

The Trap for Baby Jesus

10:00:00 Program starts with Eurovision logo

10:00:09

We begin with a view of the starry sky. The camera wanders about between the stars. We hear the narrator's voice resounding with pathos and calm grandeur, as if he were recounting some ancient legend.

Narrator

So it was once upon a time, so it is today and so it will be in the far future. Every year on the same day and on the same magic evening a miracle occurs...

The camera floats towards the planet Earth and slowly approaches it. The narrator continues with his story.

Narrator

Millions of people all over the world receive millions of presents. Everyone knows who brings them. In some places it is Santa Claus, in others for example Ded Moroz and in one small country in the very heart of Europe it is Baby Jesus.

We have arrived in front of a house with a roof loaded down with snow. Behind the snow-clad trees we see the house front, with several of its windows alight. The camera approaches one of these windows. Behind the glass we sense the silhouette of a Christmas tree. The narrator continues

10:00:44

Narrator

Baby Jesus comes on Christmas Eve and leaves presents under the Christmas tree. He takes great care not to be seen by anyone. That is why even today nobody really knows exactly what he looks like. Children love secrets. But what they love more is a secret revealed!

A little boy (Baby Jesus) comes floating in through the open window, he is carrying an enormous sack. He looks about and when he ascertains that he is alone in the room, he enters.

Baby Jesus walks across the room towards the Christmas tree. Panning down, the camera reveals a rope that is strung up in his way.

Baby Jesus ignores the rope. He walks on. He takes a parcel out of the sack. He smiles..

Jesus Child's foot stumbles against the taut rope.

The rope brings a bucket of coal down from the top of a wardrobe.

The pail pulls tight the loop of the rope, which is on the ground beside Baby Jesus. It catches his legs.

Baby Jesus has a fright – something yanks him up.

The rope is hooked over a beam and pulls Baby Jesus up towards the ceiling.

Vasek and Tereza run in through the door and grab the sack that Baby Jesus has dropped. One by one they take out many presents.

The parents follow the children into the room. They are amazed at what they see. Dad takes his camera and snaps it all.

10:01:19

The photograph with the sack and Baby Jesus hanging suspended is in the newspapers with an enormous headline "*Children catch Baby Jesus*"!

Vašek (a small boy of eight) sits at a table in the living room, pondering about what we have just seen. He likes the idea. Vašek starts drawing something onto the sheet of paper in front of him.

On the sheet in front of Vašek we see a plan of the trap for Baby Jesus, which we witnessed a moment ago put into practice.

10:01:38

Narrator

Children across the Czech Republic spend the evening looking out for Baby Jesus, although they know very well, that he only comes when the room is empty. It is only then that the Baby Jesus dares to enter and place his presents under the beautifully decorated christmas tree. Then he will ring a bell and quietly disappear. And no one will have seen him.

Vašek looks around the room.

He sees Tereza looking out through the window through the ice-blossoms drawn on the pane by the frost.

Father is in the kitchen.

Mother is hovering the carpet.

Vašek is thinking.

From Vašek's view we see a looking out for Baby Jesus again.

The camera watches Tereza run off to the decorated Christmas tree. Their mother is still hoovering the carpet under the tree. She is obviously in a hurry and the Christmas Eve preparations have made her quite nervous. She checks on her husband, who is doing something behind her in the kitchen.

Vašek is finishing drawing his plan.

Mum has finished hovering the carpet. She turns it off and goes to the kitchen to help her desperate husband. Mother is talking to father in the kitchen. Father is trying to cover the portions of carp in breadcrumbs. He is not managing very well.

10:02:22

Mother: *Don't do it like this. You will spoil it!*

Vašek watches first them and than Tereza. She is smiling at him in excitement.
Vašek gets up and goes to Tereza with the drawing in his hand.

10:02:39

Mother : *Ok, but you are making mess all over the kitchen!*

Vašek approaches Tereza from behind. They look out of the window together. Then he whispers something to Tereza.

We see Baby Jesus trapped.

Tereza looks at Vašek. He shows her his plan.

Both parents are still in the kitchen. Mum is trying to bread the last portions of carp. Dad has started to fry them. The fat is sizzling and spattering all over the place, Dad tries to jump back to avoid getting stained. Mother is getting really angry.

10:03:05

Mother

My goodness, what are you doing? You're putting it into the fat quite wet!

Father

What do you mean, wet? I let it drip off first...

Mother:

Just let me do it!

Mum is frustrated, they are both getting into a state. But then the parents turn and smile at the children, and continue with the frying.

Tereza whispers something to Vašek:

10:03:14

Tereza:

But what if they catch us?

10:03:16

Tereza's vision

Dad comes into the room. He looks around and what he sees horrifies him.

In the room the children are trying to push a bucket with coal onto a wardrobe. There are ropes strung about everywhere.

Dad takes a deep breath and looks angry. Mum appears behind him, she is angry too.

return to reality

Tereza finishes her whispering and looks at Vašek. Vašek thinks a little. Maybe her worry is justified. He looks at his parents again.

Vašek is whispering:

10:03:29

Vašek: *So we can lock them in the cellar.*

Vašek's vision

Mum and Dad are sitting in the cellar, tied up. Vašek closes the door on them and smiles at Tereza.

Return to reality

Tereza doesn't like this idea.

Mum and Dad are getting to be even more jittery. Dad burns the fat in the frying pan and throws the wooden spoon down furiously.

10:03:40

Father

For goddness sake!

10:03:41

Mother

What are you doing now?

Mum is just getting a platter from the cupboard. She jerks back and drops the platter on the floor. It shatters.

Mum comes running into the room. She throws the children a nervous smile and runs towards a cabinet. She takes some sticking-plaster and other first aid material out of a drawer.

The children move about the room pretending that nothing is happening. They are waiting for their Mum to leave the room.

Mum runs back into the kitchen.

10:04:00

Mother:

Show me your hand.

She is trying to administer first aid to her husband, who has cut his finger – he swears angrily and even kicks at the cooker in frustration. Mum tries to calm him down but without success.

Vašek and Tereza sit on the steps and continue planning. Vašek whispers something again.

10:04:06

Vašek:

And what about hypnosis?

Vašek's vision

Their parents are sitting quite still at the kitchen table, staring ahead. They are hypnotized. A hypnosis spiral is spiraling in front of them, held by Vašek and Tereza.

Return to reality

Tereza shakes her head; she doesn't like the hypnosis idea either. Vašek does some more thinking.

In the kitchen foreground smoke is rising from the burning frying pan. Mum picks up the smoking pan and rushes to the sink with it; dad opens the window to air the kitchen. The children are sitting in the background, watching this scene helplessly.

Then Vašek whispers another idea into Tereza's ear.

10:04:24

Vašek:

Look, I have got it. I have got a brilliant idea.

Tereza ponders over it. She shrugs. Yes, maybe she could agree to this.

Vašek smiles happily.

Mum is giving the festively laid table some final touches. Dad brings in the platter of fried carp that he had laboured over, and a jug of Christmas punch.

10:04:38

Narrator

On Christmas Eve the people living in this small country fast. And because they try not to eat all day, they can't wait to sit down at Christmas Eve dinner. It is an old custom that fried carp with potato salad is served. It is the most exciting meal of the year, because everybody feels, that Baby Jesus may come at any moment.

10:04:48

father

Children!

The children are sitting at the table, having summoned up their best manners. They smile at their parents and steal quick glances at each other.

Mum and dad are serving the children with the traditional fried carp and potato salad. They are trying to look happy and festive.

Vašek watches his mum and dad, in his mind he is preparing to go into action. He looks over into the living-room at the Christmas tree and smiles.

Above the table, two glasses with punch and two glasses with orange juice are clinked in celebration of the festive evening.

Mum and dad smile at each other and the children, and take sips from their glasses. Also the children drink and start eating.

10:05:26

Mother

Mind the bone!

The children are eating, eyeing their parents every now and then. Tereza smiles markedly at her brother and Vašek has to calm her down with a soothing glance – worried she might give the show away.

Little angel bells are revolving beneath a candle on the table and their tinkle start the bells under the tree candles tinkling in a regular and irritating rhythm.

Vašek is eating his fish and keeping an eye on his parents. He is getting ready to act.

Dad has put another forkful of fish in his mouth. A tiny fish bone sticks in his tongue. Dad swears and removes the fishbone.

Vašek plucks up courage. He looks at Tereza and then nods as a sign that the action has begun.

Tereza nods enthusiastically. Then she puts her hand to her throat. She starts coughing and pretending that a fish bone is stuck in her throat. She runs away from the table.

Their parents notice at once. They have a fright. They look at each other with a silent message “there seems to be no end to these Christmas horrors”, and jump up springing to Tereza’s aid.

10:06:07

Father

What happened?

10:06:11

Mother

Don’t swallow... Open your mouth! Is it a bone?

Vašek sits at the table for a while longer, waiting for the others to be get of sight. Then he jumps up.

In the hall mum and dad are trying to calm Tereza and to pull that imaginary bone out for her.

Vašek rushes into the pantry and looks for something there.

He has found it at last – a box with a tea that makes you relax and go to sleep. There’s a picture on the box – a man asleep beneath the moon and the stars. On the box it says in large letters “Tea for sleep”. Vase takes a good look at the box and then takes out all fifteen of the teabags in it.

Vašek runs back to the table and drops the teabags into the jug of Christmas punch. He stirs the contents for the teabags to seep quickly in the hot punch.

Vašek pours the contents of his parents’ glasses back into the jug. He stirs the contents thoroughly.

In the meantime, Tereza keeps pretending to be choking. Mum and dad are trying to hold her head still and make her open her mouth. Tereza forgets to fight them for a moment, when she sees that Vašek is already seeping the teabags in the jug of punch in the kitchen.

(Tereza's view)

Her parents try to look into her mouth. But the camera looks beyond them into the kitchen, where Vašek is swiftly seeping the soporific tea in the punch. Vašek motions to Tereza that she should continue with her bout of hysterics.

Tereza pulls herself together and continues to “fight” her parents.

The teabags are seeping in the jug of punch.

A rubbish bin snaps open and the squeezed-out teabags fall in.

On the table stands the jug of punch and next to it the angel's bells are rotating. Vašek sits down on his chair. He sighs with relief – he's done it! Tereza stops coughing.

But then he remembers something. Tereza starts again.

Swiftly Vašek pours out some punch into his parents' empty glasses.

And mum and dad are now returning with Tereza, who is calm again. They are stroking her hair.

Tereza sits down next to Vašek. She winks at him.

Mum and dad sit down too. Trying to calm down, they drink up the punch in their glasses and continue eating.

Vašek sees that he has to help the action along, he must get them to drink some more. So he lifts his glass of orange juice in a toast. (camera pans) Tereza catches on immediately, and does the same.

Dad smiles and refills his glass with punch.

Mum and dad clink glasses again with their children and they all take a drink.

Vašek and Tereza smile at each other. Everything is developing according to plan.

They drink another toast to a happy Christmas.

And then another.

The jug is half empty by now.

Vašek and Tereza watch their parents with great intensity.

Mum and dad are evidently beginning to feel sleepy. Dad is chewing a piece of fish and is nearly falling asleep as he does so. Mum keeps yawning. She blinks her eyes to keep them open and looks at dad, who has just fallen asleep in the middle of his meal. Mum can't understand it. She tries to shake him back into wakefulness.

The children are tense enough to burst.

Dad mumbles something in his sleep – and sleeps on.
Mum falls asleep too.

Vašek smiles at Tereza with self-confidence and jumps up from the table. Tereza runs off after him.

And they start preparing the trap for Baby Jesus. Vašek makes a loop at one end of the laundry-line.

Tereza arranges the loop on the floor round the Christmas tree.

Vašek ties together three pails and places them on top of the cabinet.

Tereza throws Vašek the loop and (pan) he slips it over the ceiling beam – Vašek ties it to the pails.

Their parents are asleep at the table.

Tereza and Vašek are pouring coal from the bucket into the pails.

Vašek stretches the rope from the radiators to the cabinet.

They are pouring more coal, running up and down stairs.

Mother is asleep, but something seems to have disturbed her. She jerks up and wakes. Half asleep she stares around. She looks at her empty glass of punch. She thinks she must be a little drunk and sighs. Then she remembers what day it is and she looks up.

She sees two empty chairs. The children have gone.
We take a look at dad. He is fast asleep.

Mum stares at dad, she can't believe this. She shakes him. Dad wakes up at last too. He looks around with confusion.
We can see children doing their job.

The sleepy parents appear in the doorway. They stare at the children with heavy eyelids, trying to focus on what they see and to understand what is happening.

(unfocused shot)

In a haze we take in the children, who are pouring coal into the pails.

Neither mum nor dad can understand what they can possibly be doing.

The children suddenly notice that their parents are watching them. They stand still and wait tensely for what is going to happen now. But when nothing happens, they quickly put their buckets down and rush to their parents' side.

The children rush up to their parents, who are standing wavering about in the foreground. Tereza unwittingly knocks a dish of Christmas cookies to the floor.

The cookies spill all over the carpet.

Tereza turns back and wants to pick up the cookies. Vašek pulls her away from the cookies and towards their parents.

The children carefully step over the rope loop.

(view from above) The children come up to their parents and smile at them innocently.

(view from below) Their parents try to focus on the children. Dad is falling asleep again.

Dad is entering the kitchen, the others behind him. He is carrying a wash-basin with water, and he is yawning.

10:10:30

Narrator

In some families they fill their time waiting for Baby Jesus with traditional customs. For example sailing candles. A burning candle is fixed into the half of a walnut shell and each person sends their candle out onto the water. Whoevers little boat sails straight without wobbling, will have their wishes come true and a succesfull year ahead. The future of the captain whose ship has sunk is the opposite. There is nothing good for them to expect in the new year.

The children sit at the table. They wink at each other, looking forward to the outcome of their operation. Dad puts the wash-basin down in front of them. He just about manages to do so without spilling the water.

Mum picks up a candle and lights it. That is to say – she tries to light it.

Mum looks down at her own hands, unbelievably. She looks at dad. He shrugs and sits down beside the children.

Mum manages to light the candle, and she lets the wax drip into half of an empty walnut shell. Then she sticks the lighted candle into the hot wax.

Mum hands dad the first little “boat” made of walnut shell and candle. She starts lighting another one. Dad is placing the first one into the water in the wash-basin. He smiles at the children. But his eyes keep shutting.

Tereza forgets about Baby Jesus for a moment. She loves the little boat. She looks at her mother and gets a fright.

Mum is holding another burning candle. But she is asleep, so the candle leans over and the wax starts dripping. Then the candle falls out of her hands and onto the table.

Vašek notices what happened and quickly blows out the candle. Just then their sleeping father rolls down to the floor beside them. Both sleeping parents look very calm and happy. They are smiling, as if they were having a pleasant dream. The children look at each other and Tereza rushes out to reconnoiter.

The children take a careful peek into the living room.

There is still nobody in the room. The trap is laid, all ready round the Christmas tree. There are no presents under the tree as yet.

Tereza is disappointed. Vašek is nervous too, but he is still hoping that Baby Jesus would come. Their mother suddenly appears behind them and the children take fright.

Mum puts her arm round the children's shoulders and leads the back into the adjoining room.

The children return into the room and immediately notice their father.

Dad is sleeping. His hand lies on the edge of the basin and his sleeve has caught fire from one of the candles.

Tereza runs up to him, pours water on his sleeve and the fire goes out.

Vašek is starting to have a really bad conscience over what he has brought about to his parents.

Mum is still standing in the doorway. She watches apathetically as Tereza puts her father's burning sleeve out. Then she makes a gesture suggesting she'll go and see if Baby Jesus has arrived, and she leaves the room. She shuts the door behind her.

They can't run after her, because father's body leans forwards and he falls face forwards into the basin of water. Not even that wakes him up.

The children take fright. What if their mother gets caught in the trap instead of Baby Jesus? But then they have to jump forwards to save their father.

The children run up and lift him upright.

From beyond the closed door into the living room there are footsteps to be heard and a lot of banging about.

Teresa is tense. She is getting ever more scared that it's going to be her Mum who gets caught in the trap. Not even Vašek is so sure now that it had all been a good idea.

After hearing the noise. Father gets up, and with a pretend-mysterious smile he motions for the children to wait, that he had better take in the situation by himself first. He leaves the children alone beside the basin with the floating boats.

Dad quickly slips through the door so that the children can't really see into the other room, and he shuts the door behind him.

The children are alone. But they don't look very happy.

One of the boats floating on the water starts sinking. The candle goes out. Vašek notices this and swallows nervously.

Another big crash from next door.

Both children carefully peep round the door into the living room.

But what they see in the room surprises Tereza and even Vašek.

As can be expected, mum is hanging up side down, but not very high, because the pails could not lift her all the way. Only her legs are up in the air. Otherwise she is lying on the carpet, peacefully asleep. She is holding the vacuum cleaner with which she was about to clean the carpet of the cookie-crumbs. Dad is sleeping sitting up, leaning back against the Christmas tree, which has toppled to the floor.

The scene makes Tereza sad. Tears gather in her eyes. Vašek didn't imagine things like this either. When he sees his sister crying he feels very bad indeed.

Then she notices, that dad has very peaceful expression on his face. Also mother looks very peaceful as she lies there asleep, holding on to the vacuum cleaner. As if she was having the most pleasant of dreams. At last we can see a really happy and peaceful Christmas atmosphere reflected in her face.

Tereza smiles through her tears. She is glad that her parents look so happy.

Vašek doesn't know what to do now. He looks about the room and then he notices something. He starts back.

The imprint of a child's hand can be seen clearly on the window pane, made from the outside.

Vašek grabs his sister and pulls her towards the window.

Vašek and Tereza slowly walk up to the hand imprint. Tereza tries to place her hand onto the imprint. But her hand is about twice as large. Tereza's eyes are shining, as are Vašek's.

Vašek is looking out, trying to see the person who made that imprint. Then they both notice something else.

Out on the balcony lies a big pile of presents. The pile looks as if Baby Jesus had been frightened off by something and spilt it all from his sack.

THE END