

POY!  
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## COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

Everyone present, including tots, help tell this story

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Have some good laughs during parties or family gatherings while keeping Christ in Christmas. The story takes about 10 minutes.

Prepare:

- Participants merely shout a brief phrase whenever they hear their assigned name.
- Assign one or more parts to everyone. As you assign parts, let participants practice shouting their response.

Parts for individuals

Dr. Bugzapper: “What have we here?”  
Handsome Henry: “Never fear! Heroic Hank is here!”  
Famished Fred: “I’m so hungry I could eat a moose!”  
Fluffy FLO: “Oh, somebody save us!”  
Mother Fidget: “Where in the world did I leave them?”  
Baron Joykiller: “I’ll take care of you! Ha ha ha!” (*Laugh fiendishly*)  
Narrator: (*Read the story melodramatically, and pause after capitalized names to let folks respond.*)

Parts for one or more persons.

If more than one, shout in unison.

If small children are present, at least one adult should do these parts to prompt the tots.

Cinnamon: “Clip clop, clip clop. Neigh!”  
Drowsy bear: (*Growl loudly*)  
Potlicker: “Bow-wow-wow!”  
North Wind: “Oooooooooo”  
Rusty rifle: “Ker-blam!”  
Huffy Puffy: “Choo choo! Wooo woo!”  
Joygivers: “Merry Christmas, Jesus’ joyful birthday!”

Narrator (*Read*):

### **Episode 1: Night Visitor.**

The Bugzapper family lived in old Russia. At supper, the father was telling his three grown children the story of Christmas, which was only ten days away. Suddenly the door flew open and hit the wall with a bang as loud as their old RUSTY RIFLE [*Ker-blam!*]

Icy air blew out the oil lamp. “Aha!” cried DR. BUGZAPPER [*What have we here?*]

“The Tsar’s soldiers, maybe, or thieves,” he warned in the dark. “Who’s there?”

Then, snarling as he ran to the door, was fuzzy little white POTLICKER [*Bow-wow-wow!*]

“We’ll all be slain!” wailed the daughter, FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

“It’s just the wind. I’d light the lamp but I’ve lost my glasses,” complained MOTHER FIDGET [*Oh, where’d I leave them?*]

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“They’re on top of your head!” said her younger son. “Let’s shut the door or we’ll freeze. Oh, I can’t find my fork in the dark!” whined FAMISHED FRED [*I’m so hungry I could eat a moose!*]

“Stop talking with your mouth full of sausage!” jeered his older brother. “I’ll go shut the door,” said older son, HANDSOME HENRY [*Never fear! Heroic Hank is here!*]

The brave lad shut the door and returned, saying, “No one’s there.” But then they heard a horse neigh outside. Answering from the barn was CINNAMON [*Clip clop, clip clop. Neigh!*]

Bang! Bang! came knocks at the door. “Robbers!” cried FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

She begged, “Oh, I’m afraid, but maybe some poor soul is freezing out there!”

Henry carefully opened the door, and out rushed POTLICKER [*Bow-wow-wow!*]

In rushed the angry, stinging NORTH WIND [*Ooooo*]

“Brrrr! I need my rabbit fur mittens!” cried MOTHER FIDGET [*Oh, where’d I leave them?*]

“You’re sitting on them!” answered her daughter. “Oh! A man came in! He’s there in the shadows,” cried FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

“Where did our dog go?” Asked the doctor in the dark.

“He bit my ankle!” responded the intruder. “I’m the postman. Pardon my coming so late, but this letter says *Urgent*. Someone please light a lamp.”

With relief, shouted JOYGIVERS [*Merry Christmas, Jesus’ joyful birthday!*]

The doctor read the letter. “It’s from the mayor of Forgotten Mesa, a Siberian mining town that’s never heard about Jesus. Oh, oh!” cried DR. BUGZAPPER [*What have we here?*]

### **Episode 2: Mad Moose.**

“They have an epidemic of Mad Moose disease, and need the vaccine I developed. Without it, a thousand people will die in six days! That’s Christmas! But Forgotten Mesa is far, the railroad is slow and its high trestles are perilous!”

“It’s all right, replied HANDSOME HENRY [*Never fear! Heroic Hank is here!*].

“There’s more,” the doctor said. “The mayor heard our Christmas is joyful and peaceful, and asks us to tell his villagers about it. They only gripe about the cold, drink vodka and fight. Let’s go! We’ll leave at once for the depot of HUFFY PUFFY” [*Choo Choo. Wooo wooo!*]

“Load the sled,” urged the doctor. “I’ll hitch it to CINNAMON” [*Clip clop, clip clop. Neigh!*]

“Oh, not so hastily!” begged FAMISHED FRED [*I’m so hungry I could eat a moose!*]

“Look! Another paper is in the envelope. Aha!” said DR. BUGZAPPER [*What have we here?*]

“A map of Forgotten Mesa! Beyond the last train stop, we’ll cross a mountain. We’ll must take our horse and sleigh with us on the train.” They prayed in Jesus’ name for a safe trip, packed food and blankets, and the sled carried them to the train depot, pulled by CINNAMON [*Clip Clop, Clip Clop! Neigh!*]

While loading the horse on a freight car, something stirred in a dark corner; it rose up and roared. They had awakened the hibernating DROWSY BEAR [*Growl loudly!*]

“Help!” screamed FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

“Stay calm,” ordered HANDSOME HENRY [*Never fear! Heroic Hank is here!*]

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He aimed RUSTY RIFLE [*Ker-blam!*]

As usual, it missed. Startled, the chubby bear climbed down with heavy grunts from the freight car. Taking credit for driving him off was POTLICKER [*Bow-wow-wow!*]

The train jerked and clanked, and they chugged past and snow-laden trees, counting the days left—six, five, four... Hank opened a window, looked out, and soot covered his face. Clickety-click, clickety-click, went the wheels of HUFFY PUFFY [*Choo Choo. Wooo wooo!*]

Having climbed into an empty car, rode along with them DROWSY BEAR [*Growl loudly*].

### **Episode 3: Evil Baron.**

With three days to go, they discussed Christmas. God had come to earth, born as a man to save us. “Greetings, my friends!” interrupted a tall man in black. He swept off a high silk hat and bowed. He had a slim, black mustache and a gold chain hung from his monocle. He was greeted by JOYGIVERS [*Merry Christmas, Jesus’ joyful birthday!*]

The man smiled a crooked smile, which bothered POTLICKER [*Bow-wow-wow!*]

The stranger kicked the dog, and it ran yipping. With a twisted grin, the man asked why they traveled so far north. The doctor explained the life-saving vaccine for Forgotten Mesa, and showed him the map. He sneered, “Your map is obsolete. I’ll show you a shorter way.” He sipped from a flask, and then drew a straighter line on the map to Forgotten Mesa. He then winked at the daughter. “How fortunate, my lovely lass, that I met you in time!” purred BARON JOYKILLER [*I will take care of you! Ha ha ha!*]

She pointed out to the baron that his route crossed a deep canyon. “Oh, dear! We’ll fall to our death!” cried FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

“There’s nothing to fear, my beauty,” replied the man in black.

They got off the wheezing train with two days to go. Having taken a liking to the family, also climbed down unseen from his car DROWSY BEAR [*Growl*]

### **Episode 4: Spooky Bats.**

“Which way do we go?” asked the mother. “Can I see the map? I need my reading glasses!” whined MOTHER FIDGET [*Oh, where’d I leave them?*]

“In your purse!” the son replied, hitching up CINNAMON [*Clip Clop, Clip Clop! Neigh!*]

They trekked up the trail that the baron had designated. It ended at a dark, gaping hole in a mountainside, marked by crosses.

“Aha!” said DR. BUGZAPPER [*What have we here?*]

“An abandoned mine! Crosses stand for miners who died. That baron deceived us. We forgot to pray before we came this way. Oh, look out!”

Bats were flying jerkily out of the black hole. Cried FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

“Back to the train depot!” moaned the doctor. “We’ve only one day before the villagers die, and we have to cross a mountain.”

“Wait!” begged FAMISHED FRED [*I’m so hungry I could eat a moose!*]

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### Episode 5: Final Countdown.

Meanwhile, the baron coveted Forgotten Mesa's mine, and devised a lie in order to possess it. "Mr. Mayor, I'm the doctor with the vaccine and will administer it after I've dined," said BARON JOYKILLER [*I will take care of you! Ha ha ha!*]

The mayor thanked him and asked why Christmas made some people happy.

The baron hesitated. "Christmas? Oh, yes! Common folk gorge themselves, give gifts they can't afford, put up silly decorations and drink in excess." He shouted above the din of NORTH WIND [*Ooooo*]

The mayor said they already did all those things but still found no real joy at Christmas.

"My good man!" snarled the baron, "It's because you lack the flashiest Christmas celebration of all—explosions! Bring me a box of dynamite!"

Before dawn, the villain toted the dynamite to the bridge, attached it, and hid, holding the detonator. Soon he heard CINNAMON [*Clip Clop, Clip Clop! Neigh!*]

The sled stopped halfway across the high bridge, and the family discussed how to tell the villagers about Christmas. God but was born as a man, died and rose again to give us eternal life. "Grrrr!" interrupted POTLUCKER [*Bow-wow-wow!*]

The dog tracked the baron's scent across the bridge. The bear had come, too, and joined the dog. Aiming a pistol at the bear, cried BARON JOYKILLER [*I will take care of you! Ha ha ha!*]

The dog caught the baron's sleeve as he shot, and the bear fell.

The doctor spied wires and saw the baron raise the detonator. "Aha!" cried DR. BUGZAPPER [*What have we here?*]

"Get off the bridge!" Screamed FLUFFY FLO [*Oh, somebody save us!*]

The villain jeered, "You, my dear family, will die when I count down from three." He lifted the detonator. "Three! Two!" he counted slowly, savoring the sadistic suspense. "One! Merry Christmas, you fools!" cried BARON JOYKILLER [*I will take care of you! Ha ha ha!*]

The bullet had grazed the bear's head; it came to, and rose behind the baron. As he cried "zero" two furry arms closed around his chest, and the horrified family heard his ribs crack. The bear flung him into the chasm; down, down he fell. Screams echoed back and forth between the canyon walls. Turning, the bear ambled into the woods, its job done.

The tired family reached the mountaintop. "Ah!" cried DR. BUGZAPPER [*What have we here?*]

They were in Forgotten Mesa! "Here's the vaccine!" cried HANDSOME HENRY [*Never fear! Heroic Hank is here!*]

"In time!" cried the mayor. "It's Christmas Eve. We're saved from Mad Moose disease!"

The villagers recovered, and the mayor begged the family, "Tell us about Christmas."

They did so, and later the mayor told them, "Christmas is joyful now; we trust in Jesus."

They all sang, thanked God and ate moose steaks. Children joined hands and skipped, and angels above rejoiced to see a thousand new JOYGIVERS [*Merry Christmas, Jesus' joyful birthday!*]

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Narrator: Have small children join hands and skip in a circle while the adults sing *Joy to the World* or another carol that exalts Jesus.