

# Santa Soaked

## A Story for All Ages



As told by Santa Claus  
with Carl Lindemann  
Illustrated by Milandi Coetzer

**For the rising legions of  
young climate activists  
- whatever their age**

**SANTA SOAKED**  
A Story for All Ages

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents either are used fictitiously or are from the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

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First Edition - *θύμοι καὶ θυμοί*

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**[SantaSoaked.net](http://SantaSoaked.net)**



## WHY THIS BOOK?

*Santa Soaked* is a much-needed update to a tale that has been largely unchanged for over a century. Today, Santa's home at the North Pole is melting along with the rest of the Arctic. His story must adapt or it is at risk of becoming outdated or worse – a climate-denial myth.

While this turn may seem a break from the past, it is a return to roots. Santa has wandered far from his origins in Saint Nicholas, Patron Saint of Children. His bright and sunny gift-giving presence now casts a deep shadow. He's become the Patron Saint of Consumerism, inviting kids to embrace a lifestyle that darkens their future.

Here, Santa's life after the North Pole offers a fresh start. Losing his home speaks to more than the kids he serves. For many grown-ups, the world of hope and possibility we grew up in has vanished. Now, we only hope that our worst fears for ourselves and our children aren't realized as the climate crisis threatens to shatter civilization.

Santa's spiritual rude awakening on climate brings young and old together for a crucial conversation that is long overdue. My hope is that this instills awareness and inspires action. From there, we shall find our way back home to a better tomorrow.

- Carl Lindemann  
Cape Town, South Africa  
5<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

UNLESS someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better.  
It's not.

- Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

Les grandes personnes ne comprennent  
jamais rien toutes seules, et c'est fatigant,  
pour les enfants, de toujours et toujours  
leur donner des explications.

- Saint-Exupéry, *Le Petit Prince*






You may wonder  
why I didn't fuss  
when icicles dripped,  
then snow turned to slush.

And, to boot,  
it was sweaty  
in my big red suit!


Why, why didn't I  
wonder why?

There's a simple something  
you never should forget.  
When you live on floating ice,  
melting is a major threat.





I won't forget when  
the ice cracks came.  
Those little lines  
grew into vines.



They crept across our workshop,  
and reached from roof to floor.  
We hoped that this was all,  
and there'd be nothing more.



What happened next  
was not so nice.  
A crumbling wall went  
through the ice.

I shouted a warning,

"Everybody out!"

My helpers took the quickest route.



I went back in  
to save the list  
of all the things  
that kids had wished.

It was in my arms, then...  
I started to leave **when...**





# Splash!

Water washed me  
through and through.  
I was in the ocean blue.



Dunking down, then bobbing up,  
getting soaked sure shook me up!

My helpers hauled me out  
as the workshop fell in.

Try to imagine  
the incredible din:

Whoosh! Kerplunk!  
AH-  
WHOOM!!!



What a fright  
to see it sink  
out of sight!

Down went  
a treasure  
of toys, clothes,  
cookies and cake.  
Losing these gifts  
was such a heartache.

But no one was lost, and not everything.  
Somehow our bunkhouse was still standing.  
The wish list, too, had survived.  
We brought it and ourselves inside.

The helpers were

full

of questions.



"What happened?"



"Should we stay or go?"

They looked to me for things I just didn't know.



I looked to the list  
for something strange,  
and found there's been  
a frightful change.

Tornadoes terrified Terrance and Tyler.  
Typhoons troubled Tyrese and Tirzah.  
Tamara and Tommy, too -  
they all had weather worry wishes.  
That's what I found just in the T's,  
then the same from the A's to the Z's.

So, we weren't alone  
with our troubles at home.  
Children were telling us it's  
roasting, flooding or bone dry.  
We didn't know the reason why.





The kids would know.  
They always do.  
If I asked them,  
I'd know, too.

So I set out to travel,  
to see them to unravel  
the weird weather mystery.





First, I went to Siberia,  
where I met with Alina  
who was feeling down.

A brown stinky cloud  
of smoke like a shroud  
was choking her town.

This is what she told me:

"I speak of the fire  
and the forests they burn.  
Raccoon and reindeer, bird and bear  
- those are my friends living in there."

I wondered what had caused the blaze.  
She answered with a sorrowful gaze.



Kai lived near the Great Barrier Reef,  
with an ocean love turned to grief.

"I speak of the water,"  
they said, holding back tears.

"This home for creatures has started to fail.  
The coral has gotten all brittle and pale.  
Everything's sickly from minnow to whale."

When I asked the what, how, and why,  
they broke down and had a good cry.





Amparo lived on her family's farm  
where the land had come to harm.

"I speak of the earth," she said.

"Rain pours down to drown our crops.  
Hard times here till the flooding stops."

As to the cause, she wouldn't say.

"It doesn't help when kids explain.  
We've tried telling grownups time  
and time, again and again and again."



Rahil was from Mozambique  
where his life had become bleak.  
He wondered if and when  
he would have a home again.

"I speak of the wind," he said.

"A cyclone swept our village one day.  
We were lucky. We got away.  
Then as we started on our way back,  
a second storm hit the very same track."

Asking why, I got more of the same.  
When kids lose trust, who's to blame?





Hiranya's bothers  
were not like the others.  
There was something  
that wasn't quite right.

She had her own room,  
so sunny and bright.  
In each and every  
shelf and nook,  
a cuddly toy  
or a book.

If happiness was had  
by having stuff,  
you'd think, for sure,  
she had enough.

But she'd sent  
such a sorrowful wish.  
What could be so amiss  
that she hoped...for hope?





Before I could ask,  
she took me to task.

"What are you doing here?  
It's the wrong time of year."

I told her my mission  
and, in addition,  
the troubles the other kids face.

"I don't know what's going on.  
Asking hasn't gone so well.  
It seems that no one wants to tell."

Hiranya looked me in the eye,  
and said she'd give it a try.  
But first, she made a sad sigh.

"Adults who don't know  
and those that do -  
what's the difference  
between the two?  
Who cares for us? Do you?"

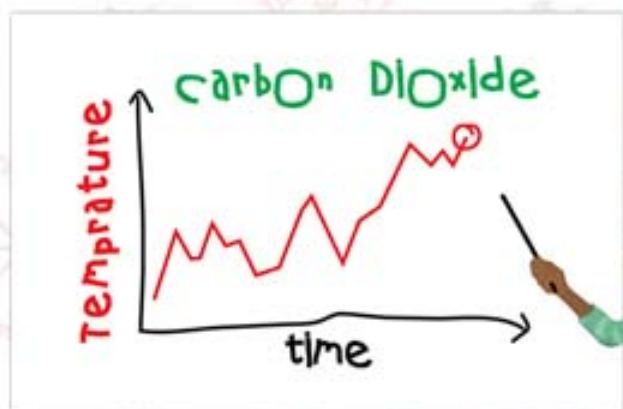
Then she gave a worrying warning  
of a world that's warming.

"Fumes from factory and farm  
are causing the harm  
plus everything else spewing smoke.

What's worse? It's getting worse,  
and it isn't easy to reverse."

She tossed out terms like  
"mass extinction" and  
"loss of biodiversity."

Well, I've never been to university,  
so some things were a mystery.  
But you don't need a PhD  
to know that this means misery.







She asked to see if I care  
about so much that isn't fair.

"Who gets to clean this climate mess?  
Kids get stuck, that's my guess.  
Today's adults won't be around.  
They'll be sleeping in the ground."

Hiranya called out  
an awful evil with a gnarly name:

## THE INIQUITY OF INEQUITY

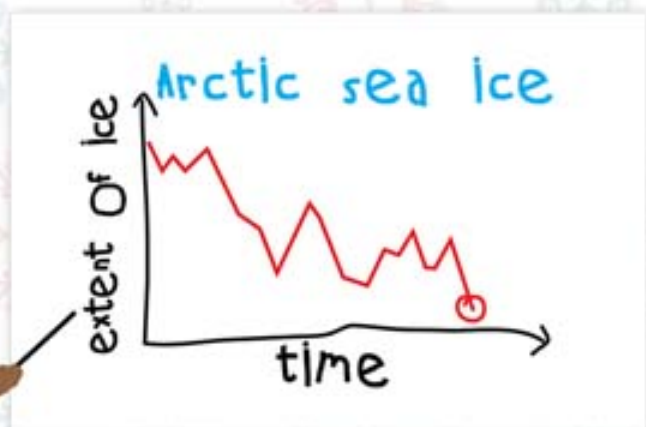
"Poverty, bigotry, gender and race,  
how they're linked is a shameful disgrace.

The uber-rich have an itch  
to give us the ditch.

Billionaires gorge their greed  
as billions suffer in their need.

When Elon Musk's not selling cars,  
he's banking on his move to Mars."





Suddenly, she had a thought that could have left her quite distraught.

"Now, the Arctic ice is melting fast. How long can your home there last?"

I told her how I'd gotten soaked. To my surprise, that got her stoked.

"So, your workshop's been deep-sixed. You're free to help us get this fixed!"

She said that we must rearrange a dreadful lot to get real change.

"Adults in charge, the  
leaders of our nations,  
talk and talk and talk and talk  
in endless conversations.  
They make a lot of ballyhoo.  
The time to act is overdue."

That stopped me cold,  
and started me to thinking.  
I think I thought until I think.  
And then I knew  
just what it is we ought to do.

"Success depends on you and  
your friends leading my team."

Hiranya approved, got on the move,  
and was soon in the groove.





She spoke of protest, strike,  
and other actions of the like.

"We must be bold  
if we're to hold  
adults to account!"

Well, I'm the Holly-Jolly guy.  
Protest's not my thing, but I'll try!

Then she suggested something  
that's really got me going.

Let's come up with wondrous ways  
for happy, healthy holidays.

Like, why cut down a Christmas tree?  
Come, gather friends and plant with me!

These aren't just for yuletide cheer,  
but for every day of the year.

We hugged and then parted.  
That's how we got started  
out on our new path.





Heading back, I had a feeling,  
watching warming everywhere.  
Soon, we would be leaving  
the home we'd cherished there.

My helpers and I,  
we gathered inside  
to discuss and decide  
where to go and what to do.

I told of where I'd traveled  
and how the children had unraveled  
the weird weather mystery.

"What kids need  
and nothing less  
is help to fix  
this climate mess."

The helpers cheered and all agreed,  
it's best to let the children lead.



They also had a great idea  
for where we ought  
to go from here.

"Let's tell the story you just told,  
so everyone both young and old,  
will be in-the-know.  
Once the clueless have a clue,  
there's so much more for us to do."

And so I wrote  
this book for you.

Without our workshop,  
it's the only gift I've got.  
But there's another  
I've thought about a lot.  
It's one, together,  
we shall make:  
a better future  
not just for our children,  
but for their  
children's  
children's  
children's sake.

*The End*

*...of a New Beginning*





# Santa's Gifting Ways

*Santa Soaked* aims to raise awareness and action on the climate crisis. Key to this is reconnecting with what's truly worthwhile. That's why I follow Santa's example by not offering this for sale. Instead, it brings me joy to gift this to you. Please visit [SantaSoaked.net/gifting](https://SantaSoaked.net/gifting) for insight into how gifting reawakens our sense of value.

Gifting is a mutual, abundant relationship. If you find value in *Santa Soaked*, here's a few items on my wish list:

First, **gift this book** to family, friends and associates by sharing this link: [SantaSoaked.net/a-gift-for-you](https://SantaSoaked.net/a-gift-for-you).

Better yet, gather friends and family to read it out loud! If you like that, you'll love this: gift your time and talent to **participate in climate storytelling workshops** using this book. Please visit [SantaSoaked.net/storytelling](https://SantaSoaked.net/storytelling) for how these heal climate despair by building community.

Finally, if circumstances permit, **a monetary gift is most appreciated**. Whatever sum suits your situation! Again, please visit [SantaSoaked.net/gifting](https://SantaSoaked.net/gifting) or write to [gifts@santasoaked.net](mailto:gifts@santasoaked.net) for more information.

P.S. little or no French? Here's the Saint-Exupéry quote: *The Big People never understand anything on their own, and it is exhausting for children to be endlessly explaining things to them.*

## Santa's Helpers

**Carl Lindemann** began his ministry at [Phillips Exeter Academy](#) and [First Church in Salem, MA \(Unitarian\)](#). He maintains a [Vipassana meditation practice](#) and serves on the advisory board of the [Cape Town Interfaith Initiative](#).

**Milandi Coetzer** is an all-around South African creative. Her roots are in fine arts, branching out from furniture and graphic design to illustration.