

ACT I, SCENE 2 - MRS. CLAUS MEETS LILAC

SCENE: Inside the North Pole residence.

LIGHTS UP on two chairs (SANTA'S and MRS. CLAUS'S) with a small table between them.

On the table are two mugs, a small poinsetta plant and a plate of cookies.

Pause (TRACK 04)

CHASE:

(From Off Stage)

OK... OK!!! Put me down!!! I'm all right now. I don't want to go in there like this. Put me down!!!

FX: (TRACK 05) - Knocking at the door.

Pause (TRACK 05)

ENTER MRS. CLAUS from the "interior" door. She goes toward the other side of the stage as if she is now answering the door.

ENTER CHASE STORYMAN and BLITZEN from the "exterior" door.

MRS. CLAUS:

Well, hello there! Welcome... welcome! Do come in.

LILAC frantically pushes her way in and past CHASE and BLITZEN.

LILAC:

'Scuse me... Comin' through here... Scuse me!

(To MRS. CLAUS, wincing and stamping her feet)

Ladies room?

MRS. CLAUS:

(With an understanding smile)

Yes, of course, dear. Right down the hall and to the left.

LILAC:

(In a panic)

Thank you!

LILAC takes off running and exits to where MRS. CLAUS first entered.

BLITZEN goes to SANTA'S chair and plops down with one leg dangling over the arm of the chair.

CHASE:

Well, so much for the big opener I had planned.

MRS. CLAUS:

Well now! You must be those lovely news people we've been expecting.

CHASE:

Yes, Ma'am! My name's Chase Storyman and that flash of... whatever... that just ran down the hall there is Lilac Hellowitz. We're here from YMI News! And you would be?

MRS. CLAUS:

I'm Mrs. Claus, dear. I'm so happy to meet you.

CHASE:

(Caught by surprise)

Mrs. Claus?... The Mrs. Claus?

MRS. CLAUS:

Yes, dear. That would be me.

CHASE:

(In awe)

Forgive me, Mrs. Claus. I had no idea that you'd be answering the door yourself! I thought maybe... the help?

FX: (TRACK 06) The sound of the elves in the workshop fades in softly in the background.

MRS. CLAUS:

Oh no. At this time of year we're rather short handed so we all pitch in. Everyone is in the workshop, rushing around, trying to get all the finishing touches done before Christmas Eve. We're getting rather close now, you know.

CHASE:

(With childlike anticipation)

Is that what I'm hearing? The elves in Santa's workshop?

MRS. CLAUS:

Oh yes! The noise gets a little tedious after awhile but, we all manage to adjust since without it there wouldn't be.

Pause.

CHASE:

(Confused)

I'm sorry?... Wouldn't be what?

MRS. CLAUS:

Why, toys, of course! All that noise is what makes the presents! That and the hands using them.

CHASE:

(More confused)

Ummm... Using what?

MRS. CLAUS:

Excuse me?

CHASE:

The hands! What are they using?

MRS. CLAUS:

Tools, dear! How else could it be so noisy?

CHASE:

Oh!... Yeah!... Right!

Mrs. Claus, could I please have a moment to document this for our viewers?

CHASE pulls out a hand microphone and looks out as if it is assumed that there is a cameraman there. The microphone is not live. It's just a prop.

Ladies and Gentlemen? This is Chase Storyman of YMI News here at the North Pole with none other than Mrs. Claus.

Mrs. Claus! Can you tell us...

LILAC comes bounding back in.

LILAC:

OK!... I'm back. What'd I miss?

Fade out and pause (TRACK 06)

CHASE:

(Groans, disappointed, rolling his eyes)

Ugh!... LILAC! I was right in the middle of an interview with Mrs. Claus, here. What's gotten into you? You know better than to burst in like that.

LILAC:

Oh!... Sorry!

MRS. CLAUS:

(To LILAC)

You seem so unhappy, dear. Is there anything I can do to help?

LILAC:

Well?... You could point me in the direction of the equator and hand me my sunglasses. That would go a long way with me right now.

CHASE:

LILAC!!!

MRS. CLAUS:

(Ignoring CHASE, consoling LILAC)

Now, now! Mustn't let it bother you, dear. I understand completely. Being this far north takes a bit of getting used to.

CHASE:

I'd like to agree with you, Mrs. Claus, except... she's like this no matter where we go. She can't stand the cold... She melts in heat... Even if it's "just right", she'll find something to complain about.

"Goldilocks" she ain't.

LILAC sneers at CHASE.

See?... Just look at the "look" I'm getting. I rest my case.

MRS. CLAUS:

(To LILAC, with understanding)

Boots don't fit right, dear?

LILAC winces and shakes her head, "Yes".

Well?... That would explain it.

CHASE:

Wait... what?

LILAC:

(To MRS. CLAUS, showing her the boots she's wearing)

Not only that but, they're really ugly... don't you think?

MRS. CLAUS:

I must admit, they're not the most attractive one's I've ever seen. Where did you get those?

LILAC turns and sneers accusingly at CHASE.

Enter RALPH THE ELF MANAGER, deep in thought, carrying and referring to his clipboard. No one notices.

CHASE:

(To LILAC)

What! They're really warm... and very... "practical" and considering our destination, I thought they were the best ones for the job. What's wrong with that?

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:
(Sizing up what's going on)

Uh Oh!

MRS. CLAUS:
(To CHASE)

We're women, dear. When it comes to shoes it's all about "style". Being practical never enters into it.

MRS. CLAUS lifts her skirt to show off that she is wearing red sequin slippers with red sequin bows.

LILAC gasps with delight when she sees them.

MRS. CLAUS: (CONT'D)
If our shoes aren't right and don't fit our mood, it tends to make us cranky.

CHASE goes to answer.

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:
(To CHASE trying to stop him before he digs in too deep)
No, no! Don't do it, buddy. Your outta your league here!

CHASE:
(Answering anyway)
Shoes! Why is it women are so fixated on shoes? They're not people, you know. There just... shoes!

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:
(To himself)
Why do they never listen?

MRS. CLAUS:
Don't be silly, Chase dear. If that were true then why is it the first thing the shoemaker gives them is a "sole"?

CHASE freezes, trying to think of an answer.

LILAC:

(To MRS. CLAUS, ecstatic)

Good one, girlfriend! I gotta remember that one!

CHASE:

So... What are you trying to say? You think I'm the "heel"?

CHASE grins. He thinks he just won the argument.

LILAC:

(To CHASE)

If you say so! But, we can go "toe to toe" with you about this all day long. Think your up for it?

MRS. CLAUS:

If you do, you'll really need to learn how to keep "instep"!

(Emphasis on the "in")

MRS. CLAUS and LILAC chuckle.

CHASE slumps over to show he knows he's been outsmarted.

LILAC and MRS. CLAUS do a hand slap to congratulate themselves.

RALPH flails his arms as if to say, "Told ya so!"

CHASE looks at RALPH for help

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:

Don't look at me! I tried to stop ya before you got in too deep. But... Did you listen?...
Noooooooooooo!

MRS. CLAUS:

(To LILAC)

Lilac, dear. You must let me show you all the shoes that Santa will be delivering this year.

LILAC gasps with delight

CHASE:

(To RALPH, squinting, in a squeaky
voice, pleading)

Help!

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:

(Jumping in to help CHASE)

Uhhhhh!... Didn't you come here to interview Santa and see how we do things in the workshop?

CHASE:

Yes!... Absolutely!

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:

Alrighty then!

(To MRS. CLAUS and LILAC)

I'm just gonna take Mr. Storyman, here, down the hall to get a good look at how all the toys are made.

CHASE:

(Excited)

You mean the workshop?... Santa's Workshop?

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:

Yup.

CHASE begins to follow RALPH as he begins to exit.

CHASE:

What'd you say your name was?

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:

Ralph! I'm the "Elf Manager".

CHASE:

I think you're my new "best friend".

RALPH THE ELF MANAGER:

(Blandly)

Yeah, yeah... I get that a lot.

RALPH exits followed, excitedly, by CHASE

MRS. CLAUS turns to escort LILAC over to the chairs to sit down and sees BLITZEN lounging in SANTA'S chair.

MRS. CLAUS:

(To BLITZEN, annoyed)

Just what do you think you're doing? You know you're not allowed up on the furniture. Shoo!... Shoo!

MRS. CLAUS:

Naughty reindeer!

BLITZEN scowls at MRS. CLAUS but, relents and exits the stage, begrudgingly.

MRS. CLAUS:

(To LILAC, escorting her to sit in SANTA'S chair)

Come along, Lilac dear. Won't you have a seat so we can chat awhile?

LILAC realizes she's being told to sit in SANTA'S chair and gasps with surprise.

LILAC:

(Pointing to SANTA'S chair)

You want me to sit... there?

MRS. CLAUS:

Yes, of course, dear.

LILAC:

Are you sure?

MRS. CLAUS:

Yes, yes, dear. It's quite all right. Please... sit down.

LILAC sits, in awe. She rubs the arms of the chair as if savoring the moment.

MRS. CLAUS sits in her chair and hands LILAC a mug from the table.

MRS. CLAUS:

Here you are, dear. This should help to warm your innards.

LILAC takes the hot chocolate, sips and smiles... satisfied.

LILAC:

Mmmmmmm!... Hot chocolate!!! Thank you so much, Mrs. Claus. I just love chocolate!!!

MRS. CLAUS:

Well of course you do, dear. We all do. I've always regarded chocolate as a staple in any diet. Otherwise, how would we have chocolate chip cookies or chocolate cake?

LILAC tries to sort out MRS. CLAUS'S way of explaining things.

And, it's funny how it grows all the way down at the equator, where it's really hot so they can make it really cold into chocolate ice cream and then send it here so we can make it hot again to make us feel warm.

LILAC:

(Confused)

Huh?

MRS. CLAUS:

Chocolate, dear. We're talking about "chocolate".

LILAC just smiles, nods and goes along with her.

You know... being at the North Pole, we're conditioned to make everything about giving gifts and making everyone happy. And, speaking of chocolate, I find it makes a perfect gift, don't you?

LILAC nods happily as she sips her hot chocolate.