

ONE MORE CHRISTMAS WISH



An Iggy, Yugo and Sam Adventure

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CHRISTMAS
WISH

AN IGGY, YUGO AND SAM ADVENTURE

IGGY, YUGO AND SAM ADVENTURES

<i>A Christmas Caroline</i>	<i>A Tale of Two Kidneys</i>
<i>A Christmas Time Tale</i>	<i>What Are You Waiting For ... Christmas?</i>
<i>Everyone Needs a Little Space at Christmas</i>	<i>Freaky Christmasday</i>
<i>A Christmas Mystery</i>	<i>ELFolution</i>
<i>Raiders of the Lost Christmas Cavern</i>	<i>South to Alaska</i>
<i>The Last of the Snow Wolves</i>	<i>Boys Will Be Boys</i>
<i>The Return of Leviticus Swyne</i>	<i>Murder at the North Pole</i>
<i>A Fairy Merry Christmas Tale</i>	<i>Christmas Night of the Evil Walking Living Dead</i>
<i>What's Past is Present</i>	<i>Iggy, Yugo and Sam in the War on Christmas</i>
<i>A Feast of Fools</i>	<i>Iggy, Yugo and Sam Explain Everything</i>
<i>Lucretia Alopeesha Takes a Vacation</i>	<i>Died Hard</i>
<i>Elves in Toyland</i>	<i>Sam Alone and Other Christmas Crackers</i>
<i>CD25: Christmas Day</i>	<i>Iggy, Yugo and Sam and the Gelatinous Mass from Outer Space</i>
<i>The Treasure of the Claus</i>	<i>Christmas: Boss Battle</i>
<i>The Man in Sandy Clothes</i>	<i>The Naughtiest List</i>
<i>Maggot, Lice and Worm</i>	<i>Stepping on Butterflies</i>
<i>A Winter of Discontent</i>	<i>Christmas Under the Dog Moon</i>
<i>Ghosts of Christmas Future</i>	<i>Stepping on Butterflies – Extended Edition</i>
<i>Nightmare on Elf Street</i>	<i>The Island of Dr. Rembrandt</i>
<i>The Fright Before Christmas</i>	<i>Peril of the Purloined Pie</i>
<i>North Pole Stud</i>	<i>An Ho\$tile Takeover</i>
<i>Here There Be Monsters</i>	<i>One More Christmas Wish</i>

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF SPORTS



FC SANTA CLAUS IS A SOCCER TEAM WHICH PLAYS IN THE 6TH DIVISION OF THE FINNISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE. FC SANTA CLAUS PLAYS ITS GAMES AT THE Saarenkylän Stadion in Rovaniemi, a city in Finland located near the Arctic Circle. There is snow in Rovaniemi six months of the year and the sun stays up from June 7 until July 6 every year.

Rovaniemi is said (by the good people of Rovaniemi) to be the birthplace of Santa Claus. Team lore claims the club was founded by a group of Santa's elves who picked up the game when they were not making toys and wrapping presents. Santa Claus himself serves as the team's honorary coach and attends most of the team's home matches.

More information, and a really impressive team store, can be found at the official website: www.fcsantaclaus.fi





Land Acknowledgement

Most of the events in this story take place on the ancestral lands of the Kizh Nation, also known as Kit'c, Kij and Kitcherenos. The North Pole, where portions of this story take place, is the traditional lands of elves and polar bears.

In which Iggy flips a coin,
Yugo uses a papier-mâché wrench, and
Sam forgets his line.

And in which it is up to Santa Claus himself to save Christmas.

“So, keep your auditions for somebody
Who hasn't got so much to lose
'Cause you can tell by the lines I'm reciting
That I've seen that movie too”

- Elton John, *I've Seen that Movie Too*

“Watching movies snuggled up
Apple cider in my cup
That's how we do it
At Christmas.”

- Aloe Blacc, *At Christmas*

“If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss ...”

- Rudyard Kipling, *If*

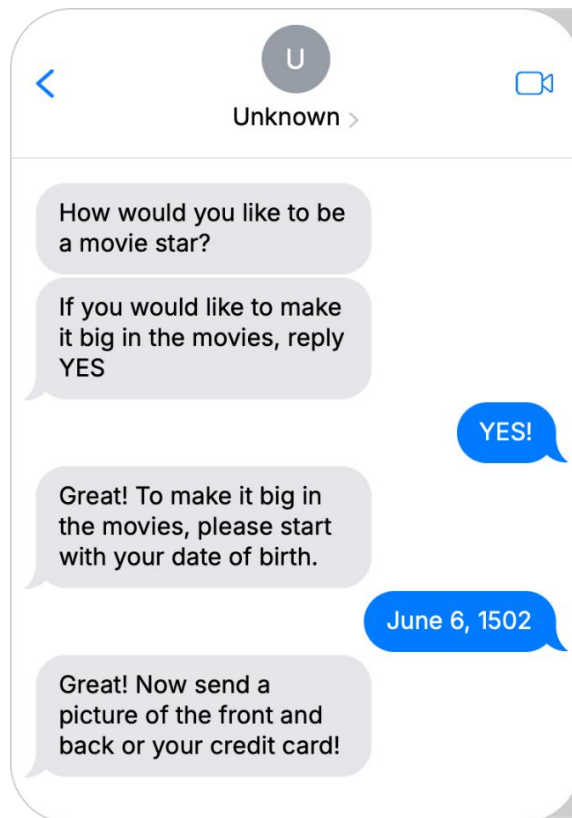
“Oh, the sound of rolling dice
To me is music in the air
'Cause I'm a gamblin' Boogie Man
Although I don't play fair”

- Oogie Boogie, *The Oogie Boogie Song*

A Tale of 'Citement and Ventures

ONE MORE CHRISTMAS WISH

Tails Never Fails



“HEY SAM, DO YOU HAVE A CREDIT CARD?” ASKED IGGY.

It was the 27th of December. All the toys had been made and delivered and the elves of the North Pole had a few days off before work began again in January. It was dark outside, as it is wont to be in December at the North Pole, and Iggy was catching up on the hundreds of text messages that had accumulated in his phone since the summer.

Sam looked up from the pile of cabbage rolls and gravy heaped on his plate. “No way. I don’t trust banks. Credit cards are for fools.”

Yugo set down his screwdriver and said, “now Sam, tell the truth.”

“I am telling the truth! I’ll never have a credit card!”

“I suppose that is true, as far as it goes,” said Yugo. He turned to Iggy, “Sam used to have a credit card, but he was so far over the limit from ordering take out that the bank took it away.”

“And they are never going to give it back,” said Sam. “That’s why I don’t trust banks.”

“How about you, Yugo, do you have a credit card?”

“Sure,” he said. “Any card in particular?” He opened his wallet and a long plastic sleeve tumbled out with dozens of cards all neatly arranged by shades of black, gold and platinum.

“It does not say,” said Iggy. “I suppose any card will do.”

Yugo selected a gleaming platinum card from near the top of the sleeve. “This is a good one. It has no limit.”

“Don’t give him that,” said Sam. “He’s being scammed.”

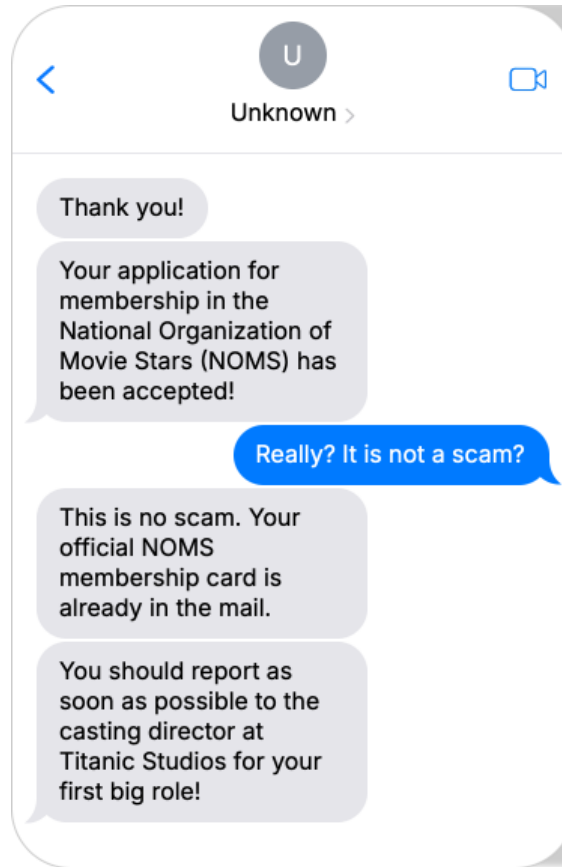
Yugo pulled back his card. “Are you being scammed, Iggy?”

“Oh no. I just need it so I can be a movie star.”

“That sounds legit,” said Sam. He shoved an entire cabbage roll into his mouth as he spoke.

Yugo shrugged. “Why not,” he said and passed on the card.

Iggy put the details into his ElfPhone. Several minutes passed he received a new message:



Iggy turned his ElfPhone around to display his screen to the others. “I told you it was not a scam. We are going to Hollywood to be movie stars!”

“Oh no we’re not,” said Sam.

“Why would you not want to go to Hollywood?” asked Yugo.

“Hollywood is full of creeps and weirdos. I saw it on TV.”

“That was a television program, Sam. It was not real. It is all make believe,” said Iggy. “That is what Hollywood is all about.”

“Still too weird for my liking,” said Sam.

“Tell you what,” said Iggy. “Let us flip a coin for it. If I win, we will go to Hollywood and if you win, we will stay home.”

“I don’t know,” said Sam. “I’ve never had much luck with coin tosses.”

“That is funny. It always comes up for me.” Iggy produced a large silver coin from his pocket with an image of Santa Claus in profile on one side and a tap-dancing penguin on the other. “You call it.”

“I never get it right,” said Sam.

“Try tails,” said Iggy. “Tails never fails.”

“Actually, there is exactly a 50% chance that tails will fail,” said Yugo.

“Fine,” said Sam. “I’ll pick tails.”

Iggy flipped the coin into the air and all three elves watched as it spun in a high arc, then dropped to the ground with a clatter.

The profile of Santa Claus gleamed up from the floor. “Heads!” said Yugo.

“What do you know,” said Iggy. “Tails failed.”

Hooray for Hollywood

THAT WAS HOW IGGY, YUGO AND SAM found themselves in a flying snowmobile bound for Hollywood, California, USA.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam are elves. The sort of elves that live at the North Pole and make toys in a workshop built of candy cane logs and mint chocolate shingles. Iggy was the tallest of the three, with messy black hair that pointed in all directions. He had a long, pointed nose, pointed ears, a pointed chin and a big happy grin. Iggy was an optimistic sort who always expected things would work out for the best and for Iggy, they usually did.

Yugo was a sturdy elf, with broad shoulders, thick forearms and nimble, clever hands. His rosy cheeks were barely visible above his enormous black moustache. Yugo is the smartest of all of Santa’s elves. He understands probability and the binomial theorem and how everything in the world works. After all, he invented most of it.

Sam sat in the back seat. He was as wide as Iggy and Yugo together. He had curly red hair, a round face and a perpetual scowl. His rotund belly would have shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly, but he rarely laughed. He preferred to scowl, so that is what he did. Sam always feared the worst would happen and, for Sam, it usually did.

But even more remarkable than chubby, ill-tempered 600-year-old Christmas elves was the snowmobile in which they rode. It was Yugo’s snowmobile, of course. He built it himself over decades, modifying it with the latest in computer technology and rocketry. It was red as holly berries, with a 10,000-horsepower nuclear powered engine and a heated passenger cabin big enough for three elves and a couple of friends. Yugo sat before a large control panel with an array of switches, buttons and colour monitors. With the press of a blue button or the twist of a glowing green knob, it could skim across the snowy Arctic plain, dive into the Arctic Sea or fly high above the Arctic Circle.

Which was where Iggy, Yugo and Sam were as Yugo piloted them towards their appointment with the Casting Director of Titanic Pictures.

Sam fidgeted in the back seat.

“What is wrong?” asked Yugo. “Do you need me to adjust the heated seats? Turn on the massage?”

“You see, that’s the thing,” said Sam. “This snowmobile has heated massage chairs. And cup holders that don’t just hold a cup, they also prepare a tasty cocktail for that cup. And I can watch movies and play games on the touch screen on the back of your chair. And, if I take off my shoes, there is a machine that will give me a pedicure, which is actually really lovely.”

“So, what is the problem?” asked Yugo.

“This is a long trip. Did it ever occur to you to put a bathroom in here?”

“I am working on that,” said Yugo. “Until then, you can use the bottle.”

“What bottle?”

“There is a big bottle under your seat. You can use that.”

“The big blue bottle?”

“That is the one,” said Yugo.

“The one that had lemonade in it?”

Yugo gulped. “Had?”

“Yeah, I drank all that a while ago. I guess I have no choice, I’m going to have to use the bottle,” said Sam. “Also, I think this thing needs a new lemonade machine. The stuff in the bottle was too warm.”

Iggy and Yugo exchanged an uncomfortable look. Yugo reached down to his control panel and spun an orange dial. “Let me make you an orange whip. Something nice and cold.”

“That would be nice,” said Sam. There was a gurgling noise and then he said, “do you have another bottle?”

One hour, three orange whips and two blue bottles later, the elves found themselves gliding low into Hollywood, California. They flew past the famous Hollywood sign,¹ the Capitol Records Building and the Chinese Theatre. Tourists milled around out front, posing for pictures with Mickey Mouse and a lime green Pikachu. Even an obese Iron-Man was getting his share of photo ops.

The snowmobile touched down at the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and North Gardner Street. They rolled past a row of souvenir shops, each with oversized Oscar statues² in the window.

¹ Santa Claus once erected a sign that read **NORTH POLE** in the style of the Hollywood sign. It was built on a large snow cliff overlooking the main workshop. However, because it is painted white like the original Hollywood sign, it is virtually impossible to see.

² The correct name of the statuette presented at the annual Academy Awards ceremony is the Academy Award of Merit. The provenance of the nickname “Oscar” is uncertain, but it is believed

“We are all going to get Oscars once our movie comes out,” said Iggy.

“That would be something,” said Yugo.

“I wouldn’t count on it,” said Sam. “Those award shows are all rigged.”

Iggy just shook his head.

Yugo opened the convertible roof of the snowmobile and put on his sunglasses.

“It was silly of me to forget my sunglasses,” said Iggy.

“You are just not used to seeing the sun in December,” said Yugo.

“I could get used to this,” said Sam. “Sunshine, beaches and pretty girls everywhere. The North Pole has nothing on this place.”

“I cannot believe we are going to be in the movies,” said Iggy.

“I don’t see what’s so surprising about that,” said Sam. “I have a face that was made for the big screen.”

“The bigger the better,” said Iggy.

Yugo passed a sign that said *Titanic Pictures* and turned into a gated lot. He stopped at a guard shack.

A man in a peaked cap leaned out the window. “Welcome to Titanic Pictures. What’s your business here today?”

“We are Iggy, Yugo and Sam,” said Iggy.

“We are here to see the casting director,” said Yugo.

“We got a text message,” said Sam.

The security guard nodded and ran his finger down the list on his desk. “Ah yes. The elves. Come on in. Mr. Bawbells is expecting you.” He raised the security bar in front of the snowmobile and Yugo headed inside the lot.

“This is going to be great,” said Iggy.

“I cannot wait to get started,” said Yugo.

“I know,” said Sam. “It feels too good to be true.”

to be properly attributed to Eleanore Lilleberg, a secretary at the Academy when the award was first introduced. She said the trophy resembled a Norwegian army veteran of her acquaintance named Oscar.

Always Read the Fine Print

“ I

CAN'T BELIEVE THEY CHARGED US FIFTY-FOUR DOLLARS to park the snowmobile!” said Yugo.

Well, it does take up three parking places,” said Iggy.

“You’d think something that big would have a washroom,” said Sam.

The three elves walked across the car park and up to the entrance to the Titanic Pictures building. It was a broad four-story structure, covered entirely in gold tinted glass. The front doors slid open with a whisper as they approached.

They entered a wide lobby. The floor was made of gold ceramic tiles and gold leaf wallpaper covered the walls. Still, the wallpaper was barely noticeable as the lobby was festooned with Christmas decorations. There was tinsel and bunting and streamers and paper chains all in red and green and silver. There were large foam candy canes on either side of the electric doors and a holly green carpet led to a tall golden desk, with a row of knitted stockings draped along the top. Behind the desk sat a blonde-haired receptionist with a blouse cut down to here and a skirt slit up to there. She scrolled through her cell phone without a glance in the elves’ direction.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam walked up to the desk. Naturally, they took off their pointed caps as they were approaching a lady (elves are polite that way). When they arrived, they found the desk was taller than they were, and only a few pointed tufts of Iggy’s hair extended above the edge but were obscured by the pine boughs that lined the top. The receptionist kept scrolling, oblivious to the three little men in front of her. She raised her phone to take a selfie and then giggled as she tapped on her screen.

Iggy coughed quietly. The receptionist lowered her phone and looked around, but seeing nothing, went right back to scrolling.

Yugo coughed a little louder, but it made no difference.

Then Sam shouted, “hey toots, we’re down here!”

The receptionist leaned over the edge of the desk. Iggy averted his eyes.

“Well, aren’t you three just the cutest little things,” she cooed. “Are you lost? Where are your mom and dad? Do you want a lollipop?”

“No,” answered Iggy.

“The North Pole,” answered Yugo.

“Yes, I very much want a lollipop,” answered Sam.

“Wait a minute,” said the receptionist as she passed a lollipop down to Sam. “You aren’t boys. The middle one has a big moustache. Are you the elves?”

“Yes indeed,” said Iggy, his eyes still averted.

“Iggy, Yugo and Sam,” said Yugo. “At your service.”

“Do you have any more lollipops?” said Sam.

“Come with me,” the receptionist walked around the front of her desk. “Mr. Bawbells has been expecting you.” She led the elves across the lobby to the elevators. Her legs were so long, and her heels were so high, that the elves barely stood up to her waist, even with their pointed velvet caps. They reached the elevator, which was bordered with pine garland boughs, with red berries and ribbons tastefully woven throughout.

“Why are all of your Christmas decorations still up?” asked Iggy.

“It’s always Christmas at Titanic Pictures,” said the receptionist. “Nobody does Christmas better.”

Iggy could think of one place that did Christmas a little better than Titanic Pictures, but he was too polite to say anything.

The elevator arrived and they all stepped inside. Three verses of a muted string and horn arrangement of *Last Christmas* played on the speakers as the elevator slowly crept up to the top floor.


The elevator doors slid open, and the elves walked directly into a large office. At the far end, a stout, balding man chewing on a cigar sat behind a desk the size of a 1976 Lincoln Continental.³ He slipped out of his chair and walked across the room with his hand out. He was barely taller than the elves and the greying hair that remained on his head stuck out in all directions.

“Iggy, Yugo and Sam, I’m so glad to meet you. How was your trip?” He grabbed Iggy’s hand and shook it vigorously. “Thank you, Miss Tinzle, I’ll take it from here.”

Miss Tinzle gave a small bow and backed out of the room as the little man reached for Yugo’s hand and gripped it tightly. “I’m Bartholomew Bawbells, my friends call me Barty. You can call me Mr. Bawbells.”

He grabbed Sam’s hand and led him to a line of chairs across from his enormous desk. “Come and have a seat.” Mr. Bawbells walked around behind his desk and, with the help of a small footstool, lifted himself back up onto his chair.

³ The Lincoln Continental was a luxury automobile manufactured by the Ford Motor Company between 1939 and 2000. The 1976 model year was the biggest in a line of big cars, measuring nearly 20 feet in length and weighing in at about 3 tons.

He pulled open a drawer and lifted out a stack of papers as thick as the Sears Wish Book,⁴ which he dropped onto the center of his desk with a loud . He pushed the stack towards the elves. “Let’s get down to business.”

“What is this?” asked Iggy. He carefully lifted the first page. It was filled from edge to edge with tiny type.

“Nothing to be concerned about,” said Bartholomew Bawbells. “Just our standard contract. It’s mostly just boilerplate. The usual NDA, confidentiality, intellectual property, non-solicitation, jurisdiction and attornment. That sort of thing. Strictly standard stuff.”

“Okay,” said Iggy. “Where do I sign?”

“Hold up there, Iggy. Do you not think we should read it first?” said Yugo.

Sam riffled the pages with his thumb. “I couldn’t read this in a year. It’s filled with foregoings and notwithstanding and hereintobefores. Some of it is even written in Latin. What does *inter alia*⁵ mean? Or *res ipsa loquitur*?⁶ Or *omnia praesumuntur contra spoliatorem*?⁷ Nobody can make any sense of this gobbledygook.”

“I am sure it is fine,” said Iggy. “You heard Mr. Bawbells. It is all standard stuff.” He turned to the last page and signed *Iggy* in neat cursive.

Yugo shrugged. He understood how nuclear reactors worked, but not lengthy legal documents. But if it was good enough for Iggy, it was good enough for him. He took the pen and wrote *Yugo* beneath Iggy’s name. He passed the pen to Sam.

“I’m not so sure,” said Sam.

Barty Bawbells reached into his drawer again and pulled out another lollipop. He held it up for Sam. “There’s a sweetie in it for you once you sign,” he cooed.

Sam snatched the lollipop from Mr. Bawbells’ hand and scribbled **Sam** on the bottom line.

Mr. Bawbells gathered up the papers and slid them back into his drawer. “Now that that has been taken care of, let me tell you all about how we make movies here at Titanic Pictures.”

⁴ The Sears Wish Book was an annual catalogue issued by Sears each holiday season until it closed its doors for good in 2018. In some years it was over 300 pages thick and was something of a holiday treat itself, with children pouring over its pages to fill their own Christmas wish lists.

⁵ Among other things.

⁶ The facts speak for themselves.

⁷ All is presumed against he who despoils.

Barty's Process

MR. BAWBELLS PRESSED A BUTTON UNDER HIS DESK and a screen slid silently down from the ceiling on smooth hydraulics. He raised a little black remote control and pointed it at the screen.

“At Titanic Pictures we make movies about Christmas. We make movie magic about Christmas magic.” He pressed a button and a bright red and green slide appeared on the screen.



“Christmas movies. That’s all we do. We make fifty of them a year. The holliest jolliest movies you’ve ever seen.”

“Wow,” said Iggy. “Anything I know?”

“Absolutely,” said Bart Bawbells. “How about *The Christmas Wish*?”

Iggy shook his head.

“*Wishes for Christmas*? That was a classic.”

Iggy and Yugo shook their heads.

“*Three Christmas Wishes*?”

More head shaking.

“*The Twelve Wishes of Christmas*? That was a big hit. You must have seen that one.”

“We do not see many movies at the North Pole,” said Yugo.

“The drive in theater is closed eleven months a year,” explained Sam.

“I see,” said Barty Bawbells. “We’re working on our next classic right now. *Another Wish for Christmas*. It’s going to be a big hit.”

“What is it about?” asked Iggy.

“Same thing all our movies are about. Laughs. Romance. Christmas magic.” Barty Bawbells pressed his thumb on his remote control and a new slide appeared on the screen.

The Heroine

- **Urban professional**
- **Job/romance complications**
- **Single**
- **Estranged from small town family**
- **Disillusioned about Christmas**

“Meet our main character. She’s a beautiful woman in her early 30s. She wears great shoes. She lives in a big city. New York, Los Angeles, Chicago. Maybe even Paris, but it is expensive to shoot on location. We have plenty of big city sets on our lot.

“She has a Christmas themed name. Something like Carol or Holly or Joy. Once we called her Chrissy, which was short for Christmas, but that was a little too on the nose.

“She has some sort of professional job in a skyscraper that requires her to work long hours. Something in finance or marketing or technology. Doesn’t really matter. What matters is she just got passed over for a promotion in favour of an office rival or lost her parking spot to an office rival or lost her boyfriend to an office rival or, best of all worlds, she lost her job, her parking spot and her boyfriend to an office rival.

“She lives alone with her pet cat or dog or maybe something more exotic like a ferret or a big lizard. It has a funny human name like Lester or Norman. Her family all lives in a small town somewhere far off. She left that small town years ago to make it in the big city and never sees her family anymore.

“But the most important thing,” and here Barty pointed to the last bullet on his slide. “She doesn’t like Christmas. She won’t celebrate it at all.”

“How can that be?” asked Iggy. “How could anyone hate Christmas.”

“She just hates it. The whole Christmas season,” said Barty. “Don’t ask why, no one quite knows the reason.”

“This seems like a very sad movie,” said Yugo.

“Where are all the laughs and the romance?” asked Sam. “Where is all the Christmas magic?”

“I’m coming to that,” said Barty. He brought up the next slide.

Small Town Troubles

- **Picturesque village life**
- **Family business failing**
- **Sick parent**
- **Death in the family**

“Our story shifts to the small town that Carol or Holly or Joy left behind. We start with a wide tracking shot of a town at the edge of a pine forest. Snow is falling. We pass a sign with the name of the town, which also has a Christmas themed name, maybe, even Christmas itself, though that is a little too on the nose. Something like Cherry Valley or Bell’s Landing Snowville.

“Or Hollywood?” asked Iggy.

“That one’s taken,” said Barty. “The camera passes the sign and sweeps down a main street filled with little shops and bakeries, with children peering into the windows. We pass a couple carrying brightly wrapped packages, a man on a street corner ringing a bell and some kids in scarves run by.”

“That is more like it,” said Yugo.

“Sounds like a magical Christmas place. I feel better about this movie already,” said Sam.

“Not so fast,” said Barty. “The camera moves on to a quiet residential street with snow covered houses with peaked roofs all in a row. When the camera reaches the last house on the block, it stops on a shaking hand, writing a letter or reaching for the phone.

“Mom or Dad or Grandad has reached out to Carol or Holly or Joy to tell her that the family candy store or restaurant or hotel is in trouble. Or that Mom or Dad or Grandad are ill and need help. Or that Mom or Dad or Grandad have died and she needs to come home at once. Or, best of all worlds, the family business is failing, Mom is deathly ill, and Grandad just passed away.”

“This seems like a sad movie again,” said Iggy.

“Wait till you meet the bad guy,” said Barty, and clicked for the next slide.

The Villain

- **Rich**
- **Wants the family farm/business**
- **Wears black**
- **Sneers**
- **Hates Christmas**

“Every movie needs a bad guy,” explained Barty. “Ours is the ruthless banker or landlord or property developer who is causing trouble for the family. He’s got a name like Marley or Potter. He might even be Carol or Holly or Joy’s boss or office rival who wants to foreclose on the family bakery or the family farm or, best of all worlds, the whole town.

“He’s rich but he is miserly and wants all the money he can get for himself. He walks with a cane, not because he needs to, but because he thinks it looks cool. He always dresses in black, black velvet jackets, black silk ties and black patent leather shoes. Maybe even a black top hat. He sneers a lot. Dogs bark when he walks by.

“But the most important thing, and this part is critical, he also hates Christmas.”

“Another one?” said Iggy.

“He sounds like a terrible person,” said Yugo.

“Are there any good guys in this film?” asked Sam.

“Oh yes,” said Barty. “That’s next.”

The Hero

- **Flannel**
- **Loves Christmas**
- **Romantic complications and hijinks**
- **Helps save Christmas**

“Our co-star is a handsome fellow about the same age as Carol or Holly or Joy. He has a Christmas name too, like Nick or Klaus or Rudy, short for Rudolph. He could even be Chris, short for Christmas, but that is a little on the nose. He runs the tree farm or the bakery or the toy shop in town. He is either new in town, or he is the boy that Carol or Holly or Joy left behind. Best of both worlds,

he is both. He has great hair, a great smile, he wears a lot of flannel and he loves Christmas. The first time we see him, he is carrying a wreath or his Christmas cards or a brown paper package wrapped up with string.

“Carol or Holly or Joy will meet Nick or Klaus or Rudy by walking into him by accident, or he will dig her car out of a ditch, or he will help her up after she breaks a heel on those fantastic shoes she wears.”

“He sounds nice,” said Iggy.

“Is this the romance part?” asked Yugo.

“I hope there is not too much kissing,” said Sam.

“There will be a little kissing,” explains Barty. “But then there will be romantic complications. She will catch him hugging a pretty stranger from afar or something like that. But the stranger will turn out to be his sister or his oddly youthful and attractive aunt, and it will all prove to be an innocent misunderstanding in the end.

“During all this, there will be hijinks and together Carol or Holly or Joy and Nick or Klaus or Rudy will come up with the money or the missing deed to save the farm or the candle shop or, best of all worlds, the whole town.”

“That does sound like a good movie,” said Iggy.

“It’s a hit every time,” said Barty. “We load all this into our screenwriting computers, press a button and they print out a perfect script every time. We can even gender swap all the characters if we want. It works just as well, and we get twice as many movies that way.”

“So where do we fit in?” asked Yugo.

“I don’t see elves on any of your slides,” said Sam.

“Just one more slide,” said Barty. He lifted his remote control a final time.

Magical Helpers

- **Friendly neighbours or employees**
- **Elderly bearded man/white haired woman**
- **Twinkling eyes or smile**
- **Love Christmas**

“The best Christmas movies all have supporting characters to help show Carol or Holly or Joy the way. They might be a next-door neighbour, the proprietor of the general store or even the mayor. Best of all worlds, they have lots of different

jobs and turn up when they are least expected and most needed. They provide helpful advice, comic relief and make sure Carol or Holly or Joy discover the answer to the problem, usually on Christmas Eve and usually by mysterious means that might just be magic.”

“I suppose they have some sort of Christmas name, too?” asked Iggy.

“Not really,” said Barty. “It is always ambiguous who they really are. But if it is a man, he is chubby, has white hair and a beard and just might be Santa Claus in disguise. Or it might be the white-haired woman who runs the preschool, and who just might be Mrs. Claus. They usually disappear at the end, because they have important work to do.”

“Like delivering presents?” asked Yugo.

“Exactly,” said Barty.

“So where do we fit in?” asked Sam.

“The mysterious stranger who might be Mr. or Mrs. Claus has been done to death,” said Barty. “We need something new. And now we have it. Mysterious strangers who might just be Christmas elves. Played by real Christmas elves! This is going to be huge!”

Iggy and Yugo clapped. Sam just rolled his eyes.

Bartholomew Bawbells put a hand on Iggy’s shoulder. “Now that you understand how it all works, let’s go make a movie!”

Elves on Film

DAYS START EARLY ON A MOVIE SET. Iggy, Yugo and Sam were summoned from their trailer at 4:30 AM for hair and makeup. Actors on a movie set are often provided a trailer to give them a private space to relax between takes or prepare for the day’s shoot. In Iggy, Yugo and Sam’s case, their trailer also doubled as their accommodation since they had no other place to stay.

Iggy was already awake and waiting eagerly when the knock on the door came at 4:30. Yugo was in front of the bathroom mirror, waxing and primping his big moustache for the day. Sam was fast asleep across the middle of his bed.

Iggy answered the door and was surprised to see Miss Tinzle on the step, her hair tied back and a clipboard in her hand.

“Miss Tinzle, how nice to see you,” said Iggy. “I was expecting the production assistant.”

“I’m the production assistant on this picture,” said Miss Tinzle.

“I thought you were the receptionist,” said Yugo, who had joined Iggy in the doorway. His moustache looked magnificent.

“I do whatever Mr. Bawbells needs me to do,” said Miss Tinzle. “Today I’m the production assistant. Are you ready to go?”

“We are,” said Iggy.

“We are having a little trouble with Sam,” said Yugo.

“Not to worry. Sometimes the talent needs some help getting out of bed in the morning.” She passed her clipboard to Iggy. “Hold on to this for a moment. I’ll be right back.”

Miss Tinzle walked quickly down the trailer steps and disappeared around the corner. She returned a few moments later with an airhorn and a bucket of water in her hands.

“You fellows may want to wait outside.” She stepped quickly through the door and closed it behind her. Iggy and Yugo looked at each other as a symphony of discordant sounds echoed from the trailer. There was the shrill call of a trumpet,⁸ a great splash of water, and all followed by a good deal of shouting and cursing. Two minutes later, Sam walked through the trailer door. He was still dressed in his red and green pajamas, and his hair was soaking wet, but he was awake.

“It’s still dark outside,” said Sam.

“The early bird gets the worm,” said Iggy.

“Don’t much care for worms,” said Sam. “I’d much rather have some sausages.”

“Let’s get you down to craft services, then,” said Miss Tinzle.

The elves shuffled behind Miss Tinzle, who led them through a maze of trailers until they reached a row of tables stacked with trays of bacon and eggs and fruit and muffins and, yes sausages. Although Sam soon learned the sausages were all plant based. They were in California, after all.

From the craft table they were led into hair and makeup, where their pointed ears were concealed beneath molded prosthetics, Iggy’s pointed hair was shaped, molded and curled, Sam’s freckles were buried under layers of foundation and Yugo’s moustache was waxed and primped to a level of waxing and primping he had only dreamed of before. It was a prodigious moustache.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam, made up, styled and well fed, arrived on set shortly after 8 in the morning. It was well before Sam’s usual hour, but he had a belly full of sausages and was ready to take on the day.

The day was, however, in no hurry to take on Sam. The elves soon learned that most of their time would be spent waiting around. Before anything could

⁸ The sound of a trumpet is a ‘tantara.’ This tantara was particularly loud.

happen, the crew had to move the cameras and the props and the lights around to set up the shot. And once the director had an acceptable take, the crew moved the cameras and props and the lights around to set up the next shot. Iggy, Yugo and Sam passed most of the morning sitting in folding canvas chairs with the names of the characters they were to play stencilled on the back.

Iggy was playing Squiggy, Yugo was playing Ringo and Sam was playing Spam. Squiggy, Ringo and Spam worked for Red Furtrey, the most eligible bachelor in Winter Glen. Red was played by a former soap opera actor named Stoker Reeve. Stoker's real name was Archibald Bumburn, which would simply not do in the movies. Red was the flannel wearing proprietor of Red's Auto Repair and Preserves and Squiggy, Ringo and Spam were his unusual apprentices who had recently arrived in Winter Glen from somewhere north. They were also working on a mysterious project of their own.

The movie was called *One More Christmas Wish*, and starred Naomi Naomi as Candy Hopewell, an architect from Chicago who had returned to her childhood home at the Olde Towne Inne in Winter Glen. The Old Towne Inne had fallen into disrepair and greedy developer Rufus Baddman had contrived to have it condemned. His wrecking crew was due to arrive on Christmas Eve, right after the building inspector served his papers.

Naomi Naomi was an internet influencer and *One More Christmas Wish* was her first acting job. Although she was popular and successful at internet influencing, she was not particularly good at acting. Still, she looked great in the high heels that wardrobe had selected for her and that was probably more important than whether or not she could act.

The elves spent the day watching the other actors say their lines while they waited for their scene. So far, they had watched Red step forward to help Candy gather up her groceries after she slipped on some ice, Rufus threaten Candy and her elderly grandfather with bankruptcy and ruin and Candy break up with her boyfriend Josh in Chicago over the phone. Naomi Naomi was not convincing in any of these scenes, but her shoes looked great.

It was almost 4 o'clock when Miss Tinzle walked up to the elves, clipboard in hand, and said, "we are almost ready for you fellows. Can you wait over there by the gaffer⁹ for the best boy¹⁰ to call you?"

"Which one is the gaffer?" asked Iggy.

⁹ The gaffer on a movie set is the head electrician. The word 'gaffer' is a British expression for boss or foreman. It is likely an abbreviation of the word 'grandfather', but no one really knows for sure.

¹⁰ The best boy is the assistant to the gaffer.

“He is the one standing next to the dolly grip,”¹¹ said Miss Tinzle.

“Of course,” said Yugo.

The elves made their way past the dolly grip and stood beside the gaffer and waited for the call. And waited. And then waited some more.

A man in a baseball cap called out, “Iggy, Yugo and Sam, we need you on set.”

“Are you the best boy,” said Iggy.

“Yes I am.”

“Pleased to meet you,” said Iggy. “Usually, I am the best boy. It is always nice to meet a really good boy.”

The best boy looked at him awkwardly and then took them to meet the director, Otto Crunch. Otto had directed over forty features for Titanic Pictures to no critical acclaim whatsoever. But he worked cheap and he worked fast, so he was a favourite of Bartholomew Bawbells. He sat in the tallest folding chair on the set, with Miss Tinzle beside him.

Otto dropped down from his perch and grabbed each elf’s hand in turn. “Hi. I’m Otto Crunch,” he said. “My friends call me Cap’n. You can too, if you like.”

“Pleased to meet you ... Cap’n,” said Iggy.

“Me too,” said Yugo.

“I get it. Cap’n Crunch,” said Sam. “I’m a big fan of your work.” Cap’n Otto was pleased to hear that as he assumed Sam was speaking about his movies. Sam was, of course, speaking about the cereal.

Cap’n pointed to the spot on the set where he wanted the elves to stand. Then he said, “I’m looking for some real gusto here, boys, real gusto. Imagine you just won first prize at the elf show. That kind of winning gusto. Take it there and then give me even more gusto. I want you to give me all the gusto you’ve got.”

Sam raised his hand. “Excuse me.”

Cap’n Otto looked down from his tall folding chair and said, “Yes, what is it, son?”

“I have a note,”¹² said Sam.

“Elves don’t get notes,” said Cap’n.

“Ms. Tinzle gave you some notes,” said Sam.

¹¹ The dolly grip is the technician responsible for operating and maintaining the camera movement equipment, such as dollies and cranes.

¹² Notes are comments or suggestions given to the director by other members of the production team. Notes may refer to suggested script changes or

“Miss Tinzle is the production assistant,” said Cap’n. “She is not an elf. The production assistant gets to give notes.”

“But ...” said Sam.

“No buts about it. It’s in your contract. Elves don’t give notes.”

“But ... but ... it’s a good note,” said Sam.

“You should have read your contract, then,” said Cap’n. “Now everyone take their places.”

Sam hung his head and joined Iggy and Yugo on the set, which was the inside of Red’s auto shop. There was a car on a hoist and Stoker Reeves, playing Red, stood beneath it. The set, the hoist and the car were all made of pressed cardboard but looked completely real.

The scene was simple, it was just the elves, playing Red’s apprentices, assisting him in repairing the car on the hoist. The script read like this:

Red:

Hey Squiggy, pass me that big spanner, would ya’?

Squiggy:

This one?

(Squiggy holds up a large wrench and passes it to Ringo)

Ringo:

Wow, this wrench is almost as big as me!

(Ringo passes the wrench to Spam)

Spam:

Here you go, Red.

(Spam passes the wrench to Red).

Stoker and the elves took a deep breath. “Quiet on the set!” shouted Miss Tinzle. Cap’n pointed to Stoker. “Action,” he said.

Stoker, playing Red, smiled broadly and said, “Hey Squiggy, pass me that big spanner, would ya’?” Iggy lifted a big wrench from the tool bench. It looked heavy, but like everything else on the set it was made of pressed cardboard. “This one?” said Iggy as he passed it off to Yugo. Yugo pretended to struggle with the wrench. As he handed it to Sam he said, “wow, this wrench is almost as big as me!” Sam took the wrench.

There was a lengthy pause.

Which dragged on for rather a little while.

Everyone turned to look at Sam expectantly.

The pause continued, uncomfortably.

And still everyone waited.

“Line,” said Sam.

“Cut!” shouted Cap’n.

Miss Tinzle rushed over to pass Sam another copy of his part. Everyone got back into position and Cap’n called out, once again, “action!”

It took another thirty-seven takes for Sam to say his line correctly.

“Cut and print,” said Cap’n. He clapped his hands together. “That’s a wrap for today. I’ll see you all bright and early tomorrow morning.”

That’s a Wrap!

THE NEXT FEW DAYS PASSED IN THE SAME FASHION. An early knock on the door, followed by the airhorn and water bucket. The craft table. Hair, make-up and wardrobe. The rest of the time was mostly spent waiting around. Iggy, Yugo and Sam participated in a few more scenes: They made small talk with some of the townfolk, they waved to Candy when she passed by the Auto Shop and they cowered behind a park bench when they saw Rufus Badmann pass by, growling at dogs and making children cry. Many of their scenes showed them working at the shop on an unseen vehicle high above them on a hoist.

Early in the second week on the set, they reached the craft table to find Miss Tinzle, dressed in an apron and chef’s hat, refilling a plate of cranberry muffins.

“Hi Miss Tinzle,” said Iggy.

“What are you doing here?” asked Yugo.

“We thought you were the production assistant now,” said Sam.

Miss Tinzle smiled. “The regular chef quit. Now I am head of craft services. I do whatever Mr. Bawbells needs me to do.”

Iggy and Yugo shook their heads. Sam filled a paper plate with cranberry muffins and sausages.

Later that day they would shoot one of their most important scenes with Naomi Naomi. It came at the start of the third act. At this point in the film, Candy was not speaking with Red after she saw him at the Waffle Haus having dinner with a beautiful woman with really great shoes. It turns out that Red was meeting his cousin who was in town for Christmas, but Candy did not know that yet. Now Squiggy, Ringo and Spam had to convince her to ask Red for help fixing the boiler at the Olde Towne Inne before the building inspector arrived. The script went like this:

Candy:

The building inspector will be here tomorrow. The Olde Towne Inne is finished. There's nothing we can do! It's hopeless!

Squiggy:

Oh Candy, there is always hope at Christmas.

Ringo:

You need to talk to Red. Red can fix anything. He is the best mechanic in the world!

Spam:

Come on, Candy. We'll take you to him now!

The set was dressed to look like the street in front of Red's Auto Repair and Preserves. Artificial snow made from bits of shredded paper wafted down gently from an overhead crane.

"Action!" shouted Cap'n. He pointed to Naomi Naomi.

"The building inspector is coming! He will be here soon! We're finished! There's no hope!" said Naomi Naomi.

"Close enough," muttered Cap'n.

"Oh Candy, there is always hope at Christmas," said Iggy. A perfect take.

This time it was Yugo who struggled with his lines. He simply could not say that anyone else was the best mechanic in the world. In the end, he switched places with Sam, who was only too happy to proclaim Red the best mechanic in the world, right in front of Yugo.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam did not have many scenes after that. Candy and Red realized their misunderstanding, and, with Candy's architect savvy and Red's mechanical skill, they were able to repair the boiler and the leaking foundation walls before the building inspector arrived on Christmas Eve. The building inspector takes a cup of eggnog from Candy and tears up the order condemning the Inne. Rufus Badmann's scheme to take over the Olde Towne Inne is foiled and all the townsfolk gather in the lobby to sing 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' as the camera pulled back and the credits rolled.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam had one more scene to shoot after that. It was the last scene in the movie that played partway through the closing credits. They were back in Red's Auto Shop, under the hoist. Yugo, playing Ringo, gave a final tap with a hammer and then the elves stood back as the hoist slowly lowered to reveal that the mysterious machine they had been working on all this time was a gleaming red sleigh, made entirely of pressed cardboard.

Squiggy:

Finally finished.

Ringo:

Just in time for Christmas.

Spam:

And not a moment too soon. Here he comes!

(Zoom in on Squiggy. He turns to the camera and smiles, with a twinkle in his eye).

- FIN -

“Action,” said Cap’n.

“Finally finished,” said Iggy.

“Just in time for Christmas,” said Yugo.

“Line,” said Sam.

Twenty-three takes later, Cap’n shouted, “that’s a wrap! Thank you everyone!” The studio lights dimmed as the crew applauded.

“Now what do we do?” said Iggy.

“The shoot is over,” said Cap’n. “You can go collect your cheque at the cashier’s office.” He pointed to a door at the back of the set. The actors and crew were all joining a line outside.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam took their places at the end of the line and waited their turn. They had become quite used to waiting during their two weeks on the set of *One More Christmas Wish*.

They finally reached the door of the office and were surprised to see Miss Tinzle sitting at the desk with a green eyeshade around her head.

“Miss Tinzle! What are you doing here?” asked Iggy.

“I’m the head cashier on this picture,” she said.

“What about the craft services job?” asked Yugo.

“That was last week. I do whatever Mr. Bawbells needs me to do. This week I’m the head cashier.”

Sam rubbed his hands together. “Well let’s have it then. Give me some of that sweet, sweet cash. Now that we’re movie stars, we’ll probably need an extra suitcase to get it all home.”

Miss Tinzle reached into her drawer and pulled out a stack of candy canes that she divided into three piles. She pushed one pile towards each of Iggy, Yugo and Sam.

“What is this?” asked Iggy.

“That is what you earned on this picture. Two dozen candy canes each.”

“That cannot be right,” said Yugo.

“It was in your contract,” said Miss Tinzle. “You did read your contract, didn’t you?”

“Of course,” said Sam. He gathered up his candy canes. He was not disappointed; he had planned to spend his earnings on candy canes anyway.

Iggy and Yugo collected their candy canes. “I guess we will be on our way, then,” said Iggy.

“It was nice meeting you,” said Yugo.

“You can’t leave,” said Miss Tinzle. “You are still under contract. You must keep making movies for Mr. Bawbells.”

“How many movies are we supposed to make?” said Sam.

“It’s the standard contract,” said Miss Tinzle.

“How long is the standard contract?” asked Iggy.

“It is a lifetime contract,” said Miss Tinzle. “That is the standard contract.”

“Whose lifetime?” asked Yugo.

“Yours, of course,” said Miss Tinzle.

“But elves live for hundreds of years!” said Sam.

“You really should have read the contract,” said Miss Tinzle.

A Lifetime of Candy Canes

SO, IGGY, YUGO AND SAM MADE MORE MOVIES for Titanic Pictures. They had supporting roles in *Yet Another Christmas Wish*, *Christmas in the Bayou*, *A Bayou Christmas Wish* and *One More Bayou Christmas Wish*, among many, many others.¹³ They played helpful neighbours, helpful farmhands, helpful eagle scouts and, in a role that earned Iggy particular acclaim, helpful morticians.¹⁴

Sam got better at learning his lines and could usually perform his scene in twelve takes or less. Miss Tinzle was always around, serving muffins or doling out candy canes or throwing shredded bits of paper that looked like snow from the top of a crane. She was even the best girl sometimes. She did whatever Mr. Bawbells needed.

¹³ *Inter alia*, as it were.

¹⁴ *Tuesday Mistletoe’s Spooky Haunted Christmas*.

They often had lunch with Miss Tinzle, on those days when Barty Bawbells had her working in the commissary. They told her about their life at the North Pole, working with Santa Claus and making toys.

“I come from a northern town, too,” said Miss Tinzle. “I came to California to find my big break in Hollywood. Then I ended up at Titanic Pictures doing whatever Mr. Bawbells needed me to do.”

“Do you ever want to go back?” asked Iggy.

“I’d like to, I miss the long nights and chilly mornings. Every day in California is the same. And there is so much sand. I don’t like sand. It’s coarse and rough and irritating and it gets everywhere.”

“I hope we can get back to the North Pole someday soon,” said Yugo.

“Can I get another plate of sausages?” asked Sam.

An entire year passed in this fashion. They tried to sneak out in the snowmobile once but discovered it had been towed on account of unpaid parking charges. The parking attendant at Titanic Pictures would not accept payment in candy canes.

So, they stayed in their little trailer at Titanic Pictures. Spring turned to summer, and summer turned to fall, though it was all the same in southern California.

And what of the North Pole? Could the other elves make the toys and pack the sleigh without them? Did anyone even notice they were missing?

Iggy, Yugo and Sam had no way to know. The North Pole is a secretive place and the only way to get a message in or out is through the ordinary mail and only by writing a letter to Santa Claus himself. And those mail deliveries only happened at Christmastime.

When Christmas finally came to the backlot, and after they had finished for the day on the set of *Christmas Touchdown!*, Iggy, Yugo and Sam each sat down at the little desk in the trailer and composed their own letters to Santa, confirming the positive nature of their recent behavior and describing all their Christmas wishes.

Since fir trees were scarce and there were none to be found, the elves decorated a little palm tree. There was no chimney in the trailer, so they hung their stockings by the kitchen window with care in the hope that Santa Claus would soon be there.

“Do you think he will be able to find us?” asked Yugo.

“Of course,” said Iggy. “Santa Claus can do anything.”


“But we’ve been gone for a year,” said Sam. “He must be very cross.”

“We are on the Naughty List for sure after all of this time,” said Yugo.

“Santa would never do that to us,” said Iggy. “You will see.”

They set out cookies and a large tumbler of Elf Nog. They arranged their stockings by their stove with care. It was the closest thing they had to a fireplace. Everything was in place.

Now, the elves well knew that Santa Claus only comes when good little boys and girls are snug in their beds, with visions of sugar plums dancing in their heads. There was a saying at the North Pole: if you *don't* snooze, you lose.

But the elves had drunk their share of Elf Nog while they waited, and eaten their share of Christmas cookies, so even though they were excited for Christmas morning, all three elves were sound a-snooze when there was a gentle  on the roof of their trailer.

The little window in the kitchen was open a couple of inches, but that was enough for Santa Claus to slide in, slippery and sly as an eel. He pulled his heavy sack behind him. He selected a cookie from the plate on the table and took a bite. He cast his eyes over three elves, sleeping on the sofa.

Santa Claus took a sip of Elf Nog and then coughed gently.

Iggy awoke with a start and Yugo sprung from the couch to see what was the matter. Sam kept on snoring.

Santa Claus chuckled. “Ho ho ho.”

“You made it!” shouted Iggy.

“Of course I made it. It’s Christmas. Santa Claus always makes it on Christmas.”

“We were worried you would not come,” said Yugo. “We thought we were on the Naughty List.”

“I was not worried,” Iggy whispered.

“Ho ho ho!” Santa Claus laughed loudly, his stomach jiggling like, well, a bowl full of jelly. “Of course you are on the Naughty List.”

Iggy gasped.

“Just what in the spirit of Christmas are you three doing in California when you are supposed to be at the North Pole making toys?”

“We ... we ... we have a lifetime contract,” said Yugo.

“You already had a lifetime contract,” said Santa Claus, stabbing his thumbs at his chest. “With me!”

Iggy and Yugo looked at each other sheepishly. Sam just kept on snoring.

“I need to get this fixed,” said Santa Claus. “I can’t have my three best men sitting by the pool when there is work to be done. Who’s in charge of this circus anyway?”

“That would be Mr. Bawbells,” said Iggy meekly.

“I was not sitting by the pool,” said Yugo even more meekly.


“Barty Bawbells?” roared Santa Claus. “He was always a naughty one. Should have known he’d be trouble.”

“He is terrible,” said Iggy.

“The worst,” said Yugo.

“That’ll do, elves, that’ll do. Let’s find old Barty and sort this out. It is Christmas, after all, and I have a rather busy night ahead of me.” Santa Claus opened the trailer door. “Lead the way. And get that Sam out of bed. He’s part of this, too.”

Tails Never Fails 2.0

 AN OVERSIZED SLEIGH AND A TEAM OF EIGHT TINY REINDEER was perched on the trailer roof when Iggy stepped outside. He looked up and waved at the lead reindeer, who snorted and stomped a hoof in reply. Iggy was followed by Santa Claus, Yugo and Sam, who was still half asleep with his blanket wrapped around his shoulders.

Bartholomew Bawbells lived in a big house at the back of the backlot. The back-backlot, if you will. Iggy reached the front door and rattled the knob.

“It is locked,” he said.

“They haven’t made the lock yet that can keep me out,” said Santa Claus. He gave the knob a little wiggle and the door swung open. A startled maid was on the other side.

“Miss Tinzle!” said Iggy. “What are you doing here?”

“I’m the housekeeper,” said Miss Tinzle with a shrug. “I do whatever Mr. Bawbells needs me to.”

Santa Claus pushed past Iggy. “Get old Barty out of bed. And make it quick. I’m in rather a hurry.”

Miss Tinzle blinked twice. “You’re Santa Claus,” she said.

“Yes, I am. And I don’t have any time to waste. I’m a busy man and I haven’t got all night. This night especially. Please rouse your Mr. Bawbells at once.”

Miss Tinzle nodded and said, “right away, sir.” She rushed out of the room.

“That’s more like it,” said Santa Claus. “Nice manners. Good attitude. Lots of hustle. You three could learn a thing or two from her.”

There was the wail of an air horn and then Miss Tinzle returned, with a disheveled Barty Bawbells in tow. He was dressed in his pajamas and a heavy robe with gold trim.

“Just what is the meaning of all --,” Barty stopped mid-tirade when he recognized the big, bearded man in his foyer.

“Barty Bawbells. You always were a bad one. I left a lot of coal in your stocking over the years.”

“Oh yeah? I sold all that coal to start my movie studio,” said Barty.

Santa Claus frowned. “You have something of mine, and I would like them back. They have important work to do which they have been shirking for months. It’s a wonder I made it here at all tonight. The rest of the elves have been pulling triple shifts for months.”

Barty smiled. “You’ve come for your elves? I’m afraid that’s quite impossible. They are all under contract.”

“Rip it up then.”

“No can do, big guy. Their contract is quite unbreakable. It is iron clad. It was written by the sleaziest, shadiest, most expensive and most unethical lawyers in all of Hollywood.¹⁵ This contract is bullet proof, it is fireproof, it is child proof and it is idiot proof.” Barty paused for a moment and then added, “but perhaps we can work out a trade.”

“What sort of a trade?” asked Santa Claus.

“This is a good deal. Three for one,” said Barty. “Three little elves for one great big one. You sign a contract with me, and I’ll let these three go. Just think of the movies I could make with the real Santa Claus. I’ll make you the biggest star in history.”

“I’m already the biggest star in history,” said Santa Claus. “But I’ll make you a better offer. I’ll flip you for it.”

Santa Claus pulled a thick golden coin from his jacket. “Heads we all stay here and make movies for you; tails you rip up your unbreakable contract and the three of them come back to the North Pole with me. They owe me a good deal of overtime right now.”

“I get all four of you? Forever? You’re right. That’s too good a deal to pass up.” Barty paced around and rubbed his chin. “But I’m on to you, old man. That’s probably a trick coin you’ve got there. A coin with two heads. We can flip for it, but I get to choose and *I* choose heads.”

“Very well,” said Santa Claus and he flipped his coin up into the air. It tumbled in a high arc and then bounced right in the middle of Barty’s kitchen table, spun on its side for a moment and then clattered to a stop.

The face of the coin displayed a penguin’s tufted tail.

“Tails!” shouted Yugo.

¹⁵ And that is saying something.

“Just like I always say,” said Iggy. “Tails never fails.”

“You lose, Barty,” said Santa Claus. “Now give me my elves.”

Bartholomew Bawbells slumped down in his chair and waved Santa Claus and the elves away. They ran into Miss Tinzle on the way to the front door.

“Miss Tinzle!” said Iggy.

“Good news, we got out of our contract. We are going home,” said Yugo.

“You should come with us,” said Sam.

Miss Tinzle shook her head. “I’d like to, I really would. I’d like to go somewhere north. But I just can’t.”

“Why not?” asked Santa Claus. “We could use someone like you. Someone who can do everything.”

“And reach things on the top shelves,” said Sam.

“I’m sorry,” said Miss Tinzle. “I have a lifetime contract, too.”

Santa Claus’ cheeks grew even rosier than usual. “Barty! Get your miserable butt in here right now!”

Barty slumped into the room. “Just go away,” he said.

“I have another deal for you,” said Santa Claus.

“I don’t want any more of your deals.”

“I think you’ll like this one,” said Santa Claus, raising his thick coin again. “Double or nothing on another toss of the coin. You win; you get all of us. Santa Claus. Three elves. I win; we take Miss Tinzle here to the North Pole with us.”

Barty’s eyes lit up. “Four for one? That is a pretty good deal. What’s the catch?”

“No catch. I’ll even let you flip the coin.”

Barty snatched the coin and flipped it into the air. “This time I’ll take tails.”

The coin spun up to the ceiling.

“He took tails, Santa,” said Iggy. “And tails never fails.”

“Don’t you worry, elf, don’t you worry,” said Santa Claus.

“But what if it comes up tails?” said Yugo. “We will all be stuck here forever!”

The coin grazed the ceiling as it reached the apex of Barty’s throw and, still spinning, fell back toward them.

“I can’t bear to look,” said Sam.

The coin passed between them, then bounced on Barty’s shag carpet. It flipped over once and then again before finally coming to rest.

Iggy looked down nervously. The profile of Santa Claus looked back at him from the face of the coin.

“Heads!” shouted Iggy.

“Will you look at that,” said Yugo. “Tails failed.”

“I was never worried,” said Sam.

Santa Claus took Miss Tinzle by the hand. “Come along, Chrissy. Let’s go.”

“Your first name is Chrissy?” said Yugo.

“I thought your first name was Miss,” said Yugo.

Miss Tinzle shrugged. “Yup, I’m Chrissy. Short for Christmas.”

“Wait a minute,” said Sam. “Your name is Christmas Tinzle? That’s a little on the nose, don’t you think?”

“What can I say,” said Chrissy Tinzle. “My mom loved Christmas.”

Iggy, Yugo and Sam followed Santa Claus and Christmas Tinzle out of Barty’s front door. “How about we go best two out of three?” Barty called from behind them.

Sam slammed the door on the way out.

Merry Christmas to All and to All a Good Night



IT WAS AN EVENTFUL NIGHT. CHRISSY HELPED THE ELVES get the snowmobile out of storage and rode in the rumble seat¹⁶ with Sam to the North Pole. It was chilly, but the moon was full and gave the lustre of midday to objects below. And if Santa Claus could ride in an open-air sleigh on Christmas, surely they could, too.

Santa Claus gathered his team from the top of the trailer to finish his evening deliveries. The best boy, the gaffer and the dolly grip all found a colourfully wrapped parcel under the tree when they woke up. But not Barty Bawbells. Every one of his socks was filled with coal. Just like every other Christmas.

Christmas morning started later than usual in some parts of the world, but a merry Christmas was had by all.

¹⁶ A rumble seat is an upholstered exterior front-facing seat which is folded into the rear of an old-fashioned automobile. , It provides additional seating for another passenger or two, who have to essentially sit outside. It is not practical in rainy weather or in snowmobiles.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam had dinner with Chrissy Tinzle the following evening at the *Walrus and Ulu*. They were at their usual table near the men's room. Chrissy sat on a footstool with her knees awkwardly arranged under the table.

Iggy had a tall glass of Elf Nog, Yugo sipped on unsweetened water and Sam had finished his second Elfläger. Chrissy Tinzle was still reading the menu.

Iggy said, "usually we meet on Boxing Day to celebrate how we just saved Christmas."

"Not this year," said Yugo.

"This year we almost ruined Christmas by taking a year off without permission to star in the movies," said Sam. "Now we're on probation until next Christmas."

"And we did not even use the snowmobile. It was parked the whole time," said Iggy.

"It was Santa who saved Christmas this year," said Yugo.

"Santa is always there for Christmas," agreed Sam. "I guess that's why he's the boss."

Iggy turned to Chrissy and said, "How do you like the North Pole so far?"

"Oh, I love it," said Chrissy. "I love the lights and the colours and the music. I just wish the doorways were a little bit taller."

"What are you going to do now?" asked Yugo.

"Santa Claus offered me a job as his receptionist. I'm not so sure about that. There are not many visitors at the North Pole to receive."

"A job with nothing to do? Sounds like a dream job to me," said Sam. He gestured to the waitress for another Elfläger.

"You know what I really want to do?" said Chrissy. "I'd like to work in the toyshop. I want to make toys."

Iggy gave a wide smile. Yugo's smile was even wider. Sam waved to the waitress again.

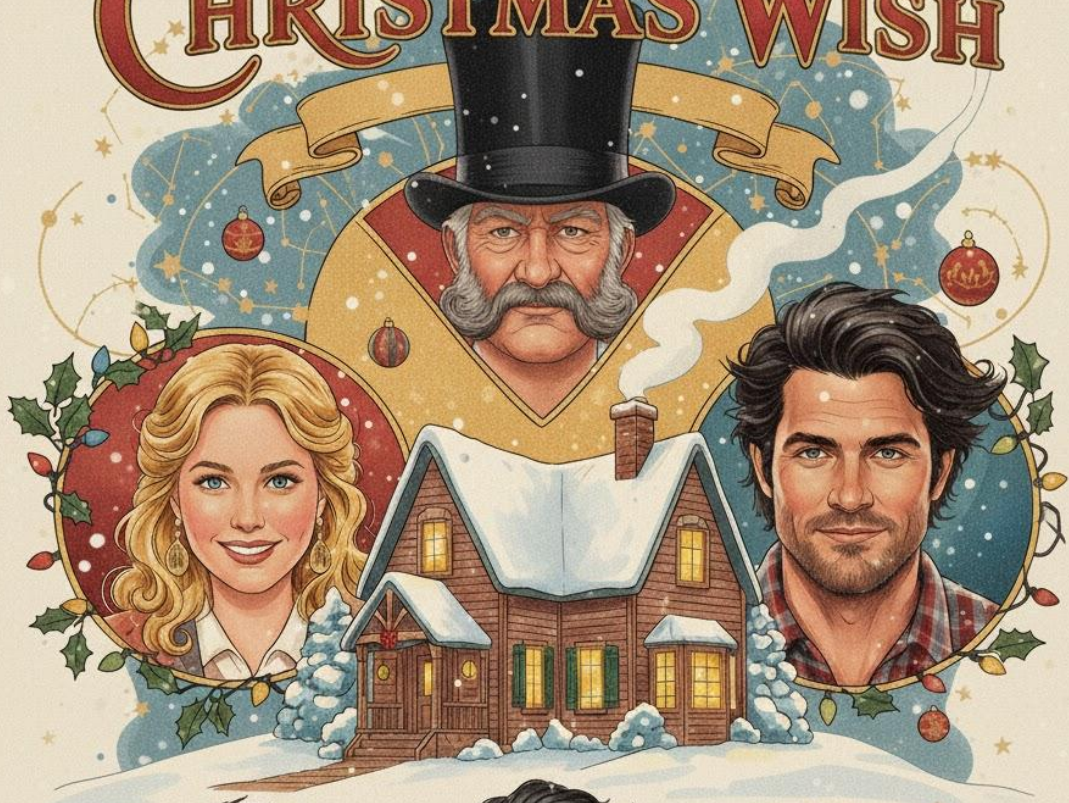
"This calls for a toast. Elflägers for everyone!"

ADDENDUM

Did Santa Claus use a trick coin in his coin flipping duel with Bartholomew Bawbells? Well, at the North Pole they say that Santa's coin had two heads *and* two tails that day.

Christmas magic is like that. Especially on Christmas Eve.

ONE MORE CHRISTMAS WISH



CASTING BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS. COSTUME DESIGNER: JENNIFER L. HARRIS. HAIR: JENNIFER L. HARRIS. MAKEUP: JENNIFER L. HARRIS. PRODUCTION DESIGNER: JENNIFER L. HARRIS. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: JENNIFER L. HARRIS, JENNIFER L. HARRIS. PRODUCED BY JENNIFER L. HARRIS. WRITTEN BY JENNIFER L. HARRIS. DIRECTED BY JENNIFER L. HARRIS.

Iggy, Yugo and Sam Will Return In:

Iggy, Yugo and Sam: Doomsday

or

Tuesday Mistletoe's Spooky Haunted Christmas

or

Last Train to Rovaniemi

or

Love is Blind: The North Pole

or

Elf on an Ice Shelf

or

Something Else Entirely



NaomiNaomiOfficial: Beutting through my Parsiae dreams! ✨

📖 New blog post New blog post about my favorite way outits & Loviels outire linked in bio! ❤️

#OOTD #Christmas Glam #Chiid:ystlam #TravelStyle #HigvelsStyyle #BlondeLife 🔥🔥

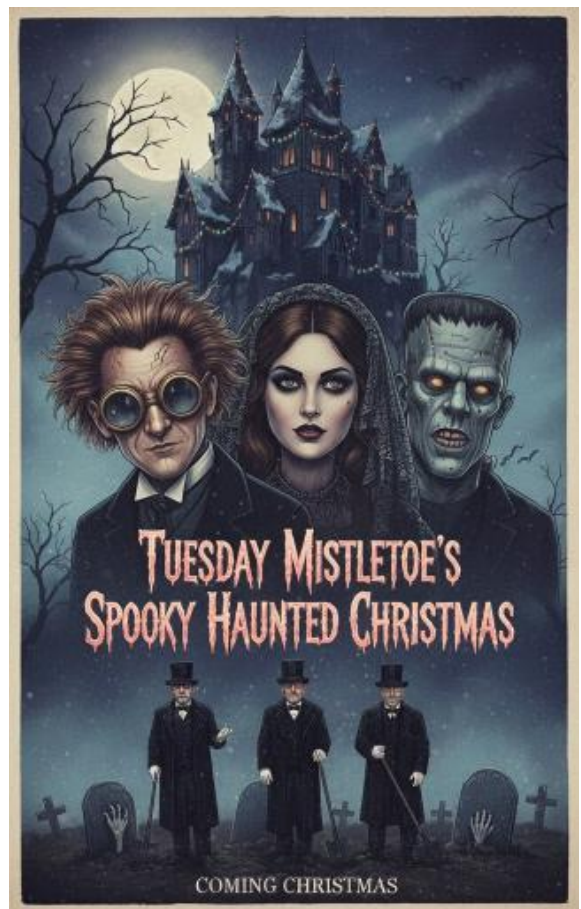


👤 Magical! You look absœluttely radiant! 🤩

COMING NEXT CHRISTMAS FROM



TITANIC
PICTURES



20 BILLION LIGHT YEARS AWAY, a silver rocket sped towards the North Pole.

The pilot was a little green fellow, no larger than an elf, with an oversized head and long thin legs. It wore thick black eyeglasses. It had no ears, so its eyeglasses were tied with a string around its enormous head. It steered the ship with four arms. Two dozen fingers danced across a wide black touchscreen, sending hundreds of directions a minute to the onboard computer.

“We are much too old for this foolishness,” muttered the green figure. “We were scheduled for retirement a thousand years ago. And now it is up to us to fix everything. As usual.”

The little green space traveller leaned back in its oversized chair. It reached down and gathered up a tray of sweets with its second right hand. It selected a sweet from the tray with its other right hand and pushed it into its prominent buccal cavity. It sucked up the sweet with a warm liquid slurp.

It lifted the large black rimmed glasses and studied the symbols that scrolled across the touch screen.

“That is satisfactory. We should arrive just in time to for their quaint seasonal celebrations. Just one more thing we have to fix.”

It lowered its spectacles and gathered up another sweet. It tapped its fingers on the screen and grinned. “We will fix it once and for all this time.”

Boglin Jinks is coming for Christmas ...



www.iggyyugoandsam.ca

Lights! Camera! Action!!

In Hollywood, anyone can be a star, even those erstwhile elves, Iggy, Yugo and Sam. But now they are trapped with no way out! Can they escape the grips and gaffers long enough to make ...

ONE MORE
CHRISTMAS
WISH

Advance praise for

ONE MORE
CHRISTMAS
WISH

I don't want anything to do with this story. Leave me out of it.

- Alan Smithee

This story is even dumber than the last one. There were no explosions or gunfights. The snowmobile is hardly in it. At least the rumble seat was wicked cool.

- Dr. James Redcliffe, age 29

Pure cinema

- Martin Scorsese