

THE CHRISTMAS MOOSE



Written by Jan Skrentny
Illustrated by Ron Beauchemin

The Christmas Moose



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Not so long ago, in a place far away,
something very special happened,
something that changed Christmas forever.



The place where our story is set
is North then North some more:
beyond where the roads end,
beyond where the grasslands turn to snow
and the snow never melts.

Here, winter is every minute of every day.
And throughout the year there are only two seasons:



Christmas

and

“Getting Ready for Christmas.”

Our story takes place in Santa's village at the North Pole.

During the season of Getting Ready for Christmas,
Santa is always busy.

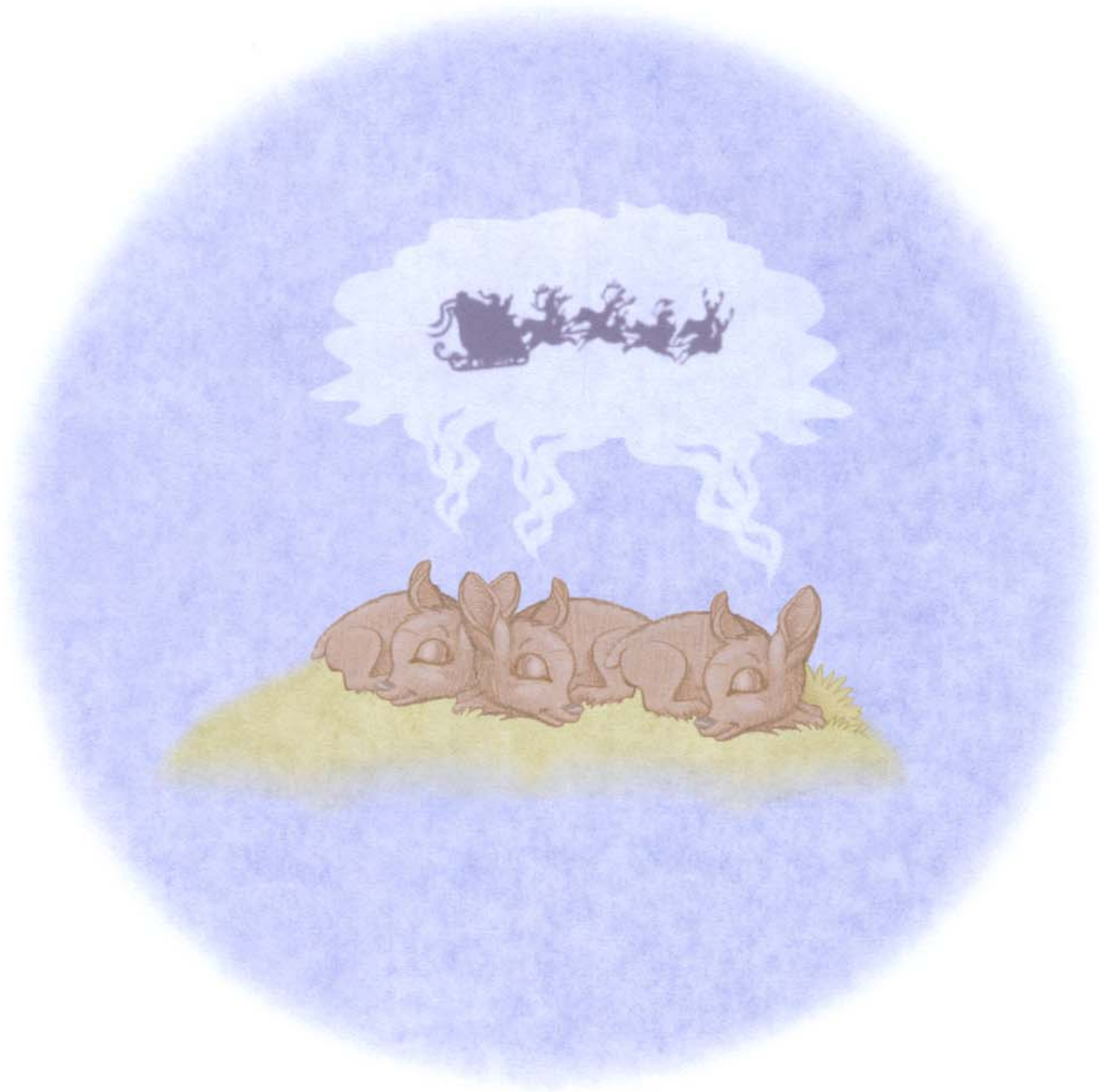
He oversees the making of all the toys.
He tastes every candy he will deliver.

But there is nothing that Santa enjoys more
than the day the new reindeer are born.



In a year or two, some of these reindeer—
no matter boy or girl—will pull Santa's sleigh.

Pulling Santa's sleigh
is what every reindeer dreams about.



But on this day, Santa was in for a very big surprise.

One of Santa's favorite reindeer was Lily.
She was never able to have a baby.

So, when she heard there was an orphaned baby moose,
Lily took him in and called him her own.

Slowly, on wobbly legs, her new calf stood up.

Santa stared, amazed.

Erv, the old elf in charge of the reindeer, stroked his white beard in wonder.

While all the other reindeer calves had tan coats, short legs, and pointed snouts,
Lily's calf had long legs, a broad chest, and a big, dark nose.



Lily couldn't have been prouder as she introduced Santa to

“Jeremiah...my son.”

Santa was very happy for Lily.
But as he walked out he whispered to Erv, the elf:

**“Looks like a
moose to me.”**



The elf nodded his head. “Indeed.”

AuthorHouse™
1663 Liberty Drive
Bloomington, IN 47403
www.authorhouse.com
Phone: 1-800-839-8640

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First published by AuthorHouse 10/1/2009

ISBN: 978-1-4389-2807-4 (sc)

Printed in the United States of America
Bloomington, Indiana

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

