

Jingle Elf, Secret Agent is an audience participation play that deals with issues of honesty and appropriate behavior. As an audience participation play, there are times when actors will need to improvise a line to cover a response from a participant which does not provide (or otherwise derails) the intended interaction. This is common and necessary. However, this does not give the actors the ability to improvise their way through the script. Improvised material should only be used as a last resort to enable the performance to move forward as intended.

The run-time of *Jingle Elf, Secret Agent* is approximately 60 minutes.

Characters:

Mrs. Claus, a wonderfully cheerful, but slightly ditsy old lady
H.E. Giftstealer, a classic villain, with no love of Christmas
Jingle Elf, a slightly inept Secret Agent elf

Locations:

Various locations in and around the North Pole, including Santa's home
and H.E. Giftstealer's hideout.

Time:

Just before Christmas.

SCENE 1:

Lights come up on MRS. CLAUS is looking around at all of the toys, shaking her head. She is unaware of the audience.

MRS. CLAUS: Oh, dear! What a day!?! (*seeing the audience*) Oh! Hello, there. I'm Mrs. Claus. And you are? So very nice to meet all of you! Oh, dear. I must look a mess. The day before the day before Christmas is always so hectic. Santa's out with the reindeer getting in another practice run. The elves are scurrying around trying to finish all the presents in time. I planned ahead this year and finished all of my cooking and baking yesterday, so today, I get to help out with the packing. Next year, I'm not planning ahead. (*looking at pile of toys*) I can't believe how many toys the elves have made this year. And each one needs to be wrapped and packed into Santa's bag. It's going to take me all day just to do this stack. Wait! I've got it. Would any of you like to be elves-in-training and help me wrap and pack all of these presents? (*allow reaction from audience*) You would?! Great!

MRS. CLAUS selects children from the audience. MRS. CLAUS places an elf hat on each volunteer and moves them to the stacks of toys and gift boxes.

MRS. CLAUS: All right. Here's what we have to do. Pick up a toy. (*have children do each step immediately after instruction*) Good. Now pick up a box. Great. Put the toy in the box. Good. Put the lid back on the box. Very good. Now, put the present into Santa's bag. Fantastic! Now, we have to do that for all of these. My! Such good workers.

MRS. CLAUS should continue to praise and help children as needed until all of the toys have been boxed and packed in Santa's bag. MRS. CLAUS pulls the drawstring and ties the bag up.

MRS. CLAUS: (*to rest of audience*) Look at how fast we got all of those presents done. Didn't the elves-in-training do a great job!

MRS. CLAUS sends the children back to their seats, leading the applause.

MRS. CLAUS: (*collapsing into her rocking chair*) I am simply exhausted. Oh. I know—a nice cup of hot cocoa would be just the pick-me-up I need.

MRS. CLAUS rises and starts to exit, but stops short.

MRS. CLAUS: I know the elves told me to keep an eye on Santa's bag, but it's not going to get up and walk away by itself. Santa's bag is definitely magic, but not that magic. So what could possibly happen? (*realizing*) Oh, I'd better hurry before the elves bring out any more toys!

MRS. CLAUS exits happily. H.E. GIFTSTEALER enters slowly, unaware of the audience.

GIFTSTEALER: What could possibly happen? (*laughs dryly*) Well, well, well. Mrs. Claus has been put in charge of packing Santa's bag this year. Fools! They should know by now I'm always looking for an opportunity to steal Santa's bag and ruin Christmas once and for all. Or maybe I should steal the bag and ransom it back to the North Pole and retire to some little exotic island in the South Pacific where there's never any snow or ice or sleigh bells—just nice white sand that stretches for miles in all directions and palm trees with coconuts and sunny days and—what was I saying? Oh, yes—all the elves know that I'm always trying to steal Santa's bag and so what do they do? Leave Mrs. Claus in charge. And what does she do? She goes off to the kitchen to make some nice hot cocoa and leaves the bag just sitting here. Not even a little teddy bear to keep an eye on it. The only way that crazy old bat could make it easier for me to steal Santa's bag would be to put it out on the curb with the rest of the trash.

GIFTSTEALER laughs again...until he sees the audience.

GIFTSTEALER: Oh! I didn't see you there. I thought everyone was gone. Well, I'm not really going to steal Santa's bag. That would be wrong. Who would want to steal Santa's bag. Not me. I would never steal Santa's bag. (*quick break*) Forget it! Who am I trying to kid, eh kid? Nobody! They don't call me H.E. Giftstealer for nothing. I am going to steal this bag right now.

GIFTSTEALER grabs the bag and pulls, but the bag doesn't move.

GIFTSTEALER: Right now.

GIFTSTEALER readjusts and pulls again. Nothing.

GIFTSTEALER: Right now.

GIFTSTEALER resettles himself, grabbing the bag with both hands. GIFTSTEALER pulls so hard that he loses his balance and falls on his backside; then reacts quickly, standing up and brushing himself off.

GIFTSTEALER: Help. I need some henchmen to help me lift this thing. Yes, definitely some henchmen. (*to audience*) Anyone want to help me steal Santa's bag?

GIFTSTEALER selects 2-3 children to become his henchmen and place them around the bag.

GIFTSTEALER: Great, you come over here and grab hold. All right. 1, 2, 3, heave. 1, 2, 3, ho. Push, pull. There we go. Right this way.

GIFTSTEALER leads the children to take the bag offstage. ALL re-enter.

GIFTSTEALER: Great! Now, you'd better sneak back before anyone realizes you're gone—you don't want to be nabbed as accomplices. (*sends children back to seat*) And I don't want to share the ransom!

GIFTSTEALER exits as MRS. CLAUS enters.

MRS. CLAUS: (*sipping hot cocoa*) Mmmmmm. This is really good hot cocoa. I took one of the gingerbread cookies too. A broken one—mmmm. All right, I guess I should keep an eye on Santa's bag like the elves said. So, where did I put it. I thought I left it right there. But it's not there. Maybe it did get up and walk away by itself. No, that's silly. Maybe I left it under my rocking chair. (*looks as necessary*) No, not there. Maybe it's under the Christmas tree. No, not there either. Oh, dear! Santa's bag isn't anywhere in here. Oh, dear! (*to audience*) Did you see what happened to Santa's bag? (*reacts to the news*) Stolen?!? Oh, dear. Oh, dear! OH, DEAR! Santa won't be able to deliver the toys without his bag. Christmas will be ruined. Oh, dear! What can I do? If I tell Santa that his bag is missing, he'll know I wasn't watching it. Besides, he's stressed out enough right now. Oh, dear. There has to be something I can do.

A sign labeled "For Emergency Use Only" flies in.

MRS. CLAUS: (*seeing the sign*) Ohhhh! "For Emergency Use Only." Well, this is an emergency if there ever was one. (*taking the sign down and reading the back*) "In case of emergency, call Elf Headquarters." Hmm. Elf Headquarters? Well, that's what it says to do in case of emergency.

MRS. CLAUS pulls a cell phone out of her apron pocket.

MRS. CLAUS: Hello, Elf Headquarters? The emergency? Oh, dear. Santa's bag has been stolen. (*pulls phone away from her ear as she is yelled at*) I know. Yes, I know. Uh-huh. I know. Thank you. (*puts phone away*) They're sending someone over.

JINGLE ELF: (*entering immediately*) Mrs. Claus?

MRS. CLAUS: Yes?

JINGLE ELF: I'm Agent Double O Point Seven, but you can call me Jingle Elf, Secret Agent.

MRS. CLAUS: Wow! That was fast.

JINGLE ELF: I was working undercover in the Stuffing Department.

MRS. CLAUS: Well, I don't know how to tell you this, but Santa's bag was stolen.

JINGLE ELF: I know.

MRS. CLAUS: You know?

JINGLE ELF: I am a secret agent, and besides the HE at HQ told me.

MRS. CLAUS: The HE?

JINGLE ELF: The Head Elf.

MRS. CLAUS: At HQ?

JINGLE ELF: At Headquarters.

MRS. CLAUS: Oh, dear. Yes, of course. Well, Jingle Elf, how are you going to find out who stole Santa's bag?

JINGLE ELF: I know who stole Santa's bag.

MRS. CLAUS: The HE or HQ or whatever told you that too?

JINGLE ELF: No. No one has to tell me who stole Santa's bag. There is only one criminal mastermind...well, at least criminal, who would ever attempt a theft like this—H.E. Giftstealer. He's tried before but our intelligence network has always been able to be one step ahead of him until now.

MRS. CLAUS: Oh. Why would he want to steal Santa's bag?

JINGLE ELF: We're not exactly sure why Giftstealer hates Christmas, but we do know that he wants to ruin Christmas for everyone else. (*leaning in towards MRS. CLAUS*) Just between you and me... (*seeing audience*) and all those people out there, I think he must have gotten coal in his stocking one too many times.

MRS. CLAUS: Well, if he didn't get coal before, he'll surely get it now—that is, if Santa gets to make any deliveries at all.

MRS. CLAUS begins to cry loudly.

JINGLE ELF: There, there, Mrs. Claus. Elf HQ sent me for a reason.

MRS. CLAUS: (*through sniffles*) Other than you were already here?

JINGLE ELF: That went into it too—but they sent me because I'm Agent Double O Point Seven, and I always complete my assignments.

MRS. CLAUS: Successfully?

JINGLE ELF: Mostly. But don't fear, Jingle Elf is here. Now, let me get some information from you.

MRS. CLAUS: (*pointing to the audience*) Please ask them, I'm too upset to think clearly. I need another cup of hot cocoa. (*starts to exit then stops*) This time with marshmallows.

MRS. CLAUS exits. JINGLE ELF moves closer to the audience.

JINGLE ELF: All right, then. It's up to you. I need vital information in order to successfully get Santa's bag back and save Christmas for everyone. Pretty cool, huh? I get to save Christmas. Oh, the information.

JINGLE ELF pulls out a notepad and pencil from his small elf bag.