



"Who, me?"

*BEST WISHES FOR A VERY
LOVELY HOLIDAY
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR*

Julenisse: The original 'Elf on the Shelf'

In olden times, farmers in Denmark blamed all kinds of misfortune on a mischievous elf who lived in the barn: The *Nisse*. On Christmas Eve, members of the household were expected to set out a bowl of porridge to appease them. Otherwise, the elves would "up their game," bringing even more suffering to the household.

Old-fashioned Danish Christmas decorations included paper versions of the *Nisse*, which are cut out with a tab that can be tucked under a book or other item on a shelf, making them look like they're dangling or climbing the shelves.

As you can see by the artwork on the front of this card, I've made a huge assumption about the dumpster fire of 2020. Last year, since I literally spent Christmas in a van down by the river (it was fun!), I did not set out a bowl of porridge for them. So this year, I plan to appease them with a lovely bowl of *risalamande*, our beloved Danish rice pudding with cream and almonds.

I hope you'll grab some scissors, cut out this *Julenisse* (the word *Jule* means "Christmas"), fold back the tab, and place him on a shelf. Whether you do or not, be assured that unseen *Nisser* do inhabit your house! Be sure to appease these pandemic-causing mischief-makers with a bowl of porridge on Christmas Eve.

I suspect a small plate of cookies would also suffice, and Santa will be happy to share.