

Santa's Second String

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FADE IN:

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS BEDROOM - NIGHT**

**SUPER: NORTH POLE - JANUARY 1957**

SANTA and MRS CLAUS both sit up, propped up with fluffy pillows, in a modest double bed with hand sewn quilt. Snow falls on the window pane. Santa wears his Santa hat and Mrs Claus wears a bonnet. Both wear glasses reading paperbacks.

Santa has a huge yawn, he looks very tired.

MRS CLAUS

Tired dear?

SANTA

Nothing that a good long sleep won't fix. Would you mind dear?

MRS CLAUS

Not at all.

Mrs Claus adjusts an Alarm clock on her bedside table. She sets it to December.

SANTA

Could you set it to November? I need to check on the elves early and there's the reindeers and the--

MRS CLAUS

Darling, you really need to get some help. Now that there's so many children you really should--

SANTA

Mary Mary, I'll be fine. That's why I'm getting up a month early. Now if you please.

Mrs Claus looks cranky as she adjusts the alarm clock.

MRS CLAUS

Well if you ask me--

SANTA

What ever it is you need to tell me, tell me in November, I'm beat.

Santa puts his head on the pillow and is immediately in a deep sleep. Mrs Claus blows out a candle and hugs Santa.

MRS CLAUS  
You lovable old fool.

Mrs Claus falls asleep cuddling/spooning Santa.

CU of Alarm clock, the minute hand whirs around so fast it's a blur, the hour hand spins around twenty times a second. Another part of the alarm clock, January clocks over to February and then March.

Santa and Mrs Claus twitch and move about in their sleep, turning one way and then another while the days fly by. Through the bedroom window, night slowly turns to day and remains day. The bedroom is now alight from sunlight.

CU of Alarm clock, the minute hand continues to appear as a blur and the hour hand spins around twenty times a second. Another part of the clock shows July, clocking over to August and then September.

Santa and Mrs Claus twitch and move about in their sleep, turning one way and then another while the days fly by. Through the bedroom window, day slowly turns to night and remains night. The bedroom is again dimly lit.

CU of Alarm clock, the hands spin wildly. October clocks over to November and the old fashioned alarm rings loudly.

Santa and Mrs Claus slowly wake up.

SANTA  
Morning dear.

MRS CLAUS  
Oh Santa, brush your teeth. Smelly breath.

SANTA  
Oh ah sorry.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Mrs Claus is at the Kitchen sink washing up some dishes and mugs. Outside the kitchen window is a starry night.

Santa is at the kitchen table. He sips a large mug of coffee. He looks through a thick stack of newspapers.

MRS CLAUS  
Anything in the paper's dear.

SANTA  
Same old same old. Oh the Dodgers moved to LA. Amazing!

MRS CLAUS  
That's nice dear. Another coffee?

SANTA  
No thank you Mary, need to get  
those reindeers back into shape.

Santa gets up to leave. He is a little stiff.

MRS CLAUS  
You really should get some help  
Santa. You're not getting any  
younger.

SANTA  
Nonsense. Fit as a fiddle. Now  
give me a kiss.

Mrs Claus gives Santa a peck on the cheek.

SANTA  
Don't wait up. After I take the  
reindeers out for a fly I have a  
meeting with the head elves.

Santa leaves. Mrs Claus shakes her head as she washes the  
dishes. She looks out to the starry night.

MRS CLAUS  
Oh how I wish someone would give  
that old lovable fool a hand.

**EXT. STARS ABOVE THE NORTH POLE - NIGHT**

A bright shining star - the Wishing star - twinkles brightly  
for a second. It's surrounded by other less bright stars.  
A small star near the wishing star suddenly begins to fall.

**INT. DINER IN CANADIAN FISHING VILLAGE - DAY**

BILLY(60), an old fisherman with a grey full beard, wears a  
thick beanie and a heavy yellow wet weather jacket. He uses  
the diner's public phone. Billy stares at a photo of a young  
girl around two while he listens. He looks anxious.

JENNY (V.O)  
Hello?

BILLY  
Hello Jenny.  
(beat)  
It's your Dad.

There's a long pause as Billy anxiously awaits a reply.

JENNY (V.O)  
What do you want?

BILLY  
Well I was hoping to see you and my  
granddaught--

JENNY (V.O)  
That's not a good idea.

BILLY  
I just want to get to know her.

JENNY (V.O)  
You missed every one of my  
birthdays and every Christmas. You  
were never there Dad. I can't let  
you break her heart too.

BILLY  
Fishing involves long hours. Your  
mother knew--

JENNY (V.O)  
You know nothing about my mother.  
You were always at sea. You missed  
her birthdays too. You were never  
around to see how much she cried.

BILLY  
I'm sorry Jenny.

Billy gets an engaged tone, Jenny has hung up.

Billy makes his way through the half full diner towards the  
exit. A redhead waitress ALICE (50) calls out to Billy.

ALICE  
Billy! You taking your boat out?

BILLY  
Yeah, why?

ALICE  
Been on the radio all afternoon, a  
huge storm headed our way.

BILLY  
They tend to exaggerate. I'll be  
Okay.

Billy exits the diner. Alice shakes her head and pours a  
customer at the counter a fresh cup of coffee.

**EXT. OUTSIDE ELVES WORKSHOPS - THE NORTH POLE - NIGHT**

Santa is on his sleigh. In front of the sleigh are nine frisky reindeers. The reindeer at the very front is Rudolf with a bright shiny nose.

SANTA

Come Prancer, come Dancer, come  
Donner and Blitzen, come Dasher and  
Commet and Cupid and Vixen. And  
last but not least come Rudolph.  
Let's fly.

Santa shakes the reins but to no avail. They don't move.

SANTA

Oh very well!

Santa hits play on a reel to reel tape player. 1957 hit 'La Bamba' plays. The reindeers take off at full gallop. Within seconds the reindeers and sleigh are in flight.

SANTA

Shoot the moon!

The reindeers and sleigh soar towards a full moon.

**EXT. OUTER SPACE - NEAR JUPITER AND SATURN**

Hurtling through space flying past Jupiter is a bright purple ball. The purple ball continues past rings of Saturn.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE NORTH POLE - NIGHT**

Santa and the reindeers fly through very heavy rain clouds. The weather's wild with heavy rain and gale force winds.

SANTA

HIGHER! HIGHER! WE NEED TO GET  
ABOVE THIS BAD WEATHER!

The sleigh and the reindeers continue to climb higher.

**EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY**

Billy is in his little fishing boat in the middle of the ocean. There's a monster swell almost swallowing the boat as well as severe heavy rain and strong gale force winds. Billy is in the cabin calling 'Mayday' on the marine radio.

BILLY

Mayday! Mayday! This is Tango  
Foxtrot one. I've lost my bearings,  
I'm way off course taking in water.

Billy struggles to listen, can only hear static. He sees a large iceberg dead ahead but it's too late. The boat hits the iceberg dead on and comes to an abrupt halt. Billy crashes through the windshield. He ends up on the iceberg.

Billy is on one side of the iceberg - a flat level section. Running through the centre of the iceberg is a huge crack. Billy's fishing boat sinks and in seconds it is gone. Billy huddles on the iceberg trying to keep warm and not fall in.

**EXT. OUTER SPACE - NEAR THE MOON**

Hurtling through space flying past the moon is a bright purple ball.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH**

Santa and the reindeers are high above the earth. Santa looks down to see the large storm system. He is so high up, he has a satellite view of the large eye of the storm. Santa is not looking where he is going.

Flying high high above the earth is Sputnik 1, earth's first satellite. Santa notices it almost too late.

SANTA

What the--

Santa pulls hard to the left and avoids a collision with the Russian satellite by mere inches. The reindeers and sleigh spin out of control and fall down down down towards the eye of the storm.

**EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY**

Billy's still on the iceberg. He crouches down to keep warm and not slide in. Billy stares at the photo of the young girl around two, the same photo from earlier.

BILLY

Would of loved the chance to have  
known you Clarabell but I guess  
that doesn't matter now.

Billy puts the photo back in his pocket. He tries to keep warm. The crack in the iceberg creaks - it's getting bigger.

Out of the cloud flies Santa's reindeers and his sleigh. The sleigh comes down fast. Billy can't believe his eyes. The sleigh makes an emergency stop on the iceberg. The landing of the sleigh makes the crack even wider.

Santa pulls up right next to Billy. Billy has to rub his eyes. He can't believe his eyes.

SANTA

Oh ahh sorry for landing on your iceberg.

BILLY

It's not my iceberg Santa. My boat sank and ---

CCRREEAAKK!!!! Loud sound of the iceberg cracking apart.

SANTA

Quick climb aboard. This ice cube is about to break apart.

Billy jumps on. Santa shakes the reins - YAH YAH! - but to no avail. The creaking continues.

SANTA

Oh very well!

Santa hits play on a tape player. 1957 hit 'La Bamba' starts to play. The reindeer immediately take off. No sooner are they airborne, the huge iceberg splits in half. The flat side Billy was on has flipped over and is now under water.

BILLY

Thanks Santa. That was close.

SANTA

Don't thank me yet, we're still not out of the woods. We need to find somewhere to land fast. The reindeer are tired from flying in this storm.

The reindeer and sleigh fly very low. The sleigh skims across the ocean, sometimes touches the water.

**INT. SAMUEL THE POLAR BEAR'S CABIN - DAY**

Samuel a large Polar Bear - wearing blue trousers - sits alone in a comfy chair in his small log cabin. He's near the fireplace to keep warm, looks relaxed smoking a pipe. Small window nearby indicates there's a wild blizzard outside.

BANG BANG BANG. Samuel gets up to answer the door. He opens the door and a frosty wind blows in a cloud of snow. At the door are Santa and Billy half frozen.

SAMUEL

Santa? What a surprise! Quick! Come in, come in.

Billy follows Santa inside, but is frightened of Samuel.

Samuel quickly shuts the door. Santa brushes off the snow. Billy tries to hide behind Santa, he's terrified.

SANTA  
Oh what dreadful weather!

Billy hides behind Santa. Samuel peers around to see Billy.

SAMUEL  
Hello.

BILLY  
Please don't eat me!

SAMUEL  
Eat you? Ha Ha Ha. Santa who's your friend?

SANTA  
He's actually a new friend. Didn't catch his--

BILLY  
It's Billy.

SANTA  
Hmmm Billy Billy Billy. Oh didn't I get you a Teddy bear for Christmas 1905.

BILLY  
I did get a Teddy bear! Maybe I'm dreaming. Stuck in a cabin with Santa and a talking Polar bear.

Santa and Samuel chuckle.

SAMUEL  
You're not dreaming Billy. Come and sit near the fire and warm up. You too Santa.

Samuel leads Billy and Santa near the warm fire. He grabs some large kitchen chairs for them to sit on.

SANTA  
Oh the reindeers are all outside.

SAMUEL  
Stay here you two. I'll put them in the stable. Back in a minute.

Samuel exits. Santa and Billy warm up near the fire. Billy breaks an awkward silence.

BILLY  
So ahh Santa. Follow any sports?

SANTA  
Baseball. Brooklyn Dodgers fan.

BILLY  
Heard they moved to LA.

SANTA  
HMMMMMMMMM.

Cabin door flies open letting in an icy wind. Samuel shuts it and shakes off the snow. He joins the others at the fire.

SAMUEL  
That storms getting worse. Best you both stay here till it passes.

SANTA  
Thank you Samuel, sorry for the intrusion.

BILLY  
Yeah thanks.

SAMUEL  
Don't mention it. Hey Billy, what do you do?

BILLY  
I was a fisherman but my boat just sank.

SAMUEL  
Hmm tough break. Maybe Santa can help.

SANTA  
Only boats I deal with are model types. Sorry. But I'm sure we can help Billy some other way. Get you back to your family for Christmas.

BILLY  
No rush Santa - no family waiting.

SANTA  
No family? Hmmm frightfully sorry.

Uncomfortable silence. Samuel breaks the silence.

SAMUEL  
Wish I had some food to offer you--

SANTA  
 Warm shelter to ride out the storm  
 is more than enou--

SAMUEL  
 (gets up)  
 I might have a christmas pudding.

Samuel starts looking in back of a cupboard in the kitchen corner of the log cabin.

SANTA  
 Well I am famished.

Billy nods in agreement.

**EXT. OUTER SPACE - HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH**

The bright purple ball hurtles towards earth. It flies past Sputnik 1 and onward to the eye of the large storm system.

**INT. SAMUEL THE POLAR BEAR'S CABIN - DAY**

Samuel's placed a small round table between the chairs near the fireplace. It has a Christmas style table cloth. In the middle of the table is a Christmas pudding on a plate. Near it a candy cane. Also three small plates and napkins.

SAMUEL  
 Now for the finishing touch.

Samuel sticks the candy cane into the top of the pudding.

SAMUEL  
 Ta Da! Sorry. It's not much.

SANTA  
 Nonsense! With a cup of tea it'll  
 be splendid.

BILLY  
 Looks good to me.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE - DAY**

The bright purple ball enters the eye of the storm. Purple arcs of light light up the whole storm system.

**EXT. OUTSIDE SAMUEL THE POLAR BEAR'S CABIN - DAY**

The small cabin with a stable nearby is hardly visible on account of the blizzard. Purple lightning hits the chimney.

**INT. SAMUEL THE POLAR BEAR'S CABIN - DAY**

In the cabin, everyone moves their chair around the round table. A purple arc flies out of the fireplace. It strikes the candy cane like a lightning rod. The cabin lights up with an intense purple light, blinds everyone for a second.

SAMUEL

Oh dear. What happened?

SANTA

No idea.

BILLY

Lightning I think, and it struck the pudding.

Everyone looks at the pudding which looks black and burnt. It smolders with a slight whisp of smoke.

SAMUEL

Darn. I think the pudding's spoilt.

The smoldering black pudding opens two eyes which look about. Little arms pop out and little legs push ARCHIBALD the pudding up off the plate. His little arm pulls out the candy cane and uses it as a cane. He opens a little mouth.

ARCHIBALD

Who you callin' spoilt Tiny?

An abrupt talking pudding startles Santa, Samuel and Billy.

BILLY

Now I know I'm dreamin'.

ARCHIBALD

So you believe in Santa Claus, you have no problems with a talking polar bear but you can't buy a talking christmas pudding. Oh plleeeaaassee! Get a life Gramps!

SANTA

Now now, that's very rude talking to a senior like that, why I'm much older than Billy and--

ARCHIBALD

Yeah yeah, we all know fatso. You've been doing this for such a long long time and you're so old and wise. Well listen up, I'm older, wiser and I'm here to help.

Santa, Samuel and Billy are dumbfounded.

**EXT. OUTSIDE SAMUEL THE POLAR BEAR'S CABIN - DAY**

The small cabin's hardly visible on account of the blizzard.

**INT. SAMUEL THE POLAR BEAR'S CABIN - DAY**

Santa, Samuel and Billy are still dumbfounded.

SANTA

You're here to help?

ARCHIBALD

Yeah Ralph sent me. Ralph? He's a large star in Orion Nebula, other side of the Milky Way. Some folks call him the wishing star.

SANTA

The wishing star sent you, but why?

ARCHIBALD

Well me and Ralph have hung out since the Big Bang. I was a little star up near Ralph and -

BILLY

You were a star?

ARCHIBALD

Yeah. Do you mind? Anyway as I was sayin' before Gramps here rudely interrupted, I was a star and Ralph got a wish from a Mary Claus to help her husband Santa. He asked me if I was busy and I said I'd love to and well, here I am. Archibald at your service.

Archibald does a little bow and twirls his candy cane. Samuel, Santa and Billy all chuckle.

ARCHIBALD (CONT'D)

What? What's so funny? You needed a hand so here I am?

SAMUEL

Your so puny, you wouldn't be able to lift one toy let alone a sack.

ARCHIBALD

Outside now Tiny. I'll lift you off the ground with one punch.

Archibald the Christmas Pudding pounds his tiny fist.

SANTA

Sorry old chap but I'm afraid you  
don't have the physical attributes.

Archibald looks determined to prove himself.

ARCHIBALD

Hey Tiny, you got a bigger table  
than this one.

SAMUEL

Yeah, the table in the kitchen.

ARCHIBALD

Lead the way.

Samuel leads the others to the kitchen corner of the cabin.  
There is a large cleared wooden kitchen table.

ARCHIBALD

Stand back.

The others stand either side. Archibald twirls the candy  
cane round and round till it's a blur. He aims at the table.

Before their very eyes, all manner of Christmas foods  
materialize all over the table. Legs of ham, roast beef,  
roast pork, roast turkey, roast chicken, corn on the cob,  
apple sauce, cranberry sauce, buns, gravy and roast veggies.

BILLY

Wow!

Everyone can't believe their eyes. The smell and sight of  
the feast has everyone hungry.

ARCHIBALD

Well fatso, have I got the gig?  
Can I be of any assistance?

Santa rubs his chin as he gazes at the feast and thinks of  
the possibilities.

SANTA

Yes, yes. I'm sure we can use  
someone of your talents.

**EXT. OUTSIDE MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT**

A POLICE OFFICER knocks on the front door of a modest home.  
JENNY, brunette, late thirties answers the door.

JENNY

Yes. May I help you?

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'm, is your father Billy Doyle?

JENNY

Yes. Why? What's happened?

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'm, as next of kin I must regretfully inform you your father's fishing boat has been lost at sea. He made a mayday call yesterday, reporting his boat was taking on water. An extensive search of the area has found the wreckage of his boat. I'm so sorry.

JENNY breaks down. She sobs uncontrollably on the Officer's shoulder on the porch. A young girl, CLARABELL (12) with long brown hair comes out to see what's going on.

CLARABELL

Mama, what's wrong? Mama? Mama?

JENNY turns to Clarabell, continues to sob on her shoulder.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Santa leads Samuel, Billy and Archibald into the kitchen. He places a stool near the table for the magic pudding.

SANTA

Everyone, take a seat. Archibald, you can sit up here.

ARCHIBALD

Ooooh I get to sit at the grown ups table. Thanks fatso.

SANTA

Um yes back soon.

Samuel, Archibald and Billy take a seat.

MRS CLAUS (O.S)

WHERE THE DICKENS HAVE YOU BEEN?  
I'VE BEEN WORRIED SICK. YOU SHOULD  
HAVE CALLED.

SANTA (O.S)

DARN RADIO WAS ON THE FRITZ ON  
ACCOUNT OF THE BLIZZARD.

ARCHIBALD

Awkward.

Mrs Claus enters, she is surprized to see the visitors.

MRS CLAUS

Oh we have visitors. Santa you should have mentioned we have--

SANTA

Sorry dear, didn't have the chance. You know Samuel, and this is Billy.

Mrs Claus and Billy exchange a smile and a nod.

SANTA (CONT'D)

And last but not least we have Archibald.

Archibald stands up on the stool and runs across the table. He grabs Mrs Claus's hand and kisses it - continental style.

ARCHIBALD

Please to meet yah Toots. Mwah! Fatso never told me he had such a beautiful daughter.

Mrs Claus giggles like a young school girl.

MRS CLAUS

Oh I'm Mrs Claus, Santa's wife.

ARCHIBALD

No! Not possible. You're too young and beautiful for this old geezer.

Mrs Claus giggles again. Archibald returns to the stool.

SANTA

Archibald's the help you asked for.

MRS CLAUS

Help?

SANTA

You made a wish to Ralph? I mean the wishing star.

MRS CLAUS

Oh I did too. Wow! Wishes do come true.

SANTA

Evidently.

ARCHIBALD  
Hey fatso, where's your can?

SANTA  
I beg your pardon.

ARCHIBALD  
The John, the toilet, bathroom,  
little boys room, the sh--

SANTA  
You need to use the bathroom?

ARCHIBALD  
Yeah I gotta go. A number two if  
you must know. It's been bakin--

SANTA  
Down the hall, second on the right.

SAMUEL  
Hey Archibald.

ARCHIBALD  
What?

SAMUEL  
Don't fall in.

ARCHIBALD  
Up yours tiny.

Archibald climbs down from the stool and exits the kitchen.

SANTA  
Such an uncouth fellow.

MRS CLAUS  
I think he's charming. So can you  
use him?

SANTA  
Maybe, just not sure how. He can  
cover any bare table with a feast.

BILLY  
Santa, Mrs Claus, if I may.

SANTA  
Yes Billy.

BILLY  
Are you familiar with the term  
second string?

SANTA  
Certainly. Like in baseball.

BILLY  
Exactly, why not form a second  
string sleigh and reindeer team.

SANTA  
But I don't think he'd manage--

BILLY  
Well it wouldn't need to be just  
him, we could have a driver,  
someone to help Archibald up and  
down the chimney and some muscle. I  
don't have any family waiting for  
me so I'd love to help, if I may.

SANTA  
Excellent idea. Why this other  
team could take up the slack and  
could target the poorer families,  
ones that can't afford a feast.

SAMUEL  
Santa, I'd love to volunteer to be  
the muscle, help move the toys.

Santa and Mrs Claus look happy at this prospect.

SANTA  
Oh this is splendid and the second  
team could help with managing the  
elves while I'm asleep.

BILLY  
It'd be my honor.

SANTA  
This is more than I could ever  
hoped for. What a wonderful  
present to me. Thank you dear.

MRS CLAUS  
My pleasure Darling.

SANTA  
I've got the backup sleigh. Now  
all we need is another team of  
reindeers and a driver.

**INT. SMALL DINGY OFFICE - DAY**

Santa's in a business suit that's two size too small for him. He sits behind a cluttered desk in a tiny dingy office. There's a knock on the door.

SANTA  
Come in, come in.

Door can only be half opened cause of a filing cabinet. A young Badger BLUEGRASS (20) squeezes through the door. He's wearing jeans and an unironed business shirt and tie.

BLUEGRASS  
Is this where the job interv--

SANTA  
Yes, yes. Take a seat.

Santa half stands up to shake Bluegrass's hand. Bluegrass and Santa sit back down. Santa looks through a resume.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
Now Bluegrass, don't mind if I call you Bluegrass or Blue?

BLUEGRASS  
Bluegrass is fine.

SANTA  
Says here you have fifteen years experience handling reindeer. How's that? You don't look that old.

BLUEGRASS  
My Grandfather raised me and he owns a reindeer farm.

SANTA  
Hmmm. Very good. And are you scared of heights?

BLUEGRASS  
Not that I know of. Don't think so.

Santa continues to scan through the resume. Bluegrass looks nervous.

SANTA  
Hmm. Fine Fine. You're not a beatnik are you?

BLUEGRASS  
No I'm a badger. You hire badgers?

SANTA

Oh we are a very progressive company. Hire all sorts, all sorts. So would you like to know anything about the position?

BLUEGRASS

How much does it pay?

SANTA

Nothing.

BLUEGRASS

Nothing?

SANTA

Not a cent. But we do offer room and board, on Christmas eve you get all the milk and cookies you could ever want, lots of fun and adventure and whilst employed in my service you'll never grow old.

Bluegrass thinks for a moment.

BLUEGRASS

I'll take it.

SANTA

It was the never growing old, wasn't it.

BLUEGRASS

Well I was sold on the milk and cookies and the fun and adventure.

SANTA

Welcome aboard.

Santa shakes Bluegrass's hand.

SANTA

Think your grandfather can do me a deal on some reindeers.

Bluegrass gives Santa a nervous smile.

**INT. MEETING ROOM / SMALL AUDITORIUM**

Santa's at the front of a small auditorium. Billy, Samuel and Archibald sit on the front row. Bluegrass sits in the second row, sits back with his feet resting on a front row chair. There's a large map of the world on the front wall.

SANTA

I gather you've all met our new addition to the team.

Bluegrass gives everyone a two finger salute.

ARCHIBALD

Hi-ya Stripes.

BLUEGRASS

The name's Bluegrass.

SANTA

he-hum. The elves have this room for a Union meeting in five so everyone eyes front.

Santa uses a pointer and points to a large map of the world.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Starting eleven P M Christmas Eve Eastern Russia and ending seven A M Christmas day western Alaska, we have exactly thirty two hours to deliver over a billion presents. It might sound like a lot of time, but it's not. Any questions?

SAMUEL

What's the plan, do we deliver to different countries or what?

SANTA

We'll deliver to the same towns, so if anyone gets in trouble, the other team's not far way. You'll target the poorer neighborhoods, folks who can't afford a feast. Any other questions?

ARCHIBALD

Yeah fatso. How do I get into the houses?

SANTA

Same way I do, down the chimney. Billy will help you up and down and Samuel will handle the presents. Any other questions?

Everyone shakes their heads. There's a small number of elves at the back of the auditorium.

## SANTA

If there's no more questions, looks like the elves want to have their meeting. We've got four weeks to Christmas. Lets make it happen.

**MONTAGE - SECOND TEAM'S PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS**

- A) Billy walks on a tin roof. Archibald on his back. Billy slips over. Archibald goes flying.
- B) Billy walks on a tin roof. Makes it to the chimney. Tries to lower Archibald into the chimney. Slips over.
- C) Billy walks on a tin roof. Makes it to the chimney and lowers Archibald down. Knocked out by a flying present.
- D) Samuel shakes his head. He's near a stack of presents near a mock up tin roof that's only a few feet off the ground. Billy lies unconscious on a thick mat nearby.
- E) Bluegrass fails to lasso reindeers in a corral under large flood lights in the snow. Large warehouse is behind.
- F) Bluegrass continues attempts to lasso reindeers in the corral and continues to fail.
- G) Bluegrass manages to lasso a reindeer. The reindeer drags Bluegrass around in the snow.
- H) Billy walks on a tile roof. Archibald on his back. Billy slips over. Archibald goes flying.
- I) Billy walks on a tile roof. Makes it to the chimney. Tries to lower Archibald into the chimney. Slips over.
- J) Billy walks on a tile roof. Makes it to the chimney and lowers Archibald down. Knocked out by a flying present.
- K) Samuel shakes his head. He's near a stack of presents near a mock up tile roof that's only a few feet off the ground. Billy lies unconscious on a thick mat nearby.
- L) A reindeer continues to drag Bluegrass around in the snow.
- M) Billy walks on a tin roof. He makes it to the chimney, lowers Archibald down, catches the present, drops it in the chimney. Samuel near the stack of presents gives a thumbs up.
- N) With the reindeers running wild in the corral, Bluegrass sits down on a stool in one corner. Starts to play a banjo.
- O) The reindeers stop running around the corral. They all gather around Bluegrass to hear him play the banjo.

P) Billy walks on a tile roof. He makes it to the chimney, lowers Archibald down, catches the present, drops it in the chimney. Samuel near the stack of presents gives a thumbs up.

Q) Bluegrass has the reins on all the reindeers. They're all lined up in front of the sleigh.

**EXT. NORTH POLE OUTSIDE ELVE'S TOY WAREHOUSE**

Under large flood lights, Bluegrass grooms one of the nine reindeers now rigged up and in front of the sleigh. Samuel, Archibald and Billy arrive.

ARCHIBALD  
How's it goin' Stripes?

Bluegrass looks up, shakes his head and returns to grooming.

SAMUEL  
Might as well accept it. He calls me Tiny.

BILLY  
And I'm Gramps. Means he likes you.

ARCHIBALD  
You all think I like you? Boy was I puttin' out the wrong signal. So Stripes what's their names?

BLUEGRASS  
Huh?

ARCHIBALD  
The reindeers. What's their names?

BLUEGRASS  
They haven't got any.

ARCHIBALD  
Well we need to rectify that. Okay Tiny, top of your head, first two.

SAMUEL  
Ahh Flotsam and Jetsam.

ARCHIBALD  
Gramps, next two.

BILLY  
Ahh Chicago and Detroit.

ARCHIBALD  
Stripes, next two.

BLUEGRASS

Ahh Dickens and Shakespeare.

ARCHIBALD

Okay last three, Wallet and Watch  
and Rusty?

BLUEGRASS

Rusty?

ARCHIBALD

He looks like a Rusty. Now there,  
they've all got names.

**EXT. NORTH POLE RUNWAY - NIGHT**

Santa's sleigh pulled by nine reindeers charges down an icy runway to the sound of 'La Bamba'. There's a huge red sack in the back. Flashing lights either side guide the sleigh down the runway. It takes off into the dark.

The second sleigh team is at the edge of the runway ready to take off. Bluegrass has the reins. At the front, next to Bluegrass is Archibald sitting on a cushion. Behind him is Samuel and Billy sitting in the back seat.

BILLY

So how do the reindeers fly?

SAMUEL

A special feed the elves make up.  
They feed them just before takeoff.

BLUEGRASS

(turns back to Samuel)  
Special feed?

The reindeers have feed bags on. Everyone's off the sleigh.

ARCHIBALD

Great start guys.

SAMUEL

Just a minor teething problem.

The reindeers no longer have their feed bags on and everyone's ready to take off.

BLUEGRASS

Come Flotsam, come Jetsam, come  
Chicago and Detroit. Come Dickens,  
come Shakespeare, come Wallet and  
Watch. And last but not least come  
Rusty.

Bluegrass shakes the reins but the reindeers won't budge.  
 Bluegrass presses play on a reel to reel tape player.  
 Bluegrass banjo music plays. The reindeers take off down  
 the runway. With a galloping of hooves they're airborne.

**INT. MR AND MRS TIDMOUSE'S RUN DOWN SHACK - NIGHT**

Rundown one room shack has bare floor boards, cracks in the walls and a small fireplace. Half dead christmas tree in one corner. Other end has a kitchen table, cupboard, window and small sink. Along a wall's a large bed with an old quilt.

Sound asleep in bed is Mr and Mrs Tidmouse and their five children, a family of very poor church mice. No one stirring.

Out of the fireplace appears Archibald, covered in soot. Archibald coughs cause of the soot. He has some presents.

The Tidmouse family all jump out of bed. Mrs Tidmouse puts on a small gas lantern. It lights up half the room.

MR TIDMOUSE

A-a-a-anyone th-th-there? Is that  
 you Santa?

Out of the shadows steps Archibald. Mrs Tidmouse and the children all hide behind Mr Tidmouse who's scared as well.

ONE OF THE TIDMOUSE CHILDREN

Ahh Daddy, it's a monster.

ARCHIBALD

I'm not a monster! I'm Archibald  
 the magic Christmas pudding at your  
 service. I'm Santa's helper.

Archibald twirls his cane and then leans on it with style. The children are less frightened of the talking pudding.

MRS TIDMOUSE

You deliver presents like Santa?

ARCHIBALD

I don't just deliver presents.  
 Behold.

Archibald starts to twirl his candy cane till it's a blur. He then points it at the bare table. The table is immediately covered with decadent Christmas food. A feast.

TIDMOUSE CHILDREN

Oooooooooohhhh!

Archibald turns to leave, walks back towards the fireplace.

ARCHIBALD

Well I'm off. Merry Christmas raddy  
ra ra and all that. Got a lot more  
houses to visit before I'm done.

Mrs Tidmouse has an old brownie box style camera with flash.

MRS TIDMOUSE

Mr Archibald, would you mind. With  
the children if you please.

ARCHIBALD

(thinks about it)

Can't see the harm.

Archibald poses for a photo surrounded by Tidmouse children.

Archibald walks back to the fireplace.

MRS TIDMOUSE

God bless Mr Archibald. God bless.

ARCHIBALD

Ciao!

Archibald tugs twice on a rope and in a moment he is gone.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE NORTH POLE - NIGHT**

The second team fly back to base. A starry night is the  
backdrop. Everyone looks very tired. Billy rubs a sore  
shoulder, Samuel and Bluegrass can barely keep their eyes  
open.

ARCHIBALD

I don't know how fatso does it.

SAMUEL

That's why he has to sleep nine  
months of the year. By mid January  
he'll be back in deep hibernation.

The second team come in for a landing on the icy North Pole  
runway. The sleigh landing sounds like a 747 landing.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Mrs Claus cooks loads of bacon and eggs. Santa helps himself  
to a plate full of bacon and eggs, toast and coffee. Samuel,  
Billy and Bluegrass trudge in wearing pyjamas. Archibald  
follows. They all look half asleep as they sit at the table.

SANTA

Morning boys.

The four all look very tired. They mumble 'morning'.

ARCHIBALD

Morning Fatso, Toots. Oh and Merry Christmas.

SANTA

Afraid you're a bit late old boy. It's the twenty sixth. What the English like to call Boxing day.

BILLY

You mean we all slept through Christmas?

SANTA

Afraid so. But I want you all to know you all did a splendid job.

A small elf enters and drops a pile of newspapers on the table. Meanwhile Mr's Claus serves the four bacon and eggs.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Ahh newspapers from around the world. Splendid. Thanks Stuart.

The elf promptly leaves. Santa looks at the headlines for each paper. His chipper attitude quickly disappears.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Oh no no! This will not do! This will not do!

MRS CLAUS

What's wrong dear?

Santa angrily holds up various front page headlines, many with photos or drawings of Archibald.

SANTA

The Christmas Goblin! Archibald, the amazing Christmas pudding! Oh and this one with a family snap - Santa's new helper.

ARCHIBALD

Oh that one's a keeper. Can I have it!

Santa is furious, he storms out.

ARCHIBALD

What's wrong with him?

MRS CLAUS

Santa likes to keep a low key, so low that many think he's not even real. He does that so he can get the job done. Imagine if he had to get a snap with every single family, well it just wouldn't work. Not to mention the paparazzi.

ARCHIBALD

The paparazzi?

MRS CLAUS

Yes I said not to mention them dear.

ARCHIBALD

Hmmm I guess I messed up. Will he be okay?

MRS CLAUS

He should be over it by September.

Mrs Claus pours everyone coffee.

**EXT. UPPER CLASS SUBURBAN STREET - ENGLAND - DAY**

**SUPER: 1969**

It's a fine summer's day. A rusty old pickup looks out of place as it drives down a leafy street with fine houses. On side of the pickup hand written is "No Doggie Doo For You!".

**INT. RUSTY OLD PICKUP - DAY**

Behind the wheel is an unshaven slob - MR DOBBS (50) - smoking a cigar. In the passenger seat is OLIVER - small nine year old with "No Doggie Doo!" white t-shirt and cap.

MR DOBBS

Now when yah finished your regulars down this street, you need to do the dozen along Pritchard and we've got a new one on Elm - Number nine.

Oliver nods, he looks half scared of Mr Dobbs.

MR DOBBS

I'll be at the Sailor's Arms, won't be home till late.

OLIVER

But it's five miles back home and I don't have any bus mon--

MR DOBBS

Oh shu-up! It's only bleedin' five miles! When I was yer age I'd walk tha' everyday fer school.

Oliver gets out of the pickup.

**EXT. UPPER CLASS SUBURBAN STREET - DAY**

Oliver stands near the pickup, armed with a pooper scooper. He has a large backpack on. Mr Dobbs leans out the window.

MR DOBBS

Don't waste them plastic bags now. No double baggin' and if anyone asks about school, tell em it's a holidee. Dalai Lama's birthday!

Oliver obediently turns and heads off to a house with a front lawn covered in dog poo. The old pickup drives off.

**EXT. MR'S ABERNATHY'S BACK YARD - DAY**

MRS ABERNATHY (90) is a sprightly senior, wispy long grey hair, lots of wrinkles. She's on her back porch in a dressing gown. She points a bony finger at Oliver.

MRS ABERNATHY

Boy! Boy! Make sure you double bag them doggie doos! I don't wanna smell em when I use my bin.

Oliver is in the middle of a large yard surrounded by doggie poo. He is just about to scoop up a large sloppy one.

OLIVER

Okay Mr's Abernathy.

Oliver grimaces at the smell as he picks up the sloppy poo.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S LIVING ROOM - DAY**

On a large comfortable couch sits Samuel, Billy and Archibald in the middle. Either side are two empty comfy chairs. They're intensely watching something.

On an old black and white Television in the corner is a live telecast of the Apollo 11 moon landing. Apollo 11 has landed. Neil Armstrong announces "The eagle has landed". Stuart the house elf walks past.

ARCHIBALD

Hey Stuart. Wake Santa and Mrs Claus up. They'll wanna see this.

Stuart shakes his head no. He looks to the others.

SAMUEL

The little puddings right Stuart.  
This he'll want to see.

Stuart's not sure what to do. Finally he walks off.

BILLY

Do you think he'll wake Santa?

SANTA (O.S)

WHY ARE YOU WAKING US UP FOR?

ARCHIBALD

Sounds like he did.

**INT. MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - DAY**

In a working class living room, three plaster ducks on the wall, a black and white TV televises the Apollo 11 landing.

Oliver sits on the worn carpet in front of the TV. Wide eyed he watches the Apollo 11 landing mesmerized.

MRS DOBBS, late forties, scrawny, ugly, smoking a cigarette and MR Dobbs enter front door with a few bags of groceries.

MR DOBBS

Blimey, what are you doin' home?

MRS DOBBS

Ere, don't you have a dozen yards to clean up this arvo?

OLIVER

I'm watching the Apollo 11 moon landing.

MRS DOBBS

All we've done for ya, puttin' food on the table and a roof over ya head and this is the thanks we get.

MR DOBBS

Told ya we don't belt im enough. Spare the belt, spoil the child!

Mr Dobbs takes off his belt. Oliver runs for the door. Mr Dobbs chases him but falls on account his pants are around his knees. Oliver escapes. Mrs Dobbs calls after him.

MRS DOBBS

Finish every house else no supper!

Mr Dobbs slowly gets up. He's angry as he puts his belt on.

MR DOBBS  
That bloody kid.

MRS DOBBS  
Just relax and I'll make us both a  
cuppa. See what's on the telly.

Mrs Dobbs exits. Mr Dobbs walks over to the TV and changes channel. Every channel is televising the lunar landing. He turns it off. Mr Dobbs sits down and reads the paper.

MRS DOBBS (O.S)  
Anything on?

MRS DOBBS  
Only pick up one channel! That  
bloody kid broke the telly!  
(reads paper -to himself)  
Little shit!

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S LIVING ROOM - DAY**

On an old black and white Television in the corner is a live telecast of the Apollo 11 moon landing.

On the large comfortable couch sits Samuel, Billy and Archibald in the middle. Mrs Claus sits in a comfy chair.

SANTA (O.S)  
I DON'T CARE IF THE MARTIANS HAVE  
LANDED! YOU DON'T WAKE ME UP!

MRS CLAUS  
Santa's a cranky bear when he gets  
woken up too early. No offence  
Samuel.

SAMUEL  
None taken.

Santa enters and plops himself into the other comfy chair.

On the old black and white Television view of the lunar lander but no activity.

SANTA  
Is this what you woke me up for?  
Rivetting!

Santa rests his face on his fist, he looks grumpy. Mrs Claus is not looking at the television, she's looking at the window. Sunlight shines on her face. Outside it's daylight.

On the TV screen, Armstrong slowly climbs down the ladder.

Santa and all three on the couch are focused on the TV. There is no sign of Mrs Claus - her chair is empty.

On the TV , Armstrong takes the famous step and announces '*This is one small step for man, one large step for mankind*'

Santa is now more upbeat.

SANTA

Splendid! Now that's worth waking up for. What'd you think Mary? Mary?

Santa looks across to Mary - her chair's empty. He looks about, sees Mary at the window. She cries as she stares out.

Santa approaches Mrs Claus, concerned on why she's upset.

SANTA

Mary dear, what's wrong?

MRS CLAUS

It's been so long and I'd forgotten.

SANTA

Forgotten?

MRS CLAUS

How bright it is, and beautiful, and warm.

The tears stream down Mrs Claus's face. He looks outside. 45 degrees above the horizon, behind some cloud, is the sun.

#### **INT. BRIDAL DRESS SHOP - DAY**

Jenny (50) has aged gracefully. She sits in a near empty bridal shop. Clarabell (24) steps out. She looks ravishing slender with long dark wavy hair, clear skin dressed as a bride. Jenny starts to cry.

CLARABELL

Hey, you're supposed to cry at the wedding, not dress fittings.

JENNY

I just wish your Grand--

CLARABELL

(rolls her eyes)

Oh no, not about Grandpa again. Mum it's been twelve years.

JENNY

But I was so mean to him when we spoke. He just wanted to meet you.

CLARABELL

Well from what you tell me he sounded like a miserable father, missing yours and Grandma's birthdays and Christmases. You were just telling him the truth.

JENNY

Belly I was wrong to push him away like that. He was only trying to provide for his family the only way he knew how. He didn't know better.

Jenny sobs on Clarabell's shoulder.

CLARABELL

Mum, please stop. He knew you loved him. And you're ruining the dress.

Jenny stops, wipes her eyes and checks the dress is still OK.

**EXT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S FRONT PORCH - DAY**

Warm sunny day on the North Pole. Billy sits on a bench on the porch. He gazes at Clarabell's photo at age two. Santa enters, catches Billy before he can put it in his pocket.

SANTA

What do you have there?

BILLY

This? Just a ghost from my past.

SANTA

(takes closer look)

Hmm, looks like a young child.

Hmmm Clarabell if I'm not mistaken.

BILLY

Spot on Santa. Amazing!

SANTA

Yes she was a very good girl, one of the best. All grown up now.

BILLY

Granddaughter.

SANTA

I thought you didn't have family.

BILLY

I told you I didn't have family waiting for me. My daughter Mary - Clarabell's mother - didn't want me in her or her daughter's life.

Billy looks very sad, his bottom lip quivers and he has tears in his eyes. Santa's sorry for opening an old wound.

SANTA

I'm so sorry Billy. I actually wanted to ask you some advice.

BILLY

Anything?

SANTA

As you know, I sleep nine months a year. I go into a deep hibernation so by Christmas eve I have enough reserve energy to deliver to all the children.

BILLY

Amazing how you can do that.

SANTA

Well I have a dilemma. Mrs Claus misses the sun, as we sleep most of the year, well she's missing it.

BILLY

And you want my advice?

SANTA

Hmmmm

BILLY

Even after hearing my rotten track record regarding family.

SANTA

Hmmmm

BILLY

All I ever wanted was to be a fisherman. My father was one, his father and so on. In the blood. Only problem I was terrible. Always fishing in the wrong spot, using the wrong bait. But I was determined to be the best so I could give my family everything.

Santa nods, Billy continues.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I worked long and hard, made enough to pay off the house. Put my daughter through College. Thought I was giving them all they wanted. But I failed to give them the one thing they really ever wanted.

SANTA

What was that?

BILLY

Me.

The old man breaks down, sobs uncontrollably. Santa pats Billy's shoulder to comfort him. Billy continues to sob.

**EXT. WORKING CLASS STREET - DAY**

Oliver walks down a street of adjoining narrow houses each with their own small front yard. He walks past ERNIE and MATCHSTICK'S house. Ernie and Matchstick are freckle faced redhead brother and sister aged ten and eight respectively.

Matchstick skips and Ernie plays with a couple of matchbox toys, a truck and a double decker bus.

ERNIE

Hi-ya Oliver.

OLIVER

Hi Ernie, Matchstick.

Skinny Matchstick pokes her tongue out at Oliver.

ERNIE

See the moon landing? It was swell!

OLIVER

Nahh. I was busy.

ERNIE

You didn't see Neil Armstrong walk on the moon. This is one small step for man, one giant leap for--

OLIVER

No I missed it.

ERNIE

Hey Oliver, why don't you go to our school anymore?

OLIVER

Oh Mr and Mrs Dobbs thought it be better if I got home schooled.

ERNIE

You doin' long division? Boy I hate long division and fractions.

OLIVER

Mr and Mrs Dobbs say that stuffs not important. I'm learning all about small business.

MATCHSTICK

Mr and Mrs Dobbs this, Mr and Mrs Dobbs that. They're not your real parents are they. You're an orphan.

ERNIE

Matchstick! Stop it! Sorry Oliver.

OLIVER

No Matchstick's right. Mr and Mrs Dobbs are my foster parents. My real parents I killed when I was five years old! Can't help myself!

MATCHSTICK

I'm gunna tell Mum. Mum! Mum!

Matchstick runs inside. The boys chuckle.

ERNIE

Hey Oliver, you wanna hang out, play with my matchbox cars. You can be the double decker bus.

OLIVER

Maybe next time. I gotta get home. Bye Ernie.

ERNIE

Yeah bye Oliver.

Ernie resumes to playing with his toys. Oliver walks on.

**EXT. NORTH POLE RUNWAY - DAY**

Santa's sleigh and reindeers are at the edge of the runway. On board Santa wears Hawaiian shirt, sunglasses and a fedora. Beside him is Mrs Claus with a pretty sun dress, large sun hat and sunglasses. Back of sleigh is loaded with luggage.

The second team are all off to the side to see them off.

SANTA

Now Bluegrass, are you sure your Grandfather has no problem with taking care of the reindeer and driving us into Anchorage.

BLUEGRASS

No, not at all. He's actually looking forward to it. Oh I almost forgot.

Bluegrass picks up a bag of reindeer feed, places it near the luggage in the back.

BLUEGRASS

For the return trip.

Santa nods. Billy grabs something out of his jacket pocket.

BILLY

I almost forgot too. Return flight tickets to New York.

Billy gives the tickets to Mrs Claus.

MRS CLAUS

Thanks Billy.

Mrs Claus is very happy, she smiles.

ARCHIBALD

You know Toots, your smile dazzles brighter than the morning star.

MRS CLAUS

Thanks Archie.

SANTA

Well we need to go now if we wanna catch that flight to New York.

SAMUEL/ARCHIBALD/BLUEGRASS/BILLY

Bye.

SANTA/MRS CLAUS

Bye.

Santa presses play on a cassette deck installed into the sleigh's dash. La Bamba plays loudly. The reindeers sprint down the runway and soon they are airborne.

SAMUEL

SEND A POSTCARD!

**INT. CHURCH - DAY**

JOHN - Army officer in uniform and best man and groomsmen, also in uniform, all stand to the bridal march. A priest stands in front of the alter. A matron of honour and her three bridesmaids in bright yellow wait standing as well.

Coming down the isle is Clarabell, looking beautiful in a white wedding dress and veil. She's lead down the isle by a silver haired gentleman - possibly an uncle. Clarabel flashes her mother a smile as she passes. Mary is crying.

**EXT. STATEN ISLAND FERRY - DAY**

Santa and Mrs Claus take in the sights of New York from the rear of the Staten Island Ferry. Santa takes a nice photo of Mrs Claus and the Statue of Liberty behind her.

**MONTAGE - CLEANING MR'S ABERNATHY'S BACK YARD**

A) Oliver's in the middle of Mrs Abernathy's large yard. Trees at rear, near the fence, are in full summer bloom. Oliver struggles to scoop up sloppy dog poo. The entire yard looks like a minefield - there's dog poo everywhere.

B) Same view of the back yard. Oliver scoops up dog poo at another location in the yard. Still looks like a minefield. The trees are no longer green, early stage of autumn/fall.

C) Same view of the back yard. Oliver scoops up dog poo at another location in the yard, Still looks like a minefield. The tree branches are almost bare, late stage of autumn/fall.

D) Same view of the back yard. Oliver scoops up dog poo at another location - has a jacket on. Still looks like a minefield. Patches of snow cover tree branches and the yard.

E) Same view of the back yard. Oliver scoops up dog poo at another location - has a jacket on. Still looks like a minefield. Blanket of snow covers the trees and the ground.

**END MONTAGE****INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

On the refrigerator is a Postcard - "Greetings from New York City" and the photo of Mrs Claus on the ferry with the Statue of Liberty in the background. Samuel opens the refrigerator door and looks inside.

SAMUEL

Want a root beer?

Archibald sits on the stool at the kitchen table.

ARCHIBALD  
 Sure. Why not?

Samuel grabs two root beers and returns to the kitchen table. He sits opposite Archibald, gives him a root beer.

ARCHIBALD  
 Thanks.

SAMUEL  
 So Archie, I always wanted to ask.  
 What's it like being a star?

ARCHIBALD  
 Well a lot of folks think it must  
 be great being up there, adored by  
 millions, but it ain't that great.

SAMUEL  
 It's not?

ARCHIBALD  
 Yeah, it's actually pretty lonely.  
 Sure you've got your typical  
 heavenly bodies that gravitate  
 towards you but they only hang  
 around cause you're, you know, a  
 star. And your whole life, you're  
 always under the telescope.

SAMUEL  
 So you prefer this life?

ARCHIBALD  
 Lets just say, the day I met you  
 guys in the cabin, Mrs Claus wasn't  
 the only one who'd been granted a  
 wish. Only thing I miss is Ralph.

Billy and Bluegrass enter.

BILLY  
 Hey guys it's time?

ARCHIBALD  
 Time?

BILLY  
 To wake Santa up.

**EXT. MR'S ABERNATHY'S BACK YARD - DAY**

The yards covered in snow. Oliver scoops up last dog poo in the yard. The yard's now clean and all white for Christmas.

**EXT. TOWN STREET - LATE AFTERNOON**

Long shadows. It's late in the day as Oliver trudges home. He passes a fat VENDOR, Indian (45) selling Christmas Trees. The vendor struggles to put unsold trees on a flat bed truck by himself. He's only loaded a couple, twenty still to go.

OLIVER  
Excuse me sir, can you give me a tree you haven't sold.

VENDOR  
Five quid.

OLIVER  
But I don't have any money. Please sir, it's Christmas Eve.

VENDOR  
What do you think I am? A charity?

OLIVER  
What if I help you load the truck? Will you give me a tree then?

VENDOR  
Okay. One tree.

The Vendor and Oliver work together, they are able to load a tree on the truck in seconds.

There is only a couple of trees left. Oliver helps the vendor with the second last tree.

VENDOR  
That one's yours.

The last tree is half the size of the rest. Half the branches are missing. Looks like it's been run over.

OLIVER  
That one. But--

VENDOR  
The deal was one tree. Good day.

The vendor hops in his truck and starts it.

OLIVER  
Thank you. Merry Christmas.

VENDOR  
Don't wish me Merry Christmas boy. I'm Hindu!

The vendor drives off in his truck. Just as well the tree's small as Oliver has to drag the tree back home.

**EXT. WORKING CLASS STREET - LATE AFTERNOON**

Oliver walks down his street of adjoining narrow houses. Some houses have flashing Christmas lights. He walks past Ernie's house. Ernie and Matchstick are still outside playing, Matchstick with a doll and Ernie with a yoyo.

ERNIE

Hi-ya Oliver. What ya got there?

OLIVER

It's a Christmas tree.

ERNIE

We've got one of them. Me and Matchstick left a list for Santa under the tree. Matchstick wants Kerplunk and I want Creepy Critters.

OLIVER

I want Battling Tops.

ERNIE

Cool. Well remember to leave a note for Santa what you want.

OLIVER

You really think there's a Santa?

ERNIE

Aw yeah, we get toys every year.

OLIVER

Well I better go and put this tree up. Bye Ernie.

ERNIE

Don't forget the list for Santa.

OLIVER

I won't. Merry Christmas Ernie.

ERNIE

Merry Christmas Oliver.

**EXT. NORTH POLE RUNWAY - NIGHT**

Santa's sleigh is loaded with a huge red sack. All the reindeers are lined up, ready for takeoff. The runway lights and flood lights are on. Santa is off the sleigh, he is cuddling Mrs Claus and kissing her all over her face.

The second team are on their sleigh behind Santa's sleigh. They have a front row seat to Santa's amorous behaviour.

ARCHIBALD

I think I preferred Fatso and Toots when they weren't behaving like two love sick teenagers.

SAMUEL

I think it's sweet.

Santa's on his sleigh. He's saying goodbye to Mrs Claus.

SANTA

I love you.

MRS CLAUS

I love you more.

SANTA

I love you more.

Everyone on the second sleigh feels nauseous. They all groan.

SAMUEL

I take that back.

Bluegrass presses a horn on the sleigh. BEEP BEEP! Santa gives a wave to the second team. He turns on the cassette player. La Bamba plays and the reindeers sprint down the runway. Santa's sleigh is airborne. Mrs Claus waves bye.

Bluegrass turns on his cassette player in the sleigh's dash. Bluegrass banjo music plays. The reindeers bolt down the runway.

ARCHIBALD

SEE YA LATER TOOTS!

The second sleigh is airborne. Mrs Claus waves good bye.

**INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Oliver's asleep on a mattress on the floor. His tiny room's a little bigger than a closet. There's bars on the window. The walls have no posters, no decorations. His clothes are in cardboard boxes. There's a wind up alarm clock on the floor.

**INT. MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - NIGHT**

In the corner of the living room, the half dead small christmas tree stands in a bucket. Mrs Dobbs watches an episode of Steptoe and Son on the old TV. She lets out the occasional cackle. Mr Dobbs staggers in half drunk.

MR DOBBS

Evening me dear. Fraid I got tied up with business associates at the Sailor's Arms. Pardon my lateness.

MRS DOBBS

Your teas in the oven. Probably dried out by now.

Mr Dobbs notices the small Christmas tree in the corner.

MR DOBBS

Bloomin' eck. What's that?

MRS DOBBS

A Christmas tree. The boy got it. Reckons Santa's comin'. Ha Ha Ha.

MR DOBBS

ere! Where'd he get the money for tha? Must a cost a quid!

MRS DOBBS

Some Indian fella gave it to im for free on account he elped im load his truck. I think he saved the fella a trip to the dump.

MR DOBBS

(takes a closer look)  
E-gad you're right! That's the most sorrowful tree I've ever seen.

Mr and Mrs Dobbs chuckle at Oliver's tree.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT**

Jenny sits alone on a comfy chair. In the corner is a large decorated Christmas tree. She looks through an old photo album. Many photos are of her, a younger Billy and her mother - all smiling. Jenny notices a photograph missing.

Clarabell, six months pregnant enters with a present. Jenny hardly notices her. She's busy searching through the album.

CLARABELL

Mom, what's wrong?

Jenny's frantic as she searches for the missing photo.

JENNY

I can't find it. It was here the other day but now it's gone. Maybe it's fallen under the couch.

Jenny hops to her feet, starts moving the furniture.

JENNY

Belly will you help me move--

CLARABELL

Mom, open the present.

JENNY

That can wait, I need to find this photo. I can't lose it Belly, I just can't.

CLARABELL

Mom, open the present.

JENNY

Aren't you listening Clarabell. I've lost a--

CLARABELL

Mom, open the present.

Jenny opens the present. It's a framed photograph of Jenny when she was only four sitting on her father's shoulders at the fair. Both are smiling.

CLARABELL

I saw how much you love that photo so I got it enlarged and framed. Sorry, I didn't have time to put the original back.

JENNY

Thank you darling. It's wonderful.

Clarabel smiles as her mother gives her a kiss and a hug.

**INT. MR AND MRS TIDMOUSE'S RUN DOWN SHACK - NIGHT**

Rundown one room shack has bare floor boards, cracks in the walls and a small fireplace. Half dead christmas tree in one corner. Other end has a kitchen table, cupboard, window and small sink. Along a wall's three large beds with old quilts.

Sound asleep in the three beds are Mr and Mrs Tidmouse and their five teenage children, a family of very poor church mice. Mr and Mrs Tidmouse now have a bed to their very own.

Out of the fireplace appears Archibald, covered in soot. Archibald coughs cause of the soot. He has some presents.

Mrs Tidmouse jumps out of bed and lights up a large gas lantern. It lights up the entire room.

MRS TIDMOUSE  
Get up everyone. It's Mr  
Archibald!

All the teenage mice gather around Archibald. Mr Tidmouse gets up as well. Everyone's in good spirits.

MR TIDMOUSE  
How goes it this year Mr Archibald?

ARCHIBALD  
Fine, fine. But I really think you all should be asleep.

MRS TIDMOUSE  
Oh the children can't wait for your wonderful party trick Mr Archibald.

All the young teenage mice look excited.

ARCHIBALD  
It is pretty neat. Okay stand back everyone.

Archibald twirls his candy cane till it's a blur. He points it to the bare table. It's instantly covered with a feast.

TIDMOUSE CHILDREN  
Oooooooooohhhh!

ARCHIBALD  
Well that's me done. Gotta go.

Archibald heads for the fireplace. Mrs Tidmouse calls him back.

MRS TIDMOUSE  
Mr Archibald. If you may. We have one for every year so far.

Along one wall are twelve photos in chronological order with Archibald surrounded by the Tidmouse children. Each progressive year the children get bigger and bigger.

Mrs Tidmouse has her Brownie box camera with flash. The teen children gather around Archibald. All say 'cheese'. FLASH.

Archibald is at the fireplace he pulls on the rope.

ARCHIBALD  
See you all next year. Ciao!

TIDMOUSE FAMILY  
Ciao!

**EXT. ROOF ON MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - NIGHT**

Billy nimbly walks on a tiled roof. He reaches the chimney and lowers Archibald down with a rope. He checks a notepad.

BILLY  
Battling Tops!

The second sleigh is parked on the road. All is dark and quiet. Samuel looks through a large red sack at the back. He retrieves a present. He hurls it like a baseball legend.

Billy catches the present, drops it down the chimney.

BILLY  
One present coming down!

**INT. MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - NIGHT**

Archibald holds the present. He's before the fireplace. All's dark and quiet in the living room with three plaster ducks and TV. Archibald looks about, approaches the tree.

ARCHIBALD  
You got hit with the ugly stick.

Archibald places the present under the tree. He proceeds to the adjoining kitchen. Archibald stands before the bare table and twirls his cane. The table's covered by a feast.

Archibald returns to the fireplace. He tugs twice on the rope and is hurled up and away.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE NORTH POLE - NIGHT**

The second team fly back to base. A starry night is the backdrop. Everyone looks very tired. Billy rubs a sore shoulder, everyone can barely keep their eyes open.

BILLY  
Think by now it would be easier.

Second team come in for a landing on the North Pole runway.

**INT. MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - EARLY CHRISTMAS MORNING**

Mr and Mrs Dobbs trudge into the living room and adjoining kitchen half asleep. Mrs Dobbs is in a pink dressing gown. Mr Dobbs is in flannelette pyjamas. They both stop in shock mouths agape at the sight of the wonderful christmas feast.

MR DOBBS  
Bloomin' eck! Ere when did you do  
all this then?

MRS DOBBS  
 Don't look at me. I got nothin' to  
 do with it.

Mr Dobbs picks up a turkey drumstick and starts eating.

MR DOBBS  
 Taste good! You think the boy di--

MRS DOBBS  
 Nahh. He'd be lucky ta make toast.

MR DOBBS  
 Pinch me, I must be dreamin'.

MRS DOBBS  
 Read about this Christmas Goblin,  
 he does stuff like this.

MR DOBBS  
 Ere maybe he bought us some  
 presents too.

Mr and Mrs Dobbs look under the tree. They find Oliver's  
 present. Mr Dobbs reads a small card on the present.

MR DOBBS  
 To Oliver. Bloomin' ell, it's from  
 Santa.

MRS DOBBS  
 Come on. Open it up. See what it is.

Mr Dobbs opens the present.

MR DOBBS  
 Battlin' Tops. That'll be worth a  
 few bob.

OLIVER (O.S)  
 Merry Christmas.

Mrs Dobbs nudges Mr Dobbs. He hides the game behind a chair  
 Oliver enters still rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

OLIVER  
 Did he come? Did Santa come?

Oliver looks under the tree. He's bitterly disappointed to  
 find no present.

MR DOBBS  
 He probably saw that tree and hot  
 footed it back to the North Pole.

Mr Dobbs chuckles, Mrs Dobbs cackles. Oliver feels lousy.

MRS DOBBS  
Ahh stop yah mopin'. Come and see  
our wonderful Christmas feast.

Oliver is a little more upbeat. He is amazed at the sight.  
Oliver tries to take a mince tart. Mrs Dobbs smacks his hand.

MRS DOBBS (CONT'D)  
Sit down! I'll make you a plate.

Oliver sits at the end of the table licking his lips. Mrs  
Dobbs places on a plate a paper thin slice of ham, thin  
slice of turkey, a very small roast potato and a cherry.  
Oliver cleans up his plate in seconds. Holds it up.

OLIVER  
More please!

Mr and Mrs Dobbs sit opposite. Both have plates stacked  
high. Mr Dobbs is eating another turkey drumstick.

MR DOBBS  
More? More? It isn't all yours.  
There's me and Mrs Dobbs too!

OLIVER  
But there's so much. I hardly got  
anything. Please can I have more?

MRS DOBBS  
Tell ya what, do yah regulars,  
finish up early at three and we'll  
save yah a plate. Alright?

OLIVER  
Pick up doggie doo today? But it's  
Christmas!

MRS DOBBS  
Doggies don't care it's christmas.

MR DOBBS  
That's right. It's a three hundred  
and sixty five day a year business.

OLIVER  
Well I'm not picking any poo up  
today. It's Christmas!

Mr Dobbs pounds his fist on the table.

MR DOBBS  
Someone's overdue for a beating.

OLIVER  
You're never touching me again!

Oliver grabs two mince tarts and flips the table over. The feast is all over the floor. Mr and Mrs Dobbs are livid.

MRS DOBBS  
You little shit, after all we've done for you. Belt him good love.

MR DOBBS  
Will do!

Mr Dobbs chases Oliver around the kitchen and living room. Oliver throws a chair in front of Mr Dobbs. He trips over it.

Oliver heads out the front door. Mr Dobbs yells after him.

MR DOBBS  
And don't come back!

Mrs Dobbs smacks Mr Dobbs on the back of the head.

MRS DOBBS  
Why ya tell im that for ya big lug!

MR DOBBS  
Huh?

MRS DOBBS  
The foster money! The business!  
Who's gunna pick up all that pooh?  
That boy's our meal ticket!

MR DOBBS/MRS DOBBS  
(yell from doorway)  
OLIVER! COME BACK! COME BACK!

**EXT. WORKING CLASS STREET - DAY**

Oliver finishes a mince tart, tears in his eyes. He walks past Ernie's house. Ernie's outside playing with a new toy.

ERNIE  
Hi-ya Oliver, did Santa bring you Battling Tops. He bought me Creepy Critters and Matchstick Kerplunk and he also got me this slinky and-

OLIVER  
I hate him!

ERNIE

Who Oliver? Your foster dad? My  
Dad says he's a lazy drunk--

OLIVER

Not him! Santa! He didn't bring me  
anything!

ERNIE

Did you have a good look under the  
tree, maybe it slipped behind som--

OLIVER

I looked! That fat jerk didn't--

ERNIE

You shouldn't say that, it's not  
very nice! Here have this slinky!

Ernie hands Oliver the slinky.

OLIVER

I don't want your stupid slinky! I  
WANT BATTLING TOPS!

Oliver throws the Slinky into the garden.

ERNIE

That wasn't very nice.

OLIVER

NICE? NICE? WHAT DOES NICE GET  
YOU? THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY FIVE  
DAYS OF DOG POO! NO CHRISTMAS  
PRESENT! I'M THROUGH BEING NICE!

ERNIE

Oliver, I don't want to play with  
you anymore. Good Bye.

Ernie rushes inside and slams the front door shut.

OLIVER

SAY GOODBYE TO NICE OLIVER ERNIE!  
NICE OLIVER IS NEVER COMING BACK!

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - DAY**

**SUPER: 1972**

On the refrigerator are three Postcards - "Greetings from  
New York City", "Greetings from Paris" and "Greetings from  
Egypt". There's also photos of Mrs Claus at the holiday  
locations. Billy opens the refrigerator and looks inside.

BILLY  
Want a Doctor Pepper?

Bluegrass sits at the kitchen table.

BLUEGRASS  
Sure. Why not?

Billy grabs two Doctor Peppers and returns to the kitchen table. He sits opposite Bluegrass, gives him a Dr Pepper.

BLUEGRASS  
Thanks.

Bluegrass opens his Dr Pepper, takes a sip.

BLUEGRASS  
So where did Santa and Mrs Claus go for this year's honeymoon.

BILLY  
London England.

BLUEGRASS  
(takes another sip)  
That should be nice.

**EXT. OUTSIDE BUCKINGHAM PALACE - LONDON - DAY**

Red double decker tourist bus travels past Buckingham Palace. The top of the bus has no roof for sightseers. Santa and Mrs Claus are dressed casual on the top deck of the bus. Santa has a camera around his neck. Santa and Mrs Claus look happy.

MANDY, a little girl, two seats up and across keeps looking at Santa. Santa catches her and gives her a wave. She pulls on her MOTHER's elbow, gets her attention. Points out Santa.

MANDY  
Look Mummy. It's Santa Claus.

MOTHER  
Mandy! Don't point. That's rude.  
(to Santa)  
Sorry! Mandy thinks your Santa.

SANTA  
Quite alright. Get it all the time.

Mrs Claus and Santa smile at the mother and Mandy. The Mother looks front. Mandy gives Santa and Mrs Claus another wave and turns front as well. Santa and Mrs Claus giggle.

MRS CLAUS  
If she only knew.

**EXT. UPPER CLASS SUBURBAN STREET - ENGLAND - DAY**

A fine summer's day. A rusty old pickup looks out of place as it drives down a leafy street with fine houses. On side of the pickup hand written is "No Doggie Doo For You!".

**INT. RUSTY OLD PICKUP - DAY**

Behind the wheel is scrawny Mrs Dobbs. A cigarette hangs from the corner of her mouth. In the passenger seat is Mr Dobbs wearing "No Doggie Doo!" white t-shirt and cap.

MR DOBBS  
I curse the day I told that boy  
never to come back.

MRS DOBBS  
No good complainin' to me. Now get  
a move on, I'm missin' me telly.

Mr Dobbs gets out. Mrs Dobbs hangs out the window.

MRS DOBBS  
Don't waste them plastic bags now.  
No double baggin' for anyone!

Mrs Dobbs drives off. Mr Dobbs looks miserable.

**EXT. MR'S ABERNATHY'S BACK YARD - DAY**

MRS ABERNATHY (93) is a sprightly senior, wispy long grey hair, lots of wrinkles. She's on her back porch in a dressing gown. She points a bony finger.

MRS ABERNATHY  
Boy! Boy! Make sure you double bag  
them doggie doos! I don't wanna  
smell em when I use my bin.

Mr Dobbs is in the middle of a large yard surrounded by doggie poo. He's just about to scoop up a large sloppy one.

MR DOBBS  
Okay Mr's Abernathy.

Mr Dobbs grimaces as he picks up the sloppy poo.

**EXT. STREETS OF LONDON - DAY**

Oliver steps out of a swank Tailors with a smirk. He's dressed in Top hat, tails with a bow tie and cane. Elderly flustered Tailor runs out of the store, yells out 'thief'. Two Bobbies across the street notice Oliver and take chase.

Oliver pushes, jostles and shoves his way through a crowded busy sidewalk downtown. Not far behind, two Bobbies also dodge and jostle pedestrians. They blow whistles in hot pursuit. Oliver runs across the road, it's heavy traffic.

Oliver runs down stairs to the metro. The Bobbies run down the same stairs. Seconds later Oliver appears emerging from the same stairs. He's lost the Top Hat and tails. He rips off the bow tie, throws in a bin. He's given them the slip.

**INT. QUEENIE'S OLD ENGLISH PUB - DAY**

DOOLAN - a wombat - sits in a booth at the back of an English pub. He drinks shots of whisky and smokes a cigar while reading a newspaper. A cloud of smoke surrounds him. He looks shady wearing a tweed jacket with the collar up.

American tourists MORTY(40) and BRENDA(38) sit at a nearby table in the crowded pub. Morty wears a safari suit, Brenda a jump suit. Brenda complains. Cannot hear what she says but from her body/face expressions - she hates cigar smoke.

Morty looks towards Doolan, looks down. Chugs down his pint. Morty nervously approaches Doolan. Doolan reads the paper.

MORTY

Ahh sir? Sir?

Doolan looks up annoyed from his paper.

MORTY (CONT'D)

Hi. My wife's getting a lot of your cigar smoke. Could you be kind enough to put it out please?

Doolan looks at Morty. He sucks hard on his cigar. The tip glows red. Doolan blows a cloud of smoke into Morty's face.

MORTY (CONT'D)

COUGH. COUGH. COUGH.  
I'll take that as a no.

Morty returns to the table.

MORTY (CONT'D)

Brenda! Drink up. We're going.

BRENDA  
Why Morty, why? What's wrong?

MORTY  
It's the pub Brenda. It ain't that  
quaint. Drink up and lets go!

Brenda takes a mouthful and spits half back. She grimaces.

BRENDA  
Errrrrrrr the beer's warm!

Brenda and Morty quickly head for the exit.

BRENDA (CONT'D)  
Now can we go to the one in the  
brochure. Somewhere the beer's cold.

QUEENIE is a large mouse - same size as a Tidmouse mouse.  
She's dressed as a bar wench and has a notepad and pen. She  
watches Morty and Brenda leave. Turns to Doolan.

QUEENIE  
Doolan! What are you doin' scarin'  
off me customers!

DOOLAN  
They were'nt customers. They were  
tourists. And the worst kind.  
Americans!

QUEENIE  
They were customers! Payin'  
customers! Which reminds me, when  
are you payin' ya tab!

DOOLAN  
Ooooh aaaaah any day now. Just  
have a minor cash flow problem.

Queenie rolls her eyes and walks away.

STODJAR - a large bulldog with a tweed coat and checkered  
hat enters the Pub followed by two Aligators ALVIE and JASPA  
in trench coats. They head towards Doolan's booth.

Doolan looks up in shock and surprize as Stodjar sits  
opposite him, Alvie beside him and Jaspa near Stodjar.

DOOLAN  
Stodjar!

ALVIE  
Mind ya manners. Mr Stodjar!

Alvie clips Doolan on the back of the head.

DOOLAN  
Owww! Sorry! Mister Stodjar. What  
brings you out --

STODJAR  
Oh don't be so bloody stupid  
Doolan! You know why I'm here.  
But first things first. Alvie?

Alvie pulls out Doolan's cigar. Puts it out in his glass.

STODJAR  
Cigars. Can't stand em. Now to  
business. Where's my mon-nee!

DOOLAN  
I'll have your money Mr Stodjar.  
My gang's out there as we speak  
trying to generate some income.

STODJAR  
Did ya hear that boys? His gang!  
A chipmunk and a hamster! Ha ha ha!

Stodjar, Alvie and Jaspa all chuckle.

DOOLAN  
Snatcher and Bash may be small but-

STODJAR  
I don't wanna hear about your  
rodents Doolan! You wanna operate  
on my turf you pay! So pay up now!

DOOLAN  
I just need a few more weeks.

STODJAR  
What-ya think boys? Should we give  
him more time or not?

JASPA  
Naaah! I say we drag him home and  
chop him up for some Wombat stew.

Jaspa licks his chops. Doolan shudders in fright.

DOOLAN  
I'll have yah money Mister Stodjar.  
Just give me another few weeks.

STODJAR

You got a week. If no mon-nee,  
Alvie and Jasper here will be  
feastin' on wombat stew for a week!

Stodjar, Alvie and Jasper chuckle. Doolan's terrified.

STODJAR

Come on boys.

Stodjar, Alvie and Jasper exit. Stodjar turns back.

STODJAR

A week.

**EXT. INNER CITY STREET FAIR - LONDON - DAY**

Oliver walks through a street fair. He stops to browse a stall with toys and games. On the table is 'Battling Tops' which has caught his eye. Also for sale are a variety of toys as well as a stack of frisbees and a jar of marbles.

Nearby, an attractive FRENCH LADY(30) dressed chic browses a stall with gold, silver, diamond, pearls and gems jewelry.

SNATCHER, a chipmunk with a red cap and BASH, a small hamster with a cute pink bow are not far away. Snatcher nudges Bash, and gestures towards the French woman. Snatcher and Bash line up the French Lady for their next target.

The French lady selects a shiny gold bracelet to buy. Money changes hands. The lady places the bracelet in her handbag. She continues on her way. After just a few steps, Snatcher steps in front of her and fakes a heart attack. Hams it up.

SNATCHER

Oh No! Not again.

Snatcher clutches his heart as he falls to the ground.

FRENCH LADY

Are you okay? Poor little thing.

French Lady puts her handbag down and gets down on one knee to check on Snatcher. She is genuinely concerned.

FRENCH LADY (CONT'D)

Can I get you something? A glass  
of water? An ambulance.

SNATCHER

Dicky heart. Nothing anyone can  
do. Hopefully it'll pass. Could you  
maybe hold my hand till it passes?

Snatcher looks at the French Lady with sad eyes.

FRENCH LADY

Of course.

Oliver has a front row seat to the sting. While the target hold's Snatcher's hand, Bash scuttles out from under a stall table. She jumps into the semi open handbag. The handbag wriggles about. Bash emerges with the bracelet around her.

Snatcher continues to hold the French Lady's hand and fake the heart attack. He sees Bash disappear under a stall table. He miraculously recovers from his severe condition.

SNATCHER

Thank god it's passed. God has spared me for one more sunset. Thank you kind lady.

FRENCH LADY

Don't mention it. Glad I could help.

The French Lady is back on her feet. Snatcher gets to his feet and bids fairwell to the French Lady.

SNATCHER

Arrivederci fraulein.

Snatcher turns to walk away. He's nabbed by a POLICE CONSTABLE behind him. ANOTHER CONSTABLE is not far away.

POLICE CONSTABLE

You're nicked Sunshine!

FRENCH LADY

What's going on?

ANOTHER CONSTABLE

Ma'm, you've been the victim of two professional pickpockets - Snatcher and Bash. Could you check your handbag, see if anything's missing.

The French Lady looks through her handbag. She's alarmed.

FRENCH LADY

The bracelet I bought. It's missing.

The Police Constable tightens his grip on Snatcher.

POLICE CONSTABLE

If you wanna make bail, I suggest you get Bash out here now!

SNATCHER

Bash! Come out! We're nicked!

Bash scuttles out from under the table. The other constable grabs hold of her, still with the jewels around her.

From Oliver's POV, Snatcher and Bash are in the clutches of the Police Constables. Oliver thinks quick. He grabs a handful of frisbees flicks them at the Constables' faces. The toy stall keeper yells at him to stop but to no avail.

Both constables are hit in the eyes. They drop Snatcher and Bash who run away from the Police and towards Oliver.

OLIVER

Quick! Back this way!

The Constables are momentarily out of action. Snatcher and Bash run past Oliver. The constables quickly recover and are in hot pursuit.

Oliver grabs the large jar of marbles off the table. He throws the marbles all over the ground and takes off in the same direction as Snatcher and Bash.

The constables hit the marbles, both skate, trying to find solid ground. One constable crashes into the toy stand. The other constable crashes into a tye dye t-shirt stand. The French Lady can't help herself, she laughs out loud.

Snatcher, Bash and Oliver run on out of the street fair.

**EXT. INNER CITY SIDE STREET - LONDON - DAY**

Snatcher, Bash and Oliver run into a quiet side street. They look back and notice they're not being chased.

SNATCHER

That was close. Thanks for getting us outta a tight squeeze. I'm Snatcher and this is Bash.

OLIVER

I'm Oliver. Anyone who's in trouble with the Fuzz is a friend of mine.

Bash stands up on two legs and whispers in Snatcher's ear.

SNATCHER

Naaah. He probably don't have the stomach for it.

OLIVER  
What don't I have the stomach for?

SNATCHER  
We're after new recruits for our gang. Rock n rollers that can walk the walk. We do a bit a this and that. Pickpocket, snatch and grab. Usual stuff. You proved you're good in a tight spot but probably don't have the stomach to steal.

OLIVER  
Oh you don't know me very well.

**EXT. TRAFALGAR SQUARE - LONDON - DAY**

Trafalgar Square swarms with tourists, couples and families, all taking holiday snaps. Mrs Claus stands in front of a large lion statue in front of Nelson's Column. Santa stands back, waves to Mrs Claus. He takes a photo of Mrs Claus.

OLIVER  
You see that old Geezer over there.

Oliver gestures towards Santa. Snatcher and Bash nod.

OLIVER  
Wait here. Shouldn't take long.

Santa's busy taking snaps of Mrs Claus in front of the Lion.

OLIVER (O.S)  
Scuze me Governor.

Santa turns to see Oliver approach. His hand fiddles with the camera. Santa stealthly rewinds and removes the film.

SANTA  
Yes.

OLIVER  
Would you like me to take a photo of you and the missus.

SANTA  
Oh how very kind. Thank you.

Santa hands him the camera. He walks to Mrs Claus. Oliver looks back towards Snatcher and Bash, flashes them a grin.

OLIVER  
Okay, move in closer! Closer!  
Say Cheese!

Santa and Mrs Claus smile. Oliver runs off with the camera. He runs past Snatcher and Bash who join him.

MRS CLAUS

Santa! That boy stole your camera.  
Aren't you going to go after him.

SANTA

I'm afraid he's well and truly gone.

MRS CLAUS

What a naughty boy! Well he won't  
be getting any presents from Santa!

SANTA

Afraid Oliver's story's a sad one.  
Orphan at five, forced to live with  
mean foster parents who'd beat him  
and even deprived him of Christmas.  
He ran away at nine and he's been  
living on the streets ever since.

MRS CLAUS

How sad.  
Oh no! What about our holiday  
snaps?

Santa pulls out the roll of film from his pocket.

SANTA

Took the liberty of taking this out  
before he grabbed the camera.

MRS CLAUS

You knew he was going to do this?

SANTA

Guessed he would. Also guessed he  
could use the money from the camera.

MRS CLAUS

Poor Oliver.

SANTA

There's good in every child. Hard  
for that good to shine through when  
they're dealt such a tough hand.  
(beat)  
Hungry?

MRS CLAUS

Famished. Let's get fish and chips.

Mr and Mrs Claus walk off hand in hand.

**INT. QUEENIE'S OLD ENGLISH PUB - DAY**

Doolan's in his booth smoking a cigar, drinking scotch and reading the paper. Snatcher and Bash arrive followed by Oliver holding the Minolta camera. They all sit down.

DOOLAN

Snatcher, Bash! Why aren't you out stealing? And who's this boy?

SNATCHER

This here Mr Doolan is Oliver. You said you were after a new recruit.

DOOLAN

But he's just a boy.

SNATCHER

He saved me and Bash getting nabbed today he did. If it weren't for him, we wouldn't be given ya this!

Snatcher shows Doolan the gold bracelet. Doolan looks at it with awe. He pulls out a jewelers eyepiece and inspects it.

DOOLAN

Eighteen carat and real diamonds. Nice piece worth a few quid.

Doolan is in good spirits.

SNATCHER

And that's not all. Show em what ya nabbed Oliver.

Oliver gives Doolan the Minolta camera.

OLIVER

I nabbed this from an old geezer down Trafalgar Square.

SNATCHER

We watched im do it. The kids a natural.

Doolan inspects the Minolta Camera.

DOOLAN

Great camera. Worth a few quid. Nabbed it from a tourist ayy?

OLIVER

Yeah, nabbed it from a silly old Geezer. Made out like I was gunna take a holidee snap of him and his missus. Got em to say cheese and all and then I did a run-ar.

Doolan roars with laughter. The rest all join in laughing.

DOOLAN

Oliver is it?

OLIVER

Yeah that's right.

DOOLAN

Welcome to the gang!

Snatcher pats Oliver on the back. Oliver looks happy.

DOOLAN (CONT'D)

Let's celebrate.

Queenie walks past the booth.

DOOLAN (CONT'D)

Queenie! Shakes all round.

QUEENIE

Not with your tab.

Doolan gives Queenie the gold bracelet.

DOOLAN

This should cover it.

Queenie looks at the bracelet in awe.

QUEENIE

Reckon it will.

(puts in pocket)

Four shakes comin' right up!

Queenie exits. Everyone at Doolan's booth look happy.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - DAY**

Santa and Mrs Claus walk in to their kitchen still dressed for holidays. Close behind's Samuel carrying their luggage. At the kitchen table is Billy, Archibald and Bluegrass.

BILLY

How was London?

MRS CLAUS  
Oh it was wonderful. Big Ben,  
Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar--

ARCHIBALD  
Enough with the small talk. What  
did you bring us?

Mrs Claus turns to Samuel.

MRS CLAUS  
Samuel. Could you put the blue bag  
on the table.

Samuel places a blue bag on the table. Mrs Claus opens it.  
Mrs Claus starts distributing souvenirs to everyone.

BLUEGRASS  
This is just like Christmas.

ARCHIBALD  
Seeing we slept through the last  
fifteen, I say it's better.

MRS CLAUS  
Bluegrass, we got you the latest  
David Bowie Cassette. That okay?

Mrs Claus passes him a cassette.

BLUEGRASS  
Cool!

MRS CLAUS  
And Archibald. Got you a mug!

Mrs Claus passes him a mug with the Union Jack.

ARCHIBALD  
Another mug! Gee thanks!

MRS CLAUS  
And Billy. Got you a snow globe.  
Tower Bridge - London.

Mrs Claus passes him a snow globe. Billy shakes it.

BILLY  
Thanks. I'll put it with the rest.

MRS CLAUS  
And Samuel. Saw this and thought  
of you.

Mrs Claus pulls out of the bag a tall woolly Palace guard hat. Samuel puts it on his head. Everyone laughs.

SAMUEL

Wow! Thanks! Wonder what they make it out of?

Samuel tries to look in the hat for a label.

MRS CLAUS

(nervously)

Ahh think it's rabbit. Maybe fox.

SANTA

Come on Darling. We need to hit the sack. I get up in four months.

MRS CLAUS

Okay Sweetie. Good night everyone.

SANTA

Night everyone. See you in December.

MRS CLAUS

Yes good night all.

SAMUEL/ARCHIBALD/BILLY/BLUEGRASS

Night.

Santa and Mrs Claus head out of the kitchen.

Samuel's still searching for a label in his hat.

ARCHIBALD

They make it outta bear.

SAMUEL

Polar?

ARCHIBALD

No Black.

SAMUEL

Guess that's okay.

(beat)

Unless you're a Black bear.

Everyone nods in agreement.

**EXT. GRASSY MEADOW RIVERBANK - US MIDWEST - DAY**

John, Clarabell's husband crouches behind a small two year old boy BILLY. Billy holds a small fishing rod fishing. John turns to someone to his left and waves.

Jenny and Clarabell sit on a large picnic blanket not far away. They're sipping wine and waving back to John. It's a beautiful day on the river bank, blue sky and a light breeze.

CLARABELL

Little Billy loves to fish.

JENNY

Must take after my Dad.  
Thanks for calling him Billy.

CLARABELL

John and I like the name and we wanted to pay tribute to Grand dad.

JENNY

Thanks.

Jenny wipes a tear.

CLARABELL

Mom. Why were you so mad at Grand dad?

JENNY

Growing up, your grand dad spent months away at sea fishing. He'd miss Birthdays, holidays. Anyway, a year before he disappeared, your Grandmother had a heart attack. Died all alone. I found her, must have been a week after she died. Alone. I was so mad at him. So mad.

CLARABELL

And now?

JENNY

Wasn't his fault. I know that now. He was just doing the only thing he knew how. Fishing. I was wrong what I said. I was so so wrong.

Jenny grabs a tissue, wipes her eyes.

JENNY (CONT'D)

They never did recover his body. I still can't believe his gone. Maybe he got swallowed by a whale and one day he'll turn up, out of the blue.

Jenny wipes her eyes with a tissue. Clarabell comforts her.

**EXT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S FRONT PORCH - DAY**

Sunny early autumn day on the North Pole. The sun's low, just above the horizon. Billy sits alone on a bench. He gazes at Clarabell's photo at age two. Archibald enters.

ARCHIBALD

What'ya got there Gramps?

BILLY

Ohh this is a photo of my grand daughter Clarabell.

ARCHIBALD

(takes closer look)

Cute kid.

I thought you didn't have family.

BILLY

I do but my daughter told me she didn't want me in hers or Clarabell's life.

ARCHIBALD

Ouch! Why did she say that?

BILLY

She was mad at me.

ARCHIBALD

And when did she say this?

BILLY

Fifteen years ago.

ARCHIBALD

Fifteen years? Still think she's mad at you after all this time?

BILLY

I dunno. Maybe.

ARCHIBALD

I doubt it Gramps. Now if she were a star, she'd definitely still be mad. Fiercely stubborn them stars.

(looks at Sun)

Ain't that right Fred?

BILLY

Who's Fred?

ARCHIBALD

Fred

(gestures at Sun)

Said somethin to him a billion years ago he objected to and he's refused to speak to me ever since. Haven't you Fred?

(looks at Sun)

See! Now that's stubborn.

BILLY

You know our Sun? And you call him Fred?

ARCHIBALD

Aww yeah. I've known Fred forever. Just after the Big Bang we were real close. Real close.

The Sun is low above the horizon - still stubborn and silent.

**MONTAGE - OLIVER, SNATCHER AND BASH STEALING SPREE.**

A) Two couriers deliver rack of suits into Taylors, leave a rack on the street. Oliver and Snatcher snatch rack and run.

B) Oliver and Snatcher push rack of suits into Queenie's pub. Bash rides top of rack. Doolan rubs his hands with glee.

C) Oliver served by posh Lady in classy Jewellers. Snatcher nearby as lookout. Bash amongst display collects gold chains.

D) Doolan inspects gold chains with jeweler's eyepiece. His gang look on. Doolan looks very pleased. Smiles all round.

E) Bash crawls under infra-red beams in a museum. Bash crawls over security console. Bash's paw flips a switch to OFF. Red beams throughout the museum all extinguish.

F) Snatcher loads a trolley with paintings and museum pieces as Oliver pushes it about the museum. Bash rides the trolley.

G) Doolan inspects an ancient vase. Paintings rest on the seat opposite and museum pieces cover the booth's table.

H) The trio are in a quiet side street full of parking meters - snow on the ground. Oliver smashes a meter with a large sledge hammer. Sidewalk is covered with coins.

I) Snatcher, Bash and Oliver interrupt Doolan reading the paper. They drop a large sack on the table. Doolan opens the sack, he is very pleased to see the bag's full of coins.

**END MONTAGE**

**INT. SHOPPING MALL - US MIDWEST - DAY**

Children and parents line up to have a photo on Santa's lap.

A young FEMALE PHOTOGRAPHER shakes a small rattle.

FEMALE PHOTOGRAPHER  
Billy! Billy! Look this way Billy!

Two year old Billy sits on Santa's lap in the mall.  
Clarabell and Jenny are off to one side. They look on.

The young female Photographer shakes the rattle and takes  
two photos with a remote cable. FLASH. FLASH.

FEMALE PHOTOGRAPHER  
Thank you Billy! You were a very  
good boy!

Clarabell helps Billy off Santa.

CLARABELL  
Say Bye to Santa.

Billy waves Bye - two year old style. A young girl hops up  
on Santa's lap. Clarabell puts Billy in a pram parked near  
Jenny. The three leave to further explore the mall.

**INT. SMOKED FILLED POKER ROOM - NIGHT**

Doolan, Stodjar, Alvie and Jaspa sit around a poker table  
playing poker. All drink scotch, Stodjar smokes a cigar.

STODJAR  
Only time I enjoy a good cigar.  
Playin' poker. Like one Doolan?

DOOLAN  
Why thank you Mister Stodjar.

Stodjar offers Doolan a cigar. Alvie lights it up for him.

STODJAR  
Must say, I'm impressed how you no  
longer owe me mon-nee. Well done!

DOOLAN  
Thank you Mister Stodjar.

Doolan enjoys the fancy cigar.

STODJAR  
Lets make this our last game, then  
we'll call it a night.

Stodjar looks either side to Alvie and Jaspa. Gives them both a wink. Alvie and Jaspa nod and grunt the affirmative.

DOOLAN

Sounds good to me Mister Stodjar.

Everyone at the table throws a chip in. Alvie deals. Closer inspection, Alvie deals from bottom of the deck to Stodjar. Doolan's unaware of the shenanigans. All inspect their hands. Stodjar gives Alvie and Jaspa a nod.

Doolan looks at his hand. He has three Kings, an Ace and a Two. He discards the Two and throws in a chip in the center.

DOOLAN

One.

Alvie throws Doolan a card. Doolan checks the card, it's another Ace. Doolan now has a full house - Kings over Aces.

Jaspa throws his hand in.

JASPA

I fold.

Stodjar discards a card and throws in a small stack of chips.

STODJAR

See your one and raise you ten.

Alvie deals Stodjar a card. Stodjar looks at his hand. He stares down Doolan, eye to eye without blinking.

Alvie throws in his hand.

ALVIE

I fold.

Stodjar continues to stare down Doolan.

STODJAR

Looks like it's just you and me.

Doolan looks at his hand again. Full house - Kings over Aces. Doolan shoves the remainder of his chips, a small stack.

DOOLAN

See your ten and raise you twenty.

Stodjar continues his staring game. Doolan returns the stare.

STODJAR

See your twenty and raise you one hundred thousand.

Stodjar shoves a stack of red chips and four large stacks of gold chips center of the table.

DOOLAN

I fold.

STODJAR

What's wrong Doolan? Chicken?

DOOLAN

No. I just don't have the money.

STODJAR

I'll lend ya the money. You can owe me. What? Hand's too weak?

Doolan looks at his hand. Kings over Aces. A good hand.

STODJAR

Hurry up Doolan, we all need ta get ta bed.

Alvie and Jaspas chuckle.

Doolan ponders over his hand. He's of two minds.

STODJAR

Alvie, can you give Doolan a nudge. Think he's gone ta sleep.

Alvie and Jaspas chuckle. Doolan checks his hand, it's good.

DOOLAN

Okay, I'll see you.

STODJAR

What ya got?

Doolan lays out his hand. He looks and sounds confident.

DOOLAN

Full house, Kings over Aces.

Stodjar lays out his hand one by one. He has four Aces.

STODJAR

Four Aces. I win! You owe me monee.

DOOLAN

But that's not possible. There's only four Aces in the--

Alvie hits Doolan hard across the face.

DOOLAN

Owwwww!

ALVIE

Ere, you callin' Mister Stodjar a cheat?

DOOLAN

No I'm just sayin' that it's not possible. There's only four Ace--

Alvie hits Doolan hard across the face again.

DOOLAN

Owwwww!

STODJAR

Doolan sounds like a sore loser! You got ta Christmas Day to get me my mon-nee. No money and Alvie and Jaspa finally get their wish - Wombat stew.

Jaspa licks his chops.

STODJAR

Either way, we're going to have a wonderful christmas. Right boys?

Alvie and Jaspa chuckle.

DOOLAN

But Mister Stodjar, it just ain't possible to have six Ace--

Alvie has grabbed Doolan's head and wacked it hard against the table. Doolan is out cold.

DOOLAN

Take him home boys.

Alvie and Jaspa get either side of Doolan and drag him out.

STODJAR

Oh boys?

JASPA

Yes Boss?

STODJAR

Mess him up a little.

Stodjar laughs hysterically smoking a cigar. Alvie and Jaspa exit dragging Doolan with them.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - DAY**

On the refrigerator are four Postcards - "Greetings from New York City", "Greetings from Paris", "Greetings from Egypt" and "Greetings from London". There's photos of Mrs Claus at the holiday locations. Bluegrass opens the refrigerator.

BLUEGRASS

Anyone want some egg nog?

Rest of the team's at the table, four clean glasses in the center. Everyone grunts 'yes'. Bluegrass brings over a jug of egg nog, pours into the glasses and distributes.

SAMUEL

Can't believe this is our sixteenth Christmas. Time flies.

BILLY

Yeah and it ain't getting easier.

BLUEGRASS

Can't believe it. The Sixties just flew by. The Beatles, Mama and the Papas, Cream, The Doors. All gone!

ARCHIBALD

It's tough but I'm exactly where I wanna be. Workin' with you schmucks!

Everyone smiles at this comment. Archibald raises his glass.

ARCHIBALD

To another successful Christmas.

SAMUEL/BILLY/BLUEGRASS

(raise their glasses)

Another successful Christmas.

Everyone clinks their glasses. CLINK. CLINK. CLINK.  
Everyone drinks to the toast.

ARCHIBALD

So when do we wake up fatso?

SAMUEL

We should get him up tomorrow.

BILLY

I just want you to know, Santa hates being called fatso.

ARCHIBALD

Yeah I know. Bonus!

**INT. QUEENIE'S OLD ENGLISH PUB - DAY**

Doolan's in his booth. He has his head resting in one hand, looks to be suffering from a headache. Queenie walks past.

QUEENIE

Doolan? Why aren't you smokin' them smelly cigars? Not well?

Doolan turns to Queenie, he has a black eye and a fat lip.

DOOLAN

I'm ahhh in a bit of a scrape.

QUEENIE

Oh Doolan! Who did this to you?

DOOLAN

Stodjar's boys. Things got out of hand when I disagreed with the outcome of a poker game. I pointed out they were cheating.

QUEENIE

Well if you play with dogs expect to get bit. Here, I'll get you some aspirin and some ice for that shiner. Couple of days you'll be right as rain.

DOOLAN

Fraid not. Somehow I'm now in debt to Stodjar for a hundred grand and if I don't have his money by Christmas I'm wombat stew.

Doolan sobs in his hands loudly. Queenie pats his shoulder.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT**

On the wall is a framed photo of Jenny at age four on her father's shoulders at the fair. Near this photo is one of young Billy sitting on Santa's lap.

Jenny and Clarabell decorate a Christmas tree near the photos. They place tinsel and ornaments all over the tree. Little Billy hangs a small ornament on a bottom branch.

CLARABELL

Well done Billy!

(to Jenny)

This is Billy's first Christmas he knows about Santa. He's so excited.

JENNY

And what does Billy want for Christmas?

CLARABELL

A Teddy Bear.

The tree decorations are almost complete. Jenny stretches and puts a star on top.

JENNY

There. All done. We did well.

Three generations stand back and admire the decorated tree.

**INT. QUEENIE'S OLD ENGLISH PUB - DAY**

Oliver and Snatcher walk in to Queenie's pub, Bash sits on Oliver's shoulder. All three are smiling. They reach Doolan's booth and are shocked at what they see.

SNATCHER

Boss! What happened?

Doolan has a black eye, fat lip and an ice pack on his head. His gang sit down. They all look concerned.

DOOLAN

Stodjar's gorillas was usin' me as a punchin' bag.

OLIVER

(smirks)

I thought they were Alligators.

Oliver, Snatcher and Bash chuckle.

DOOLAN

I almost got killed and you guys are makin' jokes.

OLIVER

Sorry Boss.

(beat)

So why did they beat you up?

DOOLAN

Stodjar ran a crooked poker game. Took me for a lot of money. When I suggested the game was rigged, his boys did this to me.

SNATCHER

Geez Boss, anything we can do?

DOOLAN

Not unless you boys can get your hands on a hundred Gs by Christmas.

OLIVER

A hundred Gs! Geeez!

Bash puts her little paw on her head, shakes it in disbelief.

SNATCHER

Must be a way to raise a hundred Gs by Christmas. Think, think, think.

Oliver, Snatcher and Bash, tap a finger to forehead, think.

DOOLAN

Don't waste your times thinkin' about it. I've thought about it a lot. I'm afraid I'm wombat stew.

Doolan continues to read the paper while everyone else at the booth look depressed. He turns a page. He starts to read an article. A smile lights up his face.

DOOLAN

Woo hoo!

SNATCHER

What is it boss?

Doolan shows all a story about Archibald and the Tidmouse family. There's a photo of Archibald with the teen children.

DOOLAN

Listen to this. For the past fifteen years, the Tidmouses, a family of poor church mice, have been visited every Christmas Eve by Santa's helper Archibald, a Magic Christmas pudding. Archibald, not only brings the children presents, he also provides the family with a grand feast. Wow. It even has their address. Isn't this great.

SNATCHER

Sorry Boss, don't follow.

DOOLAN

We're gunna kidnap Santa.

OLIVER

Kidnap Santa?

DOOLAN

Yeah, you gotta problem with that Oliver?

OLIVER

Only problem I have is if I don't get to mess that fat jerk up a bit.

Oliver pounds his fists. Everyone at the booth chuckles.

**INT. LITTLE BILLY'S BEDROOM - MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT**

Billy's in his pyjamas, eyes half closed in bed. Juvenile artwork covers the walls. Jenny and Clarabell look on.

CLARABELL

One more sleep till Santa comes.

JENNY

Looks like an angel when he sleeps.

Jenny and Clarabell leave, turning off the main light. A night light dimly lights the room. Billy is sound asleep.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD NEAR SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

Team two sleigh lands on an abandoned country road. Woods lie on one side of the road and a small dilapidated building that may have once been an old church on the other.

Billy nimbly walks on the building's old tin roof with Archibald on his back. They reach the chimney and Billy lowers him down with a rope.

Samuel effortlessly hurls a number of presents to Billy on the roof with precision. Billy catches all and drops the presents down the chimney. He leans on the chimney and waits.

Billy looks at his watch. He gets two tugs on the rope.

BILLY

About time!

Billy pulls up the rope. It's a pumpkin with a face drawn.

BILLY

Huh?

(to sleigh crew)

Guys! We got a problem!

Samuel and Bluegrass look to Billy, confused what's going on.

**INT. MR AND MRS TIDMOUSE'S RUN DOWN SHACK - NIGHT**

The front door's kicked open. Samuel steps in followed by Billy. They find Mr and Mrs Tidmouse and their five teens around the kitchen table, tied up and gagged. Billy and Samuel untag and untie the family.

MR TIDMOUSE

Oh please don't hurt us. We're  
nothing but poor church mice.

The Tidmouse family are all terrified of Billy and Samuel - especially Samuel who looks large and menacing.

SAMUEL

We're not here to hurt you. We're  
here to help you.

BILLY

We're friends of Archibald. Know  
where he is?

The Tidmouse family are untied. They rub their sore wrists.

MR TIDMOUSE

We got a knock on the door about  
half seven. Thought it were  
carollers. A wombat and a kid  
pushed their way in, tied us all  
up. Said they'd burn down our  
house if we didn't cooperate.

BILLY

Why did they kidnap Archibald?

MR TIDMOUSE

No idea?

Old wall mounted dial phone rings. Mr Tidmouse answers it.

MR TIDMOUSE

Hello?  
(beat)  
It's for you.

Billy picks up the phone.

BILLY

Hello?

DOOLAN (V.O)

If you ever want to see your little  
pudding friend alive again, Santa  
(MORE)

DOOLAN (V.O) (CONT'D)  
needs to catch the number five at  
the bus stop out the front. It  
leaves at Twelve Oh five.

BILLY  
Who is this? What do you want?

DOOLAN (V.O)  
Santa needs to come alone or else.

Billy gets a busy tone. He hangs up. He looks at a clock  
on the wall. It's Eleven forty five. Billy rushes outside.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD NEAR SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

Billy walks over to the second sleigh. Bluegrass sits with  
huge 1972 style headphones on. It's plugged into the console.

BILLY  
Move over Bluegrass. Need to use  
the two way.

BLUEGRASS  
(takes off headphones)  
Huh?

BILLY  
Need to call Santa.

Billy picks up the mike and turns on the two way. Gets  
static. He turns over the channel.

BILLY  
Hello red dog. Hello red dog. This  
is silver fox. You copy. Over.

SANTA (V.O)  
Yeah silver fox, we copy over!

BILLY  
Red dog, we is east bound and down  
and we is in one heap a trouble.  
We need you to put the pedal to the  
metal and get over here. Ya copy  
over!

SANTA (V.O)  
Yeah we copy. What's your ten  
twenty over!

BILLY  
Thirty three Sycamore. Over.

SANTA (V.O)  
See you in five over!

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT**

Santa holds on to his reins and steers his sleigh, it's a starry night. Santa looks down below.

Santa's POV: The second sleigh is parked on the road outside the old dilapidated house.

Santa shakes his head in disapproval. He looks down below.

Santa's POV: An abandoned barn about fifty yards from road.

**INT. OLD ABANDONED BARN - NIGHT**

Santa has the sleigh and all the reindeers hidden in an old abandoned barn. There's some hay and rusty farm tools about.

SANTA  
(to Rudolph)  
Now Rudolph, you're in charge while  
I'm gone. Don't leave without me!

Santa pats Rudolph and exits the old abandoned barn.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD NEAR SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

Santa walks over to the second sleigh. Bluegrass sits with huge 1972 style headphones on. It's plugged into the console.

SANTA  
Bluegrass!

Bluegrass takes off his headphones. Santa looks cranky.

BLUEGRASS  
Santa! Oh hi. I was just listen--

SANTA  
What's going on?

BLUEGRASS  
No idea. No one's told me anything.

SANTA  
I'll see what's going on. Look son, don't wanna tell you how to suck eggs, but you need to move this sleigh off the road. You guys don't wanna end up in jail or the evening news. We gotta keep this all low key.

BLUEGRASS  
 Sorry Santa. Didn't realize.

SANTA  
 It's okay. Been doin' this for  
 years. Can't put an old head on  
 young shoulders.

Santa walks towards the old house and walks in.

Bluegrass puts on his headphones. Sound of 'La Bamba' can be heard in the distance. Bluegrass takes off his headphones, unsure what he heard. He shrugs and puts the headphones back on. He returns to listening to his music.

**INT. MR AND MRS TIDMOUSE'S RUN DOWN SHACK - NIGHT**

Santa enters, inspects the broken door jamb. Tidmouse family sit around the table. Billy and Samuel are glad to see him.

BILLY  
 Santa. Thank god you're here.

SANTA  
 Billy what happened?

BILLY  
 It's Archibald, he's been  
 kidnapped.

The Tidmouse family are happy to see Santa and all crowd around him for a photo. Mrs Tidmouse has her camera ready. Santa's frustrated not being able to talk to Billy.

SANTA  
 Now everyone. Can you all give us  
 some space. We are having a crisis.

MRS TIDMOUSE  
 Santa. A photo. With the children.

SANTA  
 (snappy)  
 Definitely not! Your family snaps  
 and newspaper articles are why we  
 are in this mess!

Most of the teens are in tears at Santa's behaviour.

MR TIDMOUSE  
 Now Santa, I'll ask you to speak  
 civil to my wife. If you please!

SANTA

Oh enough of this nonsense.  
Samuel, Billy cover your ears.

Samuel and Billy cover their ears. Santa speaks deeply.

SANTA

Your eyes grow heavy, so heavy you  
need to lay down. When you awake  
this will be but a dream. Good  
night. Sleep sleep sleep sleep.

The Tidmouse family all return to their beds in a trance.  
In an instance they are all asleep.

SANTA

Now where were we?

BILLY

Archibald's been kidnapped. Got a  
phone call. If we ever want to see  
him again, you are to catch the  
number five bus alone. It leaves  
out the front at twelve oh five.

Billy and Santa look up at the wall clock. It ticks over to  
twelve oh three.

SANTA

We better get out there then.

Santa exits, Billy and Samuel follow. He stops at the  
damaged door jamb.

SANTA

Try and mend that while I'm gone.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD NEAR SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

Santa, Samuel and Billy walk out of the Tidmouse house.

BILLY

Where's the sleigh?

Billy looks around, sees the sleigh a few yards off the  
road, almost out of sight. Bluegrass listens to music.

BILLY

Oh there it is.

SANTA

Asked him to move it off the road.

BILLY

Good idea.

Billy, Samuel and Santa walk over to a bus stop.

SAMUEL

Do you want me to come with you?  
Maybe we can follow the bus with  
the sleigh?

SANTA

Thanks for the offer but we don't  
want to risk Archibald's safety.  
Hopefully we can resolve this fast.

The Number five red double decker bus pulls up.

BILLY

What do you think they want?

SANTA

Money which we don't have. Maybe I  
can reason with them or something.  
Standby near the phone.

Billy nods. Santa is about to board, he turns back to Billy.

SANTA

Got any change? These pants don't  
have pockets.

Billy pulls out coins from his pocket, gives it to Santa.

SANTA

Thanks.

**INT. NUMBER FIVE DOUBLE DECKER BUS - NIGHT**

Mid fifties INDIAN BUS DRIVER turns to Santa.

INDIAN BUS DRIVER

Where to sir?

SANTA

Ahh

Voice at the back of the bus yells out "Lidcombe".

SANTA

Lidcombe?

Santa holds open his palm. The bus driver takes three coins.

Bus takes off with a jolt. Voice from back yells out "Back Seat". Santa wanders towards the back, bus appears empty. Santa reaches the back seat he finds Snatcher and Bash.

SNATCHER

Sit near the window. Other side.

Santa sits near the window.

SANTA

Where are we going? Lidcombe?

SNATCHER

Bash. Frisk him.

Bash scuttles to the other side. She darts under Santa's coat. Santa giggles, he's ticklish. He starts to squirm. He coughs COUGH COUGH. His eyes bulge. Bash scuttles back. Bash stands up on her hind legs, whispers in Snatcher's ear.

SNATCHER

You're clean.

SANTA

After that experience, I don't feel clean. Frisked me in places Mrs Claus has never even seen.

SNATCHER

Pull the cord, we're getting off.

SANTA

But this isn't Lidcombe.

SNATCHER

Pull the cord!

**INT. LIVING ROOM OF AN ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT**

Archibald sits tied to a chair. A gag is loose around his neck. He's in a near empty room with hardly any furniture and a large window with closed venetian blinds. Oliver and Doolan sit at a small round table with a dial phone.

ARCHIBALD

So what's your story Twist?

OLIVER

My name's Oliver! Why do you keep calling me Twist?

ARCHIBALD

Please sir, I want some more!

OLIVER  
You got any idea what the silly  
git's on about?

DOOLAN  
No idea.

ARCHIBALD  
Well, looks like you two braniacs  
are well read. Bet you read the  
paper for the comics, hey Wally!

DOOLAN  
I enjoy reading the paper but not  
for the comics and I'm no Wally.

Oliver hears a noise. He looks through the venetians.

OLIVER  
They're here.

Oliver grabs a lump of wood against a wall. He stands behind  
the door. It opens, in enters Snatcher, Bash and Santa.  
Oliver brings the wood down hard on Santa's head. CRACK!  
Santa's knocked out. He lies on the floor - a crumpled mess.

ARCHIBALD  
Well Twist, I didn't expect that.  
That was hard core.

Everyone's shocked at Oliver's action. Bash hides behind  
Snatcher.

ARCHIBALD (CONT'D)  
Hey kid, you got a lot of pent up  
hostility. What did you have to do  
that for? He's gunna be out for  
hours and it's Christmas.

OLIVER  
The silly fat git had it comin'! I  
told you I was gunna mess him up.

DOOLAN  
We all thought you were joking.

SNATCHER  
Never took you for a psycho kid.

Oliver drops the wood, he drops to the ground and cries.

OLIVER

(sobbing)

All I wanted was Battling Tops. I even got a tree. Left a note for him under it. But he missed me. I spent the whole year picking up dog poo and he missed me! Ernie got a game, even spoilt Matchstick got a game but I got nothing. Her her her

Snatcher goes up to him and pats Oliver on the back.

SNATCHER

Maybe it slipped behind the couch.

OLIVER

(sobbing)

It didn't. I looked. And to top it all, he got my evil foster parents a christmas feast her her her!

ARCHIBALD

Did you say Christmas feast?

OLIVER

(wipes eyes)

Yeah. Why?

ARCHIBALD

Santa don't do Christmas feasts, I do. That's my speciality!

Oliver looks angry, he picks up the lump of wood.

OLIVER

(lifts up wood)

So you forgot my present.

ARCHIBALD

I never forget nothin'. I'm a star. Enlighten me kid. What year was this?

OLIVER

(still holds wood)

Nineteen Sixty nine.

ARCHIBALD

And the address?

OLIVER

(still holds wood)

Forty two Rickford Street South--

ARCHIBALD

You had a really small ugly tree,  
looked like it got hit with the  
ugly stick.

Oliver puts the wood down.

OLIVER

But why didn't I get my present?

ARCHIBALD

Can you think of any low life  
scumbags that'd steal a Christmas  
present from a nine year old child?

**FLASHBACK - INT. MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - CHRISTMAS 1969**

Oliver holds up an empty plate at the kitchen table.

OLIVER

More please!

Mr and Mrs Dobbs sit opposite. Both have plates stacked  
high. Mr Dobbs is eating a turkey drumstick.

**END OF FLASHBACK**

**INT. LIVING ROOM OF AN ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT**

OLIVER

My rotten foster parents! How  
could I have missed that!

ARCHIBALD

It's hard to imagine anyone doing  
that, even low life scumbags.

OLIVER

Well we gotta rectify this.  
Imagine if every kid missed out on  
a present from Santa. The results  
would be catastrophic.

Oliver rushes over to Santa, he tries to revive him. Santa  
opens half an eye.

SANTA

Mummy? Is that you Mummy?

SNATCHER

Oh man, you knocked him right back  
to kindergarden.

**INT. MR AND MRS TIDMOUSE'S RUN DOWN SHACK - NIGHT**

Billy and Samuel look worried as they wait at the kitchen table. Billy glances at the wall clock. It's three A M. Billy shakes his head. Samuel shrugs.

**INT. LIVING ROOM OF AN ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT**

Santa sits up on a chair, he is half awake holding his head.

SANTA

Anyone get the number of that truck?

OLIVER

I'm really really sorry I hit you Santa. How are you feeling?

Santa's POV: There are two Olivers.

SANTA

Which one of you said that?

Snatcher arrives with Bash, he has a cup of tea.

SNATCHER

Me and Bash made you a cup of tea Santa. Drink up. It'll make you feel better.

Santa takes the tea, he takes a sip.

Santa's POV: There's only one Snatcher and one Bash.

SANTA

Thank you. I'm feeling much better. What time is it?

Snatcher looks at his watch.

SNATCHER

Almost four.

SANTA

Oh no! Oh no no no!

DOOLAN

Okay, Santa's recovered. Now can we ask for the ransom?

ARCHIBALD

Oh boy, you really are a Wally?

SANTA

What my friend means to say is, I don't have any money, just lots of presents and good cheer. But seeing I've been held up for so long, many children will miss out this year.

OLIVER

We can't let that happen, come on Santa. Snatcher, Bash, untie the pudding.

Oliver helps Santa up, Snatcher and Bash untie Archibald.

DOOLAN

STOP!

Doolan has a gun and he's pointing it at Oliver.

OLIVER

What are ya gunna do? Shoot me? Shoot Santa? I know you need money but this ain't the way.

DOOLAN

So you guys are just gunna let him go. Of course he's got money. He's lying to you all. He's a big fat liar.

SANTA

I may be big, I may be fat but I'm no liar.

DOOLAN

If I don't get my money, I'll be dead in a fews hours. What's in it for me if I let you and the pudding go Santa? What's in it for me?

ARCHIBALD

You can have my magic candy cane.

DOOLAN

Your magic what?

ARCHIBALD

My magic candy cane. Twirl it at any bare table and voila - instant feast.

SANTA

No Archibald, not your magic Candy cane!

ARCHIBALD

The kids need you fatso. The feast was the icing on the cake but you've always been the main attraction.

DOOLAN

(curious)

How does it work?

ARCHIBALD

Just point and twirl. That simple.

DOOLAN

May I?

ARCHIBALD

Let us go and it's yours.

Archibald's still on the chair with his hands tied up. Doolan grabs the candy cane off Archibald. He twirls it at the bare table. Behind him, Archibald points his finger at the same table and twirls it. A feast appears on the table.

DOOLAN

It works! It works! Ha ha! Oh this is gotta be worth a fortune!

ARCHIBALD

So we have a deal.

DOOLAN

Yes yes of course. Untie them.

Doolan puts the candy cane in his pocket. He's estatic. Snatcher unties Archibald.

OLIVER

Doolan. We need to borrow your car.

DOOLAN

Take it, take it. I've got everything I need right here.

Doolan pats his pocket. He is still estatic. Santa, Archibald, Snatcher, Bash and Oliver exit the house.

**EXT. OUTSIDE AN ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT**

Outside on a quiet street a 1970 Morris Marina drives off.

**INT. 1970 MORRIS MARINA - NIGHT**

Santa and Archibald are in the back seat.

SANTA

Sorry you had to give up your candy cane Archibald.

ARCHIBALD

It's okay. I'll get another one.

SANTA

But don't you need that one to do your feast thing.

ARCHIBALD

Naaah. I got everything I need.

Archibald points his right index finger.

SANTA

So why have you been using that candy cane all these years?

ARCHIBALD

Theatrical effect. Feel silly just standing there twirling my finger.

Oliver's at the front driving, Snatcher is in the passenger seat and Bash is on top of the dash sliding about.

OLIVER

Did ya hear that Snatcher, the pudding scammed Doolan ha ha ha!

SNATCHER

I'd hate to see his face when he realizes he's been scammed ha ha!

Oliver looks in the rear vision mirror at Santa.

OLIVER

Santa? Could you take us with you?

SANTA

Sorry but I work alone, you three would only slow me up?

OLIVER

Please Santa. We don't have a home and we're all real handy. Maybe we can help you and the elves out.

Oliver continues to stare at Santa in the rear view mirror.

SANTA

I'm very sorry Oliver but--

ARCHIBALD  
You can ride with us, but you gotta  
promise not to--

SANTA  
Archibald! We can't take them back!

ARCHIBALD  
Fatso I've got a good feeling about  
these three. I think they're gonna  
work out.

SANTA  
Your problem's always been you're  
too soft. If things don't work out  
I'll hold you accountable.

ARCHIBALD  
Yeah Fatso, ground me if I'm wrong.

Oliver, Snatcher and Bash are estatic.

OLIVER  
We won't let you down, we promise.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD NEAR SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

Morris Marina pulls up near second sleigh. Bluegrass is  
oblivious, listens to some music. Everyone exits the car.

Billy and Samuel are in the doorway of the Tidmouse shack.  
Samuel shuts the door behind him and they hurry over.

BILLY  
Santa! Archibald! You're back. Who  
are these guys.

ARCHIBALD  
This is Twist, Snatcher and Bash.

BILLY  
Cool nicknames.

ARCHIBALD  
Twist is the only nickname. Other  
two, I couldn't do better. They're  
all coming with us.

SAMUEL  
So what do we do now Santa?

SANTA  
We might have to give the southern  
hemisphere a miss. Miss down under.

Everyone looks depressed.

SANTA  
Better we do half the kids than  
none at all. Load up. Lets do it.

**INT. OLD ABANDONED BARN - NIGHT**

Santa opens the doors to the old abandoned barn. It's empty.

SANTA  
I hope you have all been well be--

Santa realizes the reindeers, sleigh and presents are gone.

SANTA  
Oh no, no, no!

Santa rushes out of the barn.

**EXT. OUTSIDE SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

The second sleigh are ready for take off. Oliver, Snatcher and Bash sit behind the large sack at the back. Bluegrass music plays. The reindeers begin to move. Santa appears ahead. Bluegrass needs to pull up quickly.

SANTA  
Stop! Stop!  
Did anyone move my sleigh?

Everyone shakes their head no.

SANTA  
Anyone know where it is?

Everyone shakes their head no.

SANTA  
Oh what a disaster!

Everyone except Archibald disembarks. Archibald looks up at the starry night, at his old friend, Ralph, the Wishing star. Santa can be heard in the background having a meltdown.

ARCHIBALD  
Hi-ya Ralph. Thanks for granting me  
my wish. It's worked out well  
thanks. But I need to ask you one  
more wish. I know you have a rule,  
one wish per customer, but I really  
need this. So if you could help me  
out one last time.

The wishing star shines extra bright for a second.

Archibald looks at his hands, they both sparkle for a moment. Archibald looks back at the Wishing Star.

ARCHIBALD  
Thanks Ralph. Bye.

Archibald gets down off the second sleigh. Santa's still having a meltdown. Everyone else tries to console him.

ARCHIBALD  
Everyone except Santa, back on the sleigh. Get ready to leave.

Everyone stops and looks to Archibald.

ARCHIBALD  
Fatso? Show me where you last saw your sleigh.

SANTA  
You don't understand, they're gone, they're gone.

ARCHIBALD  
Please, show me where you last saw them. Please.

Everyone looks at Archibald like he's lost his mind.

SANTA  
This way.

ARCHIBALD  
(to rest)  
You all get ready. Hurry now.

Everyone else boards the second sleigh, still confused.

**INT. OLD ABANDONED BARN - NIGHT**

Santa and Archibald enter the barn. Archibald closes the doors behind them.

ARCHIBALD  
Where were the reindeers?

Santa gestures to the front of the barn.

SANTA  
Just here.

ARCHIBALD  
And the sleigh over there. Correct?

SANTA  
That's right.

Archibald leads Santa to a back corner of the barn, in a small stable out of sight.

ARCHIBALD  
I need you to place one hand on my head and be very quiet now.

SANTA  
But what's going on?

ARCHIBALD  
I'll explain later.

Santa places one hand on Archibald. Archibald rubs his hands together in a circular motion. The barn around them is a blur. Reindeers and sleigh appear for a second and disappear. Archibald stops rubbing his hands.

SANTA  
Archibald. What's going on?

ARCHIBALD  
Shhhh.

The Barn door swings open. Santa from four hours earlier parks the sleigh and reindeers in the barn. Santa looks on.

EARLIER SANTA  
(to Rudolph)  
Now Rudolph, you're in charge while I'm gone. Don't leave without me!

Earlier Santa pats Rudolph and exits the old abandoned barn.

SANTA  
But how?

ARCHIBALD  
Ralph. The wishing star. He just granted me my very last wish.

Santa climbs on board the sleigh. Archibald opens the doors. Santa plays La Bamba and the reindeers run out of the barn.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD NEAR SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

Four hours earlier Santa walks into the Tidmouse house.

Bluegrass puts on his headphones. Behind him, Santa's sleigh flies off into the night and sound of 'La Bamba' fades away. Bluegrass takes off his headphones, unsure what he heard. He shrugs and puts his headphones on. Returns to his music.

**INT. OLD ABANDONED BARN - NIGHT**

Archibald closes the barn door.

ARCHIBALD  
Now back to the future.

Archibald claps his hands. The barn around him is a blur.

**EXT. OUTSIDE SMALL DILAPIDATED BUILDING - NIGHT**

The second sleigh's ready for take off. Everyone's on board except for Archibald. Archibald appears alone.

BILLY  
Where's Santa?

ARCHIBALD  
Oh we found them. He already took off. Had to make up time.

Everyone looks at Archibald in disbelief as he climbs aboard.

Bluegrass has his head phones on. He answers the two way.

BLUEGRASS  
Hello? Santa? Where are you?  
(beat)  
Will do. Bye. Over.

Bluegrass takes off his headphones, turns to everyone.

BLUEGRASS  
That was Santa, he's in Rio. He'll meet up with us at Mexico city four AM their local time.

SAMUEL  
How did he get to the other side of the world in such a short time.

BILLY  
He's Santa.  
Let's get going, lot of deliveries before Mexico city.

Bluegrass plays bluegrass music and the second sleigh takes off. Oliver, Snatcher and Bash look around in amazement.

**EXT. MIDDLE CLASS SUBURBAN STREET - NEAR CHICAGO - NIGHT**

Santa parks his sleigh on the quiet suburban street.

Santa rummages through the huge sack at back of the sleigh.

SANTA

Elm street, here I come.

Santa disembarks with a red sack. Wide view shows a red flash darting from roof top to roof top, disappearing down a chimney momentarily. Elm street almost complete in seconds.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT**

A red blur flies out of the fireplace. The blur transforms into Santa with a sack in front of a decorated Christmas tree, the tree Jenny, Clarabell and young Billy decorated.

SANTA

One teddy for little Billy and some lego cause you've been extra good.

Santa places two presents under the tree. Santa notices a stool with a glass of milk and cookies near the tree.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Don't mind if I do.

Santa takes a bite of a cookie and a gulp of milk. He looks at the framed photos on the wall near the tree. On the wall is the photo of young Jenny on Billy's shoulders at the fair.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Well well well, it seems you do have a family that cares.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE NORTH POLE - NIGHT**

The second team fly back to base. A starry night is the backdrop. Everyone looks tired except the new recruits Oliver, Snatcher and Bash who look around excited. Billy, Samuel and Bluegrass can barely keep their eyes open.

BILLY

It gets harder every year.

SAMUEL

I know it's Christmas but I just wanna hit the sack. I'm beat.

The second team come in for a landing on the icy North Pole runway. The sleigh landing sounds like a 747 landing.

**INT. QUEENIE'S OLD ENGLISH PUB - DAY**

Doolan sits at his booth smoking a cigar, drinking whisky and looking chipper. Stodjar enters, followed by Alvie and Jaspa. They stop at Doolan's booth.

DOOLAN  
Merry Christmas Mister Stodjar!  
Alvie, Jaspa!

STODJAR  
Your lookin cheerful Doolan. You  
must have my mon-nee!

DOOLAN  
No money but I do have something  
much much better.

Doolan slips out from his seat. He places his whiskey and cigar on an adjacent empty table.

DOOLAN  
Mister Stodjar! Boys! Please!

Doolan directs Stodjar, Alvie and Jaspa to sit at the booth.

STODJAR  
What ya doin' Doolan? Servin' up  
some wombat stew?

Stodjar, Alvie and Jaspa chuckle. Doolan stands before them.

DOOLAN  
Gents. Prepare to be amazed.

Doolan seems chuffed as he pulls out the candy cane.

DOOLAN  
Hands off the table. Hope you  
brought your appetites. Presto!

Doolan twirls the candy cane around and around. Nothing. Stodjar, Alvie and Jaspa exchange bewildered looks.

STODJAR  
What game are you playin' at Doolan?

DOOLAN  
Mister Stodjar. Just one moment.  
Please!

Doolan looks worried. He tries the candy cane twirl again.

STODJAR

I don't have time for silly games  
Doolan. Seein' there's no mon-nee,  
boys, you're havin' wombat stew!

Alvie and Jaspa lick their chops. Doolan tosses the defective magic candy cane and takes off out of the pub.

STODJAR

Get em boys!

Alvie and Jaspa run out of the pub in pursuit of Doolan.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S KITCHEN - DAY**

**SUPER: SIX MONTHS LATER**

On the refrigerator are four Postcards - "Greetings from New York City", "Greetings from Paris", "Greetings from Egypt" and "Greetings from London". There's photos of Mrs Claus at the holiday locations. Oliver opens the refrigerator.

OLIVER

Anyone want a Coke? Pood? Tiny?

Archibald and Samuel sit at the kitchen table.

SAMUEL

I'm fine Twist.

ARCHIBALD

I'll have one.

Oliver brings two cans to the table. Gives one to Archibald. He sits down.

ARCHIBALD

So why do you keep callin' me Pood?

OLIVER

Pood as in pudding. Is there a problem Pood?

ARCHIBALD

Not at all Twist.

SAMUEL

I think it's a great nickname.  
About time you had one.

OLIVER

So where is everyone?

SAMUEL

Stripes is feeding the reindeers,  
Snatcher is having a meeting with  
the elves, Gramps is with Santa  
somewhere and Bash and Mrs Claus  
are watching television.

**INT. MR & MRS CLAUS'S LIVING ROOM - DAY**

On a large comfy chair sits Mrs Claus. Bash sits on her lap.  
They're intensely watching something.

On an old black and white TV is the opening credits of Days  
of Our Lives - "Like Sands through the hour glass, so....."

Mrs Claus and Bash continue to intensely watch television.

**EXT. NORTH POLE OUTSIDE ELVE'S TOY WAREHOUSE - DAY**

Billy and Santa chat as they walk side by side. It's a  
sunny day, blue skies at the North Pole.

SANTA

How is Snatcher working out?

BILLY

The elves love him and he has a  
great head for business. He's a  
real asset.

SANTA

Good good.

BILLY

I'm not getting fired, am I Santa?  
I feel like I've been training up  
my replacement.

SANTA

No one could ever replace you  
Billy. Besides, we're going to  
need someone to keep things going  
when you come with us to Chicago.

BILLY

Santa, I don't need a holiday. I'm  
quite happy right here. Wouldn't  
you like to just go with Mrs Claus?

SANTA

You're coming Billy and that's  
final. Besides, I need someone to  
go with to the Baseball game -  
Dodgers play the Cubs. Remember?

BILLY  
You've twisted my arm. I'm going.

**EXT. NORTH POLE RUNWAY - DAY**

Santa's sleigh is at the edge of the runway. On board Santa wears a casual shirt and sunglasses. Beside him is Mrs Claus with a pretty sun dress and sunglasses. Back of sleigh is loaded with luggage and a bag of reindeer feed.

Gathered near the sleigh are team two as well as Oliver, Snatcher and Bash on Oliver's shoulder. Samuel, Archibald and Bluegrass are all giving Billy a group hug all at once.

BILLY  
Hey, what's all this? Anyone would think I'm never coming back. I'll be back home in a month.

SAMUEL  
Nah-ah. You'll feel that warm sun and you'll never wanna come back.

BLUEGRASS  
(wipes his eyes)  
See-ya Gramps.

ARCHIBALD  
Take care Billy.

Billy climbs in the back seat. Everyone waves goodbye. Santa plays La Bamba and the sleigh takes off.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE NORTH POLE RUNWAY - DAY**

Billy looks down at the farewell party. They appear tiny.

BILLY  
(puzzled)  
He called me Billy.

**EXT. CHICAGO O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY**

A 747 airliner comes in for a landing.

**EXT. OUTSIDE WRIGLEY FIELD - CHICAGO - DAY**

Street view of Wrigley Field - Home of the Chicago Cubs.

**SERIES OF SHOTS - FUN DAY AT WRIGLEY FIELD**

A) Pitcher winds up and throws a fast ball complete with sports commentary. Cubs are playing the Dodgers.

- B) Santa's seated. Billy arrives wearing a Cubs cap. He places a Dodger's cap on Santa. Santa's pleased.
- C) Batter prepares to hit a ball, swings and hits it.
- D) Enthusiastic fans use hand gestures and yell out.
- E) A batter hits the ball and runs for first. The batter makes it to first and is safe.
- F) Billy and Santa eat hot dogs and watch intently.
- G) A batter hits a home run. Batter runs a home run.
- H) The enormous scoreboard displays 'HOME RUN'.
- I) Billy shakes his head. Santa punches the air, happy.

**EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CHICAGO - DAY**

A yellow cab pulls up in a suburban street.

**INT. BACK OF YELLOW CAB - DAY**

Billy and Santa sit in the back seat of a yellow cab.

BILLY

Santa, what's going on? This isn't the hotel. Where are we?

SANTA

Aah Billy. I found out something interesting a little while ago. You have a family that miss you.

BILLY

Is this why I'm here? To unload me on my daughter who I haven't seen for years. A daughter that doesn't want me in her life.

SANTA

No! It's not like that. You are so important to me Billy and I'm proud to call you my friend but don't you want to get reacquainted with your own family. They truly miss you.

BILLY

I don't know.

SANTA

Knock on your daughter's door.  
It's just over there. Your grand  
daughter and great grand son live  
there too. I'll wait here and if  
you get a frosty reception, you can  
get back in the cab and we'll never  
mention it again.

Billy stares at the house.

BILLY

I have a great grand son?

SANTA

His name's Billy too.

Billy takes a deep breath.

BILLY

I'm going in. If I'm not back,  
thank you for everything.

SANTA

Pleasures been all mine.

Billy hugs Santa and exits the cab. He turns back to Santa.

BILLY

Wish me luck.

SANTA

You don't need it. Go.

**EXT. OUTSIDE MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - DAY**

Billy bravely walks to the front door. He rings the door  
bell. He anxiously waits. Turns back to check the cab's  
still there. The door opens, it's Jenny his daughter. She's  
aged but gracefully. Glasses hang around her neck.

JENNY

Yes, may I help you?

Billy takes a deep breath.

BILLY

Jenny, it's me. It's your Dad.

Jenny doesn't trust what she hears. She puts on her glasses.

JENNY

Daddy? Is it you? Is it really  
you?

BILLY

Yes baby, it's me. Daddy's home.

Jenny throws her arms around Billy. Tears stream down hers and Billy's faces.

JENNY

Oh Dad, I'm so sorry talking to you the way I did last time we spoke.

BILLY

It's okay, I probably deserved it.

JENNY

No, I shouldn't have--

BILLY

It's okay. It's okay. I just need to ask you something sweetheart.

JENNY

What's that?

BILLY

Am I too late to be your Dad.

JENNY

It's never too late.

Jenny and Billy hug. Clarabell comes outside.

CLARABELL

Mom, are you okay, I heard--

Clarabell stops, she's surprized to see Billy as well.

CLARABELL

Grandpa?

BILLY

Clarabell? You look so different from your photo. So grownup but still so beautiful.

CLARABELL

Photo?

Billy pulls out the crumpled photograph of Clarabell age two

BILLY

I've been carrying around this photo for near twenty years. Wasn't one day I didn't look at it and dream of being part of her life.

Clarabell joins in with Billy and Jenny's group hug.

**INT. BACK OF YELLOW CAB - DAY**

Santa's POV: Jenny, Billy and Clarabell have a group hug. Billy looks towards the taxi and gives Santa a wave.

SANTA  
Driver. The hotel please.

**EXT. OUTSIDE MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - DAY**

Billy POV: Santa waves good bye and the cab drives off.

JENNY  
Who was that Dad?

BILLY  
A friend. A dear old friend.

CLARABELL  
Come inside Grandpa. Come meet  
your great grand son.

All three move towards the front door.

BILLY  
Great grand son? Am I really that  
old?

All three are inside and the front door closes.

**EXT. ROOF ON MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - NIGHT**

**SUPER: SIX MONTHS LATER**

Oliver nimbly walks on a tiled roof with Archibald on his back. He stops at a chimney. He also carries a small bag.

ARCHIBALD  
This isn't one of our stops Twist!

OLIVER  
No but it's one of mine.  
(holds up bag)  
Special delivery.

ARCHIBALD  
Now I remember. How long's it been  
Twist?

OLIVER  
Four years tomorrow.

ARCHIBALD  
Revenge, a dish best served cold.

Oliver smiles as he lowers Archibald down the chimney.

**INT. MR AND MRS DOBBS HOUSE - EARLY CHRISTMAS MORNING**

Mr and Mrs Dobbs trudge into the living room and adjoining kitchen half asleep. Mrs Dobbs is in a pink dressing gown. Mr Dobbs is in flannelette pyjamas. There's a miserable looking christmas tree in the corner of the room.

MR DOBBS  
Did we get any feast this year.

MRS DOBBS  
Nah! That's three years in a row.  
Nuthin'. Bloody Santa!

MR DOBBS  
Maybe it's not the tree. Maybe it  
was the kid that got us the feast.

MRS DOBBS  
A feast for that little shit. I  
doubt it.

Mrs Dobbs cackles, Mr Dobbs chuckles. Mr Dobbs drops himself onto the couch. He notices two presents under the tree.

MR DOBBS  
Woo hoo, we got presents.

MRS DOBBS  
No!

MR DOBBS  
Yes.

MRS DOBBS  
Well then, hurry up and get em.

Mr Dobbs grabs the two presents. Both are the same size, square boxes size of a small tissue box. He gives Mrs Dobbs hers. They sit down at the kitchen table to open them.

MR DOBBS  
(shakes it)  
Wonder what it is? Small!

MRS DOBBS  
As they say, good things come in  
small packages. Let's open em.

Mr and Mrs Dobbs rip off the wrapping. They both have identical boxes with lids.

MR DOBBS  
Dying to know what it is.

MRS DOBBS  
On three, one, two.

Mr and Mrs Dobbs rip off the lids. They grimace at what they find. It stinks. They need to put the lids back on.

MR DOBBS  
Oh that's fowl!

MRS DOBBS  
What kinda sick pup would do that?

Mr Dobbs takes a quick peek.

MR DOBBS  
Labrador?

**INT. JENNY'S MODEST SUBURBAN HOME - EARLY CHRISTMAS MORNING**

Billy senior walks into Jenny's living room half asleep in his pyjamas. Jenny enters in a pink dressing gown.

JENNY  
Merry Christmas Dad.

Jenny gives Billy a peck on the cheek. She walks on to an adjoining kitchen.

BILLY  
Merry Christmas Baby.

JENNY  
Coffee?

BILLY  
Love one. So has the little man gotten up yet?

CLARABELL (O.S)  
Do you mean this little man?

Billy turns around to find Clarabell entering holding little Billy's hand. Clarabell lets his hand go and he runs over to the tree. Clarabell gives Billy a kiss on the cheek.

CLARABELL  
Merry Christmas Grandpa.

BILLY

Merry Christmas Angel. I'm keen to see little Billy open up his presents from Santa.

Little Billy rips open a large present from Santa. It's a large box of Lego.

CLARABELL

Wow Billy, you got Lego! Your great Grandpa will need to help you play with that while Daddy's away.

BILLY

It'll be my pleasure.

Jenny gives Billy senior a mug of coffee. He takes a gulp.

BILLY

Thanks. I needed this.

CLARABELL (O.S)

That's a strange present for a three year old.

Billy looks over to what Clarabell is talking about. Little Billy has opened up a box from Santa with five snow Globes.

BILLY

Oh ahh I think that one's for me.

Billy picks up the present and puts it on the table. He looks inside and recognizes the Snow Globes. Snow Globes from New York, Egypt, Paris, London and even Chicago. Billy finds a photo in the box. A grin breaks over his face.

The photo is everyone at the North Pole in a group photo in Santa's Living room. There's Santa, Mrs Claus, Archibald, Samuel, Bluegrass, Oliver, Snatcher and Bash.

Billy smiles.

**EXT. MR'S ABERNATHY'S BACK YARD - DAY**

MRS ABERNATHY (94) wispy long grey hair and wrinkles is on her back porch in a dressing gown. She points a bony finger.

MRS ABERNATHY

Boy! Boy! Make sure you double bag them doggie doos! I don't wanna smell em when I use my bin.

Doolan is in the middle of a large yard surrounded by doggie poo. He's just about to scoop up a large sloppy one.

DOOLAN  
Okay Mr's Abernathy.

Doolan grimaces as he picks up the sloppy poo.

DOOLAN  
(to himself)  
Doolan! You have officially scraped  
the bottom of the barrel. The very  
bottom. Oh the indignity!

FADE OUT.