Characters

Father Christmas (M/F)	-	Santa Claus
Rudolph (M/F)	-	A reindeer.
Elvis (M/F)	-	A supervisor elf who works in the Christmas toy workshop.
Pipkin (M/F)	-	An elf.
Thistle (M/F)	-	An elf.
Lichen (M/F)	-	An elf.
Moss (M/F)	-	An elf.
Fern (M/F)	-	An elf.
Twiggy (M/F)	-	An elf.
Scarecrow (M/F)	-	A Scarecrow

Scene 1 – Father Christmas' Grotto

(Onstage is a sock box. A few socks are scattered around it on the floor, and one or two socks hanging over the edge. Father Christmas enters, hot and bothered. He is wearing very odd socks, one tall, one short, and neither matching in any way. He pulls a sock or two from his sock box, tries to match them with the ones he's wearing, with no luck.)

Father Christmas: **(Loud sigh. Calls loudly)** Rudolph! Elvis!

Rudolph: **(Enters cheerily)** Yes Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: Have you seen my socks?

Rudolph: **(Stares with surprise at the socks Father Christmas's is wearing)** Oh! They're interesting. Is this the new fashion Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: No, it's not the new fashion! I can't find my socks! I think someone's been eating them!

Rudolph: **(Rather guiltily)** It wasn't us; they don't taste very nice.

Father Christmas: So, you've tasted them?

Rudolph: Just a nibble, once. We prefer mosses, herbs, ferns, grasses, shoots and leaves of shrubs and trees. Would you like some moss?

Father Christmas: No! – Thank you – I just want a pair of matching socks. I can't find any anywhere.

Elvis: **(Enters rubbing hands together cheerily)** We've nearly got all the toys ready for you to deliver, Father Christmas. **(Suddenly stares hard at Father Christmas's feet)** Mm -they're interesting – is this the new fashion?

Father Christmas: **(A bit grumpy)** No, it's not the new fashion! I can't find any matching socks.

Rudolph: **(Looks towards sock box)** Aren't there lots of socks in your sock box?

Father Christmas: **(Bothered)** Yes there are, but they're all odd ones. - I've spent ages trying to find two that match for tonight.

Elvis: **(Cheerily)** Don't worry Father Christmas, we'll help you find a pair!

(Father Christmas, Elvis & Rudolph go to sock box.)

Rudolph: **(Peering into sock box)** Ooo, what a lot of socks. Hm, it might take a while to sort through them all.

Father Christmas: Oh dear, oh dear, and it will soon be time for me to go on my rounds.

Elvis: **(Peers into box)** I'll call some of the elves to help. I'll use my magic whistle. **(Lifts an invisible whistle to lips and blows. No sound comes.)**

(Elves, any number enter)

Elvis: **(Organizing)** Elves, we need to find a matching pair of socks for Father Christmas to wear tonight to deliver toys to the world's children. **(Looks at Pipkin)** Pipkin, I'll pass you a sock, you take it from me, say what colour and pattern it is, and pass it along. With a bit of luck, we might find two to match.

Pipkin: **(Orders)** Elves in a straight line please. **(Elves eventually form an orderly line ready to pass socks along.)**

Rudolph: **(To audience)** You'll help won't you? Shout out if you see two socks that match.

Audience: Yes.

(Elvis picks a sock out of the box and pass to Pipkin until all gone.)

Pipkin: **(Take one sock at a time from Elvis. Speak clearly and loudly and hold up sock for audience to see. Then pass to next elf in line, etc.)** One pink spotty sock. – One yellow stripey sock. – One sock with Christmas puddings on. – One green sock. – One sock with teddies on. – One sock – oooh look it's you Father Christmas – on. – One sock with Christmas trees on. – One sock with drums on. – One sock with snow on **(interrupted)**

Thistle: That's not snow, it's a white sock!

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Pipkin: Oh yes, so it is!

(Elves laugh)

Pipkin: One sock with – **(Delighted)** oh look elves – elves on it!

Elvis: **(Bends down to peer into sock box. Shakes head.)** All gone. No more socks. **(To audience)** Have we got a matching pair?

Audience: **(After checking)** No.

Father Christmas: Oh, dear, I can't go out wearing odd socks. My costume is like my uniform you see, and I need to feel right. Children know just what I look like, red hat, red top, red trousers with belt, all white fur trimmed.

Rudolph: Odd socks.

Father Christmas: No! Not odd socks.

Twiggy: But the children won't see your socks. You wear your boots on top.

Father Christmas: I know that Twiggy, but it will feel, well, it will feel odd! I can wear odd socks other days, but I need to put my best foot forwards tonight.

(Rudolph lifts his hooves up and looks at them puzzled.)

Father Christmas: Now I wonder where on earth my other socks can be? I know I've got lots somewhere.

Lichen: Perhaps they had holes in Father Christmas, and you threw them away?

Father Christmas: **(Rather indignant)** Throw socks away! I wouldn't throw socks away because they had holes in the heels, or toes. I'd darn them Lichen. I'm very good at mending.

Elvis: Perhaps they were worn out all over the place then? Some must be quite old.

Father Christmas: **(Indignant)** Old?? Most of those socks are nearly new! Only two hundred years in fact! Good goat hair socks. Plenty of wear left in them!

Rudolph: Where do you think your other socks are? **(A sudden thought)** Have you any in your wash basket?

Father Christmas: **(Rather embarrassed)** Oh dear, um, well – **(Trails off)**

Moss: Well – Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: Well, you see, being so busy with Christmas Moss, I've got a bit behind with my washing. My niece Milla did offer when she visited, but I couldn't let her, of course. **(Points)** They're er, in the wash basket.

Elvis: **(Cheerily)** Oh, that's not a problem Father Christmas. We've time to wash and dry a pair or two by the fire for you!

Father Christmas: **(Graciously)** That would be most kind elves, thank you.

(Everyone troops to the wash basket)

Rudolph: **(Peers inside)** It's very dark inside the wash basket. I'll hold my red nose over it, so you can see. **(Leans over with his red nose. A red nose that illuminates would be a bonus.)**

Fern: **(Cheerily plunges a hand into wash basket)** I'm sure we'll soon find you a pair of matching socks Father Christmas. **(Cries out in surprise and jumps back)** Ouch! Ouch! Ouch! There's something prickly in there! **(Rubs hand.)**

Father Christmas: **(Remembering)** Ah – ah – oh dear! - The little hedgehog must have come back to hibernate! It won't wake up until spring now. We mustn't disturb it.

Elvis: **(Positively)** I've had a good idea Father Christmas - Old Samu in the workshop is a very quick knitter. He can start knitting you a pair of socks right away!

Father Christmas: **(Shakes head)** Oh that will never do Elvis! I can't spare elves for knitting me socks! **(Insistent)** The most important thing is to finish the children's toys. Every boy and girl in the world must have a toy.

Twiggy: **(Points)** What's in the basket over there Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: **(A bit shamefaced)** Ah, hmm, that's my mending basket Twiggy. With being so busy, I'm afraid I've got a bit behind with that too

Twiggy: **(Cheerily)** Perhaps there's a sock in there that matches. We elves can soon patch it up for you!

Father Christmas: That would be most kind elves, thank you.

(All troop over to mending basket)

Thistle: **(Peers into mending basket)** Oo, it's very dark inside the mending basket.

Rudolph: **(Helpfully)** I'll shine my red nose over it so you can see.

Lichen: **(Cautiously puts hand into basket.)** Oh, oooh, aaaaah, this basket isn't prickly - it's lovely and soft and furry – and purr-ey!

Moss: **(Peering into basket)** Let me see! **(Exclaims)** - It's a cat and three tiny kittens!

Elves: **(Gather round and look. All)** Aaahh.

Father Christmas: **(Remembering)** Oh – ah – yes, mm, that's the little stray I let in from the cold. **(Shakes head)** We can't disturb her until the kittens are older.

(Elves & Rudolph scratch heads, all thinking hard.)

Rudolph: Father Christmas - you know how you use an odd sock for this and an odd sock for that. Perhaps one of those odd socks might match one you've got?

Father Christmas: **(Reminiscing)** I do remember a time, about eighty years ago, when one of the windows was rattling in the winter wind, and I wedged a sock in the frame to stop it rattling.

Thistle: Which window was it, Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: The one that was rattling of course. **(Points to a representation of a window with a pink sock sticking out.)**

(Elves all troop to window)

Lichen: **(Pulls out pink sock and holds it up to audience)** A *pink* sock. Does it match any of the others?

(Audience hopefully say no.)

Father Christmas: Oh, dear me! Let me think – oh yes, there was another time, about one hundred years ago, when the snow was creeping under one of the doors, and I stuffed a sock under it.

Moss: Which door was it, Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: The one the snow was creeping under of course **(Points to a representation of a door with an orange sock sticking out)** - that door over there Moss.

(Elves & Rudolph all troop over to door)

Fern: **(Pulls out the orange sock from bottom of door & holds it up.)** An *orange* sock. Does it match any of the others?

(Audience hopefully say no.)

Father Christmas: **(Thinking)** - Let me have another think – oh yes, and about one hundred and fifty years ago, I remember a hole in a wall where the mice were creeping through. They nibbled some chocolates a nice little girl in Amsterdam in Holland had sent me. **(Crossly)** I was quite cross about that.

Twiggy: Which wall was it, Father Christmas?

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Father Christmas: **(Points)** That one the mice were creeping through of course.

(Elves & Rudolph all troop to wall where a yellow sock with purple spots is sticking through)

Twiggy: **(Pulls out sock)** It's a *yellow sock with purple spots*. Can anyone see another one?

Audience: **(After checking)** No.

Elvis: Are there any other odd socks anywhere Father Christmas?

Father Christmas: Well, there's the wind sock on top of the house of course. The last one blew away two hundred years ago.

Rudolph: Oh, Father Christmas, we can't do without the wind sock! We reindeer have to take off against the wind.

Father Christmas: **(Kindly)** Indeed, indeed. Taking off with the wind is far too hard for you all. You have to know which way the wind is blowing.

Elvis: **(Urgently)** Father Christmas, it will soon be time for you to go! We must find you two matching socks! Do you think there are any socks in places where you don't need them?'

Father Christmas: **(Puzzled)** Where I don't need them? I wouldn't have put them there in the first place if I didn't need them! There's the scarecrow **(Enter scarecrow)** in my vegetable garden, but he can't do without his socks.

Scarecrow: **(Holds out arm to show sock of seeds)** And the birds can't do without your old sock full of seeds this snowy weather.

Father Christmas: **(Kindly)** They certainly can't scarecrow, they certainly can't.

Pipkin: **(Enthusiastic)** What we need is something that we haven't thought of!

Thistle: That's probably why we haven't thought of it.

(SFX. Sleigh bells.)

Lichen: I'll go and see who it is. **(Exits)**

Lichen: **(Enters carrying brown paper parcel)** Reindeer Express delivery for you Father Christmas. **(Hands Father Christmas parcel)**

Father Christmas: For me? **(Looks at handwriting on parcel)** Oh, how lovely, it's from my niece Milla. **(Shakes parcel, then squeeze it)** I think it's a hat. How very nice of Milla to send me a warm hat for Christmas. She's a wonderful knitter. But I mustn't open it before Christmas.'

Moss: Ooh, let me have a guess please. **(Gently squeezes parcel then declares)** I think it's a scarf!

Rudolph: Oooh let me feel it with my nose. I'll tell you what's inside. **(Feels with nose then declares firmly)** It's a hot water bottle cover.

Fern: Why not ask some of the children to squeeze the parcel, and guess what it is?

Elf or Scarecrow: I'll take it round! **(Takes parcel to random children in audience, letting them have a little squeeze of parcel, and guess. Repeat the guesses loudly if rest of audience can't hear.)**

Rudolph: **(Craftily)** But what if it's a delicious pudding, or cake – or fish – shouldn't we open it – in case it goes off?

Father Christmas: Hmm, in that case, perhaps it should be opened. **(To audience)** Should we open it children?

Audience: Yes.

Father Christmas: **(To audience)** Who'd like to open the parcel? **(Invite a volunteer onto stage)**

(Volunteer opens parcel and gets out socks that are tied together, so only top sock is seen)

Father Christmas: **(Enthusiastic as he looks at top sock)** Wonderful! A lovely pair of green socks to wear tonight!

Elves: **(Together, loud)** Hurrah!
Rudolph: **(Together, loud)** Hurrah!
Scarecrow: **(Together, loud)** Hurrah!

(Father Christmas unties the socks and gasps - there is only one green sock – the other has Christmas trees on. He holds the two odd socks up. Elves, Rudolph & Scarecrow loud gasp)

Father Christmas: **(Scratches head, puzzled)** That's odd. That's very odd. Milla has sent me an odd pair of socks!

(If anyone in audience shouts that they match a pair on stage, ad lib for a short while, then read letter.)

Scarecrow: There's a letter with the parcel.

Father Christmas: **(Reads letter aloud)** 'My dear Uncle Niklaus, when I visited you, I noticed that you were getting very low on socks. I noticed too how many good odd socks there are in your sock box. So, I have knitted you two socks to match two of them. See if you can find them! With love from Milla.'

Elvis: **(To audience – if not already found)** Can anyone see socks to match?

(Audience will shout out and two matching pairs are found. Have a bit of fun with the finding of the socks; e.g. mismatch a couple.)

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Father Christmas: **(Puts on a pair of socks. Shows audience.)** That's much better! Now, it must be nearly time to go. Are you ready Rudolph?

Rudolph: Ready Father Christmas.

Elvis: We've loaded the sleigh for you.

Father Christmas: **(Waves)** Goodbye everyone – and thank you for helping.

Everyone sing: We Wish you a Happy Christmas, or similar.

THE END