

It's a Magical Journey, or Else!



Sascha Martin's
Christmas Eve

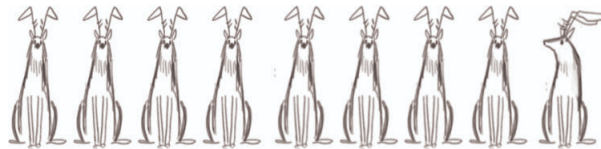
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Illustrations by Manuela Pentangelo

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A Sascha Martin Series Standalone



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Sascha Martin's Christmas Eve
began with an idea
That a certain little someone
had been hammering all year.

Mary-Alice had been nagging
him and Luca, every day,
Till they wilted, and agreed to build
their not-a-friend a sleigh.

“Luca, you’re in charge of sleigh
construction - Stop it! No excuse!
All your tinkering and making stuff
at last will be of use.

“This is *Sleigh Designer Magazine*,
and here’s the very one
I want you using as your model and ...”
she turned ... “When Luca’s done,



“Then Sascha, you just have to make it fly -
that isn’t much to do -
But it has to go around the world.
We’ll need a reindeer too!”

“Make that lots of reindeer - nine of them!
And all of them must fly!”
“That’s impossible,” said Sascha.
“Yes it is ... until you *TRY!*”

“Now, you both have your assignments,
and they’re due on Christmas Eve.
We’ll go flying round the world
and all my friends will see us leave.”

“All her *friends*,” said Luca softly,
with his air quotes on display ...
“I suppose that’s you and me,
but we’ll be with her in the sleigh!”

“What was that?” said Mary-Alice,
who had hearing like a bat.
Sascha said: “Um, flying reindeer -
I suppose we’ll manage that.”

“I should think so! God! You’ve
only got the easy bits to you -
I have outfits to select!
And there’s my hair and makeup, too!”

“Are you handing out the presents?”
Luca said. “Oh, silly child!
“Everybody else is giving them
to me,” she said, and smiled.

Off she bustled, looking satisfied
at last, with phone to ear,
Growing shrill with some unfortunate,
whose failing wasn’t clear.



Luca frowned throughout construction,
cause the atmosphere was wrong;
Mary-Alice had to be there
so it took him twice as long

To build the sleigh, each move
disrupted by an agitated shout ...
And she took away his earplugs
so he couldn't block her out.



On the day of her inspection
(though she'd been there all along),
Mary-Alice circled round the sleigh
in search of something wrong;

Checked the paint against her
colour charts, each angle on her plans;
Tested every single vantage point
for waving to her fans;

Kicked the runners, fluffed the cushions,
pulled on harness ring and rein,
Jumping up and down inside but
finding nothing to complain.

"Where do presents go?" she asked,
and Sascha muttered something rude.
"What?" "I said ... a quantum Santa Sack
is something we'll include."

“Good. That only leaves the reindeer
still to organise. Let’s see ...
I’ve appointments in the salon,
but ... tomorrow? Yes, I’m free.

“I’ll come over in the morning,
to inspect the reindeer. So ...
Have them groomed and ready, waiting
for departure, and we’ll go.”

But the hinterland of Landfill
isn’t really known for deer,
Be they rein or fallow, musk or red,
at any time of year.

Sascha wrung his hands. “She wants them
by tomorrow.” “There’s the zoo,”
said Luca. “Maybe they’d be
kind enough to lend us one or two.”

“Yes! You’ll teleport to Mosman!”
Sascha rummaged in a box.
It was full of old inventions,
iffy plates and smelly socks.



He returned and handed Luca
a device. "Now hurry! Fly!
While you're gone I'll find a way
to get the sleigh up in the sky."



Luca's particles were so
excited; Luca even more,
Cause he hadn't seen Taronga Zoo
at least since he was four.

But he found the zoo in chaos,
and the Mosman streets a-shout,

Full of keepers seeking Klaus,
their only reindeer, who'd got out.

Luca checked the reindeer-finder
that he'd packed (an afterthought)
In the pocket of his trousers and,
reviewing its report,

Found the reindeer sitting smiling
with a latte in the sun,
Wrapped his arms around its neck
and teleported: he was done.



Moments later, in the lab
beneath the base of Sascha's house,
Luca made the introductions:
"Sascha Martin, this is Klaus.

"Mosman's crazy!" he continued.
"How amazing is it there?"

They make lattes in the cafes
just for reindeer, which are rare.”

“Only one?” said Sascha, frowning.
“Just one reindeer? This is bad!
She’s arriving any moment!”
“Sorry. Klaus is all they had.”

With the little steps of horror
clicking dainty down the stair,
Sascha tried a desperate gambit,
going old-school, in despair:

He surrounded Klaus with mirrors
to convince her there were more,
But she caught her own reflection
which, of course, was all she saw.

After primping for a moment
turning this way, turning that,
Mary-Alice bustled through to where
the single reindeer sat.

“Oh he’s lovely!” Mary-Alice said.
“He’ll really suit the sleigh!
“And - ” she looked around expectantly -
“The others? Where are they?”

But the boys were grim and silent.
“Oh my god no! This is it?”
As she morphed, they both retreated,
but she followed, spitting spit.

“Does he even fly?” she spat.
“Oh yes. I’m confident he will,”
Sascha said, not feeling confident
at all, and looking ill.

“Good,” she said. “I’ll call him Rudolph.”
“No you can’t. His name is Klaus!”
Luca wished he hadn’t said it,
as her screeching filled the house.



Some time later, hoarse, but pleasant
once again, she said: “Be clear,
You have fifty minutes left
to get my other reindeer here.”

Stepping out, she left a cloud behind,
of darkness and despair.
Fifty minutes later, finding
still a single reindeer there,

Mary-Alice voiced her protest.
Luca covered Klaus's ears,
Till the girl ran out of breath
and sat to dab her bitter tears.

"But you haven't heard the good bit,"
Sascha said. She raised her eyes,
With a flash of hope her blotched
and puffy face could not disguise.

"Do you mean," she barely whispered,
"that you've brought me all the rest?"
"Absolutely! That's a maybe,"
Sascha said. "We need to test."

He produced a new invention
and revealed it to the light.
"What is that?" breathed Mary-Alice,
all a-tremble and alight.

"It's a multiplier." Puzzled
were the little tyrant's eyes.
"What's a multiplier do?"
and Sascha groaned. "It multiplies."

Sascha pointed the device at Klaus
and *ZAP!* He had a clone,
Who was also drinking latte,
so that Klaus was not alone.

Luca leapt and Mary-Alice squealed,
ecstatic, shouting "More!"
Sascha zapped and zapped and suddenly
the reindeer numbered four.

Luca danced around as Mary-Alice
fanned her florid face,
Staring breathless as another quad
of reindeer took their place.

Mary-Alice gasped: "Keep going, Sascha.
Do another now!"
As she clutched a little hanky
and she mopped her sopping brow.

"I want nine!" she moaned, near fainting,
"Give me nine! It's like a dream!"
Meanwhile Luca, in excitement,
crossed the path of Sascha's beam,

And in place of Reindeer Number Nine
stood Luca Number Two.
"Oh you idiot!" the tyrant groaned.
"He's duplicated you!"

"Now the moment's gone!" she wept,
"and it was nearly so divine!"
Sascha quietly zapped Klaus again
and said: "Here's Number Nine."

Mary-Alice slowly focused
and her lips abruptly rose;
"Yes. My lovely team of reindeer!
But we can't take both of those."

Mary-Alice waved a hand at
Luca 1 and 2, and sighed;
"I suppose I'll have to interview
them both, and then decide."

Looking bored, she turned away, but
spun about in sudden glee:
“Here’s a thought!” she said to Sascha.
“Make another one of me!”

Thank you for reading

This has only been a sample;
did you think it fun, or vile?
My intention, when I'm writing,
is to leave you with a smile.

Should you wish to say hello
or ask a question, or whate'er
On my website is a contact page
and [this](#) will take you there :)

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