Santa's Workshop

ADVENTURES FROM THE NORTH POLE

BOOK 08

The Surprise Wilfred Kept



As told by

Imogen Quillworth

KEEPER OF THE STORY LIBRARY

The Surprise Wilfred Kept

Adventures from the North Pole

Book 8

Told by Imogen Quillworth, Keeper of the Story Library

SantasWorkshop Press

Copyright

© 2026 Robert Gloster. All rights reserved.

Published by SantasWorkshop Press at 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.

Chapter 1: Something worth telling



Arthur brought a small wooden dish into Mr. Puddlesworth's Shop and put it on the counter.

Behind the counter stood Wilfred Puddlesworth, better known as Mr. Puddlesworth. He leaned over the dish.

“For buttons?”

“For a spoon,” said Arthur. “Miss Bramble's stirring spoon. The hollow holds the sticky end, and the handle rests in this little groove.”

The dish was smooth and round. Mr. Puddlesworth ran a finger round its edge, then fetched a wooden spoon from a drawer to try it.

It fitted beautifully.

“A very comfortable spoon,” he said. “I wish my elbows had somewhere as nice to rest.”

Arthur smiled, but kept looking at the dish.

“Do you think she'll like it?”

“Something useful, made properly? Yes. What is the occasion?”

Arthur lifted his tool bag. The strap had a neat line of stitches through it.

“She mended this. It tore while I was carrying it, and she offered to stitch it. I held the ends together while she worked. I'd have spent the afternoon picking my tools out of the snow without her.”

“A cold way to spend an afternoon.”

“So this is my thank-you. Could you help me wrap it? I'd like to give her a little surprise today.”

Mr. Puddlesworth was delighted. He knew what the parcel contained, who had made it and why. It was exactly the sort of good news that wanted telling.

“Brown paper,” he announced. “And red ribbon. A present like this needs a proper bow.”

He spread the paper on the counter. Arthur set the spoon rest in the middle.

“I shall explain the groove to her,” said Mr. Puddlesworth. “And the sanding. She ought to hear about the sanding.”

“After I've given it to her,” said Arthur.

“Naturally.”

The shop bell rang.

Miss Bramble came in with a small empty basket.

Mr. Puddlesworth pulled one flap of paper over the dish. Then the other. Then he rested both hands on top.

“Good morning!” he said, louder than he needed to.

Chapter 2: Nearly a hint



“Good morning,” said Miss Bramble. “Have you some twine? I've a parcel of buns to tie.”

“Certainly. Twine. An excellent thing for tying.”

Arthur stepped aside so Mr. Puddlesworth could reach the drawer. Mr. Puddlesworth cut a length, coiled it and put it in her basket.

“And some paper, please. That roll there would do.”

She pointed towards the roll beside Arthur.

“The brown?” Mr. Puddlesworth asked.

“Yes, dear.”

“Brown paper is useful for all sorts of parcels. Some are round. Some are made of woo…”

He stopped.

Miss Bramble waited.

“Wood?” she suggested.

“Yes. Plenty of wooden things to wrap,” he said.

Arthur coughed into his hand. Mr. Puddlesworth suspected it was a laugh.

Miss Bramble looked at the covered dish.

“Are you wrapping something?”

“Yes,” said Arthur. “A little thank-you present.”

“How lovely. Is the ribbon for that?”

Mr. Puddlesworth picked up the red ribbon.

“It is. Red will look particularly nice with your…”

He stopped, the ribbon stretched between his hands. He had been about to say her stirring spoon.

“My paper?” Miss Bramble suggested.

“Brown paper. Yes.”

“It does,” she agreed. “I shan't hold you up. I'll come back for my paper when I've taken the next tray out.”

“I'll cut it ready,” Mr. Puddlesworth told her.

She thanked him and left. The bell gave a cheerful little ring.

Mr. Puddlesworth looked at Arthur.

“That went well.”

“You nearly told her it was wooden.”

“There are a great many wooden things.”

“There are,” Arthur agreed.

“And brown things.”

“Those too.”

“And you nearly told her who it was for,” Arthur added.

“That was closer,” Mr. Puddlesworth admitted.

Mr. Puddlesworth lifted the paper. He wanted to call Miss Bramble back and show her the dish. Then he looked at Arthur, who was smoothing the paper ready to fold it.

“Arthur,” he said, “give me something useful to do before I tell her everything.”

Arthur drew the dish towards him.

“Hold this fold while I turn it.”

Mr. Puddlesworth planted a finger on the paper.

Chapter 3: Useful hands



Between them, they wrapped the dish snugly. Mr. Puddlesworth cut Miss Bramble's paper and laid it ready.

Then he opened the pencil drawer Arthur had mended. It slid out at the touch of one finger.

“I'm still enjoying that,” he said, passing Arthur a pencil.

Arthur smiled and wrote a card.

Thank you for the stitches. Arthur.

Mr. Puddlesworth read it and smiled. He fetched the ribbon.

Arthur began the bow while Mr. Puddlesworth held the ribbon crossing with one finger. One loop was larger than the other.

“A bow should have two ears of the same size,” Mr. Puddlesworth said.

Arthur tipped his head.

“Our bow looks like a rabbit.”

Mr. Puddlesworth glanced at the long loop.

“A rather lopsided rabbit.”

He loosened the knot to adjust it.

The bell rang.

Miss Bramble was back. Warm air from the Bakehouse had left a faint smell of baking on her coat.

Mr. Puddlesworth kept one finger firmly on the ribbon crossing. Both loose ends lay on the counter.

“Not quite finished?” she asked.

“Nearly,” said Arthur.

“Well, there's no hurry. My buns are cooling.”

She set her basket beside the folded paper.

Mr. Puddlesworth wanted to tell her what Arthur had made. She was so close to it now. His mouth opened.

Then he looked at the parcel, still lying on the counter. He closed his mouth and picked up a ribbon end.

“This loop first,” he said. Arthur held the other end steady.

He drew the loops level and tightened the knot. Arthur slipped the card beneath the ribbon.

“There,” Mr. Puddlesworth said.

“A lovely bow,” said Miss Bramble. “Somebody will be pleased.”

Mr. Puddlesworth put her folded paper into her basket. Then he stepped aside.

Arthur picked up the parcel.

“Actually,” he said, “it's for you.”

Miss Bramble looked from the gift to his face.

“For me?”

Mr. Puddlesworth nodded. Once. It took an effort not to add anything.

Chapter 4: News for everyone



Miss Bramble read the card first.

“Oh, Arthur. You didn't have to.”

“I wanted to,” he said. “Your stitches saved me a lot of trouble.”

She smiled at him, then eased the ribbon apart. Mr. Puddlesworth watched his carefully matched loops disappear.

The paper opened.

Miss Bramble lifted the wooden dish and brushed a thumb across its hollow.

“A spoon rest! And so smooth.”

Arthur's shoulders relaxed.

“I thought you might like it.”

“I do. Come and see where I'm going to put it.”

She tucked the card safely into her basket and gathered up the ribbon.

“I'll keep this for another present. Such a good bow deserves another outing.”

Mr. Puddlesworth locked the shop for his break, and they went to the Bakehouse together.

In the Front Shop, Miss Bramble fetched her stirring spoon. She lowered it into the new dish. The handle settled in the groove, and the sticky end rested in the hollow.

Arthur watched with a quiet smile.

“There,” she said. “A place for it while I cut the buns.”

Mr. Puddlesworth had more to say. About the paper. About nearly mentioning the wood. About the finger that had held everything together.

Miss Bramble set a bun before him.

“Go on, dear. Tell me the rest.”

He broke the bun in half and began.