kay Nihn must act like she acts. She really does like dogs."
"Then that is why she let Peko stay here?" Jinkersnipies said.
"That is why," Santa replied. "She knew Peko would be happier with us, so Miss Kay Nihn let us make the decision. So you see, she is not an old meanie, but an old nicie."
Santa lifted Peko the pup and said, "Come on, fellow, let me show you the North Pole."
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