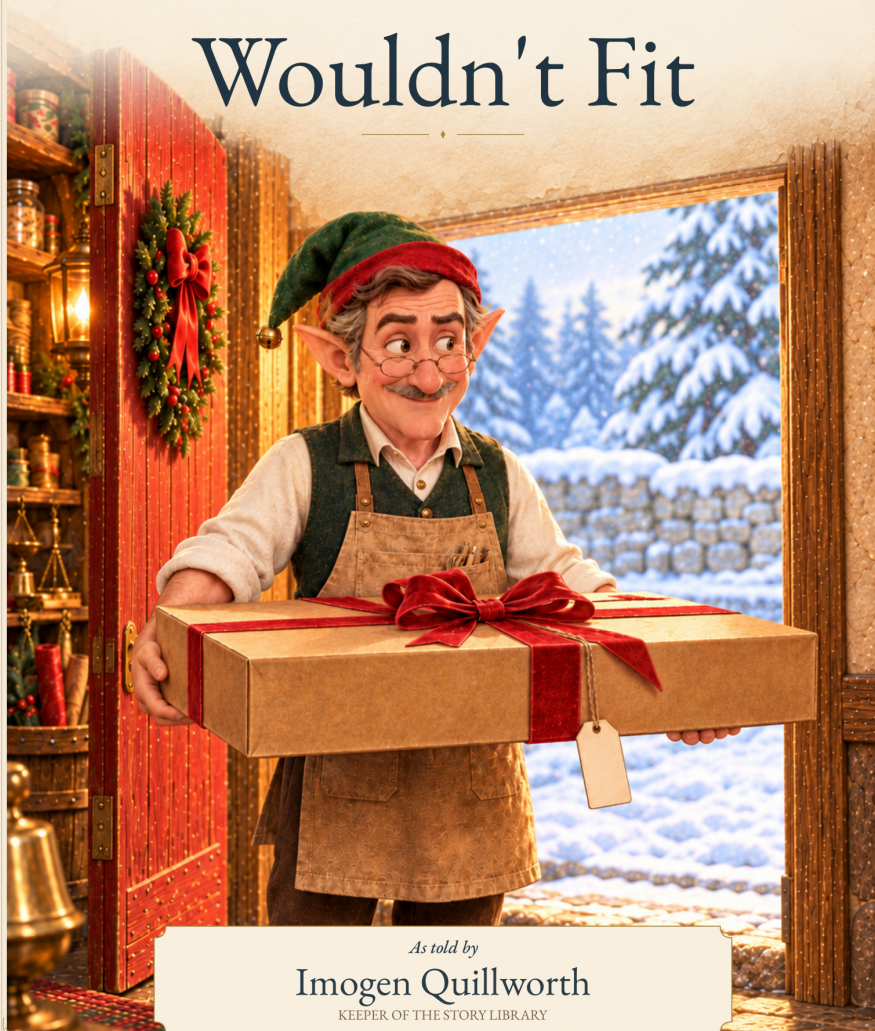


Santa's Workshop

ADVENTURES FROM THE NORTH POLE

BOOK 06

The Bun That Wouldn't Fit



As told by

Imogen Quillworth

KEEPER OF THE STORY LIBRARY

The Bun That Wouldn't Fit

Adventures from the North Pole

Book 6

Told by Imogen Quillworth, Keeper of the Story Library

SantasWorkshop Press

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1. A thank-you with corners



Mr. Puddlesworth opened the drawer beneath his shop counter with one finger.

He shut it. He opened it again.

All morning it had stuck halfway, leaving him to reach round the edge for his pencils. Arthur had smoothed the rough bit of wood underneath. Now it slid out beautifully.

“I could do that all afternoon,” Mr. Puddlesworth said.

“You’d get very little shopkeeping done,” Arthur replied.

He packed his tools, leaving one screwdriver beside the drawer while he checked its runner a last time.

“Thank you,” said Mr. Puddlesworth. “You’ve saved my knuckles.”

Arthur smiled and picked up his tool bag. “Glad to help.”

After he had gone, Mr. Puddlesworth fetched his coat. An edible thank-you was called for.

At Miss Bramble's Bakehouse, he explained about the drawer.

"I'd like something splendid for Arthur."

"I could make one bun big enough to share," she said. "A round one, with the dough twisted together. He could pull off a piece."

"With icing?"

"A little."

"Then he'll know it's a gift."

"I think he'll know when you give it to him."

Later, she brought the finished bun to his shop on an ordinary serving tray. It fitted comfortably. A thin white curl of icing followed the twists in the golden dough.

Mr. Puddlesworth had made a square card box on his counter. Ribbon ties held its corners together, and a crease across the base would let it fold flat when empty.

They settled the bun on greaseproof paper inside. There was plenty of space round it.

Miss Bramble folded coloured paper into little fans. Mr. Puddlesworth tucked them round the bun, clear of the icing, and admired the bright ring they made.

"I want all this waiting for Arthur at the Bakehouse," he said.

He tied a handsome bow over the lid and added a label: For Arthur. With thanks.

"Now it looks as splendid as I meant it to."

"Shall we take it to the Bakehouse?" Miss Bramble asked. "Arthur can meet us there for his break."

She held the door open. Mr. Puddlesworth lifted the box, keeping it level.

The bow trembled. The label swung.

He carried his splendid bun towards the doorway and stopped.

One corner stuck out beyond the left side. The other stuck out beyond the right.

2. The other side



“My bun won't fit,” Mr. Puddlesworth said.

Miss Bramble looked at the box.

“It fitted when I brought it.”

“It has rather more round it now.”

He stepped back, turned the box a quarter of the way round and approached again.

The new corners stuck out just as far.

Mr. Puddlesworth looked down at his four carefully folded sides. He had made them all the same width.

“A very fair box,” he said. “Every side gets an equal turn at being awkward.”

“Perhaps we could tip it,” he added.

“The bun would slide. I'd rather keep the icing on top.”

“So would I.”

They carried it back to the counter together. Miss Bramble shut the door.

Mr. Puddlesworth straightened the label. On the counter, his gift looked ready to go anywhere.

Miss Bramble set the empty tray beside the box. She waited while he gave the bow one last careful pat.

The visitor bell rang.

Arthur came in with his tool bag.

“I've left my screwdriver. The short one.” He spotted it beside the drawer. “There it is.”

Then he spotted the box.

“Is that a parcel?”

Mr. Puddlesworth moved his hand away from the label.

“It's for you.”

“For me?”

“For repairing my drawer. Miss Bramble has made you a bun.”

Arthur's eyebrows rose.

“That whole box?”

“The bun has some wrapping.”

Miss Bramble's mouth curved at the corners. She said nothing.

Mr. Puddlesworth loosened the bow and lifted the lid. The fans stood in a bright ring round the golden bun, its curl of icing quite unharmed.

Arthur leaned closer.

“Oh, that's lovely.”

Mr. Puddlesworth straightened the nearest fan.

“We were bringing it to the Bakehouse. Unfortunately, the doorway has declined.”

Arthur glanced at the empty tray beside the box.

“Would the bun fit on that?”

“That's what I brought it on,” Miss Bramble said.

Arthur held the tray alongside the box. There was room for the bun and a clear edge all round it.

Mr. Puddlesworth looked at the fans. He had pictured the whole splendid parcel on the Bakehouse table. Taking the bun out would mean taking that bright ring apart.

He rubbed a thumb over the end of the label.

“I wanted you to have the whole thing.”

“I've seen the whole thing,” Arthur said. “Thank you. I'd like a piece of the middle.”

Mr. Puddlesworth laughed. He untied the first corner ribbon.

“Then let's get it to your plate.”

3. Plenty of room



With the ties undone, the box opened flat. Miss Bramble set the smallest fan aside, then helped Mr. Puddlesworth slide the bun and its greaseproof paper onto the tray.

He placed the fan and label at the edge, away from the icing.

“Would you share it with us, Arthur?”

“I’d like that very much.”

Miss Bramble went ahead to get the plates. Arthur folded the empty box along its crease, folded the card lid too and tucked the narrow bundle beneath his arm.

Mr. Puddlesworth covered the tray with a clean cloth, carried it through the doorway without brushing either side, then locked the shop for his break.

Arthur held up the narrow bundle of card.

“That went through easily too.”

“It has stopped trying to take the bun with it.”

At the Bakehouse, three plates waited on a table in the Front Shop. Mr. Puddlesworth uncovered the bun and set Arthur's plate nearest the thank-you label.

Miss Bramble made a small cut where two twists of dough joined. Arthur pulled a piece free. Soft crumbs parted beneath the golden crust, and a curl of icing came with it.

He took a bite.

“That's worth coming back for.”

Miss Bramble smiled and handed Mr. Puddlesworth his plate.

“You chose a good bun,” he told her.

“I'm glad you left room for it.”

He glanced at the folded card beside Arthur's chair.

“I left a considerable amount.”

As Arthur reached for another piece, his sleeve brushed the little paper fan. It folded shut beside his plate.

He opened it carefully.

“Do I have to mend another drawer for a second piece?”

Mr. Puddlesworth settled it beside the label, then lifted the tray towards Arthur.

“Certainly not. I'm still thanking you for the first one.”