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The strange voyage of Nikolaus Piper

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traducción de
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(fragmento en inglés)

CHARACTERS

DORINDA THE FAY

THE DROWSY TRAVELLER

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

NIKOLAUS PIPER

[...]

DORINDA snaps her fingers and turns him back into MISTERIUS MERCURIUS.

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

All right, all right, I'll tell the story, but don't say I didn't warn you. This story will reveal things that nobody wants to see, that nobody wants to hear. In fact, I once lost my head for telling it. Another time, I was almost tarred and feathered! The story seems silly at first, but wait till the end. Listen carefully and pay attention, the absurdly sad, frightfully sinister, and eerily twisted tale of "The Strange Voyage of Nikolaus Piper" is about to begin.

THE DROWSY TRAVELLER touches a button, and the caravan turns into a small wooden theatre; the roof is filled with trap doors and a candle sits atop. He turns a lever, and sad circus music begins to play. DORINDA, happy as a clam, sings and dances.

DORINDA THE FAY

Ladies and gentlemen,
Youngsters, kids, and munchkins
Helicopters and street cars,
Beetles and caterpillars

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

I have the honour of introducing someone strange and dangerous; more dangerous and stranger than the colour-blind vampire who couldn't tell blood from lettuce; more dangerous and stranger still than the cow-bat that doesn't look like a cow or a bat, so no one knows how it got that name in the first place. This creature I speak of is a dark and mysterious being with two eyes, two legs, and five toes on each foot—with a nose in the middle of its face and a mop of hair on its head.

DORINDA snaps her fingers and a handkerchief appears. She sneezes and the handkerchief turns into a giant cloak. A rather suspicious shape can be made out underneath.

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

Please welcome NIKOLAUS PIPER!

DORINDA pulls off the cloak, and the audience sees a camel chewing gum.

DORINDA THE FAY

Oops! I messed up!

DORINDA snaps her fingers. The camel disappears. Now NIKOLAUS PIPER is underneath the cloak. He's a little boy, about eleven, seemingly harmless. His voice is squeaky and sharp. He looks shy.

NIKOLAUS PIPER

And... huh... are we in Greenland yet?

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

Nikolaus is eleven years old

He doesn't make faces or play the cello

He doesn't speak Chinese or ride a motorbike

He doesn't even slurp his Jell-O.

He's neither the tallest nor the shortest

Of the Piper brothers

He's neither the best nor the worst,

Neither the handsomest nor the ugliest.

NIKOLAUS PIPER

How do you say "hello" in Greenlandic? "Anus puhisi hupsuna?"

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

Nikolaus wasn't a nasty enough to frighten an elephant.

NIKOLAUS PIPER

I think elephants are very cute.

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

Nor was he good enough to resist hurting a fly.

NIKOLAUS PIPER

Flies—I hate them! And they're hard to kill, too. But is it Greenland, or not?

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

The only thing that set Nikolaus apart from his brothers was that he was stubborn, stubborn as a mule.

NIKOLAUS PIPER

Anus puhisi hupsuna! Anus puhisi hupsuna!

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

On top of that, Nikolaus Piper didn't care one way or another about anything. And this would drive his parents up the wall.

DORINDA snaps her fingers, turning herself and the DROWSY TRAVELLER into Nikolaus's parents.

NIKOLAUS PIPER

Mom? Dad?

DORINDA THE FAY

(as Mom) Nikolaus, do you want milk or juice?

NIKOLAUS PIPER

I don't care.

THE DROWSY TRAVELER

(as Dad) Nikolaus, do you want an apple or a pineapple?

NIKOLAUS PIPER

Six of one, half a dozen of the other.

DORINDA THE FAY

(as Mom) Nikolaus, do you like rock or folk music?

NIKOLAUS PIPER

It's all the same to me.

THE DROWSY TRAVELER

(as Dad) Nikolaus, what do you want for Christmas?

NIKOLAUS PIPER

Whatever, it doesn't matter—but are we in Greenland or not?

DORINDA THE FAY and THE DROWSY TRAVELER

No!

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

There are three kinds of people in this world: those who accept things the way they are, those who don't, and those who switch sides whenever it serves their interests. For example, there are those who yell, once seated, that seats should be saved for old ladies. Some people are ashamed to admit that the world suits them pretty well the way it is; they hate those who declare, "I don't accept things as they are." And that's how terrible fights start, with seats flying and all; only in the end, everyone forgets that the old ladies are left standing. There are people who fight to change the world and then get bored with trying so hard. There are others still who don't give a rat's ass about the old ladies – perhaps because they have never noticed them standing there, their ankles swollen, tired of the long wait – or perhaps because they have never realized that the way things are isn't so great after all; Nikolaus Piper was one of those people.

DORINDA THE FAY

(as Mom) Nikolaus, don't you want a tractor like your sister Tabitha or a book on logical speleology, like your brother Tobias?

NIKOLAUS PIPER

I don't care, Mom.

THE DROWSY TRAVELLER

(as Dad) Santa Claus will come, and if you don't ask him for anything, he'll just bring whatever. Look what happened to your cousin Timothy: he asked for a Siberian dog and got a Japanese lizard instead. Ha! A Japanese lizard!

NIKOLAUS PIPER

It really doesn't matter to me, Dad.

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

So, Christmas came as it does every year, with no change of season or date; its prickly trees decorated with fireflies, its snow cakes, its turkey and watermelon feasts, uncles smelling of garlic pizza, aunts giving sloppy and unpleasant kisses, cousins putting the dog in the fridge, throwing a frog in the punch, and then crying when they are scolded for it.

DORINDA snaps her fingers and everything changes: in the middle of the caravan a Christmas tree grows, poinsettias bloom, Christmas music starts playing. As for DORINDA herself, she appears decked out in red, gold, and green.

DORINDA THE FAY

(as DORINDA THE FAY, singing)

Mommy made a Christmas pudding.
Daddy made some Christmas cookies.
All the cousins dressed in red,
And the mailman brought some postcards,
Ouch! Our granny really bit him hard!
And the eldest, Tacitus Piper,
Sung us a Christmas carol,
Auntie Clea almost fainted.
The clock struck midnight.
Glasses were raised and toasts proclaimed.
Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!
But what's that red object in the sky?

THE DROWSY TRAVELER

(as Dad) It's a bird!

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

It's a plane!

THE DROWSY TRAVELER

(as Dad) It's a crazed mutant kiwi!

MISTERIUS MERCURIUS

A ham-stuffed chicken!

NIKOLAUS PIPER

May be it's the capital of Greenland?

DORINDA sings

DORINDA THE FAY

Santa Claus brought presents:

A Christmas watch for Tabitha Piper
A Christmas blouse for Thomasina Piper
A piano for cousin Tiberius
A vase for cousin Tacitus
And for dad he brought a corkscrew on wheels
And for mom he brought a bike with handlebars
A vineyard for Uncle Daniel
And for Nikolaus Piper, guess what?
For Nilolaus Piper...

Nikolaus opens his present without much enthusiasm.

NIKOLAUS PIPER
A finger!