

# POETS' PAGE



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## ELFINETTA's E.T.s

by Wanda Sue Parrott

*(This political spoof set during the Bush II Administration won the 2008 Sleuth's Ink Mystery Writers Mistress of Mayhem Award.)*

Shouting "Where's Santa Claus?" Elfinetta thought: *well-done dead or my Christmas goose is cooked*. Lusty squeaks and squeals responded as Elfinetta surveyed thousands of pointed gray faces around holly-festooned toy tables in Santa's North Pole compound. The sharp-eared imitation elves banged their fists. "Food! Food! Food!"

"SILENCE!" their surrogate mom said. "If Grandpa and Grandma Claus aren't here soon, we'll have our holiday feast without them. Crisp tenders in orange sauce with raisins." The crone licked her lips.

Mouse-shaped faces slurped. "Yummm."

"Now sit still. Trust me. I promise food good enough to die for."

Elfinetta rushed toward the kitchen, stopping in the freezer where Mrs. Claus was wriggling on a meat hook. "Sorry, ma'am. This's the president's fault."

Mrs. Claus' eyelids clicked. She belched an "O" steam-ring when Elfinetta hefted her to the floor. "Is this an alien invasion?"

"No ma'am. When your elves struck for higher wages, the President vetoed their walkout..."

"I know..."

"So no child would be left behind..."

"You mean left without Christmas?"

"Exactly. He sent my gaggle of genetic goofs to replace your elves."

"Those things aren't aliens?"

"I'm Doctor Etta Moon, geneticist. I spliced mice cells and human cells. Since he's a right-to-lifer, he vetoed their destruction."

"Did he dub you Elfinetta? He nicknames everyone."

"Dubya dubbed me man-mouse-mom. And them? Cheap labor."

"Well, I'll swan."

"You'll what?"

"It's Ozarkese for I'll be danged."

"You're a hillbilly?"

"Was. I left Possum Holler by eloping with Santa. Snuck aboard his sleigh."

Elfinetta frowned. "What's alien about my little monsters?"

"They look like Grays."

"They're terrestrials. Dubya's reasoning is that Christmas is more profitable than even mideastern oil.

"What about Bubba Claus?"

Elfinetta shoved Mrs. Claus toward the kitchen, where Santa's red suit lay crumpled beside the oven. "He's roasting in M&M-size bits soaked in orange-flavored anti-freeze."

"That's deadly poison!"

"Those creatures reproduce overnight. They're cannibals! I killed your husband to save humanity."

Mrs. Claus guffawed. "Wrong!"

"Why do you laugh?"

"You didn't kill Santa Claus!"

"Then who's the fat guy I whacked unconscious, then diced up and marinated?"

"Karl Rove."

"No!"

"Yes."

"But Rove's bald. With his wig and whiskers, he looked just like Santa."

"That's why Mister President assigned him this mission."

Elfinetta gasped. "But, Rove resigned."

"So the public thinks," Mrs. Claus said, peeking in the oven. "He was an undercover agent doubling as my Bubba."

“Why?”

“The president reassigned my husband to a profit-making mission.”

Elfinetta was speechless.

Mrs. Claus smiled. “Ambassador Claus is in China, negotiating a cheap deal, outsourcing the elves' jobs. Now, let me help you.”

The women carried the tray of steaming tenders to a sideboard. Elfinetta asked, “What about us?”

“You and me?”

“No. Me and my brood. I begged the president to let me abort the mission.”

“And you're doing a good job, dear. Your dinner smells scrumptious.” Mrs. Claus offered Elfinetta a chunk of Karl. “You know the saying: the kitchen is a woman's spiritual domain. Well, this's my kitchen, not yours!” She grabbed a meat cleaver, but shrill screeching slurps interrupted.

Elfinetta spotted the surging sea of ratlikke rodents filling the hallway, ranting for food, food food. “Since dinner didn't come to them, they're coming to dinner!”

Fingers that had nimbly painted eyelashes on porcelain doll faces, and spread glue on little kids' plastic big wheels and toy guns, were now unsheathed weapons that clawed, ripped and tore across the floor and into each other. Instinctively following the succulent scent of supper, the stronger creatures were devouring the weakest ones in their scramble for survival.

Elfinetta snatched the cleaver from Mrs. Claus and hurled it at the leader, whose once-shiny black eyes were glowing red. It glanced off his shoulder, knocking him to all fours. He spotted Mrs. Claus and drooled, growling: Grandma, Grandma, Grandma. His followers echoed the chant.

“Egads!” Elfinetta screamed. “They thought I was serving you for dinner! How do we get out of here?”

“I'll take the window. You take that side door. Slam it hard so it clicks. That'll trap them inside.”

Elfinetta sprinted past the sideboard, knocking the tray to the floor. Pea-sized tenders spilled into a lopsided star. Elfinetta saluted the mess, then ran outside.

She trailed Mrs. Claus to the corral. The lady in red said, “I'll take Dancer. You take Prancer. I hope you know how to ride bareback.”

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The president had just settled down for a long winter nap, when out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, he sprang from his bed to see what was the

matter; then what to his wondering eyes did appear, but two haggard old women on flying reindeer.

They crashed atop the White House Christmas tree. Lights flickered. The tree went dark. The president laughed. "Turd Blossom, you jokester. Merry Christmas to you, too."

A Secret Serviceman burst into the room. "Mister President, come quick! Those women bear tidings of bad cheer." He dragged the president, in his undershorts, into the cold night.

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