



Tan Doo Doo Meets Santa Claus

Tan Doo Doo laid on her back in her bed in the dark. She was planning all the work that lay ahead of her during the upcoming days before Christmas. Her shopping was complete, the house cleaning process was well on the way and she had baked about 12 pans of her village famous black cake, soaked them in rum and packed them away. Her drinks were ready, just needing to be strained and bottled. Curtains were almost finished and the Christmas tree was erected, decorated and fixed in one corner of the gallery for everyone's eyes to see. She felt satisfied that things were going according to plan.

In the stillness of the night she heard a noise. She listened and was sure that she had heard it again. The words of a poem came back to her:

'Twas the night before Christmas,
and all through the house,
not a creature was stirring,
not even a mouse.'

That sound was no mouse, so she very slowly edged off the bed, tiptoed to her door, cracked it open and listened carefully.

After a couple minutes, she could hear bottles rattling. She was certain it was not her son, Sonny Boy, as he was terrified of the dark. Big man like he! **Steups**. But who or what could it be? Tan Doo Doo contemplated: Should I bolt my door and return to the safety of my room? Or should I go and confront the intruder and secure all the goods I had bought in town today? She thought to herself: **Lawd fadda**, look at my trouble here this Christmas night! **Mih** black cake, mih sorrel and mih ginger beer! Mih expensive ham too!

You see, Tan Doo Doo worked very hard for her money and she had to safeguard what was hers. Down the **corridor** she edged, to the kitchen where many unopened boxes were on the ground and on the tables. Her eyes were now used to the dark and she made out a figure leaning over her boxes. She reached behind the door for



the largest **mortar pestle**, raised it high over her head and shouted, 'Who are you?' A frightened voice answered in the dark, 'Is me, Santa Claus.'

Tan Doo Doo knew immediately that it was an intruder, because Santa Claus was not due until **Christmas Eve** night, and she told him just that. When there was no response, Tan Doo Doo advanced towards him, pestle in hand, poised to do damage. Santa sat on the floor, his feet crouched close to his body and his hands up in the air. He was begging and pleading for forgiveness. Tan Doo Doo had no time for sympathy when it came to she and **tings dem**. Tan Doo Doo was about to teach Santa a lesson about timing.

With one hand, she reached down and pulled Santa to his feet. She dragged him across the room where she could get some light and there she began to unmask him. First, she pulled off his hat, then his white beard and that was enough. She recognized the culprit. **Wap!** Tan Doo Doo hit Santa one **lash in he tail!** Her mind was made up to do for Santa that night. She reached for his midsection to relieve him of his red, velvety coat. She struggled a bit but when Tan Doo Doo finally released the buckle of Santa's black belt, there was an explosion of bottles, tins and boxes which came crashing to the floor. Tan Doo Doo was uncontrollably enraged.

Let's just say that night Tan Doo Doo made a **citizen's arrest**. She dragged Santa Claus down the hill, through the **dirt track**, on to the **main road** and up to the police station. At the police station, Tan Doo Doo took the statements, asked all the questions, gave all the answers, charged 'Santa Claus', then instructed the police officers to do the paperwork. After she was assured that he was properly secured in the holding cell at the back of the station, she lead the villagers who came out to see what all the **commotion** at her house on the hill was about.

Waiting at the front door, on her return home, was her son, who had come home, found the house open, his mother missing and pure chaos in the kitchen. He had feared the worst and was about to go to the police station, when he heard her voice retelling the story to villagers and saw her coming. Needless to say, Tan Doo Doo did not sleep for the rest of the night and neither did her son, who had to listen again to all the lessons on honesty he had been hearing for his entire life. Added to this, he was accused of abandoning his mother and leaving her to the mercy of criminals, murderers and thieves. He was warned about vices and diseases. He was warned



about **La Diabliesse**, who would make him drive her to hell in his car if he was not careful. He was also ordered to clean up the kitchen and secure the boxes, the packages and the locks on the doors.

Days later, when it was time for the matter to be heard and tried, everyone in the village bathed, dressed in their finest **court clothes** and went down to the courthouse to the trial of Santa Claus. The trial did not last long, probably fifteen minutes, and this was due mainly to the restlessness of the crowd, inside and outside the courthouse.

After he was sentenced, Tan Doodoo demanded that the magistrate accede to one request and that was for the convict to publicly apologize to Santa Claus for using his clothes and bringing his name into **disrepute**.

As he apologized, all the children cheered, then Tan Doodoo gave a long lecture to all present: the magistrate, the police, the adults, the children. Everybody listened attentively to the words of the wise and the warnings of the warrior. She then turned and started on her journey back home, to continue preparing for Christmas -- normal, normal.