

Title: North Pole Nick
By Mike Scott K4ZPE

Please note: When Ham radio operators want to talk to someone they send out a C Q – it literally means “Seek – You.”

“CQ CQ CQ This is A4OJ—My call's easy to remember it's - Ask “4” Old Joe. Anybody out there tonight?”

“Right back at you Joe. How's your Christmas eve?”

“Just another day to me. I didn't get your call sign.”

“Oh, my call. How about N-Zero-P-O-L—good a call as any I guess, You can call me Nick.”

“Okay let see that's N-Zero-P-O-L—Hey that's a good one—North Pole Nick is it? Thanks for the come back Nick. What's your location?”

“I'm mobile tonight Joe.”

“Well you be careful Nick —lots of drunks on the road.”

“Oh, I stay off the main roads.”

“So tell me Nick what are you doing out there tonight?”

“Got a few deliveries to make.”

“They make you work on Christmas eve?”

“A minute ago you said it was just another night.”

“Yeah well, that's for me. Never was much for the holidays.”

“Christmas is real special to me Joe.”

“How's that Nick?”

“It's the time of year when we think about the people we love.”

“Maybe that's it. My wife's gone. I guess I've got no one to love.”

“You could call someone—maybe a friend.”

“Never had time for any real friends. Got some ham radio friends but they're all busy tonight.”

“How about your kids? Maybe you could call your kids?”

“Have a daughter but don't see her much.”

“How come Joe?”

“She was just like her mother. Always picking at me.”

“How about your brother?”

“My brother? I haven't talked to that son of a gun for more than twenty years.”

“Why is that Joe?”

“Don't rightly remember—we never did get along.”

“I'll bet Harold doesn't know either.”

“Hey, how do you know my brother's name?”

“I know lots of things. I know your daughter Caroline would love to know you, but when Sarah died you pushed her away and your son Carl—you won't even acknowledge you have a son—why is that Joe?”

“I don't know who you are but that's none of your business.”

“You're right of course. It's your business and you're not managing it very well. That's why your sitting alone tonight talking to strangers on the radio instead of enjoying this wonderful time of year.”

“Who the heck is this?”

“Hang on a minute, got a stop to make. Whoa Prancer, whoa Blitzen—be right back Joe.”

The radio went dead.

“You still there Joe?”

“Yeah, what's with the whoa Prancer and Blitzen stuff you think your Santa Clause or something? I suppose you're sliding down chimneys handing out

presents to everyone?”

“Just doing what I can, but I do have a gift for you tonight Joe.”

“Oh yeah? What's that?”

“In a minute your phone is going to ring. When you answer it, I need you to say Merry Christmas. Can you do that for me Joe?”

“What are you blabbering about?”

The phone rang. “Remember Joe —Merry Christmas.”

“Merry Christmas,” he said, as he answered the call. “Caroline is That you?”

“I saw your number on my caller ID. So glad you called dad. Sorry we missed you. We were out looking at the lights. I was so hoping we'd hear from you. Carl is here with Patrick and uncle Harold is here too. We've all been thinking about you.”

“Hi Pumpkin.”

“You haven't called me “Pumpkin” since I was a little girl. Dad—we were wondering if maybe, if your not busy I mean, could you join us for dinner tomorrow?”

As Joe accepted his daughter's invitation, the radio squawked, “Ho Ho Ho! and a Very Merry Christmas to you—Joe.”

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