

## The Crown versus Santa Claus

### **Set:**

A courtroom, the rest is up to you.

### **Time:**

Any time you like, but early December.

### **Cast:**

Santa Claus – A jolly old man with beard, should be dressed in a red cloak/coat, but traditional not bold and glary. Male.

Judge Scrooge – The Judge. Can be played by anyone.

Clerk Clark McClerk - A Court Clerk. Scottish. Can be played by anyone. Has a flaky Scottish accent.

Cuthbert Grinch – Prosecuting Lawyer representing the Crown. Male, upcoming lawyer. Nephew to Judge Scrooge.

Ivana Letimov – Lawyer for the Defence. Female. Has a flaky East European accent.

### **Authors Note:**

I have carried out very little research for this play, so if there are inaccuracies in this courtroom, just go with them and have fun.

*The Judge should be upstage centre with the Clerk nearby. Prosecution one side, Defence the other. If you have the luxury of 12 non speaking cast members feel free to use them as a jury.*

*The court is full, except for the Judge, who walks in at the start of the play.*

**Clerk:** All rise for the Honourable Judge Scrooge!

*(all rise except Santa, who remains seated, as the Judge walks in and takes his seat.)*

**Ivana:** *(Loud whisper)* Stand up Mr Claus! *(Santa stands up.)*

**Judge:** *(Sits.)* Please be seated.

*(all sit except Santa.)*

**Ivana:** *(Louder whisper.)* Sit down Mr Claus!

**Santa:** *(sits.)* Oh, very well, Ho ho Ho!

**Ivana:** It's alright, just relax, let me do the talking.

**Santa:** Of course! Ho Ho Ho!

**Ivana:** Sssh Shanta!

**Santa:** My lips are shealed! *(Sealed)*

**Ivana:** Really?

**Santa:** Sorry! Ho...*(Ivana shuts him off by raising her hand.)*

**Judge:** Clerk Clark McClerk, you may begin proceedings.

**Clerk:** *(is sitting, falling asleep.)*

**Judge:** Clerk Clark McClerk... Clerk Clark McClerk... CLERK CLARK MCCLERK!

**Santa:** Has Rudolf arrived Haha!

**Judge:** Wake up Clerk Clark McClerk!

**Clerk:** *(startled awake)* Aye?

**Judge:** Stay awake Clerk Clark McClerk, you may begin proceedings!

**Clerk:** Aye, thank you sir!.....

**Judge:** Go on then!

**Clerk:** Your right honourable Judge Scrooge, Lord Judge of Judges, Master Judge of all Judging and Judiciary...Head Judge of Scots Land and its we islands and highlands/

**Judge:** Oh just get on with it!

**All:** YES, GET ON WITH IT!

**Clerk:** Aye. Calling Mr Cuthbert Grinch, lawyer for the persecution.

**Judge:** Prosecution.

**Clerk:** Aye, that's what I said! Arise Mr Grinch.

**Judge:** Pardon me?

**Cuthbert:** Good afternoon Uncle Scroo.... I mean Judge Scrooge your honour, your lordship, Sir!

**Judge:** Just 'Your Honour' will be fine.

**Cuthbert:** Sorry your honour, of course your honour.

**Judge:** Now, present the case for the prosecution.

**Cuthbert:** Yes your honour, of course your honour. I am honoured your honour.

**Judge:** OH PLEASE!

**Cuthbert:** I present to the court the case for the prosecution, on behalf of the Crown. On October the Twenty-Oneth, one Santa Claus, alias Kris Kringle, alias Saint Nicholas, alias Papa Noel, alias Sing Dan Lo Lan, alias Pelznickel/

**Judge:** Pelznickel?

**Cuthbert:** Dutch, sir your honour, sir.

**Judge:** Continue.

**Cuthbert:** Did willingly and unlawfully... *and* immorally, did encroach into October!

**Ivana:** Subjection your honour!

**Judge:** Objection?

**Ivana:** Yes, objection. Like I said.

**Judge:** Subjection overruled. Continue Cuthbert my lad.

**Cuthbert:** Said Mr Claus, did wilfully and non-legally encroach into October. I have reliable witnesses saying he was seen in Perrywinkles Nursery, Station Road, Melton Mowbray on the Twenty-Oneth of October. Around lunchtime.

**Santa:** Ho ho ho!

**Judge:** Please remain quiet Mr Claus.

**Ivana:** What my client means to say is, that he merely visited Perrywinkles Nursery in Melton Mowbray to buy some hoes.

**Judge:** Hoes?

**Ivana:** Hoes.

**Cuthbert:** Letter O's?

**Santa:** Yes! Ho Ho Hoes!

**Ivana:** Hoes for his garden. Three hoes.

**Judge:** Please explain Miss Letimov.

**Ivana:** *Ivana* Letimov.

**Judge:** Yes, I'm sure you do, but I will decide that later.

**Ivana:** Hoes, for his gardens your honour. So many carrots, reindeer don't feed themselves.

**Judge:** I see, continue Cuthbert.

**Cuthbert:** Thank you your honour, I'm honoured. On the Twenty-Oneth of October, around lunchtime, the gentleman seated next to Miss Letimov/

**Ivana:** /IVANA Letimov.

**Cuthbert:** Yes, Ivana Letimov/

**Judge:** Do you? Well that's jolly decent of you ol'chap, Case dismissed!

**Cuthbert:** No! No your honour, Mr Claus was seen sat seated on a seat next to an old shed.

**Ivana:** Grotto.

**Judge:** I beg your pardon?

**Cuthbert:** Indeed, Santa was seen sat seated on a seat next to a grotto. That wouldn't be so bad your honour, but we have reliable evidence that a small child by the name of Isabella/

**Santa:** Isabella Ding-Dong? Ho Ho Ho!

**Ivana:** Please sssh yourself!

**Cuthbert:** By the name of Isabella... Surname-Withheld, was seen sat seated on Santa's knee!

**Judge:** Knee?

**Clerk:** Aye, Nee.

**Judge:** Get to the point Cuthers. You were explaining Mr Claus's illegal encroachment into October.

**Cuthbert:** Yes your honour. It's un-legal enough for Mr Claus to be seen in public during the month of November, yet alone wilfully absconding into the previous month of October.

**Ivana:** Subjection your honour!

**Judge:** Objection!

**Ivana:** Yes... that.

**Judge:** Objection overruled.

**Cuthbert:** Thank you. The Christmas Act of 1829 does forbid the presence of any form of Christmas activity in the month of November. So I put to the court that Mr Claus's foray into October was twice as non-legal!

**Judge:** I see.

**Cuthbert:** Furthermore, he was seen sat seated with Isabella Surname-Withheld sat seated on Santa's knee. Really your honour, is it really moral, to sit with someone else's child on ones lap?

**Judge:** Indeed not.

**Ivana:** Interjection your honour!

**Judge:** OBJECTION!

**Ivana:** Yes, sorry.

**Judge:** Objection upheld, what would you like to say Miss Letimov?

**Ivana:** My client, Mr Claus, did indeed visit Perrywinkles Nursery, Melton Mowbray on the Twenty-First (*glares at Cuthbert.*) of October. This we do not contest. However, in all innocence, he merely visited in order to buy some hoes, oh and fork handles.

**Judge:** Enough of that, let's not go there.

**Ivana:** I simply suggest that Mr Claus visited said nursery in order to purchase garden implements! Really? This is surely no crime!

**Cuthbert:** But he was dressed in his big red cloak and boots!

**Ivana:** It was unusually cold for October! What? Do you want him to be catching the Flu?

**Santa:** Man Flu. Rudolf Flu...My sleigh flu... Ha Ha! Ho Ho Ho!

**Ivana:** (*to Santa*) Shut up!

**Cuthbert:** So maybe, Miss Letimov, you can explain why Miss Surname-Withheld was perched upon your clients knee?

**Judge:** Ivana Le.... Miss Letimov?

**Ivana:** My client was seen in public, dressed as Father Christmas, this we do not contest. Times are hard your honour, my client spends all his time and money dispersing presents to children all around the world. He has little money left over for buying warm clothes. So on this date in question he was wearing his red cloak and boots, due to it being unseasonably cold. There has been no crime here your honour!

**Cuthbert:** Injection your honour!

**Judge:** Objection actually.

**Cuthbert:** Sorry, I feel a bit of a prick, your honour.

**Judge:** Objection upheld, continue Cuthbert.

**Cuthbert:** It's good that Miss Letimov agrees, but she's missing the point your honour.

**Judge:** How so Cuthy-wuthy?

**Cuthbert:** I bring to your attention that Perrywinkles Nursery, Station Road, Melton Mowbray, is not what you think!

**Judge:** Oh! Is it some sort of illegal rave tent, drug den or Mafia hide away?

**Cuthbert:** No sir.

**Judge:** Oh, shame. Continue.

**Cuthbert:** Thank you. No. No. No, Perrywinkles Nursery is no garden centre. Oh no! Perrywinkles Nursery is a..... Nursery!

**Judge:** I don't follow.

**Ivana:** Abjection!

**Judge:** Shut it!

**Cuthbert:** A nursery. Not for plants, a nursery for children.

**Judge:** A nursery where children can buy plants, is that a thing?

**Cuthbert:** No your honour. A nursery for pre-school children, a place to go before they go to school. For children of pre-school age. That sort of nursery. So, your honour, you see why this behaviour from Ivana's client is so immoral. There were no garden tools or implements to be purchased in this establishment of little mites!

**Ivana:** Inaction!

**Judge:** Oh what is it now Miss Letimov?

**Ivana:** My client is old, probably a bit senile/

**Santa:** Pardon me? Ho Ho!

**Ivana:** He's old, dazed and confused.

**Santa:** Am I?

**Ivana:** On the day in question, he became disorientated during his shopping outing to buy some hoes. He saw the big sign on Station Road, Melton Mowbray and was relieved to finally find the shop he required. He wasn't to know this was a nursery and not a nursery!

**Judge:** You prove a good point, Ivana Letimov.

**Ivana:** Oh thanks so much, my client is free to go!

**Judge:** No, of course not! We have not yet ascertained why Miss Surname-Withheld was sat upon Santa Claus's knee.

**Ivana:** Yes, your honour. She saw my client, dressed as Father Christmas. Isabella was barely three years old, she has no real concept of the months of the year, she saw Mr Claus and simply wanted to sit on his knee and tell him what she wanted for Christmas.

**Santa:** Yes, that's what happened Ho Ho Ho!

**Judge:** I see, and had Miss Surname-Withheld been a good girl?

**Santa:** I believe so, I can't really remember, I was confused you see.

**Cuthbert:** It's hardly relevant whether Miss Surname-Withheld had been a good girl or a bad girl, the point is Miss Letimov's client had this child on his lap for immoral purposes.

**Ivana:** Cool it Cuthbert!

**Judge:** Now now!

**Santa:** Objection!

**Ivana:** You be quiet!

**Judge:** Order! Order!

**Ivana:** Sorry, your honour.

**Judge:** Cuthbert, my good fellow. Do you have anything else to add?

**Cuthbert:** Yes, I would bring to the attention of the court that Mr Claus has previous convictions.

**Santa:** Oh dear! Ho Ho Ho!

**Judge:** This is most interesting. Do go ahead Cuthbert.

**Cuthbert:** I would like to bring to the attention of the court that Mr Claus does not just have one previous conviction. Not two previous convictions, not even three. But six-hundred million convictions of breaking and entering last Christmas Eve alone! What say your client Miss Letimov?

**Santa:** Oh dear, Ho Ho.... Oh.

**Judge:** This is very serious, what say you Miss Letimov?

**Ivana:** Are you being serious Mr Grinch? My client has never broken into a house. Unless you call 'harmlessly sliding down chimneys and depositing gifts to expecting children' breaking and entering?

**Cuthbert:** I mean that precisely.

**Ivana:** But surely it cannot be breaking and entering when the accused has been invited?

**Judge:** Invited by whom Miss Letimov?

**Ivana:** By the six-hundred million children of course.

**Cuthbert:** Children hardly count as reliable witnesses!

**Judge:** So you say Mr Claus has already been convicted of so many breakings and entering's?

**Ivana:** Yes your honour, my client was given a suspended sentence.

**Judge:** I see.

**Ivana:** But it was overruled by the European Court of Human Rights on the basis that no man, or woman could possibly break into six million houses in one night!

**Santa:** Ah, now that's where you're wrong Ho Ho!

**Ivana:** I told you to be quiet!

**Cuthbert:** Also your honour.....

**Judge:** Yes?

**Cuthbert:** Miss Letimov's client has been accused of nearly as many acts of theft!

**Ivana:** How so? Of what?

**Cuthbert:** Thefts of mince pies and glasses of sherry!

**Santa:** Ah, guilty as charged there your honour! Ho Ho Ho!

**Ivana:** Button it beardy!

**Cuthbert:** Look at the size of Mr Claus's belly, there's your proof your honour!

**Ivana:** Surely my client could not possibly control his sleigh whilst under the influence of so much sherry!

**Cuthbert:** He even has a red nose from all that Sherry! He looks like Rudolf haha!

**Ivana:** Projection!

**Judge:** What?

**Cuthbert:** Dejection!

**Santa:** Overruled!

**Judge:** No!

**Ivana:** Ha, rejection!

**Judge:** Order!

**Santa:** Mines a Sherry your honour!

**Ivana:** Ssssh!

**Cuthbert:** (*singing*) Who ate all the pies?

**Judge:** Order! Order! Silence in court! Where are your manners? I should bang your heads together!

**Clerk:** You canny do that Judge.

**Judge:** Oh, you're awake! Silence Clerk Clark McClerk!

**Clerk:** Aye.

**Judge:** Now apologise, all of you!

**Ivana:** Sorry Judge Scrooge.

**Cuthbert:** Sorry Uncle Scrooge, your honour, sir.

**Judge:** Mr Claus?

**Santa:** Ho Ho Ho! Oh, I mean sorry, your honour.

**Judge:** Very well. I have heard enough. There is no need for the jury to retire to consider the verdict. Cuthbert Grinch, you present a good argument. Santa Claus did indeed break the law with his illegal encroachment into October. This in itself would be unforgiveable and punishable in the name of the law and I would be obliged to lay down a heavy sentence. You correctly reference the Christmas Act of 1829, but you have failed to mention the Santa Clause of 1951 which, as I'm sure you are aware, exempts one person, Mr Santa Claus here, from the Christmas Act of 1829. Mr Santa Claus has free movement throughout the world to go as he pleases, to have as many children on his knee as he wishes and to visit any nursery, be it for plants or for children.

**Cuthbert:** But what about the breaking and entering your honour?

**Judge:** Oh dear boy, no court is going to convict Mr Claus of breaking into the homes of children who have invited him! Especially not the ones on the 'Nice' list!

**Cuthbert:** The theft of mince pies and Sherry?

**Judge:** Heavens no! Six Hundred Million homes in one night, the man deserves a tippale and a sugary treat!



**Cuthbert:** Drink driving! I mean drink *sleighbing*!

**Judge:** Enough! Mr Claus, we thank you for all you do across the world, for all the delight you bring to children around the globe, be they nice *or* naughty! I might suggest next time that you delegate an assistant to buy your garden implements for you, but otherwise you are free to go Mr Claus!

**Cuthbert:** But, but.... But Uncle Scrooooooge?

**Judge:** Oh grow up Cuthbert! CASE DISMISSED!

**Ivana:** Thank you your honour!

**Judge:** Have you anything to say Mr Claus?

**Santa:** Ho Ho Ho!

**Judge:** Ha ha, yes! Ho Ho Ho Indeed!

**Ivana:** Ho Ho Ho!

**Clerk:** Aye Aye Aye!

**Cuthbert:** Oh no no!

*(at this point, if you have the budget and wish to be totally reckless with it, Rudolf should enter from one side, being played by two actors in a pantomime style horse reindeer outfit, pulling a sleigh laden with lots of presents. Santa boards the sleigh and Rudolf drags them off the far side, followed shortly by a projection (not objection) of a reindeer and sleigh flying across the night sky to the sound of jingle bells. This is purely optional.)*

**END OF PLAY.**