

Dialogue Sample from THE DAUGHTER OF ST. NICHOLAS

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[SNEGORKA, played by the actress VAYLA, enters looking for ST. NICHOLAS' reindeer and meets the white WOLF. MISHA, a fellow actor, and LUDI, the shy dresser, watch from offstage.]

SNEGORKA

I've lost the footprints of the reindeer. Surely this is the place they come for shelter. But where are they? Soon the clouds will cover the moon and there will be no light. I must hurry home.

(WOLF comes from behind rock, growling softly. SNEGORKA freezes, frightened.)

SNEGORKA (Continued)

Wolf, Wolf, your growl is frightening.

(WOLF moves closer to SNEGORKA.)

SNEGORKA (Continued)

I am far from home -- looking for my Father's reindeer.

(SNEGORKA steps back as the growling WOLF closes in.)

SNEGORKA (Continued)

Have you seen them, Wolf? The herd is large.

(WOLF steps closer and bares his teeth.)

SNEGORKA (Continued)

He sent me, Snegorka, to call them.

(SHE blows the silver whistle that makes no sound to human ears. WOLF, whimpering and covering his ears, cowers at her feet. HE speaks slowly and majestically in a low voice.)

WOLF

Forgive me, Snegorka.

SNEGORKA

Wolf, you heard the silver whistle!

WOLF

All the forest knows you are friend to animals. It is the nature of the wolf to hunt and, when hungry as I, we even hunt humans.

SNEGORKA

I am sorry your hunger is great, Wolf.

WOLF

But you are the daughter of the gentle one, Grandfather Freeze -- St. Nicholas. And with his cloak of winter, St. Nicholas protects the white wolf. I am your servant. How can I serve Snegorka?

SNEGORKA

White Wolf, the reindeer. Have you seen them?

WOLF

Seen them? If I had seen them I would have eaten them. No, they are not here.

SNEGORKA

Is this not where they come for shelter?

WOLF

This is the place. I came here for my supper. I, too, am disappointed.

SNEGORKA

Where have they gone?

WOLF

South, I think. Following their noses. In search of green through melting snow. This I imagine, but I am not a reindeer. Go home, Snegorka, and search for them in the light.

SNEGORKA

My thanks, White Wolf. Good hunting.

(SNEGORKA goes but turns back.)

White Wolf. If you see them, please spare the reindeer.

WOLF

Forgive me, Snegorka. That I cannot promise.

(WOLF howls and leaps "offstage" right.
IGOR is met "offstage" right by LUDI

who takes his mask. Holding the mask, LUDI watches and silently mouths SNEGORKA's lines. MISHA stands by her side, watching her. SHE turns, embarrassed at his attention. THEY smile and LUDI returns to her tasks.)

SNEGORKA

Reindeer, carriers of hopes and dreams
Traveling south for grass and
streams
The children wait in happy sleep
Hearts will break if they
should weep.
Oh, hear my silver notes so clear
And hurry home, Christmas is near!

(SNEGORKA exits right and VAYLA gives her hat and coat brusquely to LUDI as SHE is pouring tea for MISHA who sits at table.)

VAYLA

What a stupid play and the audience is no better.

MISHA

I thought they were very lively, didn't you, Miss Ludi? Filled with holiday spirit.

VAYLA

Christmas Eve! And no more applause than that!

LUDI

It was wonderful. The scene with the wolf was so exciting, Vayla.

VAYLA

You thought so? Everyone is a critic. A silly play for a provincial audience.

MISHA

They loved it, Vayla, as they do every year when we play here. But you would have them throw roses at your feet.

VAYLA

To think, I could be doing Shakespeare!

MISHA

(Dramatically)

At half your salary.

VAYLA

(Giving MISHA a look)

Tea, Ludi, NOW!

(She exits to dressing room.)

LUDI

Yes, Vayla.

(LUDI goes to make VAYLA'S tea at sideboard but forgets her task while talking to MISHA.)

MISHA

Did it seem all right, Ludi?

LUDI

Oh, yes. How exciting to be on a stage and make people laugh.

MISHA

(Skeptically)

You think so?

LUDI

(Wide-eyed)

Yes.

MISHA

Then why don't you try it?

LUDI

Me? Never. I watch through the curtain but that's enough excitement for me.

MISHA

You really watch the plays? Don't you really sit back here and read like Igor?

LUDI

I watch every minute ... and the audience too. I watch the faces of everyone. Old men laugh, and young elegant women cry. Everyone believes at Christmas.

MISHA

(Moving to her)

Everyone wants a miracle at Christmas.

LUDI

Yes!

MISHA

(Gently taking her hand)

And what do you want, Miss Ludi?

LUDI

(Nervously reacting to his attention)

Me? Why ...

VAYLA

(Offstage)

Ludi, what are you doing? My tea!

LUDI

Coming, Vayla.