

Santa's Workshop

ADVENTURES FROM THE NORTH POLE

BOOK 05

Pip Plays Shop



As told by

Imogen Quillworth

KEEPER OF THE STORY LIBRARY

Pip Plays Shop

Told by Imogen Quillworth
Keeper of the Story Library

SantasWorkshop Press

Copyright

© 2026 Robert Gloster. All rights reserved.

Published by SantasWorkshop.ie. Free to read and listen to. Reproduction, redistribution, adaptation and commercial use require written permission.

Created with care at Santa's Workshop. Original storytelling and creative direction by Santa's Workshop. Illustrations and character voices produced using AI technology.

Contents

Chapter 1: Everything in its place

Chapter 2: A bag of clouds

Chapter 3: Pip's purchase

Everything in its place



Pip stopped beside a table in Miss Bramble’s Bakehouse.

There were three empty paper bags on it, two little boxes and a teacup with nothing inside. Nellie stood behind the table. Mr. Puddlesworth stood in front of it, holding out his empty hands.

“Four, please,” he said.

“Four what?” asked Pip.

“That depends what she has.”

Nellie peered into a box.

“Today I have buttons for a giant’s coat.”

Mr. Puddlesworth examined something Pip couldn’t see.

“Too small,” he said. “The giant will sneeze and lose the lot.”

“Then he should button his coat before he sneezes.”

Pip looked from the box to the teacup.

“Is this a shop?”

“A pretend one,” said Nellie. “Would you like a turn?”

Pip had finished checking the afternoon’s work at the Workshop. Everything that needed watching was in someone’s capable hands, and everyone knew when she would be back. Her break belonged to her.

Nellie’s toymaking was finished too. Mr. Puddlesworth had closed his real shop for his break, and Miss Bramble had let them use a spare table in the Front Shop. They had brought their own empty bags and boxes. The real buns remained where real buns belonged.

“I could keep the shop,” Pip said.

“Good,” said Nellie. “I’ve been wanting to buy something.”

She stepped out from behind the table.

Pip stepped in. She put the boxes beside each other, stood the bags in a neat row and found a little scrap of paper to write on.

“We ought to know what we have,” she said.

“Anything you like,” said Nellie.

Pip wrote bags.

She wrote boxes.

Then she counted the teacup carefully and wrote one cup.

Mr. Puddlesworth leaned forward.

“An excellent list. I should like a hat for a very shy teapot.”

“Nellie was first,” said Pip.

“So she was.” He stepped behind her. “An excellent queue as well.”

Nellie rested her hands on the table.

“I’d like a bag of clouds.”

Pip glanced at her list.

“I have bags.”

“Lovely.”

“I don’t have clouds.”

Nellie looked into one of the empty boxes.

“Are you sure?”

“Quite sure.”

Pip opened the other box to make certain. Nothing was in that one either.

“You could have a very good bag,” she offered.

Nellie’s smile slipped a little.

“But I came for the clouds.”

Behind her, Mr. Puddlesworth looked sadly at an invisible teapot.

“And mine is still hiding under the table.”

Pip had made a tidy shop. Nobody had bought anything.

A bag of clouds



Pip picked up a paper bag.

She held it open, but she didn't hand it over yet.

"What are the clouds for?" she asked.

Nellie's smile returned.

"A picnic for the moon. It needs somewhere soft to sit."

Pip looked at the open bag. She gave it a small shake to puff out the sides.

"Then you'll want the fluffy sort."

"Very fluffy."

Pip reached into the empty air above the table. She took down one pretend cloud and tucked it into the bag. Her fingers spread wide for the second.

“This one’s rather large.”

“The moon is rather large,” said Nellie.

Pip tried to fold down the top of the bag. Nellie caught her wrist gently.

“You’ll squash them.”

Pip stopped.

For a moment she was back at the beginning, with a bag that wouldn’t close and a customer who still couldn’t take her clouds home.

She opened the mouth of the bag again.

“Do they need to be tied in?”

“They might float away.”

“Then we’ll tie a ribbon round each one. You can hold the ends.”

Pip pinched an invisible ribbon, wound it round an invisible cloud and made a very careful bow. Nellie watched her hands.

“Leave a little space,” she said. “It’s a soft cloud.”

Pip loosened the pretend bow.

“How’s that?”

“Perfect.”

They tied the second cloud together. Pip set the bag upright and passed Nellie the invisible ribbon ends.

Nellie carried the real bag in one hand. Her other hand floated above it, holding the pretend clouds in place.

“What do I owe you?”

Pip looked at Mr. Puddlesworth.

“What have you been using for money?”

“Whatever the customer brings,” he said. “I paid for my buttons with a noise.”

“Was it a good noise?”

“An extremely good noise.”

Nellie thought, then made a small, cheerful pop with her lips.

“One cloud,” said Pip.

Nellie made another pop.

“Two clouds. Paid in full.”

Nellie moved aside, holding her bag very carefully.

Mr. Puddlesworth approached the table.

“Now. About my teapot.”

“Does it need a hat to keep warm?” Pip asked.

“It needs something to hide behind when visitors arrive.”

“Would a large brim do?”

“It would do splendidly. Though it must still be able to pour.”

Pip lifted the empty box lid as if it were a hat. Mr. Puddlesworth pointed to a spot beside its edge.

“The spout goes there.”

Pip tilted the lid up a little on that side.

“Room for the spout.”

“And the handle?”

“At the back.”

“The teapot is very particular about its handle.”

“A sensible place to be particular,” said Pip.

She lowered the lid towards the table, keeping a space beneath it for the imagined teapot. Mr. Puddlesworth crouched to look.

“I can’t see its face,” he said.

“Then the hat is working.”

He lifted his invisible teapot, complete with its invisible hat, and tucked it comfortably against his coat. The real box lid stayed on the table.

For payment, he gave Pip a magnificent ding.

Pip put her pencil down. The list still said bags, boxes and one cup. It had missed almost everything in her shop.

Pip's purchase



Nellie set her bag beside her chair.

“You’ve sold clouds and a teapot hat,” she said. “Would you like to buy something now?”

Pip glanced at the time. There was room for one more turn before she needed to return to the Workshop.

“Yes,” she said. “I think I would.”

Mr. Puddlesworth took his place behind the table. He left the boxes where Pip had put them.

“The shop is open,” he announced. “Who’s first?”

Pip stepped forward. She stood quite straight and cleared her throat.

“Good afternoon. I need a pair of slippers for a thunderstorm.”

Nellie sat up.

“What sort of thunderstorm?”

“A very noisy one. It’s coming upstairs, and there’s a teapot asleep.”

Mr. Puddlesworth looked down at the empty floor beside his feet.

“Mine?”

“Unless you have another.”

“One is quite enough.” He opened a box and inspected its empty inside. “I have some extremely quiet slippers.”

He lifted out a pretend slipper and handed it across.

Pip weighed it in her palm.

“This is the left one.”

“Certainly.”

He reached into the box for its partner.

Pip weighed that one too.

“This is also a left one.”

Mr. Puddlesworth studied his empty hands.

“A thunderstorm may have two left feet.”

“This one doesn’t,” said Pip. “I asked it.”

Nellie leaned towards the box.

“Try underneath.”

Mr. Puddlesworth rummaged very carefully through nothing at all. He held up a third slipper.

“Here we are. A right.”

Pip placed both slippers on the floor, where the imaginary thunderstorm could put them on. Nellie pulled her feet back to make room.

Pip raised two fingers above the table. Slowly, she walked them through the air. There was no stamp and no boom. Just a thunderstorm going upstairs on tiptoe.

Mr. Puddlesworth held a finger to his lips.

“The teapot is still asleep.”

Pip’s two fingers reached the top of the imaginary stairs.

Nellie let out the breath she had been holding, then laughed. Pip’s smile escaped before she could make it small.

“A satisfactory pair,” she said.

“Payment?” asked Mr. Puddlesworth.

Pip considered. Then she made the tiniest boom she could manage.

Nellie had to lean closer to hear it.

“I’ll accept that,” he said.

They put away the empty bags and boxes. Nellie released the pretend ribbons, one at a time, so her clouds could drift home. Mr. Puddlesworth returned his teapot to its invisible shelf.

Pip picked up her little list and folded it into her pocket. She had time to walk back without hurrying.

At the door she paused.

“You kept the slippers in stock?”

“Of course,” said Mr. Puddlesworth.

“Good. Next time I shall bring the other thunderstorm.”