

Santa's Sweatshop

Written by

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EXT. NORTH POLE - DAY

An aerial view of the region. Breathtaking.

Vast.

Empty.

Shimmering in white.

WHUMP WHUMP WHUMP WHUMP WHUMP

A helicopter soars over the ice.

I/E. HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

ELIZA LURNER (40s) leans her head against the window,  
peering down at the white wasteland.

Even bundled up, she's a stunner. The kind of gal that makes  
men say and do stupid things, which is important for our  
story.

There's a CRACKLE of static over her headset.

PILOT (O.S.)

First time?

She looks back at the pilot with a little smirk.

ELIZA

(no duh)

How'd you guess?

PILOT

There's not much to see out here.

ELIZA

There's one thing.

The Pilot gives a slight nod.

PILOT

We're coming up on it. I'll take you  
in low, give you a view.

The helicopter SHAKES as it dips and swoops across a hill of  
ice.

Perched on the top of the hill is a large gleaming building.  
Elegant, modern, and beautifully designed.

An architectural marvel. It looks like it's made of ice. Clean lines with towering broad windows that give a gorgeous view of the ocean in the distance.

ELIZA  
Is that the workshop?

PILOT  
Nope.  
(beat)  
That's the residence.

EXT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The helicopter touches down and Eliza climbs out of it.

Her nose crinkles as she stares up at the large building before her.

Cold. Industrial. Cinder blocks and steel.

WHACK! A GOLF BALL suddenly streaks across the pale blue sky.

EXT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

An ELF CADDIE (looks 15) places a fresh golf ball on a tee.

Looming over the tee is the legend himself.

He's gone by many names, Kris Kringle, St. Nick, Santa Claus.

We'll just call him NIC (looks 50s).

Not a chubby fellow, and hardly jolly, this Santa is a man of industry.

He sports a neatly trimmed white beard, and a tight red snowsuit. The golf club he clutches in his hand is striped red like a candy cane.

Standing off to the side is a group of EXECUTIVES shivering in their parkas.

The lead executive addresses Nic, who is largely ignoring them.

EXECUTIVE  
Twenty times faster graphical  
processing.  
(MORE)

EXECUTIVE (cont'd)  
It has 64-bit architecture and gives  
a CPU speed increase of fifty percent  
over our previous model.

WHACK! Nic hooks the ball hard.

NIC  
Gawd dang it all...

He MUTTERS a series of indecipherable profanities.

EXECUTIVE  
It dwarfs anything else in the  
market.

MISSY(looks 30s)an ELF secretary, saunters over to Nic and  
hands him a steaming cup of coffee.

MISSY  
(regarding his swing)  
You're not accounting for the wind.

NIC  
I'm accounting for the wind.

MISSY  
Really? Cause it's blowing that way.

NIC  
I know which way it's blowing.

MISSY  
Then when aren't you accounting for  
it?

EXECUTIVE  
We're confident that this will be the  
best selling tablet on the market...

NIC  
It's this driver that blows. Can't  
hit straight for nothin' -- who made  
this crap?

MISSY  
We did.

NIC  
Oh.  
(then)  
It's probably the wind.

EXECUTIVE  
And we anticipate that it'll be the  
fastest selling tablet that we've  
ever launched.

WHACK!

Nic hooks the ball badly again.

Missy grimaces at the swing.

MISSY  
(dryly)  
Should we issue a recall?

NIC  
It's the wind.

EXECUTIVE  
Can we... maybe go inside?

NIC  
No.

EXECUTIVE  
We had a PowerPoint presentation--

NIC  
Cut to it.  
(beat)  
How many units?

The Executive looks a little sheepish at Nic.

EXECUTIVE  
We're aiming at five million units  
for the holiday launch.

Nic cocks an eyebrow.

NIC  
Which holiday? Flag Day?

The Executive clears his throat.

EXECUTIVE  
A delay in the development of our  
chip put a crunch on our timetable.

NIC  
Five *million* units--

EXECUTIVE  
We're coming to you because we need a  
Christmas miracle.

Beat.

Nic takes a sip from his cup.

NIC  
Ah. Well, the thing about miracles  
is... they don't come cheap.

EXECUTIVE  
We're willing to compensate.

The Executive pulls out a huge stack of bound papers from a  
briefcase and hands it to Nic.

EXECUTIVE (cont'd)  
Our proposal.

Nic slips on his glasses and flips open the file.

He gives a slight smirk.

NIC  
(sotto)  
Ho-ho-ho.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A boisterous Nic walks happily down the hallway with his  
secretary following after him. She takes notes as they walk  
and talk.

NIC  
Send the plans to the plant, and  
contact Stewie -- I want production  
on this tablet to be up and ready by  
the end of the week.

MISSY  
We're still behind on the SunCore VR  
headsets.

NIC  
That's Stewie's problem.

MISSY  
That's a *time* problem, which is *your*  
problem cause Christmas is right  
around the corner.

NIC  
I know when Christmas is, Missy. It's  
not exactly my first one.

MISSY  
Do you know how many hours there are  
in a day?

NIC  
Twenty-four.

MISSY  
Do you know how many minutes?

NIC  
Off hand?

MISSY  
One thousand, four hundred and forty.

NIC  
You did that math in your head?

MISSY  
Yes. Do you know how many minutes it  
takes to build just one tablet?

NIC  
Fewer than one thousand, four hundred  
and forty. Why are you so worried  
about the production?

MISSY  
Cause I can do math in my head.

He shoots her a look.

MISSY (cont'd)  
Remember the Samsung account?

NIC  
That was one settlement.

MISSY  
It nearly bankrupted this place.

NIC  
We've never missed a deadline.

MISSY  
Our phones exploded.

NIC  
Their design was flawed. Look, I'll  
worry about the production schedule.  
You worry about *my* schedule.

MISSY  
(not happy)  
Fine.

She glances back down at her scheduler.

MISSY (cont'd)  
You have your annual puff piece  
interview at eleven.

NIC  
Cancel it. Are the Cola people in?

MISSY  
Stuck in bad weather. The shoot's  
been rescheduled for tomorrow.  
(then)  
Also the Pope's been calling.

Nic grunts.

NIC  
Oh god.

MISSY  
Yeah, that's the idea.

NIC  
What does he want?

MISSY  
Usual, to remind you that Christmas  
is about Jesus, Mary, Joseph,  
shepherds... the Charlie Brown  
Christmas Special.

NIC  
Well I'd like to remind *him*, that  
last I checked, *he's* not been  
declared a saint.  
(then)  
Who is that?

Nic suddenly freezes.

He sees Eliza Lurner in a shapely dress, waiting in the  
reception area.



MISSY

Eliza Lurner. Your canceled eleven o'clock.

(then)

I'll get rid of her.

NIC

No!

(playing it casual)

Uh.. no, no. On second thought, I'll squeeze her in. She did come all this way after all.

Nic opens the door to the reception area and crosses to Eliza.

Missy watches.

MISSY

(dryly)

Yeah. Quite the saint.

RECEPTION

Nic extends his hand to Eliza.

NIC

Miss Lurner. I'm Santa Claus.

She shakes his hand and gives a charming smile.

ELIZA

Everyone knows who you are.

He shrugs.

NIC

Well, some people are surprised to find that I'm not some lard butt with an eating disorder.

She laughs.

ELIZA

No. Your... your butt looks fine.

She smiles at him.

His cheeks suddenly look rosey.

NIC

Shall we?

He gestures for his office.

INT. SANTA'S OFFICE - DAY

Nic pours two drinks and then circles across his desk and hands one to Eliza, who is seated in a chair.

NIC  
What everyone always wants to know  
is, how do I do it?

He leans against his desk, peering down at her with a twinkle in his eye.

NIC (cont'd)  
How do I deliver all of those toys  
across the world in a single night?  
Well I'll tell you...

He leans in close.

NIC (cont'd)  
With a little bit of magic.

He gives her a wink.

She smiles politely.

ELIZA  
I thought you outsourced it.

Awkward beat.

NIC  
Well, Santa does have his helpers.

ELIZA  
Mmmm.  
(then)  
This seems like a rather inconvenient  
place to set up your shop.

NIC  
I like the quiet.

ELIZA  
You also like the tax rate.

She gives a devilish grin.

ELIZA (cont'd)  
Listen, I know that this is usually a puff piece, but I didn't travel over three thousand miles for that.

(beat)  
We all know the myth...

She leans in a little seductively.

ELIZA (cont'd)  
I wanna know the man.  
(beat)  
You're a humanitarian. We know that. But you're also an entrepreneur. A brilliant marketer.  
(beat)  
A genius.  
(beat)  
That's what my readers should want to know about. That's what I want to know about.

He stares at her a moment.

NIC  
The truth is less romantic than the myth.

ELIZA  
Good. I'm not a romantic.

She eyes him.

BZZZT -- his intercom buzzes and he jumps in his skin.

MISSY (O.S.)  
Sir, your wife's on the line.

NIC  
(frazzled)  
My what?

MISSY (O.S.)  
Mrs. Claus.

NIC  
Oh. Her. Right.  
(to Eliza)  
Excuse me.

He circles back around his desk.

Eliza gets to her feet.

ELIZA  
You mind if I get a tour of the  
place? Ask some questions?

NIC  
Uh... well... um...

ELIZA  
Thanks.

Eliza smiles again and heads out.

Nic picks up the phone.

NIC  
Hello?

INTERCUT AS NEEDED WITH:

EXT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

MRS. HOLLY CLAUS, (looks 40s) lounges on a raft in the middle  
of a swimming pool, lazily drifting with a drink in one hand  
and a cell phone in the other.

She has deep red hair and wears a white bikini. The  
centuries, or plastic surgeons, have been kind to her.

HOLLY  
Honey, I have a great idea. I was in  
the lobby talking to this lady who  
works in social services -- or  
something like that -- and get  
this -- she actually travels about to  
different orphanages as part of her  
job. *Orphanages!*

She snorts a laugh.

HOLLY (cont'd)  
I didn't even know that they had  
orphanages anymore. Did you?

NIC  
Uh--

HOLLY

And she was showing me pictures of the kids -- they were so precious -- and so I thought we should do a raffle, or something like that, and for the winning orphanage, all the little orphans get flown out to visit Santa's workshop.

(then)

Whaddya think?

NIC

I think it's a factory. It's not a playground.

HOLLY

Oh come on, it'll be great. Like Willy Wonka's golden ticket.

NIC

Wonka? You know how many times that creep's been on the naughty list?

HOLLY

That was not substantiated.

Missy enters Nic's office.

MISSY

Duncan Fairbanks is conferencing in. He sounds angry.

NIC

(on phone)

Hang on.

(to Missy)

How angry?

MISSY

Very.

Nic frowns.

HOLLY

It'll be fun Nic. Like old times. They'll get to meet you, and the elves, and the reindeer.

NIC

I gotta go.

HOLLY  
I really think we should do this. I  
really do.

NIC  
I'll think about it.

HOLLY  
That's a yes.

NIC  
I'll *think* about it.

Nic hangs up and then turns on a large television that hangs  
on his wall.

He forces a smile as DUNCAN FAIRBANKS (60s) appears on his  
screen.

Duncan is the businessman's, businessman. Sharp, custom  
tailored suit. Neatly trimmed white hair.

NIC (cont'd)  
Duncan, how can I help you?

DUNCAN  
I hear your factory has taken on more  
production.

NIC  
That's a business arrangement with a  
business that's not yours. So, quite  
literally, none of your business.

DUNCAN  
If it effects the production of my  
headsets--

NIC  
It won't.

DUNCAN  
-- then it is my business.

NIC  
It won't.

DUNCAN  
SunCore's done a lot of business with  
you.

NIC  
And we appreciate it.

Duncan leans in closer to the camera, his face taking up more of the frame.

DUNCAN  
If those headsets are not in my  
warehouses in time for our launch,  
it'll be your head.

NIC  
We've never missed a production  
deadline. We're not going to miss one  
this season.  
(then)  
Now, I'm gonna pretend the Abominable  
Snowman got out.

Nic feigns fear.

NIC (cont'd)  
Oh no! The Abominable Snowman! Ah! I  
got to go!

He clicks off the screen.

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Nic strolls through the factory with a hard hat on,  
inspecting how things are progressing as ELVES work the  
line.

Suddenly, STEWIE (appears 30s) the goofiest looking elf,  
with a perpetually positive attitude and a permanent smile  
on his face, rushes over to Nic.

STEWIE  
Mr. C!

NIC  
Did you get the design sheets for the  
our new tablet?

STEWIE  
Oh yeah! It's really something, the  
kids are gonna love it!

NIC  
Great to hear.

STEWIE  
But uh... does that mean we're not  
doing the VR units anymore?

Nic eyes Stewie.

NIC  
Why would it mean that?

STEWIE  
Oh... well... the things is -- and you know how much we love making your toys -- but uh... well, I'm not sure we're gonna be able to make all of them in that time.

NIC  
Not with that attitude you're not. We'll just have to buckle down and work harder.

STEWIE  
Well golly, we're already working pretty hard. We're pretty buckled as is.

NIC  
Are you saying that there is no way that we could possibly do better?

STEWIE  
Well--

NIC  
How many hours do you sleep?

STEWIE  
Three.

NIC  
*Three?* Wow.

He stares at Stewie gobsmacked.

NIC (cont'd)  
Stewie, the children of the world are counting on you.

Nic places his hands gently on either side of Stewie's shoulders.

NIC (cont'd)  
You really want to let them down and ruin Christmas, because you needed three whole, long hours of sleep, every *single* day?