

PROMPT:

For simplicity, just use character names Elf 1, Elf 2, Elf 3 and Santa. Write a dialogue in playscript form, one that will fill an A4 sheet in 12pt type, most lines fairly short with some a bit longer. It's pitched for Year 5 and 6 to be able to read out loud as reader's theatre. The elves are unhappy with their pay and working conditions and have formed a union to bargain for an improvement. Make it funny. Have the elves as disgruntled a bit like a stereotypical union leader, and Santa as rather taken aback, putting his foot in it with his responses. Make sure it finishes on a short line that's amusing and Christmassy.

A NORTH POLE NEGOTIATION

(A short reader's-theatre script for Year 5–6)

Elf 1: Right, everyone, meeting called to order!

Elf 2: Hear, hear!

Elf 3: And ho-ho-HOLD it right there — Santa's just arrived.

Santa: Er... hello, my little helpers! Why the serious faces?

Elf 1: We're not *little helpers* today, Santa.

Elf 2: We're the **North Pole Toymakers' Union, Local 1225**.

Elf 3: And we have... *demands*.

Santa: Demands? I thought you just wanted extra candy canes.

Elf 1: That's part of it.

Elf 2: But only the *minty* ones.

Elf 3: The stripy ones cause chaos in the workshop. Sticky tools everywhere.

Santa: I see... well, perhaps we could tidy—

Elf 1: Oh no, Santa. This is bigger than tidying.

Elf 2: We're here about **pay**.

Elf 3: And **working conditions**.

Santa: Working conditions? You work in a magical workshop! With music! And sparkles!

Elf 1: Sparkles don't pay the reindeer feed, Santa.

Elf 2: And music doesn't fix the frozen lunchroom door.

Elf 3: I've been stuck in there twice this week. The sandwiches were fine. *I* was not.

Santa: Well... well... perhaps you could warm the door with Christmas spirit?

Elf 1: We tried that.

Elf 2: All we got was frostbite in festive shapes.

Santa: Oh dear. All right then — what exactly are you asking for?

Elf 3: We've prepared a list.

Elf 1: Item one: a **pay rise**.

Elf 2: Item two: a **proper lunch break**, not "eat while you glue."

Elf 3: Item three: **protective mittens** for the Glitter Cannon.

Santa: The Glitter Cannon only misfires occasionally!

Elf 1: Last week it turned my beard turquoise.

Elf 2: And last Friday it glued Elf 3 to the wrapping machine.

Elf 3: I'm still finding bows in my socks.

Santa: Look, I'm sure we can come to some sort of... arrangement—

Elf 1: Negotiation, Santa.

Elf 2: Bargaining.

Elf 3: *Solidarity.*

Santa: Right, yes, of course. Bargain away! But remember — Christmas is nearly here! There's no time for strikes!

Elf 1: We don't *want* to strike.

Elf 2: But we *will* picket the gingerbread house.

Elf 3: And we'll chant loudly. Very loudly.

Santa: Please don't do that. Mrs Claus is baking. She startles easily.

Elf 1: Then meet us halfway.

Elf 2: A fair deal for all!

Elf 3: And maybe a second heater for the workshop — my ears keep freezing in amusing shapes.

Santa: Oh fine! Fine! You win! A pay rise, proper breaks, and new mittens.

Elf 1: Excellent.

Elf 2: Sensible.

Elf 3: Triumphant.

Santa: But in return, I'd like smoother wrapping corners this year. Last year some of the presents looked like... cabbages.

Elf 1: They *were* cabbages, Santa. You mixed up the lists.

Elf 2: One poor child got coleslaw for Christmas.

Elf 3: And asked for more in a very puzzled letter.

Santa: Oh. Right. Let's forget that.

(He chuckles nervously.)

So... are we all friends again?

Elf 1: Friends?

Elf 2: Partners.

Elf 3: Unionised partners.

Santa: Well... ho ho... wonderful. Anything else?

Elf 1: Just one final thing, Santa.

Elf 2: Something small.

Elf 3: Something... festive.

(All three elves lean in.)

Elves (together): More tinsel. Lots more tinsel.

Santa:

...*Ho ho NO.*