

SANTA DOWN

Screenplay by

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WE STREAK ACROSS THE HEAVENS, LOOKING DOWN ON...

EXT. EARTH - DAY

A beautiful orb glistening in the vast universe, holding all the secrets of mankind. This is how God must see our mother-planet. A SHOOTING STAR falls, for a moment we follow it. Then, we plunge down on...

EXT. PINEVILLE - DAY

Wintertime in a quaint mountain town. The kind Norman Rockwell might have painted. Two-lane roads. Farms. A town square and A CLOCK TOWER.

It's Christmas time, and the town is busy with SHOPPERS serenaded by CAROLERS. There's A massive CHRISTMAS TREE and A NATIVITY SCENE in the middle of town square with life-sized plastic figures of Baby Jesus, the Virgin Mary and the Three Wise Men. A SIGNPOST READS:

*"WELCOME TO PINEVILLE
THE HIGHEST LITTLE CITY IN THE WORLD
ELEVATION 9164 FEET"*

EXT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - DAY

A mid-income, two-story home. The only house on this street not decorated for the Christmas season.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

OWEN "SMITTY" SMITH, a mischievous 12-year-old with a messy mop of hair, is fast asleep. His single mom, MRS. SMITH, wears NURSE'S WHITES and pushes the door open.

MRS. SMITH
Smitty, it's 11 o'clock. Rise and shine.

Mrs. Smith pulls the blinds, letting the sun in.

SMITTY
C'mon, Mom, it's Christmas break.

Smitty pulls his pillow over his head.

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MRS. SMITH

I have to go to work, I'll be on my cell
if you need me. Don't forget to make
your bed...

(adamant)

And no sledding!

SMITTY

Yes, Mom, no sledding.

Mrs. Smith crosses, holding out her pinky finger.

MRS. SMITH

Pinky promise?

Smitty smirks and does a pinky shake with his mom.

SMITTY

Pinky promise.

Mrs. Smith gives him a kiss on the forehead and leaves.

MRS. SMITH

Be good.

When she's gone, Smitty holds up his other hand revealing
his fingers are crossed. The pinky promise is nullified.

SMITTY

Oh, I'm good. Very good.

EXT. DEAD MAN'S HILL - DAY

A frozen strip of road carved through a forest of pines.
A group of ten KIDS stand at the summit busy doing last
minute tune-ups on their homemade bobsleds.

A tall, rail-thin kid, BONES, 12, has BLUEPRINTS for his
bobsled spread out on the hood of his sled. A SKULL AND
CROSSBONES FLAG is side-mounted on his windscreen.

Next to him, CHRISTINE WATKINS, also 12, a freckly-faced
tomboy, chews on a wad of pink bubble gum too large to
make sense. She checks out Bones' blueprints.

CHRISTINE

Nice drawings, Bones.

BONES

They're not drawings. They're blueprints
for a butt-kicking.

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CHRISTINE

Those blueprints are cool if you plan on doing a run down the bunny slope, but you didn't factor in the wind.

BONES

Wind?!

CHRISTINE

Yeah, wind. You know, one of nature's most powerful elements, rips down trees, topples buildings, throws cows a hundred miles from home. That stuff.

BONES

You can take your wind and go fly a kite.

CHRISTINE

It's called aerodynamics...

Christine snaps THE SKULL AND CROSSBONES FLAG off the side of his bobsled and throws it in the snow.

CHRISTINE

...I just saved you 1.8 seconds of drag.

Bones looks down at his flag, pissed.

Then, Smitty pushes his bobsled up to the starting line.

SMITTY

Sorry I'm late.

CHRISTINE

What're you doing here?

BONES

Yeah, I thought your mom banned you from sledding with us.

SMITTY

She did...

(then)

Are we going to do this or what?

Smitty smiles and straps on his beat-up RACING HELMET. BONES grabs A WALKIE-TALKIE and keys the handset.

BONES

Hey, T-Rex! You got the traffic stopped down there?

EXT. RAILROAD TRACK - DAY

TOMMY "T-REX" REXFORD, 12ish and cocky, keys his walkie talkie at the base of Dead Man's Hill.

T-REX
 (into walkie talkie)
 Start the race, I'll be ready with the
 checkered flag when you guys get here.

T-Rex wears an ORANGE VEST and DWP HARD HAT. He leans on A PIPE WRENCH, trying to open A FIRE HYDRANT. ORANGE CONES and ROAD FLARES form a roadblock.

T-Rex gets frustrated and kicks the wrench. Water ERUPTS like a geyser.

AN ANGRY MOTORIST gets out of his truck.

ANGRY MOTORIST
 What seems to be the problem?

T-REX
 We got a little break in the water main.

ANGRY MOTORIST
 There's no break in the main. You just
 turned on that fire hydrant. I saw you
 do it.

T-REX
 What you saw, is me relieving some water
 pressure...
 (then)
 Now get back in your vehicle and let me
 do my job, fella.

T-Rex fires up A ROAD FLARE.

Something about the authority and confidence in T-Rex's voice causes the Angry Motorist to get back in his truck.

EXT. DEAD MAN'S HILL - DAY

Bones grabs the front of his sled.

BONES
 Start your engines. We're a go.

The contestants grab the fronts of their sleds, preparing to push them up to speed.

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CONTINUED:

Christine eyes THE SANTA BOBBLE-HEAD on her dash, gives it a flick.

Smitty is not a believer.

SMITTY

Aren't you a little old to believe in Santa Claus?

CHRISTINE

Hey, I'd rather believe in something than nothing at all.

SMITTY

I believe in a good sled, a strong blade and a tight turn.

CHRISTINE

You better believe in miracles, 'cause you're going to need one.

Bones calls out to the racers.

BONES

Ready.

CHRISTINE

Set.

SMITTY

Go.

And they're off. THE KIDS push their sleds to a full sprint before jumping into their cockpits. Smitty, Christine and Bones glide into the first turn, blades grabbing to hold the snow.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACK - DAY

A SIREN WOOPS!!!! SHERIFF JENKINS, the resident Ebenezer Scrooge, slides his SHERIFF'S TRUCK to a stop and lumbers out towards T-Rex. Picture the tireddest, meanest, crotchetyest, old, kid-hating coot you can. Now give him some power, a sheriff's badge and a bad attitude.

DEPUTY TUCKER follows him. Young, nice, a hometown boy.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Tommy Rexford!!!!

T-Rex sees Sheriff Jenkins and his face falls.

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CONTINUED:

T-REX

Not. Good.

SHERIFF JENKINS

You and your no-good friends better not be racing that mountain again.

T-REX

No, sir. Not us, sir...

SHERIFF JENKINS

Shut your pie hole. You're lying to me, boy. I hate liars.

T-REX

No, sir. Not me, sir...

(then)

Hiya, Tuck!

DEPUTY TUCKER

Hey, Tommy.

Sheriff Jenkins stomps back to his truck.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Don't let him out of your sight! I'm putting an end to this right now.

T-REX

C'mon, Sheriff Jenkins, tis the season!

SHERIFF JENKINS

It's just another cold winter to me.

Sheriff Jenkins jumps back in his truck and hits the gas. The Sheriff's truck bursts through the roadblock with his snow tires spitting up ice.

T-Rex turns to Deputy Tucker.

T-REX

He's got some anger-management issues.

DEPUTY TUCKER

Tell me about it.

EXT. DEAD MAN'S HILL - DAY

Smitty, Christine and Bones tear down the narrow sliver of frozen road, driving their bobsleds like berserkers.

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The rest of the sledders are bunched in behind them, slamming into each other, banging blades.

Smitty skids his bobsled into a hairpin turn.

Two kids can't handle the sharp turn and wipe out in A SNOWBANK.

Smitty slingshots out of the curve, taking the lead on Bones and Christine.

Christine zips out from behind Smitty and creeps up on his outside. Bones on his inside.

They crank their steering wheels hard right and get slung around the final curve, going at breakneck speeds.

Smitty glances back at Christine, smiles. Christine smiles back, then her eyes go wide.

CHRISTINE

Lookout!!

Christine skids her sled out. Bones veers off, sliding to a stop.

Smitty's head whips around to find...

SHERIFF JENKINS, glowering in the middle of the road. Arms crossed. Red faced.

Smitty cranks his steering wheel to avoid hitting Sheriff Jenkins. SNAP!!! His axle breaks and the steering wheel comes off in his hands.

SMITTY

Dagnabbit!!!

Smitty has no control and he's headed for a head-on with Sheriff Jenkins. Smitty plows into Sheriff Jenkins and takes him for a ride. Sheriff Jenkins clings to the hood of the sled.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Pull this thing over. Now.

Smitty hands Sheriff Jenkins the steering wheel.

SMITTY

Why don't you give it a try?

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CONTINUED:

Sheriff Jenkins tosses the steering wheel aside. They rip past T-REX and Deputy Tucker.

T-REX

This is going to end bad.

Smitty and his bobsled bounce over the tracks and splash through a puddle on their way down main street.

EXT. PINEVILLE, MAIN STREET - DAY

ON AMBER SMITH, Smitty's 16-year-old sister, drinking hot cider après ski with her ski-rat boyfriend, DEREK.

DEREK

Amber, isn't that your brother?

Amber turns as Smitty and Sheriff Jenkins go sledding by. They splash dirty slush on her white-on-white ski outfit.

AMBER

I'm going to kill him!!!

Smitty and Sheriff Jenkins run out of road. And, SMASH!! They hit a snowdrift and get launched. They fly through the town square and smash down in THE NATIVITY SCENE.

Smitty lands in a pile of hay. Sheriff Jenkins lands in BABY JESUS'S CRIB.

SHERIFF JENKINS

I hate kids.

And, THE MANGER crashes down on Sheriff Jenkins!!!

EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

A MINIVAN skids to a hard stop. The door flies open and out comes MRS. SMITH. She's not happy. Mrs. Smith moves up the path where A SALVATION-ARMY SANTA rings a bell.

SALVATION-ARMY SANTA

Merry Christmas, Mrs. Smith.

Salvation-Army Santa opens the door for her.

MRS. SMITH

It is for someone.

And she storms inside the Sheriff's Station.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Smitty sits in front of Sheriff Jenkins, who just stares him down. Deputy Tucker plays solitaire at his desk.

Mrs. Smith comes through the door.

MRS. SMITH

I'm sorry, Sheriff, I got here as fast as I could.

Smitty knows he's busted and can't look at his mother.

SHERIFF JENKINS

I don't know how you do it, ma'am. This boy's as looney as a rat in coffee can.

MRS. SMITH

Yes. He can be trying.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Put a leash on him before he gets himself killed.

Mrs. Smith smiles politely.

MRS. SMITH

(to Smitty)

Let's go.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

Mrs. Smiths' MINIVAN winds through the Aspens.

INT. MINIVAN - DAY

Smitty stares out the window, he's in big trouble and his mother's cold shoulder speaks volumes. Silence, then:

SMITTY

Mom...

MRS. SMITH

I don't want to hear it.

SMITTY

But...

MRS. SMITH

Not one word.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smitty looks out the window where A FATHER and SON can be seen carrying A CHRISTMAS TREE into A CABIN.

Smitty looks beyond the cabin to the snow-covered Rockies high above.

EXT. ICE CAVE - DAY

High up in the Rockies. Very remote. In the mouth of a cave, LINUS and ELMER, a pair of henchmen build a massive contraption aimed at the stars.

It's A SONIC CANNON with a swivel base and a ratchet arm. A WIND-GAUGE spins.

ELMER

This weather blows.

LINUS

Shuttup and hand me that wrench.

Elmer picks up a frozen wrench and gives it to Linus, who cranks on a bolt.

ELMER

I don't understand why we had to lug all this gear to the top of a mountain?!

LINUS

Elmer, we've been through this a million times...

(re: the sonic cannon)

The range of this contraption is only ten thousand feet. We need to get it to at least eighteen thousand feet for it to reach the target. Do the math?

Elmer starts counting on his fingers.

INT. ICE CAVE - DAY

A cave of shadows and icicles. AN OIL LAMP illuminates AN ANTIQUE COPPERPLATE MAP of the solar system.

A MAN works out complex calculations with a linear slide rule and types them into A SCIENTIFIC CALCULATOR. This is WALLY. Fastidious and brilliant, Wally's filled with a lifetime of disappointment and insecurity.

Wally crosschecks his calculus with A COMPASS.

EXT. ICE CAVE - DAY

Wally comes out the mouth of the cave.

WALLY

OK, boys, we're good to go.

Wally sits in A TURRET, of sorts, attached to THE SONIC CANNON. He sticks his eye in the eyepiece.

LINUS

What is our exact elevation?

Wally checks THE ALTIMETER on his wristwatch.

WALLY

9367 feet.

Linus works the keyboard of a computer system docked on the base station of the sonic cannon.

LINUS

What is our detonation height?

WALLY

18,876 feet.

Linus feeds the computer the information.

LINUS

Automation set.

Wally refers to his scientific calculator.

WALLY

Give me 37 clicks due east.

Elmer cranks the handle of a large gear, which swivels the base 37 clicks due east.

ELMER

Azimuth set.

WALLY

Now add 13 degrees altitude.

Elmer cranks another crank-handle, which ratchets the contraption 13 degrees vertically.

ELMER

Altitude set.

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Linus looks at Wally, nods.

LINUS

You sure we've got the right flight path,
Boss?

WALLY

I'm more than sure. He's flown the same
route forever.

Wally looks into the eyepiece at the cosmos above.

WALLY

(wicked giggle)
Santa Claus is coming to town.

Wally chuckles as WE DISSOLVE THROUGH TO...

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Not a single sign of the Christmas season in this house.

Mrs. Smith, Smitty and Amber sit around the dinner table.
The silence from the drive home has carried over.

Smitty just shoves his food around his plate.

SMITTY

Are we getting a tree this year?

Mrs. Smith doesn't look up from her plate.

Amber shoots Smitty a hard stare.

AMBER

Eat your food.

SMITTY

We don't have to buy one. I'll just cut
one down like dad and I used to do.

Silence all around. You can hear a pin drop. Then, Mrs.
Smith picks up her plate and moves into the kitchen.

AMBER

Nice going, jerk. You know Christmas is
hard for her. Why do you always have to
bring up dad?

Smitty follows his mom into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mrs. Smith scrapes her plate into the sink.

SMITTY

Sorry, Mom.

MRS. SMITH

You promised me.

SMITTY

I messed up. It won't happen again.

MRS. SMITH

Yes, it will.

Smitty smiles, knowing she's right.

SMITTY

Yeah, you're right.

Mrs. Smith nods.

MRS. SMITH

You're so much like him.

(tussles his hair)

Now clear your plate and get to bed.

Smitty nods and leaves. Mrs. Smith drops her plate into the dish water and begins to cry.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Smitty sits on his bed looking at a picture of his FATHER and himself. They stand on the top of a mountain holding SNOWBOARDS. Better days.

Amber noses in the door.

AMBER

You just ruined my Christmas. Mom's got to pick up double shifts to pay for the nativity scene you wrecked, and I'm stuck baby-sitting you for the holidays.

SMITTY

Sorry.

Amber SLAMS the door. Smitty grabs A BAG OF MARBLES and A SLINGSHOT off his desk and cracks his window.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Smitty climbs onto the sloped rooftop and sits. He loads a marble into his slingshot. Takes dead aim. Fires.

The marble rips through the air and PINGS off AN OLD STOP SIGN nailed to A TREE in the woods behind his house. The "O" in STOP is Smitty's bull's-eye, and it's been dented by a thousand marbles. Maybe more. This kid's good.

CHRISTINE

What did that sign ever do to you?!

Smitty looks over and sees Christine hanging out her open window in the house next door.

SMITTY

Hey.

CHRISTINE

What happened?

SMITTY

I won't be sledding for a while.

CHRISTINE

'Least you won.

SMITTY

It was a good race.

CHRISTINE'S DAD opens the door behind her.

CHRISTINE'S DAD

Christine, dinner's ready.

CHRISTINE

Be right down.

(back to Smitty)

Later gator.

Christine ducks back inside and disappears.

Smitty loads another marble into his slingshot and lets it fly. It hits the same dent as before. Bull's-eye!

EXT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Wally sits in the turret of THE SONIC CANNON. He looks through the eyepiece. At a distant point, deep in the night sky, A VAPOR TRAIL crosses the North Star.

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WALLY

He's always on time...
(then to Linus)
Initiate launch sequence.

Linus types the launch command into the keypad.

A DIGITAL CLOCK counts down, 10,9,8...

Wally puts on a pair of ULTRAVIOLET GOGGLES.

Elmer speaks an aside to Linus.

ELMER

How come we don't get goggles?!

6,5,4...

Wally pulls his gloves tighter on his hands.

WALLY

I've spent twenty years perfecting this
weapon for this one moment. We get one
shot. Cross your fingers, boys...

Linus and Elmer cross their fingers and back up.

3,2,1...

Wally grabs the turret and looks in the eyepiece.

THE SONIC CANNON retracts and...FIRES.

The recoil sends A PERCUSSIVE BLAST out the sides.

Linus and Elmer fly backwards, slamming to the ground.

A SONIC BOMB is launched into the sky.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Smitty bolts upright when he sees THE SONIC BOMB shoot
over the mountain and reel into the heavens.

EXT. EARTH'S ORBIT - NIGHT

THE SONIC BOMB gathers ice as it CRACKS the atmosphere
silhouetted against the deep glow of Earth.

It reaches it's apex, spins on its axis and...KA-BOOM!!!!

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CONTINUED:

A MASSIVE SHOCK WAVE RIPPLES from it's epicenter.

THE SHOCK WAVE drills THE SHOOTING STAR, knocking it off kilter and sending it spiraling towards Earth.

EXT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Wally takes off his goggles, relishing his work.

WALLY

Bull's-eye!

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Smitty looks around the neighborhood.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS POP, showering SPARKS.

Then, there's a deep rumble, growing in intensity.

A COSMIC STORM brews just over the mountaintop.

STREET LIGHTS flicker.

CAR ALARMS go off.

DOGS BARK.

INT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Christine and her mom and dad sit at the shaking table. Plates rattle. Lights flicker.

A Christmas ornament falls off the tree, breaks.

The family looks at each other, perplexed. Christine's dad grabs the rattling table.

EXT. EARTH'S ORBIT - NIGHT

THE SHOOTING STAR streaks past A WEATHER SATELLITE and A BOEING 767. City lights shimmer below.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Smitty is awestruck, as THE WEATHER-VANE starts to spin, faster and faster. THEN...

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THE SHOOTING STAR hurtles over the mountaintop at 30,000 mph. It screams right over Smitty.

Smitty is transfixed by the awesome sight.

THE SHOOTING STAR thunders right over his head, whipping his hair and blasting his face with a gust of hot wind.

Smitty watches THE SHOOTING STAR vaporize the treetops.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

THE SHOOTING STAR SNAPS massive pines as if they were toothpicks. Timber. Trees come crashing down.

THE SHOOTING STAR smashes down in A MEADOW. THE IMPACT plows a deep trench through the snow with awesome force.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Smitty watches A PLUME OF DEBRIS mushroom from deep in the woods behind his house.

SMITTY

Whoa!!!

Smitty slides down the shingles, drops in the snowdrift below and takes off running.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

Smitty runs through the trees and snow as fast as he can. He splashes through a shallow stream and jumps a fallen log. Then, he stumbles and falls, going head over heels down a slope and comes to rest at the bottom of A TRENCH.

Felled trees litter THE CRATER.

Smitty stands. He looks like an ant in an ashtray.

A CHORUS OF ENGINES WHINING breaks the stillness. Smitty turns, as THREE SNOWMOBILES slide to a stop at the top of the crater. THREE MEN dismount, casting long shadows. They run down the impact slope at Smitty.

Smitty ducks behind a splintered tree, hiding.

Wally, Linus and Elmer come through the swirling mist and stop within earshot of Smitty.

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CONTINUED:

ELMER

Nothing here, Boss.

LINUS

(sarcastic)

You're right, Elmer. Nothing but this itty-bitty divot in the ground.

ELMER

I can see that. I'm not blind.

LINUS

Yes. But you are stupid.

WALLY

Shuttup, you muppets!! Spread out. We need to find him.

LINUS

Sir, with all due respect, nobody could have lived through this.

WALLY

You have no idea who you're dealing with.

Movement in the trees.

Wally whips around. Calm. Tactical.

A SILHOUETTE disappears into the trees.

Wally pulls A BLOWGUN from THE QUIVER on his back. He takes A TRANQUILIZER DART from THE SCABBARD CRISSCROSSING his chest and loads it into the bore. He moves towards the treeline.

Linus and Elmer follow closely.

The trio move within inches of Smitty. Then Wally stops. A TWIG SNAPS. He puts the blowgun to his mouth.

WALLY

Show me your face.

A SNOW-BUNNY hops from behind the tree. Elmer chuckles.

ELMER

That's not Santa Claus.

Wally grabs Elmer's shirt collar. Pulls him in close. A brief glimpse at the inner Wally. All bully and blunder.

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WALLY

You are never, ever to use that name.
Understand?

ELMER

Y-y-yes...yessir.

Wally tosses Elmer aside.

WALLY

Now, he can only survive here for four
days, tops. Our job is to keep him on
the ground. That overblown elf had a
good run, but it's over...

(down and dark)

I don't want him spreading anymore of his
Yuletide cheer. Get it?

LINUS

Got it.

WALLY

Good. Now let's find those Reindeer.

Wally moves into the trees with Linus and Elmer.

SMITTY watches them go from his place of cover. Then, in
the ashes in front of him, the moonlight catches the edge
of something shiny.

Smitty brushes away the debris revealing...

ANTIQUÉ WIRE-RIMMED GLASSES!!!

A MAGICAL PULSE OF ENERGY orbits the rims of the glasses.
Smitty is captivated, strangely drawn to them. He picks
them up and starts to put them on. THEN...

He catches sight of something in his periphery. He turns
and there, at the edge of the trees, is AN ENORMOUS BUCK
breathing icy streams into the cold night air.

It's a 50-POINT REINDEER BUCK!

Smitty's heart skips a beat.

This is no ordinary buck. It's the Clydesdale of deer.

Smitty is drawn to the animal. He gets up slowly, takes
a step forward, his boots crunch in the snow. The buck
watches Smitty, strangely focused.

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Smitty gently inches closer. Closer. Almost there.

And it is now Smitty sees the headgear on the buck. The RED JEWELS across his forehead strap spell "CUPID."

Smitty's eyes go wide with excitement.

SMITTY
(softly)
Cupid?

Then, he reaches out. CUPID leans in. Smitty's hand gently brushes Cupid's nose. It's a magical moment.

THEN...THWACK!! A BLOWDART sticks in the trunk of the tree directly behind Cupid.

Cupid bolts into the woods, taking gargantuan strides. He leaves NO HOOFPRIINTS in his wake!

Smitty whips around, seeing Wally.

Wally hones in on Smitty.

WALLY
Let's you and I have a chat, boy.

Smitty's in no mood for a chat and takes off like a shot.

Wally, Linus and Elmer give chase.

Smitty runs, leaving the crater behind, his heart punches in his chest. He trips. Goes down, dropping THE ANTIQUE GLASSES.

FLASHLIGHTS quickly approach.

Smitty's caught!!

A MYSTERIOUS MAN darts from the shadows and sweeps Smitty upward. All of a sudden, Smitty finds himself reeling up into the tree, pine needles brushing his face.

AND, WHOOSH!!!! He's sitting next to A SNOWY OWL in the pine tree high above.

Smitty is panting, scared. The Mysterious Man sits next to him on the branch, still in shadow.

SMITTY
Who are you?

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The Mysterious Man puts a finger up, silencing Smitty.

Wally, Linus and Elmer stop right below them, BLOWGUNS at the ready.

They scan the dark with their flashlights.

Wally sees THE ANTIQUE WIRE-RIMMED GLASSES in the snow and picks them up. Studies them.

WALLY

Get your weapons ready. He's close.

Linus and Elmer put their blowguns to their lips.

A PINECONE FALLS and smacks Elmer in the head. And Elmer accidentally blows into his blowgun.

A BLOWDART sticks Linus in the fat of his butt-cheek.

LINUS

What the hell?! You shot me...

Linus's eyes roll back and he face-plants in the snow.

ELMER

Wow, these darts have some kick!

Another PINECONE falls.

Wally whips his flashlight into the tree above.

The Mysterious Man grabs Smitty and jumps into another tree.

Wally's light falls on THE SNOWY OWL, who blinks annoyed.

WALLY

Let the boy go. We've got a bigger fish to fry.

Wally leaves with Elmer dragging Linus after him.

Then, THE MYSTERIOUS MAN grabs Smitty and jumps. It's a long way down. The snow rushes up fast.

The Mysterious Man lands, so softly as to not even make a sound or leave a footprint. He sets Smitty down.

MYSTERIOUS MAN

Get yourself home, Smitty. Your mother worries.

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CONTINUED:

The Mysterious Man's VOICE is like warm maple syrup.

SMITTY

How do you know my name?

Smitty gets a smile for his answer. Then a chuckle.

And, WHAMMO! Smitty is lit up with a XENON SEARCH LIGHT.

SHERIFF JENKINS gets out of his truck, bellicose and big.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Don't you run, Smitty.

(busted)

I'd say you're having one helluva day!!

Smitty turns back, and the Mysterious Man is gone.

EXT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Smitty with Mrs. Smith and Sheriff Jenkins.

MRS. SMITH

Thank you, Sheriff. I don't know what's gotten into him.

SMITTY

I know what I saw, Mom. Something really weird happened out there tonight.

SHERIFF JENKINS

You're right. A meteor crashed.

SMITTY

It wasn't a meteor!!!

SHERIFF JENKINS

What was it then? A flying saucer?

(condescending)

I'm just going by what the scientists at the National Weather Service told me.

SMITTY

What about the men who chased me?

SHERIFF JENKINS

Oh, you mean, the little green ones with the big black eyes?!

MRS. SMITH

Smitty, go upstairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smitty goes upstairs.

SHERIFF JENKINS

You don't mind me saying so, ma'am, that boy needs a strap taken to him.

MRS. SMITH

He lost his father on Christmas Eve three years ago. This time of year is tough on him.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Yeah, that's hard luck. But you can only use that excuse for so long, ma'am.

Sheriff Jenkins tips his hat and moves to his truck.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

Deep in the woods. Thousands of CANDY-CANES are strung from the branches, lilting in the night breeze. It's a surreal image. A CANDY CANE FOREST.

We hear the CRUNCHING of snow.

And out of the woods, A MASSIVE REINDEER emerges sniffing at the air. Then another. And two more. Their jeweled forehead straps spell out:

PRANCER, VIXEN, COMET and DONNER

THE REINDEER munch on the candy canes. A meal fit for Santa's Reindeer. THWAP! VIXEN is hit in the back flank with A BLOWDART! Another THWAP!!! COMET is hit!! Then, DONNER & PRANCER. They're immediately dosed and go to their knees before crumbling into the snow, unconscious.

Wally emerges from trees with his blowgun with Linus and Elmer flanking him.

LINUS

Nice shooting, Boss.

Wally looks down on the unconscious Reindeer and...

WALLY

(fantastic)
Fandabbydosie!!!

Off Wally's smile.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Smitty's asleep. His door is flung open by Amber.

AMBER

Smitty, Mom wants you downstairs now.

Smitty reluctantly climbs out of bed.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Smitty comes down the staircase. His mother waits at the bottom dressed for work, hands on hips.

SMITTY

Hey, Mom.

MRS. SMITH

Don't "Hey Mom" me!

(sharp)

Where did this tree come from?

Mrs. Smith crosses the living room to A FRESHLY-CUT TREE standing in the corner. It's perfect in shape and size.

SMITTY

No idea.

MRS. SMITH

Don't lie to me.

SMITTY

I'm not lying.

MRS. SMITH

I want you to return this to the lot you stole it from.

SMITTY

I didn't steal it.

KNOCK, KNOCK!!! Mrs. Smith crosses to the front door and flings it open. DR. MICHAEL CHALMERS stands there, ready with a smile.

He's the epitome of a small-town DOCTOR. Easy and open.

DR. CHALMERS

Hey, Sarah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SMITH
Doctor Chalmers?

DR. CHALMERS
We were supposed to carpool. Did I get it wrong?

MRS. SMITH
No, I'm sorry. I'm having one of those mornings. Give me a minute.

Mrs. Smith goes into the bathroom and primps herself.

DR. CHALMERS
Hey, Smitty.

Smitty shrugs him off, indifferent.

SMITTY
Hey.

Dr. Chalmers sees the fresh-cut tree and tries to lighten the mood.

DR. CHALMERS
Great tree.

Smitty gives no answer.

Mrs. Smith comes out of the bathroom and grabs her purse.

MRS. SMITH
We'll talk about this later.

EXT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Dr. Chalmers and Mrs. Smith move down the path.

DR. CHALMERS
He's a good kid.

MRS. SMITH
Yeah, when he's not driving me crazy.

DR. CHALMERS
He needs a man around the house.
(awkward silence)
Don't you think it's time we tell them we're more than carpoolers?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SMITH

I don't think Smitty's ready.

DR. CHALMERS

(gently)

Maybe you're the one that's not ready.

Mrs. Smith is stung, his words ring true. Dr. Chalmers smiles, opens the car door for her.

INT. SMITTY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Smitty sits at the kitchen table, shaking FROSTED FLAKES into his bowl. He douses it with milk. A HAND heaps a spoonful of sugar onto his Frosted Flakes.

MYSTERIOUS MAN

Say when.

Smitty FREEZES. His eyes follow the hand to the face of the Mysterious Man from the woods last night.

This is SANTA CLAUS, of course. But he is different than we have imagined all these years. Younger, leaner, not so jolly and bright. He's got a bit more edge, donning a red waffle shirt and dark-blue denim overalls. He's a dirty mess. Side burns. Short beard. But the twinkle is there and the unmistakable "joie-de-vivre."

SANTA

Don't forget to eat your sugar. It'll make you grow up big and strong.

Smitty pushes away from the table, scared.

SMITTY

It's y-y-you?

Santa drops a nod.

SANTA

Yes. It's me.

SMITTY

From last night?

Santa touches his nose as if he's playing charades.

SANTA

Not much gets by you, Smitty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Santa takes Smitty's Frosted Flakes and eats them.

SMITTY

You can't be him. I don't even believe
in you. There's no Santa Claus!

Santa just smiles, nods to THE TREE across the room.

SANTA

You like the tree?

SMITTY

Yes. I mean, no. I got in big trouble
for that tree.

SANTA

Let's face it, Smitty. You were in big
trouble before the tree got in the door.

Smitty is so blown away, trying to make sense of it all.

SMITTY

You're not old. And you're not fat.

SANTA

It's not Christmas yet. I pack on the
pounds right at the holiday.

SMITTY

What're you doing here?

SANTA

I need your help.

Amber can be heard approaching the kitchen.

AMBER

Smitty, where are you?

SMITTY

Hurry, hide! In here.

Smitty opens the pantry door. Santa goes inside as Amber
enters the kitchen wearing A SKI OUTFIT.

AMBER

Who are you talking to?

SMITTY

No one. I'm all alone in here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBER

I'm going skiing with my friends. Don't leave the house.

SMITTY

Okeydokey.

AMBER

What's up with you? You're acting weird?

SMITTY

I'm good.

Santa peeks out of the pantry and grabs the cereal bowl, while Amber's back is turned.

AMBER

Clean the dishes and put the milk away.
And stop talking to your cereal bowl.

And Amber leaves. When the coast is clear, Smitty flings open the pantry to find Santa dunking OREO COOKIES in the left-over milk in his cereal bowl.

SMITTY

How am I supposed to help you?

EXT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - DAY

ON CHRISTINE, opening the door, surprised to see Smitty.

SMITTY

Get the gang together. Meet back at the Old Saw Mill. Twenty minutes.

And Smitty's off in a flash.

EXT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

An abandoned saw mill deep in the woods.

INT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

A cavernous and condemned space with cob-webbed logging equipment and scrap lumber. T-Rex, Bones and Christine look at Smitty like he's gone crazy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

Let me see if I can wrap my head around this. You're saying that meteor that hit the other night wasn't a meteor. It was Santa's Sleigh?! Santa crashed down, here, in Pineville?!

(Smitty nods)

And you want us to help re-build Santa's Sleigh, which is powered by his eight reindeer, which, and correct me if I got this part wrong, ejected during the crash and are lost somewhere in the woods. And, you were asked to do this by Santa himself over a bowl of Frosted Flakes...

SMITTY

Are you in?

T-Rex looks at Bones and Christine for help.

T-REX

Anybody else have a problem with this?

BONES

It does sound a little sketchy.

CHRISTINE

You don't even believe in Santa!

SMITTY

I do now.

CHRISTINE

Cool. I'm in.

T-REX

O-kay, you two have officially lost it.

SMITTY

I don't expect you to believe me...

(milking the moment)

...I expect you to believe him.

A FIGURE slowly emerges from the darkness. SANTA steps into a pool light. He's not quite what they expected.

T-REX

You can't be serious.

Bones and T-Rex circle Santa, suspiciously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BONES

OK, first of all, if this dude is Santa, he needs a hot bath and his nose hair trimmed. Then he needs to double check his calendar, 'cause it's out of whack.

(gets right in Santa's face)

You're a week early! Explain that one or fess up.

SANTA

I made my list. I was checking it twice.

T-REX

How sweet?! Were you going to find out who's been naughty or nice?

SANTA

Yeah, it's a tradition.

CHRISTINE

Makes sense. It's called a test run, you child.

BONES

If you're Santa, why do need us to build you a sleigh?! Build it yourself.

SANTA

I make toys. Not sleighs.

T-REX

This isn't Santa Claus. A, he's not even a good fake. B, he looks like a bum. And C, this isn't Santa Claus!!

(beat)

I need to have a talk with my buddies. Can you give me a sec?

SANTA

Take your time.

T-Rex huddles up with Smitty, Christine and Bones.

T-REX

Fellas, I'm sorry. But I'm not getting the Santa vibe from this kook. Isn't there a chance you've been snowed? I'm pretty sure I've seen this guy holding a "will-work-for-beer" sign at Circle K.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BONES

I'm with T-Rex on this one, Smitty. And for the record, I think this faker needs a big-time beat down for taking advantage of your good nature.

Smitty looks back at Santa, who winks. It's only now Smitty realizes they're all being LEVITATED 20-FEET off the ground. Smitty turns back to his boys, cool.

SMITTY

You're going to have to trust me on this one. He's the real deal.

CHRISTINE

I don't even care if he's real, I'm in.

BONES

You're such a chick.

T-REX

Sorry, Smitty. Can't do it. I'm out.

And T-Rex drops like a stone, he lets out A SCREAM before landing in a pile of sawdust 20-feet below. They all look down and realize they are LEVITATING!!!!

BONES

No way!!!

SMITTY

I told you to trust me.

Bones looks at Santa on the ground below, awestruck.

BONES

It's really him!?

(Smitty nods)

Do you have an idea what this means? We can ask for whatever we want.

And Bones drops like a stone, landing next to T-Rex.

SANTA

It's not about what you get, it's about what you've got.

With a slight twist of the hand, Santa brings Smitty and Christine back to earth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BONES

Can I take my answer back? I want in.
Sorry, Santa.

T-REX

Yeah, me too...
(to Santa)
You fooled me, big guy. You better savor
the flavor, it doesn't happen much.

CHRISTINE

Wait!! Christmas is in four days.
(to Santa)
We only have four days?!

SANTA

No, we have three days. I need to be in
the air by midnight on Christmas Eve.

T-REX

What happens if we miss by a little?

SMITTY

Then Christmas is canceled.

BONES

You can't cancel Christmas. Can you?!

SANTA

According to the Laws of Christmas, Santa
must set out to deliver gifts by midnight
on Christmas Eve, at the latest. If I
fail to do so, I'll be replaced.

SMITTY

Is there more than one Santa?

SANTA

No, but my heir would kill for the job.

Bones looks at his watch.

BONES

I have to be home for dinner, but I can
draw up the blueprints tonight.

CHRISTINE

Yeah, and I'll have my dad help me work
out the aerodynamics.

SANTA

What do you do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

Me?!

(Santa nods)

I'm the heart of this crew, I make things happen. I do things. I'm a doer.

Off T-Rex's smile.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

Smitty and the gang walk and talk through the woods.

BONES

You have no idea where your Reindeer are?

SANTA

I released them just before impact. I'm a bit fuzzy after that. They would have gone into the woods.

BONES

Great, that narrows it down to 376 square miles of some of the roughest terrain in the world.

CHRISTINE

Don't worry, Santa. You've got us.

T-REX

Yeah, we're like your Elves?

BONES

You kind of look like an elf.

(razzing him)

Only smaller.

T-REX

Ha-ha! If I wanted to hear a butt-hole talk, I'd fart.

BONES

Nice pop-off, bro.

CHRISTINE

(sarcastic)

Yeah, it's a real rib tickler.

Smitty notices Santa leaves NO FOOTPRINTS as he walks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

Whoa, you're not leaving any footprints.
 (to the gang)
 Check it out, guys. He's like a ghost.

Everyone looks back, NO FOOTPRINTS where Santa walked.

T-REX

Dude, that's why I don't hear you on my
 roof.

SANTA

What can I say, I'm light on my feet.

Christine powders T-Rex in the head with a snowball.

CHRISTINE

Snowball fight!

T-Rex balls up some snow and fires back. Bones tackles
 T-Rex into a snowdrift. They pop up, slinging snow.

Smitty and Santa quickly sculpt some snowballs.

Christine hurls a snowball at Santa.

CHRISTINE

This is so cool!
 (a smile)
 I'm having a snowball fight with Santa
 Claus.

Christine whirls on Santa and drills him with a snowball
 point-blank. Santa fires back a ice storm of his own.

Christine laughs and runs up the trail.

Bones and T-Rex rise from behind the snowdrift and fire
 as many snowballs as they can.

Smitty and Santa take cover behind a fallen tree.

Smitty slings a snowball, drilling Bones.

SMITTY

We're under fire! I'm going in.

SANTA

I got you covered.

Smitty rises, cocks his arm back and WHAP!!! He's hit by
 a dozen snowballs. Smitty drops back down beside Santa.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

That's what you call covering?!

SANTA

No, this is!

Santa takes a deep breath and BLOWS UP A SNOWSTORM, unleashing A BLIZZARD on Bones and T-Rex!

A WALL OF SNOW buries them up to their eyeballs!

Only the OUTLINES of their bodies can be seen.

TWO SETS OF EYES BLINK!

T-REX

Uncle.

Christine runs up.

CHRISTINE

Hey, guys, I think I found something.

Christine leads Santa, Bones and Smitty to an outcropping of rock.

From this vantage point, they can see A COLORFUL SNOWMAN sitting in the clearing far below. He has a carrot nose and button eyes.

THE SNOWMAN IS COLORED CHERRY-RED!

T-Rex runs up with A BIG EMPTY BOTTLE OF CHERRY SNOW-CONE FLAVORING.

T-REX

I found this just off the trail back there.

Then, DANCER, BLITZEN and DASHER run out of the treeline and stop right in front of the snowman.

The kids are overwhelmed at the sight of these massive and beautiful reindeer.

CHRISTINE

They're alive.

Dancer, Blitzen and Dasher circle the snowman, dwarfing it in size. Like Santa, they leave NO FOOTPRINTS. They bite into the cherry-flavored ice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

And huge!!!

Bones advances from their place of cover.

BONES

Let's go get 'em.

Santa holds Bones back.

SANTA

Not so fast, skinny guy. I got this.

Santa looks down at Dancer, Blitzen and Dasher and softly begins whistling "JINGLE BELLS."

The Reindeers stop eating. Their ears perk up and their heads turn, as they recognize the call from their master. They take a step in unison.

And, WHAMMO!! A MASSIVE NET hidden under the snow whisks Dancer, Blitzen and Dasher up. The animals fight the net, but this only entangles them further.

A CHORUS OF ENGINES WHINING can be heard.

Wally, Linus and Elmer sweep over a ridge-line on some hopped-up SNOWMOBILES.

Elmer fish-tails out of control and slides right into the cherry snowman. He flies over his handlebars and smacks face first into A TREE TRUNK.

Elmer falls, cracking his FAMILY-JEWELS on A STUMP below.

BONES

Who are these lemons?

Wally and Linus dismount.

SMITTY

They're the ones who chased me through the woods the night you crashed.

Santa sees Wally, a glint of recognition flashes.

DOWN BELOW, Wally gets a strange feeling and pulls THE BLOWGUN out of A QUIVER on his back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALLY

He's here. I can feel him.
 (searching the woods)
 Where are you, Claus?

Wally puts THE BLOWGUN to his mouth ready to fire. He
 SCANS rocks above.

IN THE ROCKS ABOVE, Santa ducks out of sight.

T-REX

We need to do something!

BONES

Yeah, can't you just say Abracadabra and
 get the Reindeer out of there?

SANTA

They're too far away.

SMITTY

So, let's move closer.

SANTA

That's exactly what he wants. We'll get
 them another time. Another way...
 (then)
 Let's get you home now.

And they move back up the slope and into the trees.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Smitty is at the dinner table with his mother, Amber and
 Dr. Chalmers, who makes nervous small talk.

DR. CHALMERS

How was your day, Smitty?

SMITTY

Same old, same old. How about you?

DR. CHALMERS

Same old, same old.

AMBER

Must be cool saving people's lives.

DR. CHALMERS

It has its days.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, Smitty's attention is captured by SANTA, who walks down the staircase and into the kitchen. Mrs. Smith, Dr. Chalmers and Amber are so busy eating, they don't notice.

SMITTY

Can I be excused?

MRS. SMITH

We have a guest.

SMITTY

Is that a no?

MRS. SMITH

(gently)

Yes.

Dr. Chalmers eyes the Christmas tree across the room.

DR. CHALMERS

When are you going to decorate that tree?

AMBER

You mean the stolen tree?

SMITTY

I didn't steal it.

(covering)

It was cut down.

DR. CHALMERS

Stolen, cut down, whatever. Let's stick a star on top and string up some popcorn. What do you think?

SANTA walks out of the kitchen carrying a plateful of cookies, while chugging from a carton of milk. It's now we notice, he doesn't make a sound. No footsteps. Quiet as a church mouse. He winks at Smitty and goes upstairs. Again, no one looks up from their food.

MRS. SMITH

Not tonight. I've got to get back to the hospital. I picked up the late shift.

DR. CHALMERS

I'm free tomorrow night.

(then)

If it's all right with Smitty and Amber.

Mrs. Smith looks at Smitty and Amber.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SMITH
What do you guys think?

Smitty shrugs his approval.

SMITTY
I can do that.

DR. CHALMERS
I'll bring the eggnog.

MRS. SMITH
I'll pop the popcorn.

Amber rolls her eyes and gets up from the table.

AMBER
I'll make other plans.

Dr. Chalmers gives Smitty a wink.

INT. SMITTY'S ATTIC - NIGHT

A low-rise, A-frame ceiling. Exposed studs. A circular window. Tons of keepsakes packed away. Shelves bulging. Old mementos.

Christmas has been boxed up and put away at this house.

Smitty opens the door and climbs the steps to find Santa sitting on the attic bed eating cookies.

SMITTY
Are you crazy?!

Santa holds up a cookie.

SANTA
No, this is crazy. Who eats a low-fat, sugar-free cookie?!

SMITTY
My sister.

Santa pops the last cookie in his mouth.

SANTA
When in Rome.

SMITTY
Are you going to be OK in here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANTA

It's better than the inside of a chimney.

SMITTY

I sleep up here sometimes. When I want to get away from everyone and think.

SANTA

It's a good spot.

Smitty starts going through a box of stuff. A big TEDDY BEAR, strings of CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, A BASEBALL GLOVE.

Smitty tosses the ball into the glove.

SMITTY

Took me a forever to work this glove in. Dad and I used to play catch almost every night in the backyard.

(then)

Is that man going to hurt your Reindeer?

SANTA

No. He wants to hurt me.

SMITTY

Why?

SANTA

Some people lose their faith and when they do, they lose their way.

Smitty stops in front of AN OLD SANTA SUIT draped over A SUIT FORM. He pats the dust off.

SMITTY

My dad used to wear this every Christmas. It was his favorite holiday.

Santa knows this is a deep wound.

SANTA

Your father didn't want to leave you. It was an accident. There's nothing anybody could have done about it.

Smitty takes these words in, then:

SMITTY

I better get to bed. Big day tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Smitty leaves. Santa watches him go, then looks down at his SHAKING HAND. He clenches it to stop the spasm, and we DISSOLVE THROUGH TO...

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Smitty is woken from a sound sleep by NOISES coming from outside. He slips out of bed and out the door.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Smitty cracks the front door and 10,000 watts of colored light hits him in the face. The tree in the yard is lit up like a Christmas tree.

EXT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Smitty moves down the path, looking at the tree. Then, behind him, the entire house BLINKS to life. Thousands and thousands of multi-colored Christmas lights are strung on the eaves. It's an awesome sight.

SHERIFF FROST'S TRUCK turns the corner and slides to a stop. Sheriff Jenkins hops out, hand on baton.

SHERIFF JENKINS

What the hell are you doing?

SMITTY

(covering)

I'm just hanging some lights.

SHERIFF JENKINS

At 4 AM? Without a ladder? Barefooted?
In your jammies?

Smitty looks down at his bare feet, smiles.

SMITTY

I got inspired.

SHERIFF JENKINS

I'm onto you, Smitty. Now get to bed!!!

Sheriff Jenkins goes back to his truck and drives off.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Smitty is dressed. He reaches into his closet, and from the top shelf, he pulls down AN OLD COFFEE CAN. Inside, his life savings. Twenty-nine bucks. In loose change.

Smitty dumps the money into his BACKPACK.

INT. SMITTY'S ATTIC - DAY

Smitty climbs into the attic. Santa sleeps on the attic bed. He SNORES. Heavily. Smitty smiles and leaves.

INT. CHRISTINE'S BEDROOM - DAY

ON A PINK PIGGIE BANK, which Christine stares at. Smitty is by her side, helping her work through this.

SMITTY

Did you ever think she was given to you for some greater purpose? Maybe she was sent here so one day she could help save Christmas. This is her destiny!

CHRISTINE

Get real, Smitty!!! It's a piggy bank.
(then to the piggy bank)
Goodbye, Charlotte.

SMITTY

We need this money. We can't build Santa's Sleigh without supplies.

And Christine hands the piggy bank to Smitty.

CHRISTINE

I can't watch this.

And Christine leaves Smitty with A HAMMER.

INT. SMITTY'S ATTIC - DAY

Santa pulls on THE SANTA SUIT off the suit form and checks himself in the standing mirror.

Perfect fit.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Santa moves down the staircase. He stops on the landing. Checks both ways. Then, he moves towards the kitchen and steps on A TV REMOTE. THE TV snaps to life, blasting.

Santa grabs the remote off the floor, fumbles to lower the volume, but he turns it up in his panic.

AMBER'S VOICE

Smitty, is that you? Turn it down.

Santa is startled, but can't take his eyes off the TV, as a cheesy commercial for the Pineville Mall plays.

MALL SANTA

(on the TV)

Hey, kids! Do you have a list? Have you checked it twice? Well, here's your chance to come down to Santa's Village at the Pineville Mall and make a very, merry Christmas wish. I'll be there today, all day!! I "ho-ho-hope" to see you there!!!

Amber comes running down the staircase in her pajamas.

AMBER

Smitty? Turn it down, Mom's sleeping.

Amber comes into the living room. Empty. She hears A NOISE and spins to see the front door closing.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

A beautiful winter morning. Smitty, Christine, Bones and T-Rex crest the hill. They're on a mission, fitted with BACKPACKS. They stop on a hilltop and look down at THE PINEVILLE MALL, which is brightly lit for the season.

SMITTY

We all know what to do, right?

CHRISTINE

Guys, we're shopping for supplies, not going to war.

Smitty and the gang move down the hill and into the mall. As they do, we reveal one of SANTA'S REINDEER, moving out of the trees and watching after them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His jeweled forehead strap tells us it's CUPID. Cupid recognizes Smitty and quietly follows them to the mall.

EXT. PINEVILLE MALL - DAY

Smitty and the gang walk through the automatic doors. A beat later, CUPID approaches the doors. He puts his hoof on the electronic sensor. The doors open.

INT. PINEVILLE MALL - DAY

Busy day at the mall. The shops are packed with KIDS and PARENTS. Smitty and the gang walk past a sign reading:

"MEET SANTA TODAY!!!!"

INT. PINEVILLE MALL, VICTORIA'S SECRET - DAY

A DISPLAY featuring A MANNEQUIN in a red bra and pantie set. She's wearing A SANTA HAT. SANTA looks through the window at the mannequin. His beard is longer and whiter.

A VICTORIA'S SECRET SALESWOMAN approaches him.

SALESWOMAN

Hello! Shopping for Mrs. Claus?

SANTA

Oh-no. Mrs. Claus would never wear such a thing...

THE MALL MANAGER, hustles over.

MALL MANAGER

What're you doing?!!! I've got a line of brats fifty deep. Now get your butt over to Santa's Village before we have a riot on our hands...

The Mall Manager pulls Santa towards SANTA'S VILLAGE. Mall style. Fake snow. Fake presents. A fake sleigh and eight plastic reindeer.

A LINE OF CHILDREN forms at A LARGE RED CHAIR.

INT. HUNTING & HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Smitty and Christine moved down an aisle, grabbing boxes of nails, screws, a hammer, some wood glue. They place the items in a shopping basket. Smitty is stopped dead in his tracks when he hears Wally.

WALLY
S'cuse me, sir.

Smitty looks up and sees Wally approaching.

SMITTY
Uh-oh.

Wally points at Smitty.

WALLY
Yes, yes, I'm talking to you.

Smitty lowers his eyes, turns towards the sales rack with Christine. Wally passes by them and stops at A CLERK.

SALES CLERK
How can I help you?

WALLY
Do you have tranquilizer darts?

SALES CLERK
Right this way, sir.

Smitty watches Wally move to another aisle.

INT. PINEVILLE MALL - DAY

Santa sits on his chair working his way through a line of KIDS, sending them away with a smile until A SNOT-NOSED PUNK filled with too many sodas, jumps on his knee.

SNOT-NOSED PUNK
You don't look like Santa.

SANTA
If you've never seen me before, how do you know what I look like?

SNOT-NOSED PUNK
I've seen pictures.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, A DRUNK SANTA pushes himself through the line of kids. He's staggering, drunk off his rocker. Fake beard askew. A FLASK stuffed in his belt. He looks more like a circus freak than Santa Claus.

DRUNK SANTA

Who the hell are you? This is my job.

SANTA

Relax, Marv. Think about the kids.

Drunk Santa does a double take, burps a little bile.

DRUNK SANTA

How do you know my name? Are you from the IRS?!

SANTA

Are you drunk?

DRUNK SANTA

What're you, my wife?

Drunk Santa throws a drunken punch, which misses badly.

INT. PINEVILLE MALL, SECURITY KIOSK - DAY

A MALL COP sits behind the security kiosk, eating DONUTS and reading a COMIC BOOK.

CUPID nips at the Mall Cop's hand and munches down on the jelly-filled treat. The Mall Cop reels back, freaked.

MALL COP

(into walkie-talkie)

Code red, code red!!!

INT. HUNTING & HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Smitty pays for his goods while keeping his third eye on Wally, who is in the line over buying tranquilizer darts.

YELLS and SCREAMS come from the mall.

THE MALL COP runs past. CUPID chases after him.

Smitty and Christine look at each other.

Wally has also seen the scene, eyebrow raised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

Let's go!!!

Smitty grabs his bag, and they bolt from the store.

Wally throws some cash down and gives chase.

INT. PINEVILLE MALL, SANTA'S VILLAGE - DAY

The Drunk Santa is throwing wild punches at Santa. Each time he throws a punch, Santa bobs-and-weaves with lightning speed and agility. PARENTS hide their kids who are SCREAMING and CRYING at the sight of the SANTA FIGHT!

THE SNOT-NOSED PUNK kicks Drunk Santa in the leg.

SNOT-NOSED PUNK

Leave him alone, faker!!!

Drunk Santa is hobbled, but mad as hell.

INT. PINEVILLE MALL, SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY

T-Rex and Bones make their way out of the store carrying used SNOWBOARDS. PEOPLE gather at the railing, watching THE SANTA FIGHT below.

T-Rex and Bones join the crowd at the railing.

DOWN BELOW, Drunk Santa throws several punches, each one whiffing his target.

DRUNK SANTA

What're you, a freaking ghost?!!

Drunk Santa rushes real Santa, trying to tackle him, but instead he goes headfirst into the WRAPPED BOXES used to decorate the village.

BONES

Santa down!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MALL, T-Rex and Bones see CUPID chasing the Mall Cop, followed by Smitty and Christine.

Wally knocks over SHOPPERS, trying to gain ground.

EXT. PINEVILLE MALL - DAY

Sheriff Jenkins's truck speeds into the parking lot and skids to a hard stop at the mall entrance.

Sheriff Jenkins and Deputy Tucker hop out.

Deputy Tucker grabs AN ANIMAL CATCH POLE from the back.

INT. PINEVILLE MALL, SANTA'S VILLAGE - DAY

Drunk Santa grabs A GIANT CANDY CANE off the display and advances on Santa, swinging it like the Reaper's scythe. Santa ducks and dodges. Drunk Santa knocks the head off a plastic elf. A plastic reindeer loses his antlers.

KIDS scream and run to their mothers.

On the floor above, CUPID sees Santa under attack below. In a flash, he jumps over the railing and lands between the two Santas with a THUD!

Drunk Santa stops in his tracks. *Ohhhs!!! Ahhhs!!!*

Sheriff Jenkins runs up, as CUPID faces off with Drunk Santa. He turns to the Deputy Tucker.

SHERIFF JENKINS

(re: animal catch pole)

You better be packing something bigger than that, Tuck.

Deputy Tucker does an about face.

Smitty and Christine run down the stairs with Wally right on their tail. They dart into the mob.

Wally pushes his way through the crowd and finally comes face-to-face with Santa.

CUPID lowers his horns towards Wally and scratches at the tiled floor.

Everything has coalesced, leading to this moment...

WALLY

Hello, Claus...

(wicked smile)

Remember me?

Santa locks eyes with Wally.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANTA

You.

WALLY

Yes. Me.

The Snot-Nosed Punk tugs on his mother's sleeve.

SNOTTY KID

Mom, look!

The Snot-Nosed Punk points. Everybody turns and sees...

BONES AND T-REX riding their SNOWBOARDS down the moving rails of the escalator. They fly off the end.

T-Rex WHOOSHES through the air and flattens DRUNK SANTA!!

Bones smacks into Wally, knocking him for a loop.

Wally reels headfirst into Santa's Sleigh and goes down.

T-Rex and Bones skid to a stop on the fake snow.

The KIDS and PARENTS CHEER.

Smitty rushes up to Bones and T-Rex.

SMITTY

You get Cupid. We'll take care of Santa.
Old Saw Mill. Now!!!

Smitty and Christine whisk Santa into the crowd.

Bones and T-Rex approach CUPID, who's sniffing one of the plastic reindeer. It's the plastic CUPID, of course.

T-REX

Hey, Cupid, I don't mean to break up this
little love-fest, but we gotta skedaddle.

Cupid looks at T-Rex, sizing him up. Then:

SHERIFF JENKINS

Step away from the animal!!!!

T-Rex turns and sees Sheriff Jenkins standing behind with DEPUTY TUCKER, who aims A NET GUN.

T-Rex steps in front of Cupid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX
Go ahead, Tuck. Shoot!

DEPUTY TUCKER
Don't do this, Tommy.

Bones grabs Cupid's antlers and climbs on his back.

BONES
Yo, T-Rex, I've got a better idea.

T-Rex grabs Bones's hand and climbs aboard.

T-REX
Adios, muchachos.

SHERIFF JENKINS
Let 'em have it!!!

Deputy Tucker fires his NET GUN.

A NET EXPLODES from the barrel. FANS OUT! Too late.

Cupid has leapt the awestruck crowd with T-Rex and Bones riding bareback. He bounds gracefully from the mall.

Wally pulls himself out of the sleigh and staggers to his feet. He sees Santa, back to him, pulling himself up. Wally rushes over, grabs Santa and spins him.

WALLY
Gotcha!

But it's DRUNK SANTA, who promptly BURPS in his face.

INT. 18-WHEEL RIG - DAY

A BRAWNY TRUCKER barrels down the highway, trying to stay awake. He pours some coffee in his THERMOS CUP and looks out the window at T-Rex and Bones, who are passing him in the fast lane on CUPID'S BACK. T-Rex flashes a smile.

The trucker does a double take, rubs his eyes. He checks his speedometer, 65,66,67. He stamps on the accelerator, trying to keep up, but Cupid is fast.

T-Rex gives the trucker the universal sign to HONK!! The trucker blows his AIR-HORN.

T-Rex gives a "thumbs up," as Cupid jumps over the center divider, hops a couple cars and darts into the woods.

INT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

Santa feeds Cupid A CANDY CANE, who wolfs it down.

Bones, T-Rex and Christine tack THE BLUEPRINTS of Santa's Sleigh to the wall. The drawings are clearly done with a child's hand, but they're very good.

CHRISTINE

Voila!

SANTA

It looks good on paper. Will it fly?

BONES

If we build it to my specs, it'll fly.

CHRISTINE

OK, we'll start with the chassis. Let's set the blocks and measure the sled-span. And remember, boys...

SMITTY, T-REX & BONES

Measure twice, cut once.

CHRISTINE

I've trained them well.

(to the boys)

Easy on the nails. It's got to be light to take flight. Every ounce counts...

Bones flexes his peanut-sized biceps.

BONES

Don't I know it.

Christine, Bones and T-Rex start setting blocks. Smitty goes to Santa, something's on his mind.

SMITTY

Who was that man at the mall?

Santa pauses, looks at Smitty. He can't lie.

SANTA

His name is Wally. But he wasn't always this man. Once upon a time, we were very close. Or so I thought...

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Elves work hard to make the Christmas deadline. TOYS are hand-wrapped and put on a conveyor belt, which drops them inside SANTA'S OVERSTUFFED BAG.

The elfin foreman, WALLY THE ELF, a pint-sized version of Wally, moves down the assembly-line, cracking the whip, buzzed on sugar or something worse, power.

WALLY THE ELF

Watch your folds...

(power mad)

Too much tape, more curl on the ribbons, straight cuts and happy as you go. This is Christmas Eve, it only comes around once a year, make it count...

Wally The Elf stops at PATCH THE ELF, who is busy sewing the arm on A TEDDY BEAR.

PATCH THE ELF

Hey, Wally. You really should lay off the processed sugar.

WALLY THE ELF

What exactly are you doing?!

PATCH THE ELF

Making a Teddy Bear.

Wally The Elf checks A LIST on the table.

WALLY THE ELF

For John Wallace?

(a nod)

He asked for the Laser Master Blaster with the glow in the dark darts.

PATCH THE ELF

Yes, but he's only four and Santa said...

WALLY THE ELF

I don't care what Santa said. I bust my butt making all these toys, checking off the list and filling his sack. What does he do?! Flies around singing happy songs and taking all the credit. I can do what he does. Only better. This is my shop, give the brat what he wants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATCH THE ELF
I'm telling Santa on you!!!

WALLY THE ELF
You don't have the marbles.

Santa appears on the landing above.

SANTA
Wally! In my office. Now.

PATCH THE ELF
Busted.

WALLY THE ELF
You just made my short list.

PATCH THE ELF
You're the Anti-Santa!!!

WALLY THE ELF
You have no idea.

INT. SANTA'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Wally The Elf enters, full of elfin-smiles and "yessirs."

SANTA
Have a seat, Wally.

Wally The Elf sits.

WALLY THE ELF
The Reindeer are rested and ready, and the sleigh is almost packed.

SANTA
I've been going over my list and things just don't add up.

WALLY THE ELF
How so, Santa?

SANTA
Everybody's getting what they want. This is not how Christmas works.

WALLY THE ELF
Thought I'd try things a little different this year. You know, shake it up a bit, make everyone happy for a change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANTA

You can't make everyone happy.

WALLY THE ELF

Maybe you can't. But I can.

SANTA

I'm going to have to let you go, Wally.

WALLY THE ELF

You can't fire me! You need me. I make Christmas happen. Don't you get it, I'm Santa Claus. You're just the face.

Santa takes this all in, gives Wally a measured smile.

SANTA

There can only be one Santa Claus.

WALLY THE ELF

(sinister)

We'll see about that.

And Wally The Elf runs out the door.

EXT. SANTA'S VILLAGE (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Wally The Elf runs out of Santa's workshop and jumps in Santa's Sleigh, calling out to SANTA'S REINDEER.

WALLY THE ELF

Ho-Ho-Ho, boys! It's off to work we go!!
Up-up and away! To the top of the porch,
to the top of the wall, now dash away,
dash away, dash away all...

The Reindeer don't even budge.

WALLY THE ELF

MOVE, you lazy cods!!! Quick!!! There's
a new Santa in town...

Santa and his ELVES run out of the workshop after Wally.

Wally The Elf takes A WHIP to THE TEAM OF REINDEER. And several LASHES later, THE TEAM OF EIGHT bound reluctantly down the snowy slope and fly into the night.

Wally The Elf CACKLES and flies into the night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AN ELF POLICE SLEIGH pulls onto the scene, SIREN BLARING.
THE REINDEER on the harness are smaller and younger.

Santa jumps in next to THE ELF POLICE CHIEF and takes the reins.

SANTA
Let's go get him.

Santa calls to the team of young reindeer, and they whisk into the night, giving chase.

INT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

The kids all sit around, listening.

BONES
Wally the evil elf!

SMITTY
So what happened?

SANTA
Everybody got what they wanted that year,
even the naughty ones.

BONES
And that's a bad thing why?!

EXT. HAMMERFEST, NORWAY - 1980S (FLASHBACK) - DAY

The northernmost village in the world. A small fishing community. Norwegian KIDS run rampant, wearing winter garb. PARENTS have lost control. They scream Norwegian invectives at their rabid children. ONE LOCAL REPORTER REPORTS live. It's like a scene right out of "Cloverfield!" Only worse. Anarchy.

A sugar-buzzed, four-year old sucking on a lollipop fires A FLAMETHROWER.

A 30-FOOT FLAME scorches the town's Christmas tree.

Houses are TOILET PAPERED. Cars are EGGED.

Small boys jump off second-story roofs into BLOW-UP POOLS filled with water. FIREWORKS go off in the street.

TWIN BOYS blow up A MAILBOX with A CHERRY BOMB.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A LITTLE GIRL races down a steep hill in her bubble-gum pink BARBIE CORVETTE. She hits a ramp and goes airborne, jumping over SIX CARS a la Evel Knievel. She comes down hard and blasts through an intersection.

Several CARS smash into A SNOWPLOW, as they swerve to avoid her.

A 8-YEAR OLD PLAYER moves through the chaos holding hands with A BIKINI-CLAD SUPERMODEL. *"Weird Science!"*

8-YEAR OLD PLAYER
(in Norwegian with subtitles)
This is the best Christmas ever.

The Bikini-Clad Supermodel just smiles.

INT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

The kids are totally engrossed in the story.

T-REX
Sweet, a Supermodel?! I'm redoing my list.

CHRISTINE
How come I've never heard about that Christmas?

SANTA
He only got as far as Hammerfest, Norway.

BONES
Where the heck is Hammerfest, Norway?

SANTA
Exactly. I was able to contain it to a few Norwegian kids. I stopped him and finished the route from there.
(then)
The damage was minimal.

SMITTY
Hold on, if Wally's an elf, what's he doing here?

INT. SANTA'S VILLAGE COURTROOM (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A venerable, gray-haired ELF JUDGE bangs his gavel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELF JUDGE

This court is now in session.

ELVES are packed in. ELF REPORTERS and CAMERAMEN are on the edge of their seats. SANTA sits at the prosecutor's table.

WALLY THE ELF is escorted in wearing A CANDY-CANE STRIPED JUMPSUIT. FLASHBULBS POP!! Mayhem in the courtroom. The Elf Judge bangs his gavel.

ELF JUDGE

Order in the court, order in the court...

Wally The Elf sits at the defendant's table. THE GALLERY of elves quiets. The Elf Judge turns to THE ELF JURY.

ELF JUDGE

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, have you reached a verdict.

ELF FOREMAN

We have, your honor.

ELF JUDGE

How say you?

ELF FOREMAN

On count one, conduct unbecoming an elf, we the jury find the defendant guilty as charged...

(oohs and aaahs)

On count two, impersonating Santa Claus to the detriment of children, guilty...

(whispers and chuckles)

On count three, destroying the integrity of Christmas, guilty.

Wally The Elf's pops out of his seat.

WALLY THE ELF

Poppycock!!! They loved me. I was the most popular Santa ever.

ELF BAILIFFS restrain Wally.

ELF JUDGE

Wally The Elf, it pains me to have to do this. In accordance with the laws of the North Pole, and the power vested in me by Santa Claus, you are hereby sentenced to life on Earth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The elfin courtroom is ABUZZ with chatter.

WALLY THE ELF

But I'm an elf!

ELF JUDGE

Not any longer. You will live out your days as a human. Take him away...

The Elf Bailiffs drag Wally The Elf past Santa.

WALLY THE ELF

I'll get you, Claus. You haven't heard the last of me. You better sleep with one eye open because I'm coming for you.
(kicking and screaming)
Someday...somewhere...somehow.

Santa hangs his head, devastated.

INT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

ON T-REX turning to Santa, mouth agape.

T-REX

Dude, you're hard-core.

Santa is filled with a deep sense of regret.

SANTA

I'm sorry it had to come to that. Of all my elves, he's the last one I ever thought would betray me.

CHRISTINE

So Wally The Elf is Wally The Human?

BONES

And he's packing an attitude.

INT. ICE CAVE - DAY

A HALF-BUILT and very SLEEK-LOOKING SLEIGH, is jacked up on ice blocks. A work in progress.

Linus is under the chassis, installing A TURBINE ENGINE.

Blue prints and ELECTRONICS SCHEMATICS are spread out on the cave floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIXEN, COMET, BLITZEN, DANCER, PRANCER, DASHER and DONNER are chained together. Elmer tries to feed them jerky.

Linus slides out from under the sleigh on A SLIDER.

LINUS

Stop messing with those tick-infested fur-balls and help me out over here.

ELMER

I think they're sick.

LINUS

(sarcastic)

Maybe they could use a cuddle.

Elmer pets Donner, feeling for the animals.

ELMER

You sure we're doing the right thing?

LINUS

What did Santa Claus ever do for us? All I ever got for Christmas was my two front teeth knocked out.

ELMER

We weren't exactly good kids.

LINUS

Quit being a wuss! He's going to make us elves. Don't you get it, that means we'll be immortal.

Wally enters the mouth of the cave, mad as hell.

WALLY

Hurry up with that sleigh!!

Wally goes into his ice cavern.

ELMER

What's his problem?

LINUS

It's that time of the year!

INT. ICE CAVERN - DAY

Wally turns up the flame on his oil lamp and plops down on his bunk. He fidgets. Then, he sees THE WIRE-RIMMED GLASSES, a slight GLOW circles the frame.

Wally picks up SANTA'S GLASSES and slides them on. His retinas dilate. Something magical's happening!

Then, THE LENSES go opaque, and Wally is suddenly sucked into Santa's world. Like Alice into Wonderland.

HERE'S WHAT HE SEES...AS SANTA SEES IT...

SMITTY, CHRISTINE, T-REX AND BONES work hard on...

SANTA'S SLEIGH with precision hand tools. The frame is finished. Dovetail notches. True craftsmanship.

Bones and T-Rex hammer nails, as Christine makes sure everything lines up and measures out.

Smitty PLANES the edges with absolute precision.

WALLY stands, transfixed.

Santa moves away from where the kids are working, and we move with him. He moves to Cupid.

SANTA'S HAND reaches out, petting his loyal friend.

Santa's vision becomes a little blurry. The room SPINS.

And then, Santa falls straight back to the ground.

BLACKNESS...THEN...

WALLY pulls the glasses from his face and smiles.

INT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

Santa opens his eyes to see the kids standing over him.

SMITTY

You OK?

Santa gets up.

SANTA

I must've dozed off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

You sure?! You don't look so good.

Christine crosses, excited.

CHRISTINE

We're ready for a test run.

EXT. OLD SAW MILL - DAY

The large iron doors are pushed open by T-Rex and Bones.

Santa stands with Christine, waiting.

BARKING from inside!!! Odd. Then, EIGHT MUTTS trot out. FAKE ANTLERS made of old tree branches are tied to their heads. They are harnessed in and pulling Santa's Sleigh.

Smitty is in the driver's seat.

SMITTY

Mush, boys!!! Mush!!

THE MUTTS pull hard on the gang line, doing their best.

CHRISTINE

What do you think?

Santa checks out his new sleigh.

SANTA

It's...different.

To say the least. It's made of old wood, recycled METAL SIGNS, FRUIT BOXES and spare parts of every kind. If it wasn't nailed down, they used it. The struts are bolted to runners made up of four OLD SNOWBOARDS.

It looks like a soapbox-derby version of Santa's Sleigh.

Smitty pulls the sleigh to a stop, smiling proud. Then, SNAP!!! The runners collapse, and the sleigh crashes to the ground. Christine kicks the snow.

CHRISTINE

(hell!)

H. E. Double toothpicks!

T-Rex turns red and reaches into his back pocket, pulling out FOUR HUGE BOLTS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

My bad. I knew I forgot something.

Christine turns to Santa, embarrassed.

CHRISTINE

Give us five minutes, and we'll be good to go.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

SANTA'S SLEIGH flies over a ridge with THE MUTTS running at a headlong gallop.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

Santa mans the reins. Smitty and the gang are wedged in all around him. Christine is proud of her work.

CHRISTINE

What do you think?

SANTA

It feels pretty solid, but we need more deer-power.

SMITTY

Let me drive!

Christine, T-Rex and Bones snap back, in unison.

CHRISTINE, T-REX & BONES

No.

Santa hands Smitty the reins.

SANTA

Show me what you got.

Smitty gets that look in his eye.

SMITTY

OK, let's see how this bad boy handles.

Bones braces himself, turns to Santa.

BONES

I hate it when he does this.

And Smitty SNAPS the reins.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

Santa's Sleigh ZIPS through the pines, weaving in and out of the hard-packed snow. It's picking up speed.

THE MUTTS runs like thoroughbreds, SLOBBER FLYING! It's a crazy ride through the winter wonderland.

The sleigh catches some air and lurches down an incline.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

Smitty lets out a hoot.

CHRISTINE

Don't even think about it, Smitty.

SANTA

Think about what?

T-REX

He wants to do a powder run.

CHRISTINE

We're not weighted for powder.

SMITTY

C'mon, it'll be fun.

BONES

It'll be suicide.

SANTA

I've never done a powder run before.

CHRISTINE

We're toast!

Smitty leans over the bow and unhooks THE MUTTS from the gang line. The sleigh now has no animal power.

SMITTY

Let's do this.

And Smitty leans back and turns the drive bow left.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

Santa's Sleigh pitches off the hard-packed trail and down a powdery slope.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

Santa and the gang white-knuckle the rails and lean back, as virgin snow pitches over the bow.

SMITTY

WHOO-HOO!!!

The kids begrudgingly enjoy the ride.

CHRISTINE

You're crazy, you know that?

Smitty smiles and eyes the approaching SNOWBANK.

SMITTY

Who feels like a snow cone?!

Everyone looks forward and their eyes go wide.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

Santa's Sleigh explodes through A SNOWBANK!!!

Santa and the kids are covered with snow.

The sleigh wobbles back onto the hard-packed trail.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

Smitty smiles at his pals.

SMITTY

See, that wasn't so bad.

CHRISTINE

Now all we need is some Reindeer.

SANTA

Don't worry, they'll come when it's time.
I'll see to it!

Then, SOMETHING BREAKS!!!! The steering bow has SNAPPED! The sleigh VEERS right, pitching down a slope towards the road below.

INT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

Santa's Sleigh blunders down the steep slope, snapping saplings as it goes. It's out of control.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

Smitty works the steering bow, gets no response.

THE ROAD BELOW rushes at them at WARP SPEED!!!

THE SHERIFF'S TRUCK speeds around a turn with Sheriff Jenkins driving and Deputy Tucker riding shotgun.

INT. SHERIFF'S TRUCK - DAY

Sheriff Jenkins looks at A SMALL VIDEO CAMERA mounted on the dashboard. It's A DASH CAM.

SHERIFF JENKINS

A dash cam, huh? I don't like the look of it.

DEPUTY TUCKER

All the major police forces have them.

SHERIFF JENKINS

What about this city seems major to you?

Sheriff Jenkins swigs on his thermos cup of hot coffee.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

THE KIDS scream on the runaway sleigh. It hits the edge and pitches downwards.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

Santa's Sleigh caroms onto the icy asphalt.

INT. SHERIFF'S TRUCK - DAY

Deputy Tucker sees Santa's Sleigh bouncing at them.

DEPUTY TUCKER

Lookout!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sheriff Jenkins stomps on the brakes and loses control of his thermos cup.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - DAY

THE KIDS SCREAM even louder!! TIRES LOCK UP, screeching a trail of rubber on the asphalt. They're seconds from a head-on with the Sheriff's Truck.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

The Sheriff's Truck swerves and goes into a slide.

IMPACT is a nanosecond away.

Smitty and the gang SCREAM, cover their faces.

Santa raises his hand, channeling his SANTA POWER!!

And, EVERYTHING FREEZES right where it's at.

Smitty, Christine, T-Rex and Bones are frozen in time, silent screams pasted across their faces.

Bones has A GLOB OF FROZEN SNOT coming out of his nose.

Even THE SNOW FLAKES are suspended in time.

THE SHERIFF'S TRUCK AND SANTA'S SLEIGH are nose to nose!! A coat of paint is all that separates them.

Santa gets out of the sleigh and looks down at THE BUMPER of the Sheriff's Truck.

It's A CSI-MOMENT, as we SNAP ZOOM in on the impact site. We hear THE SOUND of chromed metal bending under extreme pressure, as the bumpers apply force to each other.

Santa sizes up the situation and with a twist of his hand backs the sleigh off the bumper about thirty feet.

Santa looks in the truck at Sheriff Jenkins and Deputy Tucker. They, too, are FROZEN in horror.

Deputy Tucker braces himself against the roof.

STEAMING COFFEE is suspended in mid-air.

Santa sees Sheriff Jenkins is not wearing his seat-belt. Santa opens the door and buckles him up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANTA

"Buckle up. It's the law."

With that, he shuts the door and goes back to the sleigh. As he walks, he now leaves FOOTPRINTS in the snow. Santa notices this and becomes visibly concerned.

He shakes it off and sizes up the distance between the vehicles one more time. He does mental some calculations and with his finger pushes the sleigh back one more inch.

Santa climbs back in the sleigh and snaps his fingers.

TIME SNAPS BACK!!!

THE KIDS' screaming continues.

TIRES SCREECH back to life.

SNOWFLAKES fall again.

THE SLEIGH and THE SHERIFF'S TRUCK slide at each other and stop one centimeter before impact.

INT. SHERIFF'S TRUCK - DAY

Sheriff Jenkins and Deputy Tucker lurch to a stop and get doused with hot coffee. Sheriff Jenkins sees Smitty and the gang through the windshield. He's steaming mad.

SHERIFF JENKINS

You pissants are going to pay for this.

He flings the door open, furious. He starts to jump out, but gets yanked back by the seat-belt. He spills more coffee, fumbles with the seat-belt button.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

Bones does a sleeve wipe, clearing THE SNOT STRINGER from his face. He turns to Santa.

BONES

That scared the snot out of me.

Sheriff Jenkins frees himself from the seat-belt and hops out of his truck with Deputy Tucker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF JENKINS

That's it! I've had enough of you punks and your pranks. It's one thing to have no respect for your own lives, but now you're putting others at risk...

(then to Santa)

Who the heck are you?

SANTA

A friend.

Sheriff Jenkins cocks an eyebrow, face tense.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Well there, friend. You've fallen into a barrel of bad apples.

SMITTY

I can explain...

SHERIFF JENKINS

You can explain it to me downtown, behind bars. I think a night in jail will knock some sense into you...

(twirling his handcuffs)

Now, one at a time, hit the pavement and put your hands behind your head....

With a very slight wave of his hand, Santa takes PSYCHIC CONTROL of Sheriff Jenkins's mind.

SANTA

That won't be necessary. Just give them a warning...

Sheriff Jenkins's tone and demeanor do a reversal.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Tell you what, I'm going to let you off with a warning this time...

SANTA

They're good kids, and you're going to forget this ever happened...

Sheriff Jenkins repeats everything Santa says to him with an uncharacteristic smile.

SHERIFF JENKINS

You're good kids...I'm going to forget this ever happened...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Santa waves his hand in front of Deputy Tucker.

SANTA
Same goes for you, son.

DEPUTY TUCKER
Same goes for me.

SANTA
Merry Christmas...

SHERIFF JENKINS
Merry Christmas.

Sheriff Jenkins and Deputy Tucker jump back in the truck.

SANTA
Feliz Navidad...

SHERIFF JENKINS
Feliz Navidad.

SANTA
Fröhliche Weihnachten!

SMITTY
(an aside)
Now you're overdoing it.

Sheriff Jenkins drives away. The kids are stunned.

BONES
Dude, you're a Jedi.

SANTA
Where do you think George Lucas got the
idea?

Then, THE MUTTS bound out of the woods ready to get back
on the harness.

T-REX
You think you can you teach me that mind
trick thing? I've got a parent-teacher
conference coming up.

INT. SHERIFF'S TRUCK - DAY

Sheriff Jenkins and Deputy Tucker drive along, only now
Deputy Tucker is BEHIND THE WHEEL!! There's a silence.
Then, Deputy Tucker's mind seems to snap back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEPUTY TUCKER
(confused)
Sir, w-w-where are we headed?

Sheriff Jenkins's smile turns to a scowl when he comes out of his Santa-induced trance.

SHERIFF JENKINS
Why are you driving?!

Deputy Tucker shrugs.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

From high atop the ridge, Wally watches Santa and Smitty and the kids through HIGH-POWERED BINOCULARS.

FROM HIS POV, he watches SMITTY and the gang push SANTA'S SLEIGH down the mountain pass.

WALLY
Looks like we've got some competition.

LINUS
All due respect, Boss, that dog ain't going to hunt.

ELMER
Yeah, besides we have almost all the Reindeer.

WALLY
One more day, boys. One more day and Christmas will be mine.

EXT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - DAY

The kids slide SANTA'S SLEIGH into the garage with Santa. THE MUTTS run alongside them. Smitty quickly closes the door. CUPID peeks around the side of the house.

T-REX
What about him?

BONES
He can sleep over with me.

SANTA
He's a four-hundred pound Reindeer. Not a Smurf!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, A MUSCLE CAR turns the corner and slides to a stop. Cupid ducks behind the house. Amber kisses Derek and gets out of the car and approaches.

BONES

Hey, Amber. You could've rolled with me and you chose that loser instead?

AMBER

You're such a tool, Bones.

Bones eyes Derek, as his muscle car peels out.

BONES

It's the car, isn't it?

Amber looks at Santa like he's an insect.

AMBER

Who's this?

SMITTY

Ah...he's...ah...

T-Rex waves his hand in front of Amber, imitating SANTA'S MIND TRICK.

T-REX

He's my uncle. You will forget you ever met him.

AMBER

O-kay, he's your uncle...

(then)

Smitty, get some new friends.

Amber walks inside. T-Rex is totally fired up.

T-REX

That totally worked!

Christine moves to Cupid.

CHRISTINE

Cupid's coming with me. I have just the right place.

EXT. CHRISTINE'S BACKYARD - DAY

Cupid lays inside A LARGE DOG HOUSE, head and antlers outside, body inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A GERMAN SHEPHERD cowers in the corner of the yard.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dinner with Mrs. Smith, Amber, Dr. Chalmers and Smitty.

DR. CHALMERS

What did you do today, Smitty?

SMITTY

Not much.

MRS. SMITH

He had a big night last night.

SMITTY

How do you mean?

MRS. SMITH

Somebody put the Christmas lights up.

DR. CHALMERS

You hung those lights all by yourself?

SMITTY

I had a little help.

DR. CHALMERS

The mistletoe's a nice touch.

Dr. Chalmers motions to THE MISTLETOE hanging in the door of the kitchen, he smiles at Mrs. Smith.

AMBER

Ewww! Gross.

(then)

I have to go. I'm meeting Derek at the Vista for a movie.

MRS. SMITH

Be back by midnight.

AMBER

Can I take the car?

MRS. SMITH

The keys are in my purse.

Amber kisses her mom and runs out the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. CHALMERS

Why don't we get started on the tree?

SMITTY

I'll get the ornaments.

EXT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Amber backs her mother's CAR down the driveway and takes off. As she does, she passes A RANGE ROVER.

Wally watches the house from behind tinted glass.

INT. RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

Wally puts on SANTA'S GLASSES and we're inside...

INT. SMITTY'S ATTIC - NIGHT

Smitty runs up the stairs. Santa sits on the attic bed. He looks a little piqued. Smitty's excited.

SMITTY

This is so great!! We haven't had a tree in three years. And Mom's actually being cool about it.

(then)

FYI, thanks for everything. But you did overdo it on the lights.

Smitty starts rifling through a box of ornaments.

SANTA

This house was begging for a little Christmas spirit.

Santa chuckles weakly, wipes the sweat from his brow.

SMITTY

Later Gator.

SANTA

Don't forget to put the star on top.

Santa hands Smitty THE STAR and tussles his hair. Smitty smiles and takes off with the box of ornaments.

Santa watches him go with a concerned look on his face.

INT. RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

Wally takes off Santa's glasses.

WALLY

His powers are fading...

(then)

Welcome to the real world, Claus.

Wally starts the truck and takes off.

INT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Family dinner.

CHRISTINE'S MOM

Would you like some apple pie, honey?

Christine looks up to see CUPID scarfing down A WARM APPLE PIE cooling on the open windowsill.

CHRISTINE

No, I'm good.

Her parents go back to eating in silence. Oblivious.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Smitty comes down the staircase to see his mother and Dr. Chalmers stealing a kiss under the mistletoe. Mrs. Smith pushes him away playfully, laughs. She looks happy.

Smitty clears his throat.

SMITTY

Ah-hem!! Do I smell popcorn?

Mrs. Smith and Dr. Chalmers gather themselves.

MRS. SMITH

And cranberries. I thought we'd try both this year.

Smitty smiles, bounds down the stairs and joins them.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM (MONTAGE) - NIGHT

A fire burns in the fireplace. "Jingle Bell Rock" plays on the stereo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dr. Chalmers and Smitty put the lights on the tree. STOCKINGS are hung from THE HEARTH. ORNAMENTS are placed with care.

Mrs. Smith watches the boys and strings POPCORN and CRANBERRIES for hanging.

Dr. Chalmers grabs some popcorn from her bowl and flings it at Smitty. A POPCORN FIGHT breaks out.

Then, they all start DANCING, having a blast. This house has taken on some serious Christmas spirit. THEN...

THE STAR is placed on top of the tree.

THE MUSIC ENDS. We find Smitty on the couch, sleeping.

Mrs. Smith and Dr. Chalmers sit cozy next to him.

MRS. SMITH

Thank you.

DR. CHALMERS

For what?

MRS. SMITH

I forgot how important it is to have some Christmas spirit. It's just been so long since I've felt like celebrating. It means a lot to Smitty. And to me.

DR. CHALMERS

Glad I could be a part of it.
(checks his watch)
I'd better go.

MRS. SMITH

I'll walk you out.

DR. CHALMERS

No, stay with your son.

Dr. Chalmers kisses her. Smitty opens one eye, sneaking a peek. Then, Dr. Chalmers goes.

MRS. SMITH

Hey, nosey. You can open your eyes now.

Smitty opens his eyes.

SMITTY

I like him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SMITH

So do I. And I want you to know this has nothing to do with how I feel about your father. It's just...

SMITTY

I get it, mom. Dad would want you to be happy. I want you to be happy.

MRS. SMITH

(a smile)

Let's get you to bed.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Santa faces north softly whistling "*Silent Night*." It's a chilling tableau, his lone silhouette against the soft glow of the moon.

EXT. CHRISTIE'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Cupid awakens to Santa's whistling. He goes to the fence and looks up to see Santa on Smitty's rooftop.

Cupid scratches at the ground, ready to obey.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Santa continues whistling his tune, calling to his team of Reindeer. The melody carries over ROOFTOPS, through THE PINE TREES, across THE VALLEYS and into...

INT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Linus and Elmer sleep as do the Reindeer. Then, one by one, the Reindeer's ears perk up, guiding their heads towards the sound of Santa's distant tune.

INT. ICE CAVERN - NIGHT

Wally stirs in his bunk, the echo of Santa's sweet melody waking him from his slumber.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The strains of Santa's tune float through the window, as Mrs. Smith tucks Smitty in bed. Smitty drifts off.

Mrs. Smith kisses her son's forehead and leaves.

I/E. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Wally moves through the cave. The Reindeer are restless, testing the chains. He shakes Linus awake.

WALLY

Check the chains on the Reindeer.

Wally moves out of the mouth of the cave and stops at the ledge overlooking the valley.

He joins Santa's song, whistling a dissonant chord. It's maniacally pretty.

A dark harmony complementing Santa's melody.

EXT. SMITTY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Santa feels his adversary's harmony coming back at him like a shot across the bow.

SNOW FALLS on Pineville. THE CLOCK TOWER strikes twelve.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Smitty's eyes SNAP open.

SMITTY

Santa!

INT. SMITTY'S ATTIC - DAY

Smitty climbs the staircase, scans the attic. No Santa. He looks out the attic window and sees:

SANTA'S HAT lying in the snow.

A PAIR OF FOOTPRINTS leading into the forest.

INT. SMITTY'S HOUSE - DAY

Smitty comes ripping down the stairs. Mrs. Smith appears in the kitchen doorjamb with a plateful of pancakes.

MRS. SMITH

Smitty?!

But Smitty's already gone out the back door.

AMBER

What's going on?

Amber watches her mom go after Smitty.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - DAY

Smitty runs across the snow following SANTA'S FOOTPRINTS. Mrs. Smith chases after him. Ahead, SANTA is passed out in the snow. Breathing shallow.

Smitty slides to a stop next to Santa, cradles him.

SMITTY

Santa, wake up!! Please wake up!!!!

Mrs. Smith runs up with Amber.

MRS. SMITH

Smitty, what're you doing?! Who is this man?

SMITTY

Mom, you have to help him!! I can't let him die.

Mrs. Smith turns to Amber.

MRS. SMITH

Call 911.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY

The doors SLAM open and Santa is pushed down a long hall on A GURNEY with an IV attached to his arm.

Smitty, Mrs. Smith and Amber are by his side.

Dr. Chalmers meets them, as they move quickly towards the ER. He's wearing hospital-issue blue scrubs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. CHALMERS

What do we have?

THE PARAMEDIC

Blood pressure is 87 over 71, pulse is 65 and dropping, patient is suffering from cardiac arrhythmia...

Dr. Chalmers turns to A NURSE.

DR. CHALMERS

Start him on inotropic support and set up the doppler-scope for a 3-D cardiac echo.

THE PARAMEDICS usher Santa away with the nurse. Smitty won't let go of Santa's hand.

SMITTY

I need to go with him.

DR. CHALMERS

There's nothing you can do. I'll take care of him. I promise.

Smitty reluctantly releases Santa's hand and watches him disappear behind closed ER doors.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, ER - DAY

The slow BEEP of A HEART MONITOR. Santa lies flat on his back. His eyes flutter. Open. BLURRY IMAGES of DOCTORS and NURSES working to save his life hover over him.

Santa fades, fighting for his life.

SANTA

Smitty...

And he falls into a deep-state of unconsciousness.

INT. ICE CAVERN - DAY

Wally pulls off SANTA'S GLASSES, pleased with what he's just seen. He moves out of the cavern.

INT. ICE CAVE - DAY

WALLY'S SLEIGH, which is wicked-looking and teched out, is in the final stages of construction.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Linus programs A DASH-MOUNTED TOUCHSCREEN MONITOR. It's the nerve-center, operating every function on the sleigh.

The monitor blinks to life. Across the top it reads:

"AUTOMATED DEER REPLACEMENT SYSTEM"

Elmer is busy working an old, push-pedal SEWING MACHINE. He feeds a thick, blackish-red material into the needle and stitches up a couture-looking SANTA SUIT.

THE REINDEER are chained, depressed.

Wally emerges from the icy bowels of the cave.

WALLY

Let's hit the road.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Smith, Amber and Smitty sit in total silence.

MRS. SMITH

Smitty, what's going on? And don't lie to me.

SMITTY

You remember the night the meteor crashed down?

(Mrs. Smith nods)

I ran into the woods to check it out, and I found him there. He found me actually.

MRS. SMITH

Who found you?

Smitty looks at his mom and takes a leap of faith.

SMITTY

It wasn't a meteor...it was...

(hard to say)

It was Santa's Sleigh.

MRS. SMITH

Are you telling me you found Santa Claus wandering through the woods?

SMITTY

I know it sounds crazy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBER

It sounds more than crazy.

MRS. SMITH

And it's not funny.

SMITTY

I knew you wouldn't believe me.

MRS. SMITH

I believe you're going through a tough time right now.

SMITTY

I know it's Santa, Mom. He knows things! And you should see what he can do.

Then, T-Rex, Bones and Christine enter. Looks all around. The tension is thick. Then:

BONES

Holy guacamole! He told her!

Dr. Chalmers comes out of the ER. Smitty pops up.

SMITTY

How is he?

DR. CHALMERS

I managed to stabilize him, but his body is shutting down. We don't exactly know what's wrong. Sorry, Smitty.

SMITTY

We need to get him home.

DR. CHALMERS

Where is his home?

T-REX

It's north of here.

BONES

Way north.

WALLY enters with SHERIFF JENKINS and DEPUTY TUCKER.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Excuse me, Dr. Chalmers.

DR. CHALMERS

Yes, Sheriff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF JENKINS

This is Dr. Wally.

WALLY

I'm from the Psychiatric Hospital up in Placid Falls. I think you have one of my patients.

Wally flashes some FAKE CREDENTIALS.

DR. CHALMERS

What's his name?

WALLY

(a chuckle)

Well if you asked him, he'd tell you his name was Santa Claus.

Mrs. Smith looks at Smitty. "I told you so."

SMITTY

He's lying...

(to Dr. Chalmers)

His name is Wally. He used to be one of Santa's elves. Now he wants to kill him and take over Christmas.

WALLY

You have quite the imagination, son.

CHRISTINE

It's true. He's not making it up.

Bones turns to Sheriff Jenkins.

BONES

You met him the other day. Up on Pikes Pass. We almost had a head-on collision with you...

(adamant)

Don't you remember?

DEPUTY TUCKER

Something strange did happen that day.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Muzzle it, Tuck! It never happened, I'd remember.

T-REX

No, you wouldn't. He mind-tricked you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF JENKINS

Have you kids been eating paint chips?!

WALLY

Don't be so hard on them. Our patient is a convincing storyteller. Especially with "impressionable" young minds.

T-REX

He levitated us, you dingleberry!!!

Wally laughs T-Rex off.

WALLY

This conversation is quite stimulating, but I do need to get him back and on his medication...

(to Smitty)

Time is of the essence, I have a flight to catch before Christmas.

DR. CHALMERS

Let me make a quick call. What's your patient's name?

WALLY

Stephen Nichols.

Dr. Chalmers nods and walks off. Smitty chases him.

SMITTY

You can't let them take him. Please, you have to believe me.

MRS. SMITH

Smitty, don't...

DR. CHALMERS

It's OK, Sarah.

Dr. Chalmers and Smitty go through the double-doors.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, BULLPEN - DAY

Dr. Chalmers crosses to A NURSE with Smitty.

DR. CHALMERS

Put me through to Placid Falls.

EXT. TELEPHONE POLE - DAY

A TELEPHONE COMPANY VAN is parked under A TELEPHONE POLE. LINUS and ELMER are dressed like utility workers and are strapped to THE POLE. AN INDUSTRIAL WORK-PHONE is patched into THE JUNCTION BOX. The green light blinks.

LINUS
This is it. You ready?

Elmer nods, hits the "TALK" button.

ELMER
Placid Falls Psychiatric Hospital. How
may I direct your call?
(then)
One moment please.

Elmer hands the phone to Linus.

LINUS
Yes, this is Dr. Archer.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, BULLPEN - DAY

Dr. Chalmers on the phone.

DR. CHALMERS
This Dr. Chalmers at Pineville Memorial.
Do you have a patient there by the name
of Stephen Nichols?

LINUS
You mean Santa Claus?! Yes, he's one of
our favorites.

DR. CHALMERS
I have him here.

LINUS
Oh thank God, he's been missing for days.
He does this every Christmas.

DR. CHALMERS
I'll release him to Dr. Wally then.

EXT. TELEPHONE POLE - DAY

Elmer is playing with some wires when SPARKS FLY!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINUS

Thank you for your cooperation.

THE JUNCTION BOX EXPLODES! It looks like the 4th of July in December. Elmer is blown out of his harness and SLAMS down on THE TELEPHONE COMPANY VAN.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, BULLPEN - DAY

Dr. Chalmers hangs up the phone.

DR. CHALMERS

Sorry, Smitty. I have to release him.

SMITTY

You can't.

DR. CHALMERS

I know what it's like to lose somebody. I also understand the need to believe in something bigger than ourselves, but you can't look past the truth. Santa Claus is out there, but this man is not him.

SMITTY

Can I see him?

DR. CHALMERS

He's been sedated.

SMITTY

Please.

DR. CHALMERS

I'll tell you what, it's going to take me a minute to fill out the paperwork...

(wink, wink)

Hospital rules won't allow me to let you visit him, but since my back will be turned, I wouldn't notice you sneak down that hallway to room 205.

Dr. Chalmers smiles and turns his back.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, SANTA'S ROOM - DAY

Santa sleeps, breathing through a mask. Smitty lets himself in and moves to Santa's bedside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

I'm sorry, Santa. I know I've let you down. And now Wally's going to take you away. Please, if you can hear me, tell me what to do.

Smitty takes Santa's hand and his eyes open, gently.

SANTA

Have faith.

SMITTY

I'll get you outta here. I promise.

SANTA

I'm running out of time.

SMITTY

Are you dying?

WALLY

The answer, silly boy, is yes.

Smitty turns and there's WALLY.

WALLY

Poor Saint Nick just can't hack it in the real world. He gets homesick, literally. First his powers go. Then, the life just drains right out of him. If Santa Claus and his precious Reindeer are not in the air by midnight tonight, he will die.

(wicked smile)

Tick-Tock, Santa's running out of clock.

Smitty turns to Santa, who confirms what Wally says with a nod. Smitty turns back to Wally, standing firm.

SMITTY

Why are you doing this?

WALLY

You've never lived in somebody's shadow. Or played second fiddle. Been the third banana. And nobody's ever heard of the fourth Musketeer. Or worse yet...

(bad taste)

The fifth wheel! Ugly stuff! I've been waiting my whole life to be Numero Uno.

Smitty spots *SANTA'S GLASSES* in Wally's coat pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

I won't let you take him.

WALLY

It's Christmas Eve. I have the Reindeer.
I have the Sleigh. And now I have Claus.
Christmas is mine. You're looking at the
new-and-improved Santa Claus.

SMITTY

You'll never be Santa Claus.

WALLY

Ah, but you're wrong. When Santa dies,
the job goes to the next in line...

(beat)

Guess who that is?

SMITTY

You can't be.

WALLY

Every family has its secrets. But this
cat is about to get out of its bag.
Sibling rivalry, it's a killer.

SMITTY

Wally Claus?

Wally touches his nose like he's playing charades.

WALLY

Yes, little brother to the great Santa
Claus. Soon to be Father Christmas to
the children of the world.

SMITTY

I don't know how, but I'm going to stop
you.

Wally leans down and speaks just above a whisper.

WALLY

You don't have the marbles.

Smitty matches his stare and PICKPOCKETS SANTA'S GLASSES
from Wally's coat pocket.

Sheriff Jenkins, Deputy Tucker and Mrs. Smith appear in
the door behind them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SMITH

Smitty, let's go.

Wally turns to Mrs. Smith, ruffles Smitty's hair, his tone suddenly light and breezy.

WALLY

This one is all boy. You got your work cut out for you!

(Mrs. Smith feigns a smile)

Merry Christmas.

Smitty looks at Santa, who's sleeping again. He grabs THE SANTA OUTFIT off a chair and leaves with his mother.

INT. PINEVILLE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, ER - DAY

Mrs. Smith and Smitty walk down the corridor. Smitty looks down at *SANTA'S ANTIQUE GLASSES* now in his hand.

Deputy Tucker watches Smitty leave, thinking.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

THE CLOCK TOWER strikes 8 P.M.

INT. SMITTY'S GARAGE - DAY

Smitty and the gang stand around Santa's Sleigh.

SMITTY

We have 4 hours to save Christmas. Any ideas?

CHRISTINE

We only have one Reindeer and Santa's in a mental hospital!

Mrs. Smith peeks her head in the garage door.

MRS. SMITH

Kids, enough. It's been a long day. Go home to your families.

(they don't move)

Now! I mean it!

Mrs. Smith ducks back inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

Sorry, Smitty.

CHRISTINE

Later gator.

And Christine, Bones and T-Rex leave Smitty alone.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - NIGHT

Sheriff Jenkins sits at his desk, looking over a stack of paperwork and eating a TV dinner. Salisbury steak.

Deputy Tucker sticks his head in the door.

DEPUTY TUCKER

Hey, Sheriff. Heck of a day, huh?!

Sheriff Jenkins doesn't look up from his food.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Christmas brings out all the whackos.

DEPUTY TUCKER

You mind if I cut out early tonight? My wife wants to head over to the tree lighting ceremony.

Sheriff Jenkins doesn't look up from his paperwork.

SHERIFF JENKINS

This is why I never got married.

DEPUTY TUCKER

I take it you don't want to come with us.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Go light your tree.

Deputy Tucker puts A GIFT on his desk.

DEPUTY TUCKER

Fröhliche Weihnachten, sir.

SHERIFF JENKINS

What?

DEPUTY TUCKER

Open the gift.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Deputy Tucker walks out. Sheriff Jenkins opens the gift box. Inside: A SNOW GLOBE OF SANTA'S SLEIGH. He gives it a shake, sets it on his desk. Then, he sees A DVD in the bottom of the box and takes it out.

EXT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Smitty sits on his bed, bummed. THE CLOCK TOWER strikes 10. Then, A SOFT GLOW illuminates the room.

Smitty turns, looking for the source of the light. And there, on his desk, *SANTA'S GLASSES GLIMMER* in the dark. A SPARKLE OF ENERGY CIRCLES THE RIMS. It's magical.

Smitty picks them up, mystified.

SMITTY

Santa, is that you?

THE GLOW intensifies as if answering "yes." And then, he slips them on. The lenses come to life, and Smitty finds himself looking through *SANTA'S EYES!!!*

WALLY leans in, coming in and out of focus.

WALLY

Good to have you back from the dead. We can't have you miss your own retirement.

And suddenly we're inside...

INT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Santa is tied up and slumped on A BED OF ICE.

Wally rolls A SUIT FORM across the ice. His new SANTA SUIT hangs on the bodice. Blackish fur. Couture in shape. Red mink collar. Lean and mean.

WALLY

What do you think of the suit? I've made a few slight alterations. It's a little less "*White Christmas...*"

(wicked smile)

And a little more "*Santa Baby!!*"

Santa looks around the cave, clocking everything he sees. He can see the hulking silhouettes of THE REINDEER in the icy mist. He's struggling to stay conscious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANTA

Wally...

Wally starts WALTZING around Santa.

WALLY

Yes, Claus!!! Something wicked this way comes. Can you feel it? Isn't it great? The passing of the torch.

SANTA

Don't do this.

WALLY

It's already done. You've had your turn. Now it's mine. Out with the old, in with the new. The world wants change, haven't you heard?! The North Pole is so off the beaten path...

(then)

Note to self. Build a new village!!!

SANTA

I'm sorry.

WALLY

For what pray tell?

SANTA

I failed you.

WALLY

No, you just failed!! But I do love the deathbed apology. It's very heroic.

Linus approaches from the front of the cave.

LINUS

Wally?

WALLY

Is the sleigh ready?!

LINUS

Not yet. We're having trouble with the Reindeer Replicator.

Wally turns back to Santa, drunk with power.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALLY

How 'bout that, Claus? I've got a fully "Automated Deer Replacement System!" As soon as it's up and running, your flying rats will be as useless as you...

(ha-ha)

Death becomes you, big brother!!

Wally laughs, moves off with Linus and his suit.

INT. SMITTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Smitty is transfixed behind SANTA'S GLASSES. Amber walks in the door, sees Smitty staring into the glowing lenses. Amber shakes him, breaking the trance.

AMBER

Hey, Harry Potter! Get ready!

Smitty pulls Santa's glasses off.

SMITTY

He's in the caves. Wally's got Santa and the Reindeer. Here, look!

Smitty hands Amber Santa's glasses. She puts them on and sees absolutely nothing.

AMBER

You need medication.

Smitty snatches SANTA'S GLASSES from Amber.

SMITTY

Cover for me, will you?

AMBER

No. Quit acting like a psycho and get ready for the tree lighting ceremony.

Smitty grabs his SLINGSHOT and shoves it in his pocket.

SMITTY

I'll meet you there.

AMBER

Smitty, you know I can't let you leave. Mom will kill me.

SMITTY

Please, I'll do your chores for a week.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sheriff Jenkins sits back in his chair, looks at THE SNOW GLOBE of SANTA'S SLEIGH. He grabs the telephone, dials.

SHERIFF JENKINS

This is Sheriff Jenkins, put me through to Placid Falls Psychiatric Hospital.

EXT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Christine swings the door open.

SMITTY

You're not going to believe this.

EXT. BONES'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bones swings the door open.

SMITTY & CHRISTINE

We found him.

EXT. T-REX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

T-Rex with a look of awe.

T-REX

No way!

INT. SMITTY'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Smitty and his crew are huddled near Santa's Sleigh.

SMITTY

Everybody know what they're doing?

BONES

Good here.

T-REX

Let's make some enemies!

Smitty puts his fist in the huddle.

SMITTY

For Santa.

Bones puts his fist in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BONES

For Santa.

And T-Rex.

T-REX

For Santa.

Christine looks at the guys like they're nuts.

CHRISTINE

Is this really necessary?! I mean, are you serious?! Let's just go.

T-Rex just looks at her, hangdog.

T-REX

It's what we do. Now put your fist in.

CHRISTINE

I'm never dating any of you guys. Ever.
(she puts her fist in)
For Santa.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

Smitty and Christine ride CUPID through the trees. Cupid bounds up and over saplings and trees with large cutting strides. They come to a deep gully.

Cupid pushes off and leaps the gully with ease.

EXT. PINEVILLE, DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Bones and T-Rex are pulling Santa's Sleigh right through downtown Pineville.

T-REX

This sucks monkey nuts!

Bones sees A POLICE ATV with big knobby SNOW-TIRES parked outside THE DINER.

BONES

Hold on, it's about to get fun.

T-Rex knows exactly what he's thinking.

T-REX

That's a bad idea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bones flexes his peanut-sized biceps.

BONES
Relax, I'm carrying two guns...
(point to his abs)
And a six pack!

Bones sneaks up to THE POLICE ATV. He sees A BURLY COP flirting with A CUTE WAITRESS inside the diner. Bones hot-wires the ATV and takes off. He does a quick U-turn and pulls up to T-Rex.

T-REX
You're crazy.

BONES
Easy-peasy-lemon-squeezy!

The Burly Cop sees Bones and T-Rex hijacking his ATV and bolts for the door.

T-Rex jumps in Santa's Sleigh and throws Bones A ROPE.

T-REX
Giddyup!

THE BURLY COP bursts out of the diner and chases.

BURLY COP
Hey, bring that back here. Don't do it,
boys!!!

Bones quickly ties the rope off and guns the throttle.

THE POLICE ATV punches ahead, towing the sleigh in its wake. The Burly Cop slips, falling on his butt!!!

BONES AND T-REX scream into the night.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Crowded with TOWNIES. CAROLERS entertain the festive crowd. Warm cider steams from everyone's cups.

Deputy Tucker, HIS WIFE and BABY enjoy the festivities.

Mrs. Smith, Amber and Derek sit amongst the crowd waiting for the traditional Pineville tree-lighting ceremony.

Dr. Chalmers runs up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. CHALMERS

Sorry I'm late.
 (cheek kiss)
 Hi, Amber. Derek.

Amber looks at them, then:

AMBER

How long have you two been dating?

MRS. SMITH

Dating?! We work together, sweetie.

AMBER

Yeah, so? Derek and I go to school together.

Dr. Chalmers changes the subject.

DR. CHALMERS

Where's Smitty?

MRS. SMITH

I was just asking myself the same thing.

AMBER

I told you, he had dessert at Christine's house.

Amber just looks at her mother, expecting an answer.

MRS. SMITH

Six months. We've been dating for six months.

AMBER

Six months?
 (to Dr. Chalmers)
 When are you going to get serious and put a ring on her finger?!

MRS. SMITH

Amber!

AMBER

What?! You're a mother, Mom. You can't just casually date.

Mrs. Smith is speechless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. CHALMERS

I'll "put a ring on her finger" when the time is right.

AMBER

Don't wait too long. You're not getting any younger.

Dr. Chalmers smiles her off.

DEREK

So is this like a double date?

Mrs. Smith whirls on Derek.

MRS. SMITH

No. It's like Christmas Eve with family and friends.

DEREK

Yes, ma'am.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

Smitty and Christine ride Cupid up the mountain. Cupid bounds over rocks and onto the top of the mountain.

EXT. SNOWY HILLSIDE - NIGHT

T-Rex drives THE POLICE ATV at breakneck speeds, pulling THE SLEIGH with Bones. The ATV SPUTTERS and dies. Bones looks at THE GAS GAUGE, which flashes "E" for empty.

T-REX

What's wrong?

BONES

Out of gas.

T-REX

What kind of cop doesn't top off his tank?

T-Rex jumps off the ATV and unties the rope.

BONES

Looks like we're pushing it from here!!

T-Rex hops down and meets Bones behind the sleigh. They push up the steep slope like Sisyphus pushing his rock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

Santa owes me this year. If I don't get what I want, he's going to hear about it.

Then, they're blasted by A HEAVY-DUTY LIGHT-BAR attached to A SNOWPLOW churning at them like a metallic beast. It pulls up next to them and grinds to a stop.

BONES

Uh-oh, we're busted!

Sheriff Jenkins swings open the door of the snowplow.

SHERIFF JENKINS

You boys looking to add grand theft to your already bad reputation?

T-REX

No, sir. Not us, sir.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Where are you headed?

BONES

To save Christmas.

SHERIFF JENKINS

In the spirit of Old St. Nick, I'm going to believe your cockamamy story. If it's the truth, you'll get off scot-free. If not, you've got yourselves an all-expense paid trip to Juvenile Hall. I hear it's not so nice this time of year...

(re: the sleigh)

What're you waiting for? Hook it up!

Off T-Rex and Bones' surprised looks.

I/E. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Cupid slides to a stop just outside the ice cave. Smitty and Christine dismount, taking cover behind a rock.

Inside, they see Wally admiring his TURBO SLEIGH.

WALLY

Fandabbydosie!

Its shiny lacquer finish is blackish red. It's one part Sleigh, two parts demon. It looks like it was hatched in the ovens of hell, complete with chromed-out tailpipes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINUS

Not bad, if I do say so myself.

WALLY

Good work, boys.

(turns to the Reindeer)

Now kill these useless animals and pack my bags! I'm going on a power trip!!!

Wally grabs THE SUIT FORM and disappears inside the ice cavern.

LINUS

Hand me those poison darts.

Elmer looks at THE REINDEER, who are totally defenseless in their chains.

ELMER

Why do we need to kill them?

LINUS

Because he said so.

ELMER

That wasn't part of the job. They're not hurting anybody. I'm not doing it.

LINUS

OK, Candy pants. I'll do it! Get out of my way.

Linus moves past Elmer, grabs THE BOX OF POISON DARTS and preps the blowgun.

Smitty and Christine watch from their place of cover. She checks her watch, 11:45 PM.

CHRISTINE

(hushed)

We have fifteen minutes.

SMITTY

I got this.

Smitty pulls his BAG OF MARBLES from inside his backpack and grabs his SLINGSHOT from his back pocket.

Smitty loads A MARBLE and let's it fly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE MARBLE rips through the ice cave and slams into A BIG ICICLE. The icicle breaks and falls. It smashes down on THE BOX OF POISON DARTS, crushing them into oblivion.

Linus reels back and turns.

LINUS

What the...

Smitty draws back the slingshot to his cheek and launches another marble.

IT DRILLS Linus right smack in the forehead!!! Linus's eyes cross and he falls straight back, out cold.

Elmer puts his hands up.

ELMER

Don't shoot!

Wally sticks his head out of the ice cavern.

WALLY

What's going on out here?!

Linus GROANS, only semi-conscious. Elmer quickly presses his boot over his mouth, silencing him.

ELMER

Just killing us some Reindeer, Boss.

WALLY

Make it snappy!

Wally ducks back inside his ice cavern.

Smitty and Christine advance into the cave. Smitty keeps his slingshot aimed at Elmer.

ELMER

You can put that pea-shooter down now.

Smitty lowers his slingshot.

SMITTY

Where's Santa?

ELMER

In the back of the cave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

Take the Reindeer and get out of here.
I'll bring Santa.

Smitty runs deeper into the cave.

Christine looks at THE REINDEER.

CHRISTINE

Who's got the key to those chains?

Elmer reaches into his pocket, producing A SKELETON KEY.

ELMER

I'm tired of being on the naughty list.

EXT. THE BLUFFS - NIGHT

THE SNOWPLOW grinds through the deep snow pulling SANTA'S SLEIGH. It lurches to a stop, coughing a plume of diesel smoke. Sheriff Jenkins, Bones and T-Rex climb out.

SHERIFF JENKINS

This is it?

T-REX

This is it.

SHERIFF JENKINS

What now?

BONES

We wait.

Then, THE TEAM OF SANTA'S REINDEER come bounding out of the trees. They circle the boys, puffing and stamping.

Sheriff Jenkins reaches for his sidearm.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Don't anybody move.

T-REX

Keep it in your holster, Tex. They're on our side.

Prancer approaches Sheriff Jenkins and licks his face.

BONES

Believe us now?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF JENKINS

Not yet, but I'm warming up to it.

Then...A SNOWMOBILE flies over the ridge and slides to a stop. CHRISTINE drives with ELMER on back.

Christine hops off, eyeballing Sheriff Jenkins.

CHRISTINE

What's he doing here?

SHERIFF JENKINS

I was just asking myself the same thing.

Christine turns to the boys.

CHRISTINE

What are you waiting for?! Hook 'em up!

INT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Smitty moves through the icy fog rolling along the frozen ground of the cave. He sees Santa ahead, lying in a pool of light. Smitty goes to him and unties the rope.

SMITTY

Santa, wake up. It's me...

Santa's eyes flutter open.

SANTA

Smitty...

Smitty unties the rope and lays him down.

SMITTY

Hang tight, we gotta get you outta here.

Smitty sees A MECHANIC'S SLIDER leaning against the wall. He grabs it and sets it in front of Santa.

Smitty eases Santa off the bed of ice onto THE SLIDER.

Smitty pushes, wheels slipping and spinning past THE ICE CAVERN, THE SLEIGH and...LINUS, who's just now regaining consciousness with A MARBLE-SIZED KNOT on his forehead.

Smitty WHIZZES Santa right by him.

SMITTY

See ya.

EXT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Smitty pushes Santa into the night.

SMITTY

Bombs away.

Smitty jumps on behind Santa, and they shoot down a steep slope towards the bluffs below. Santa's eyes go wide when the snow hits his face.

INT. ICE CAVE - NIGHT

Wally emerges from his ice cavern all dolled up in his SANTA SUIT.

WALLY

Feast your eyes on this!!!!

There's no one to feast, only Linus.

LINUS

We've got a problem, Boss.

Wally sees THE REINDEER are gone.

WALLY

Where's Claus?!

LINUS

The boy...

Wally grabs Linus by the shirt collar, pulls him close.

WALLY

Don't say it! Don't tell me you let the boy take Claus. That would make me less than holly jolly.

Linus spits out an apology.

LINUS

I'm...sorry...

Wally slams Linus down, angry.

WALLY

Poppycock!!!

EXT. BLUFFS - NIGHT

SANTA'S SLEIGH is ready to roll. THE REINDEER are on the harness, scratching at the snow. The gang waits.

Christine checks her watch.

CHRISTINE

Five minutes...

BONES

There they are!

Bones points up the mountain. Everyone looks.

And there, TOBOGGANING down the steep slope are...

SMITTY AND SANTA. And it's a rough ride. They look like A SPECK in the vastness, as they bomb the bumpy slope.

T-REX

Talk about a triple-black diamond.

Smitty and Santa bounce over MOGULS and take flight off A BIG ROCK FORMATION. They land hard, making a beeline for the gang. THE KIDS and ELMER SCATTER.

Sheriff Jenkins holds his ground.

Smitty leans hard right, digging the rails into the snow. He ices Sheriff Jenkins and slides to a stop at his feet.

Sheriff Jenkins wipes the ice from his face. Smitty hops off the slider, surprised to see Sheriff Jenkins.

SMITTY

What're you doing here?

Sheriff Jenkins stares at Santa.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Saving Christmas.

Sheriff Jenkins helps Santa to his feet. Santa looks Sheriff Jenkins right in the face.

SANTA

Merry Christmas, Leslie.

T-Rex gives Sheriff Jenkins a sidelong glance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T-REX

Leslie?!

SHERIFF JENKINS

I was named after my grandfather.

T-REX

Your grandfather was a chick?!

Santa moves to the sleigh with the kids helping.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

THE CLOCK TOWER inches towards midnight.

Dr. Chalmers looks around, anxious.

DR. CHALMERS

Where is Smitty? I don't want him to miss this.

AMBER

Relax, it's a tree lighting ceremony.

MRS. SMITH

He'll be here.

EXT. BLUFFS - NIGHT

Santa sits in the sleigh. Smitty buttons Santa's coat, reaches into his pocket and pulls out SANTA'S GLASSES.

SMITTY

You might need these.

Smitty slips Santa's glasses on his nose. A WHISPER OF ENERGY CIRCLES THE FRAMES. This perks Santa up.

Christine's looking at her watch.

CHRISTINE

Smitty, let's get this show on the road.

Smitty places THE SANTA HAT on Santa.

Then, A DERANGED CACKLE echoes off the mountains. The gang sees WALLY speeding at them on his TURBO SLEIGH.

BONES

Get outta here, now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smitty realizes Santa's a little out of sorts and grabs the reins from him.

SMITTY

Let's go guys!!!

Smitty SNAPS the reins. THE REINDEER dig in and Santa's Sleigh lumbers forward, slowly at first.

Christine, T-Rex and Bones run alongside.

CHRISTINE

Good luck.

And with a final shove, the kids are left behind.

Sheriff Jenkins watches all, mouth agape.

WALLY shoots across the bluffs like a rocket.

THE REINDEER get their stride and go into a full headlong gallop. Santa's Sleigh shoots across the bluffs.

Santa looks back and sees Wally is gaining fast.

SANTA

Smitty, get in the trees!

Smitty leans left on the reins, guiding THE REINDEER into the trees.

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

Santa's Sleigh does a high-speed slalom through the trees and stumps.

Wally scrapes off a tree, recklessly veering through the narrow gaps in the pines. It's fast and furious. Smitty drives with precision.

The Reindeer zigzag through the forest, running all out.

Wally pulls his sleigh up alongside them.

WALLY

Going somewhere?!

Santa waves his hand, trying to conjure up some of his magic. Nothing happens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALLY

You're magic's gone, Claus!

(to Smitty)

Pull over, kid. Hitch a ride with me. I could use an elf like you.

SMITTY

Never.

WALLY

Have it your way. If you don't want to ride the wave of the future, I can't stop you. But remember, losers finish last!

Wally turns his steering wheel right, slamming his sleigh into them. Santa's Sleigh is thrown off course.

The Reindeer run down an embankment. Smitty struggles to keep control. Santa holds on for dear life.

INT. WALLY'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Wally's lips curl into an evil smile.

WALLY

Let's see what we've got under the hood.

He flips A SWITCH. THE JET ENGINE TURBINE kicks in. The sleigh lifts off, rocket propelled and VERY, VERY FAST!!

EXT. PINEVILLE WOODS - NIGHT

Santa's Sleigh pushes forward when THE TURBO SLEIGH flies by overhead, giving them a haircut. It SHUDDERS mid-air and flips ends, blocking their path ahead. Nose down.

It's a game of chicken.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Smitty turns to Santa.

SMITTY

He's in my village now.

Smitty works the reins to his right.

EXT. DEAD MAN'S HILL - NIGHT

Santa's Sleigh glances off a tree and wobbles down to the hard-pack. They whirl past the signpost reading:

"DANGER - DEAD MAN'S HILL"

Santa Sleigh skids into Dead Man's Curve quickly picking up speed. The Reindeer are running hard.

Wally's turbo sleigh ROARS out of the trees and SLAMS in next to them, pushing them to the edge of the road.

WALLY

You're running out of road, silly-boy!

Smitty rides Santa's Sleigh up on a snowbank, one runner hangs over the edge. It's sure death below.

Smitty rights the ship and careens back down the slope, heading directly at WALLY'S SLEIGH.

SMITTY

Say hello to Dead Man's Curve, Wally!!

Smitty SMASHES SANTA'S SLEIGH into WALLY'S SLEIGH with an awesome force.

Wally SPINS OUT and PITCHES over the edge and into the deep crevice below.

Smitty steers Santa Sleigh through the curve and into the steep straightaway.

SANTA

Nice driving!

EXT. CLOCK TOWER - NIGHT

THE CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE, echoing over the mountains and through the pines. It TOLLS, counting down to midnight.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Smitty turns to Santa.

SMITTY

It's time to get your magic back, Santa.
This is your ride.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smitty hands Santa the reins.

Santa starts to call out, softly at first, but building in intensity and power. His glasses PULSE WITH ENERGY.

SANTA

Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer and
Vixen! On Comet, on Cupid, on Donner and
Blitzen! To the top of the porch, to the
top of the wall...

Smitty joins in for the final push.

SANTA & SMITTY

Now dash away, dash away, dash away, all!

And, THE REINDEER heed their call and take flight into the star-filled sky!!

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

THE SNOWPLOW emerges from the trees with Bones and T-Rex riding shotgun with Sheriff Jenkins.

Christine follows, driving Elmer on the snowmobile.

Bones points to Santa's Sleigh, which flies into the sky.

BONES

Look!!! It works!

T-REX

Believe us now?

Sheriff Jenkins looks up and sees SANTA'S SLEIGH soaring high above. In this moment, Sheriff Jenkins believes.

Christine smiles to herself.

CHRISTINE

Never a doubt.

EXT. NIGHT SKY - NIGHT

Santa's Sleigh gathers altitude.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Smitty looks down on the city lights. SANTA'S POWER has started to restore itself.

SANTA

Ho-Ho-Ho!!!

Then, out of nowhere, WALLY'S VOICE BOOMS. He's cackling mad, adrenalized.

WALLY

Not so fast, Claus!!!

THE TURBO SLEIGH BUZZES right over the top of Smitty and Santa. A NARROW MISS!!! THE TURBULENCE rattles Santa's Sleigh, sending it into a shallow dive.

Santa wrangles his Reindeer, steadying the descent.

SANTA

Hang on, Smitty!

EXT. NIGHT SKY - NIGHT

Wally and his sleigh circle back for a deadly fly-by.

SANTA

Smitty, duck!!!

Smitty and Santa duck. Wally BLOWS BY, missing them by inches.

THE VORTEX rattles Santa's Sleigh, this time sending it into an all-out death dive.

SMITTY

Now would be a good time for some magic.

SANTA

I'm working on it.

Santa works the reins, as THE SLEIGH BUZZES the treetops. CITY LIGHTS rush up fast from below.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

ON AMBER, noticing THE SLEIGH dogfight high overhead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBER

Oh-my-god! It's Santa!!!

Mrs. Smith looks up, sees SANTA'S SLEIGH whirling towards the ground.

MRS. SMITH

Oh-my-god! It's Smitty!!!

EXT. NIGHT SKY - NIGHT

Wally wheels his souped-up sleigh around and dives back down towards Santa's Sleigh.

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Smitty looks back, watches Wally shooting at them like a bat out of hell. Then, he gets an idea.

SMITTY

Can you slow him down?

SANTA

I can try.

SMITTY

Give me what you got?

Santa concentrates all his energy on Wally. And, HURLS a weak FORCE-FIELD from the palm of his hand.

EXT. NIGHT SKY - NIGHT

WALLY'S SLEIGH is hit by SANTA'S FORCE-FIELD. For a moment, HIS SLEIGH IS STUCK IN TIME!!!

WALLY

What's this?!

Wally guns his TURBO THRUSTER!

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Smitty reaches into his backpack and pulls out his BAG OF MARBLES. He grabs THE SLINGSHOT from his back pocket and loads A MARBLE into the pouch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wally breaks through THE FORCE-FIELD and ROCKETS at them.
He's about to smash them out of the sky.

WALLY
Good-night, Claus.

SMITTY DRAWS HIS SLINGSHOT BACK TO HIS CHEEK AND...

SMITTY
Hey Wally, I've got the marbles!!!!

Smitty FIRES!! THE MARBLE rips into THE EXPOSED TURBINE
OF WALLY'S SLEIGH. SPARKS FLY!!!

THE JET ENGINE TURBINE grinds to a stop, SPUTTERS!

INT. WALLY'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Wally rocks back, as his sleigh SHUDDERS and then STALLS.
The red dash-light blinks, "SYSTEM FAILURE!"

Wally cries out in anguish.

WALLY
NOOOOOOO!!!!

And he and his sleigh PLUMMET.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

THE CLOCK TOLLS FOR THE EIGHTH TIME!!!

WALLY'S TURBO SLEIGH spirals down, whipping past THE
CLOCK TOWER, past THE TOWN'S CHRISTMAS TREE.

THE TOWNIES scatter.

Wally's sleigh WHIZZES by just over their heads and
buries itself nose first into a large snowdrift.

SANTA'S SLEIGH speeds around the Christmas tree.

Deputy Tucker and his wife look up in wonder, their BABY
GIGGLES at the sight of Santa flying overhead.

Sheriff Jenkins sidles up next to him.

SHERIFF JENKINS
Heck of a night, huh?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Deputy Tucker looks at Jenkins and...smiles.

DEPUTY TUCKER

It sure is, sir.

Christine, Bones, T-Rex watch, proud of their work.

Mrs. Smith, Dr. Chalmers, Amber and Derek are completely taken with this magical moment.

DEREK

You're little brother is awesome!

INT. SANTA'S SLEIGH - NIGHT

Smitty looks down, waves to his friends and his MOTHER.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

As the TWELFTH CHIME rings from THE CLOCK.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS SNAP TO LIFE! Thousands of white lights shimmer brightly in the night.

SANTA'S SLEIGH comes in for a soft landing.

THE REINDEER scamper through the snow, stopping next to the beautifully-lit tree.

Bones, T-Rex and Christine run over and join Smitty. The TOWNIES clamor around Santa's Sleigh. A heroes welcome.

BONES

I feel like a rockstar.

T-REX

Only ugly.

CHRISTINE

And not talented.

Smitty turns to Santa.

SMITTY

We did it.

SANTA

No, you did it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And suddenly...THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS BUILDS in Santa's shoulders and arms, coursing through his body. And, he turns into THE SANTA CLAUS we all know and love.

Long white beard, rosy cheeks, twinkle in his eye.

THE MAGIC continues, moving along the body of THE SLEIGH TRANSFORMING it before everybody's eyes.

RED LACQUER WASHES OVER THE RAW WOOD.

PLATINUM PIN-STRIPING SWIRLS INSIDE THE LACQUER.

THE SOLID GOLD RUNNERS SHIMMER AGAINST THE WHITE SNOW.

Smitty can see MRS. SMITH, Dr. Chalmers and Amber pushing through the crowd.

SMITTY

Thanks, Santa. For everything.

Santa winks at Smitty, lays his finger aside his nose.

SANTA

Merry Christmas, Smitty.

Smitty jumps off Santa's Sleigh.

SMITTY

See you in the morning.

SANTA

I'll be there, but you won't see me.

(a smile, then)

Gotta go! I've got some work to do.

Santa WHISTLES to his team, and THE REINDEER run across the town square. THE TOWNIES watch in amazement.

And, SANTA'S SLEIGH flies into the night.

EXT. SNOWDRIFT - NIGHT

WALLY burrows himself out of the snowdrift only to find SHERIFF JENKINS waiting, handcuffs in hand.

SHERIFF JENKINS

Sleigh ride's over, Wally! You're under arrest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALLY

Oh yeah?! For what?

Elmer approaches, relishing this moment.

ELMER

For being a Grinch!

WALLY

Poppycock.

EXT. PINEVILLE, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Mrs. Smith breaks through the crowd.

MRS. SMITH

Smitty!

Smitty turns, smiling.

SMITTY

Sorry I'm late.

Mrs. Smith gives him a hug. Dr. Chalmers and Amber join in. They look like a family. And they are.

SANTA'S SLEIGH orbits high above, as SANTA'S VOICE BOOMS from the heavens.

SANTA

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!!!

Everybody looks up, watching in total amazement, as SANTA and his SLEIGH take off into the starry, starry night.

FADE TO BLACK.