

## Tony, the Snowman

Last night it snowed hard. By morning, the park had turned into a white fairy-tale land. The children joyfully played with snowballs, and decided to make a snowman.

His belly was a huge snowball, his nose was a carrot, his eyes- two pieces of coal, his hat - a bucket. His eyes laughed so mischievously that the children couldn't help but love him. They named him Tony.

Tony's happy smile showed how much he liked his name. One of the boys had a great idea: to have Tony take a letter to Santa.

"I am going with you!" said Fifi, the puppy. Tony put the letter into his bucket-hat to keep it safe.

"I'm sure the letter asks Santa for some tasty treats," said the shrewd fox. "We should take the letter from them, and then Santa Claus will give us the goodies and we'll eat them."

The owl liked the fox's idea. He snatched the hat from Tony's head.

The letter fell out, the fox grabbed it, and off they went to see Santa Claus!

"Ho-ho! Stop!" The wolf snarled at them from the forest.

They fought over the letter. The racket they made could be heard all through the woods.

In the meantime, Tony and Fifi had run to the fight.

They were lucky. In the scuffle the letter fell to the ground. Fifi grabbed it, and off they went.

The animals stopped beating each other and ran after Fifi.

But Tony held the letter tight, and ran as fast as his big belly allowed.

"We wa... want to take this let.. letter to Santa Claus," the stuttered Tony. He was so scared that he dropped it again.

That was all the fox needed: he snatched it and off he ran!

"Don't worry, I'll help you," said the kind old bear when he heard what had happened. They started out after the letter thieves.

"Run faster!" shouted the bear. Tony gathered all his strength, and almost started to roll, to get to Santa Claus in time.

Good old Santa Claus was walking outside his ice palace, waiting for guests.

But instead the guests he was expecting, the fox and his companions came to get their paws on the children's treats.

Santa Claus read the children's letter with joy, and said: "I will grant their wish."

At that very moment Tony and Fifi arrived, all out of breath. "What happened was that the children entrusted me with that letter," said Tony Nervously, "but these scoundrels stole it from me!"

In vain did the thieves try to convince Santa Claus that the children had given the letter to them. "Don't believe a word they say, Santa Claus! The letter was given to the snowman and Fifi! And this bad lot should stay away from here!" The bear loudly grumbled.

"You dirty scoundrels!" Santa Claus shouted, "now I'll teach you a lesson!"

Santa Claus fulfilled the children's wish and sent them the most beautiful Christmas tree in the whole world.

The children put the Christmas tree in the park and Tony proudly guarded it.

Tony proudly guarded the Christmas tree, and when all the lovely and colorful candles on the tree were lit, Tony and Fifi rejoiced together with the happy children.