

The present did not arrive in time.

What to say to your child, once, calmly — and then stop.

SAY THIS

“Some things travel separately and arrive after Christmas. Yours is one of them. Christmas morning is still Christmas morning.”

IF THEY WANT A REASON — PICK ONE, USE IT ONCE

- It was too big for the sleigh and is coming by a different route.
- The elves finished it late and Santa would not send it unfinished.
- It is being delivered to the house you will be in next week, not this one.
- Santa left it with someone to pass on, because he knew you would not be home.

DO NOT SAY

- A day. “Tuesday” turns one disappointment into two if the courier slips again. “Soon” cannot be broken.
- Anything about behaviour. The delay is logistics, and it is nobody’s fault in the house.
- More than one reason. A long story invites questions, and every detail has to stay consistent all day.

ON THE DAY

Give them something physical that stands in for the absent thing — a note about it, a picture of it, a box with a card inside. A placeholder they can hold changes the morning. If you want Santa to say it himself, on North Pole paper with a notice from the Sleigh Service, that is North Pole Rescue: santasnotes.com/north-pole-rescue

