



# The Strange Case of S.C.

By Cara Bafile

## **DOCTOR:**

I'd like to begin by thanking the members of this panel for inviting me here to present my research on Hectic Holiday Disorder. HHD is a serious condition that's most common in December. Sufferers exhibit strange behavior that impairs their ability to enjoy the holiday season.

Today, I've invited the family and friends of one of my sickest patients to share their story. To protect his privacy, we'll call the patient S.C. Let's listen to what S.C. and his family have to say.

## **HOLLY C.:**

It looked like it was going to be a good year for our family business. It was clear that a large number of children were being "good" this year, so we expected a very busy season. At first, Father was as excited as the rest of us, but then he became worried that we might not have enough supplies to meet the demand.

## **S.C.:**

Tommy wants a ho-ho-hobbyhorse!

## **IVY C.:**

Father then became obsessed with "Xmas the Spot," a store he saw as our competitor. He insisted that we start our own chain of "Deck-the-Hall Marts." That made our employees angry.

## **ELVES:**

What was he thinking? Elves can't stock shelves!

**S.C.:**

Simmer down, you ho-ho-hooligans!

**MRS. C.:**

No doubt about it. It was a tall order and the elves weren't up to it.

**S.C.:**

Take those toys to ho-ho-Holland!

**IVY C.:**

Father then suggested that we hire extra workers to help the elves. We hired penguins from the South Pole, and brought in local polar bears to handle shipping and receiving. Dad thought the new employees, who worked for fish, would lower labor costs. Of course, no one knew if the very different groups would get along.

**S.C.:**

But those bears and penguins sure can play ho-ho-hockey!

**HOLLY C.:**

The new employees turned out to be a bust. Quality fell and so did our business. Finally, we had to lay off *all* our seasonal employees.

**MRS. C.:**

Instead of bonuses, the elves got pink slips in their Christmas cards!

**ELVES:**

Merry Christmas, indeed!

**S.C.:**

Happy ho-ho-holidays!

**MRS. C.:**

I thought we might have to give up the reindeer.

**S.C.:**

Buy a ho-ho-horse!

**IVY C.:**

Then Dad invested in a boat to cut shipping costs. That caused a further rift in the organization.

**S.C.:**

Give the sail a ho-ho-hoist!

**MRS. C.:**

We've always delivered by air. We had no crew!

**S.C.:**

Yo! Ho-ho-ho and a cup of hot cocoa!

**HOLLY C.:**

Finally, Mother was forced to take over the business for Dad. He was told to rest, but he still made every list and checked it twice. When he was done, he wandered off to the land of the midnight sun.

**S.C.:**

I'm a ho-ho-hobo!

**MRS. C.:**

Without the northern lights, we *never* would have found him!

**S.C.:**

Pesky ho-ho-horizon!

**IVY C.:**

That was when we knew treatment was necessary.

**S.C.:**

I don't need a ho-ho-hospital!

**DOCTOR:**

As you can see, S.C. still suffers from symptoms of HHD.

**S.C.:**

This is a ho-ho-hoax!

**DOCTOR:**

Those who are closest to S.C. hope he'll recover quickly. Right now, we're trying an herbal cure made from poinsettia and mistletoe. It seems to be helping, but our research continues. We learn more about HHD everyday.

**S.C.:**

I'm in the ho-ho-homestretch!

**HOLLY C.:**

We want Father to get back to his jolly old self. Next year, we hope he'll be home for Christmas breakfast.

**S.C.:**

I love ho-ho-hotcakes!

**MRS. C.:**

We know, dear.

**ELVES:**

Goodbye! Get well soon! We love you!

**S.C.:**

Ho-ho-hogwash!

