

SANTA'S WISH LIST

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN SKYLINE - NIGHT

Large falling snowflakes glisten.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF SUBURBAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Snowflakes land on the carpet of white that covers the brightly lit Christmas decorations.

EXT. ROOFTOP OF SUBURBAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A black-gloved-hand reaches out of a chimney and grabs the ledge, as sparkling gold dust wafts into the air.

A cough and a groan.

A second black-gloved-hand grabs the ledge of the chimney.

SANTA CLAUS, huffs and puffs, pulling himself out of the chimney with a massive red sack slung over a shoulder. In an elongated fashion, he spirals out and lands on the roof.

Santa regains his plump shape as he shakes himself down. The red sack drops from his hand and he pats himself down.

Sending gold dust bursting from his suit into the night.

Santa whistles as he glances at the surrounding rooftops.

SANTA

Prancer.

A ball of light appears. Followed by --

Nine reindeer and a regal sleigh gliding out of the light and landing on the roof.

SANTA

Time's tickin'.

The red sack lands in the back of the sleigh. He pats Rudolph on the head and jumps in.

SANTA

Let's go, boys.

The reindeer and sleigh rise several feet above the roof and shoots off. Receding into the distance, leaving a trail of silver dust, as they disappear over the horizon.

SANTA (V.O.)
Ho, ho, ho...

EXT. SKIES OVER ELLA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Thick sheets of snow fall toward the carpet of white covering the streets and vehicles below.

SUPER: ELEVEN AND A HALF MONTHS LATER OR THEREABOUTS

Snowflakes flutter down onto snow covered Christmas decorations and lights in the front yard.

Christmas lights in the shape of Santa and a sleigh.

INT. ELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A six-year-old girl, ELLA, ponytails, sits at a desk reading a scruffy handwritten letter out loud.

ELLA
Dear Santa, I would very much like
to meet you. As we didn't get to
meet last year. Thank you. Ella.

She tears the letter from the pad and runs out the room.

ELLA (O.S.)
Mom. Dad. I've done it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A mirror hangs above a roaring fireplace. As the flames of the fire flicker, shadows dance over Christmas decorations on the walls and ceiling.

Fairy lights and tinsel sparkle on a Christmas tree.

MOM and DAD, early 30s, watch a Christmas movie on TV.

Ella runs in waving the letter at them.

MOM
All done?

ELLA
Yep.

MOM
You didn't ask for anything too
silly? Did you, dear?

ELLA

Nah.

Mom rolls her eyes.

MOM

To be six years old again.

She pokes Dad.

DAD

(mumbles)

Yes, yes. Very good.

He munches on a piece of Christmas cake.

Mom goes toward the fireplace.

MOM

C'mon. Better not keep Santa waiting. They're very busy this time of year. And this letter has a very long way to go.

ELLA

How far?

MOM

All the way to the North Pole.

ELLA

Is that a long way?

MOM

A very, very long way. And I imagine Santa and his elves wouldn't be very happy if this turned up late.

ELLA

Oh.

Mom eyes the letter, as Ella steps to the side of her.

MOM

You'd better fold it over. We don't want it getting stuck. That really would be a catastrophe.

ELLA

No. No we don't.

She folds the letter in half.

MOM
Ready?

ELLA
Yes.

MOM
All you need to do is put it in
above the flames. It'll fly out of
the chimney and on to the North
Pole.

ELLA
Really?

MOM
Oh, yes. The magic of Christmas
will help it on its way to Santa's
workshop.

Ella's eyes widen with anticipation.

Mom holds out Ella's hand with the letter.

MOM
Now gently throw it in. One, two,
three, now.

Ella throws the letter into the fireplace above the flames.
Her eyes light up, as she watches it vanish up the chimney.

Ella jumps up.

ELLA
Can I?

MOM
Of course you can.

She watches Ella shoot out the entrance.

EXT. ELLA'S RESIDENCE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Ella stands knee deep in snow as she --

Beams a smile, as the letter emerges out of the chimney. It
rises into the air and flutters away into the night.

EXT. PINE TREE FOREST - NIGHT

The disc of the moon glares down on the canopy of snow
covered pine trees.

A forest road weaves its way through the trees.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

A set of headlights emerge out of the darkness as a --
CHRISTMAS HOMELAND SECURITY VAN appears.

It careens side-to-side through the snow within inches of the embankments either side.

The van heads toward the distant silhouette of a bridge.

An almighty BANG.

The van is thrown onto its side.

Sparks fly, as the van skids along the road.

It precariously comes to a stop at the edge of an embankment near the bridge.

A succession of loud thumps echo from within the van.

Ice crystals spread across the rear doors. Followed by a loud BANG. Then, the doors EXPLODE into hundreds of pieces.

The outline of someone appears in the doorway.

A pair of EYES flash blue in the moonlight.

EXT. STAR STREWN SKY - NIGHT

A STORK flies with a bundle hanging from its beak. The coos of a baby echo from within the bundle.

The Stork shakes its head, as it watches Ella's letter fly alongside it.

The baby's coos grow louder.

The Stork glances down at a cooing baby partially hidden in the bundle.

STORK
(mumbles)
There, there.

The baby quietens and falls asleep.

The Stork watches the letter recede into the distance.

STORK
 (mumbles)
 Good luck.

The Stork veers off in another direction, silhouetted against the globe of the moon.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

Moonlight glistens in the snow and ice.

A pair of shattered handcuffs lie partially hidden in the snow a few feet from the rear doors of the upturned van.

Footprints make their way around the van, over the bridge, retreating into the distance.

The static of a radio.

GRUMPY MAN (V.O.)
 (over static)
 He did what? And you let him
 escape? Imbeciles.

A large misshapen block of ice stands several feet away from the van. The contorted silhouettes of TWO UNIFORMED GUARDS stand frozen inside it.

One of the Uniformed Guards holds a two-way radio up against one of his ears.

GRUMPY MAN (V.O.)
 (over static)
 Get back here and report. On the
 double.

One of the Uniformed Guards tries to speak.

GRUMPY MAN (V.O.)
 (over static)
 Don't expect any overtime either.

The Uniformed Guard rolls his eyes toward the moon.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Christmas decorations cover the walls and ceiling.

SUPER: THE NORTH POLE

Rows upon rows of immaculately made bunk beds.

Someone snores loudly from across the room.

The occasional letter "Z" floats past a bunk bed. They appear to be coming from --

The far end of the room, as someone stirs under Christmas patterned bed covers.

A Christmas pudding shaped alarm clock and an Agatha Christie Novel (Murder on the Orient Express) sit on the bedside table.

Another letter "Z" pops out from under the bed covers and floats across the interior.

The alarm clock BUZZES, and bursts into a Christmas song.

The person under the covers moans and groans. A hand spiders out, hunts around for the alarm clock and smacks it off.

A few seconds pass.

The bed covers fly off and a disheveled, frizzy haired elf named ALFI bolts upright and glances around.

As he rubs the blurry image of the room from his eyes, he notices all the neat and well made beds.

He pats down his frizzy hair, and raises his eyebrows.

ALFI

Oh, no.

He glances at the clock.

ALFI

Oh, dear.

He hops out of bed in his wrinkled clothes, and struggles to pull his pointy shoes onto his sockless feet.

Alfi darts amongst the bunk beds, as he makes his way across the room towards a doorway.

ALFI

Oh, dear. Oh, dear.

He grabs the only green jacket and hat from a very long, empty row of wooden pegs along the wall.

ALFI

Oh, dear.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Alfi throws on his jacket as he runs along the cobbled street. He tips his hat to other elves and pedestrians as he passes them.

ALFI

Good morning. Good morning.

He passes a wonderful array of buildings and store fronts.

A "SHOEMAKERS" sign CREAKS as it swings above the humble entrance to a cobblers.

Alfi watches two tiny elves wearing nothing but fig leaves and carrying tiny hammers, clamber over all types of various shaped shoes and boots in the display window.

Alfi passes an entrance with a "CLOSED FOR THE SEASON" sign hanging above a "SANTA'S CANDY CASTLE" sign.

The entire structure is made out of candy and chocolate.

ALFI

Good morning to you. Merry
Christmas to you.

He darts past one last sign. He looks back at the wonderful sight of roller coasters and fairground rides through the padlocked gate.

He eyes the sign above the gate.

"WONDERLAND AMUSEMENT PARK"

He glances at the "CLOSED FOR THE SEASON" sign above it.

Alfi continues past more elves.

ALFI

Oh, dear. Oh, dear.

He stares at the massive red-bricked building of Santa Enterprises Incorporated away in the distance.

ALFI

Good morning. Good morning.

He tips his hat this way and that way.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - DAY

A massive multicolored "SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED" neon sign flashes red intermittently on the roof, as two gigantic candy canes spin round on either side of it.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - DAY

Hundreds of different colored conveyor belts weave and wind their way around the massive interior carrying toys of all shapes, sizes and colors.

Christmas music echoes through the building.

A dozen or so WORKER ELVES stand at workstations monitoring the conveyor belts. They bob to the music and mouth the words to the song.

The conveyor belts converge on an opening in a wall.

HOGGLERIM, a portly elf, wearing spectacles, polishes his "ELF SUPERVISOR" badge on his jacket lapel as he walks from station to station.

He shakes his head as he eyes a wall clock.

He reads a list of names on a clipboard. Every name has a red tick next to it except for one. That would be Alfi's.

HOGGLERIM

This will not do.

He marches to the center of the room.

HOGGLERIM

Everyone, everyone. Can I have your attention please. Thank you.

The elves focus on Hogglerim.

HOGGLERIM

Does anyone... and I mean anyone, know where Alfi is?

Elves shrug, and roll their eyes as they look at each other.

MUSTACHED ELF (O.S.)

In bed probably.

Hogglerim glances at MUSTACHED ELF.

FRECKLED ELF (O.S.)

Probably wetting his whistle.

Hogglерim twists around and glares at FRECKLED ELF.

FRECKLED ELF
Just saying.

Hogglерim scans the dirty floor.

HOGGLERIM
So that would be a --

ALFI (O.S.)
Sorry, sorry.

Hogglерim turns around, watching Alfi rush towards him.

ALFI
Sorry.

A red-faced Alfi dabs his brow with a handkerchief as he steps in front of Hogglерim.

HOGGLERIM
Always the joker. The comic. Why are you always late? This is the most important time of year.

ALFI
Sorry. I was reading --

HOGGLERIM
Sorry. Sorry. Instead of being sorry all the time. Why don't you pull up your socks for a change?

Alfi glances at his sockless feet.

HOGGLERIM
Be responsible. Be on time. Is that too much to ask?

ALFI
Responsible?

HOGGLERIM
Yes. Responsible.

He scans the floor.

HOGGLERIM
You can start being responsible by cleaning this floor. Fetch the mop and bucket.

Alfi shakes his head as he walks off.

HOGGLERIM
Chop. Chop.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - ANOTHER AREA - DAY

Alfi mops the floor. He wipes perspiration from his brow and catches his breath.

Hogglерim looks on from a distance.

ALFI
Is that it?

Hogglерim's eyes narrow, as he points at various spots.

A dejected Alfi rolls his eyes and sighs.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Alfi stands on his bed staring out of the window. He watches a veil of cloud pass by the moon.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Ella's letter floats against the backdrop of the moon. A gust of wind catches it and blows it upward.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Alfi uses a small flashlight in bed, as he reads the Agatha Christie novel. He scans the words on the pages and glances at the alarm clock.

He places the novel down and hops out of bed. Puts on his shoes, throws on his jacket and heads out.

EXT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

A candle flame flickers inside a lantern above a "SLEIGH AND REINDEER" sign above the entrance.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Christmas music blares from a jukebox.

Decorations cover the walls and ceiling. Rustic furniture.

JOLLY LANDLORD stands behind the bar reading the...

"WINTER WONDERLAND GAZETTE" newspaper.

A group of colorfully dressed elves play giant Jenga in one corner while another group of serious looking elves play giant chess in the opposite corner.

A small group of JOVIAL ELVES sing and clap as they crowd round a table. They watch Alfi jig and jive on top of the table, in time to the music.

Alfi takes a swig from a tankard.

JOVIAL ELVES
Alfi. Alfi.

Alfi gulps down the contents of the tankard and places it upside down on his head.

JOVIAL ELVES
Alfi. Alfi.

The main entrance door swings open and a pretty female elf named CLARICE enters as snow swirls in behind her.

She spots Alfi on the table and goes toward him.

JOLLY LANDLORD
Hey. This might be the North Pole.
But this isn't a barn.

He points at the swirling snow gusting through the entrance.

CLARICE
Sorry.

She closes the door and heads toward Alfi.

CLARICE
Alfi, over here.

She barges her way through the Jovial Elves and stares at Alfi's back.

JOVIAL ELVES
Alfi. Alfi.

Clarice pulls on one of Alfi's ankles. He shakes his foot and Clarice loses her grip.

CLARICE
Right.

She grabs a tankard from ELF REGULAR.

ELF REGULAR

Hold on a sec. That's my drink.

The Jovial Elves sing and cheer on Alfi.

Clarice climbs onto the table and stares at Alfi's back.

She taps his shoulder, taps him again. No response.

She sighs and tugs on his green waistcoat.

CLARICE

Alfi. It's your application. It's been granted. You have an interview.

Alfi continues to jive and jig.

JOVIAL ELVES

Alfi. Alfi.

Clarice isn't impressed, she stamps her feet.

Alfi spins round and Clarice throws the contents of the tankard over him. Alfi coughs and splutters, as the Jovial Elves cheer and laugh at his expense.

ALFI

Why'd you have to go do that for?

ELF REGULAR (O.S.)

Hey, that was my drink.

Clarice waves an envelope at Alfi.

CLARICE

Your application. Remember? The workshop, well, you have an interview.

ALFI

Interview? I have?

CLARICE

Yes. You have an in... ter... view.

Alfi drops his tankard, grabs Clarice and spins her round.

ALFI

Does that mean we're both going?

Clarice nods.

Alfi pecks her on a cheek.

Jolly Landlord holds up his tankard in admiration as he stares at Alfi and Clarice.

JOLLY LANDLORD
Well done, Alfi.

He glances at the headline "JACK FROST ESCAPES CUSTODY" on the front page of the newspaper.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - DAY

The neon sign on the roof flashes red.

INT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - HALLWAY - DAY

A "HOGGLERIM, ELF SUPERVISOR" sign hangs on a door.

INT. HOGGLERIM'S OFFICE - DAY

A glass cabinet full of cups and trophies stands in a corner.

"ELF SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR" is engraved on one of the cups.

A copy of the "Winter Wonderland Gazette" lies on a desk. The headline about Jack Frost lies partially hidden under a clipboard.

Hogglерim takes a sip from a mug, as he peers over the rim of his glasses at the clipboard.

A wall clock chimes -- 2:55 PM.

Hogglерim jumps up, grabs the clipboard and exits.

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Hogglерim makes his way down a small wooden staircase.

He glances at a large wall clock.

The time changes to 3 PM.

A klaxon blows.

Two large doors open and several troops of elves trundle in.

Each one of the elves makes their way to a table dotted about the floor with partially made toys on them.

Hogglерim eyes the elves, ticking names off on the clipboard.

HOGGLERIM

That's what I like to see. All
present and accounted for.

A Christmas song blasts out the speaker and the elves sing along to it.

Hogglерim makes his way amongst the tables and elves. He eyes the toys on each of the tables as he passes them. He goes toward TALL ELF.

TALL ELF

Everything to your satisfaction,
Mr. Hogglерim?

HOGGLERIM

Indeed it is.

He glances at a "17 Days until Christmas" sign on a wall as he makes his way to the exit.

Hogglерim claps his hands to get the attention of the elves.

HOGGLERIM

As long as there are no unforeseen
problems. We should hit delivery
day right on schedule. Keep up the
good work everyone.

He leaves and the elves return to their work.

INT. WHITE HALLWAY - DAY

Christmas music plays from speakers on the ceiling.

The walls are covered in Christmas paintings and pictures. Multicolored fairy lights and other Christmas regalia hang from the ceiling.

Alfi leans forward from behind a Christmas tree. He sits alone on a white chair next to the Christmas tree. For every white chair there is a Christmas tree next to it.

Alfi scans the Christmas tree, white chair, Christmas tree, white chair arrangement along the wall.

This goes on for as far as the eye can see until finally stopping at a doorway.

Alfi gulps, as he stares at the "KRIS KRINGLE, HUMAN RESOURCES" name plaque on the door directly in front of him.

The doorknob turns and the door swings open.

Clarice, and KRIS KRINGLE, 40s, wearing a white suit with a frilly red shirt shake hands.

KRINGLE

Welcome to the team.

Clarice steps toward Alfi.

ALFI

So?

CLARICE

I got the transfer. Now it's your turn. This is your big chance. Don't mess up.

She pecks Alfi on a cheek and walks off. Alfi watches her disappear through the door at the opposite end.

KRINGLE

Time's tickin', Alfi.

Alfi scans Kringle's white suit as he goes toward him.

Kringle throws an arm over Alfi's shoulders as they enter his office. The door closes behind them.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

According to your application. You're looking for more responsibility.

ALFI (V.O.)

That's right.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

I see you're a fan of mystery novels.

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

The wheels of the "Christmas Homeland Security" van screech to a stop as it pulls alongside the curb.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

I do like a good mystery. Keeps you on your toes.

The silhouettes of the Two Uniformed Guards sit in the cabin, peering out at main street.

A radio crackles static.

GRUMPY MAN (V.O.)
(over static)
Check everywhere... and I mean
everywhere.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - DAY

Christmas music plays in the background.

Huge steel doors slide open.

Kringle and Alfi enter.

Kringle admires the different colored conveyor belts that weave and wind around the interior.

Elves stand at workstations, and monitor the different shaped toys, as they make their way along the conveyor belts.

Kringle watches toys disappear through the hole in the wall.

KRINGLE
So, this is where you started.

He glances at Alfi.

KRINGLE
I can see why you put an
application in to move. It's all a
little mundane, isn't it?

He watches the elves go about their work.

KRINGLE
We really need to improve the decor
in here. It's all rather drab and
dreary. Wouldn't you say? Could
do with a makeover.

Alfi shrugs.

KRINGLE
C'mon, this way.

He marches off and Alfi chases after him.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - ANOTHER AREA - DAY

Kringle and Alfi stand at a red door. Alfi reads the
"SANTA'S WORKSHOP" sign on the door.

Kringle pulls out a key card and slides it through a reader.

A light above the door flashes red, then green.

A buzzer sounds, the sound of a lock clicking open.

KRINGLE

Welcome to the base of operations.
Shall we?

ALFI

Golly. Yes, please.

He beams a smile as the door slides open.

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The red door closes behind Alfi and Kringle. They stand at the top of the small wooden staircase.

A Christmas song blares out from a speaker on the wall.

Alfi's eyes light up, as he watches Elves at their workstations sing along to the song.

Elves paint toys while others put toys together.

A blue suited elf sits in front of a large machine with hundreds of lights.

Lights flash different colors across the machine as the elf pushes buttons and turns dials.

A conveyor belt springs to life, chugging out various colored and shaped toys.

KRINGLE

Without the toys. Where would we
be? Eh?

Alfi follows Kringle down the staircase. They go towards a large unmanned workstation. Alfi notices a conveyor belt that runs from the table and disappears through a hole in a wall.

KRINGLE

This is your station. There's an
instruction manual and guidebook
that you can read through.

He pulls out the INSTRUCTION MANUAL AND GUIDEBOOK from a drawer located under the workstation and places it on the counter top.

KRINGLE

It's pretty straight forward.
The parts for this particular unit
come in on this here conveyor belt.
All you need to do is put them
together. Place the unit back on
the conveyor belt and it will be
collected at the packaging depot.

ALFI

How do I get the conveyor belt to
work?

Kringle hits a green button on the side of the workstation.
The conveyor belt buzzes to life.

KRINGLE

All we ask in return. Is that
you're punctual, and turn up for
your shifts. And carry out your
work to a very high standard.
Otherwise --

ALFI

Otherwise what?

KRINGLE

Ever heard of synchronization?

ALFI

Can't say that I have?

KRINGLE

Exactly. Don't you worry. As long
as you're as keen as you say you
are. There'll never be a problem,
I think... I hope.

He moves in time to the Christmas song blaring out the
speaker and starts mouthing the words.

KRINGLE

Oh, dear. I'd better get back.
This music is very catching.

He jigs and jives as he heads toward the entrance. He does a
little dance number as he reaches the doorway.

ALFI

Mr. Kringle, I won't let you down.

Kringle spins around on the spot and does a little tap dance.

KRINGLE

I have every confidence in you.

He pulls out his key card, slides it through the reader and the door slides open.

ALFI

One more thing, who's my supervisor?

Kringle waves at Alfi, as he steps backward through the entrance. Disappearing from view.

Alfi watches the red door slide closed. He grabs the manual and watches the conveyor belt disappear through the hole in the wall.

He punches a red button on the opposite side of the table and the conveyor belt jolts to a stop. He hops onto the stool and opens the manual.

The other elves glance at Alfi and continue with their work.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - NIGHT

Kringle steps toward the front of the huge machinery and glances around.

He watches toys make their way along conveyor belts and scans elves at their stations.

Kringle whistles. Catching the attention of the elves.

The conveyor belts screech to a stop, and the elves turn towards him.

KRINGLE

Does anyone know where the Key Master is?

The elves murmur amongst themselves. They point at a green door away in a corner of the room.

KRINGLE

Thank you. You may continue.

He goes toward the green door and steps in front of it. He eyes the "SECURITY ROOM. AUTHORISED PERSONNEL ONLY" sign.

He raps his knuckles on the door. Waits. Knocks again.

Door locks click and the door swings open. A weathered looking KEY MASTER ELF stands in front of Kringle.

His long gray beard dangling over his waistcoat.

KEY MASTER ELF

Hi, boss.

KRINGLE

Key Master Elf.

KEY MASTER ELF

Come in. Come in.

He shuffles away as Kringle follows him in.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Key Master Elf steps in front of a yellow button on a wall.

He glances at the open entrance.

KEY MASTER ELF

Sorry to trouble you, Mr. Kringle.
But could you... ah...

He rubs the back of his neck.

KRINGLE

Rub your neck?

KEY MASTER ELF

No. No. The door. Lock the door.
Please.

KRINGLE

Oh, my. Silly me. You'd think
after all these years. That I
would've learned by now that you're
a stickler for the rules and
regulations.

He darts over to the door and shuts it.

The locks click into place.

KEY MASTER ELF

Rules and regulations that you
entrusted to me. Remember? You
can't be too careful.

KRINGLE

Yes. Yes, indeed. You're quite
right. You can never be too
careful.

Key Master Elf presses the yellow button.

Several spotlights emerge from the corners of the ceiling. The floor rumbles, a large square panel in the floor slides away, revealing a square hole.

A glass cabinet on a marble pedestal rises out of the hole. A scroll sits on a plump red cushion on the middle shelf of the cabinet.

The spotlights flood the cabinet in light.

KRINGLE

If you'd do the honors.

KEY MASTER ELF

Absolutely.

He shuffles toward the cabinet. Removes a chain from around his neck and stares at two gold keys.

He rubs his back.

KEY MASTER ELF

One-hundred and fifty-six-years-old
am I. It is time for you to pass
on this responsibility to another.

Kringle wipes away a tear as he watches Key Master Elf. He steps toward the cabinet.

Key Master Elf holds one of the gold keys against the glass cabinet and a lock appears. He slots the key into the lock and turns it.

A glass panel opens.

Kringle places a hand on one of Key Master Elf's shoulders.

KRINGLE

But who should we trust with such a
magnitude of responsibility?

He reaches into the cabinet, pulls out the scroll, and partially unrolls it. His eyes dart over a list of names that run down the parchment.

KEY MASTER ELF

They must be good of heart.
Honest, trustworthy --

KRINGLE

I know my friend. I must hold a
meeting with the big guy.

EXT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

The sign swings back and forth over the entrance.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

Perhaps one that has yet to prove themselves.

Laughter and cheers echo from inside.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

A hive of activity. Christmas music plays.

Elves dance, sing and cheer.

Jolly Landlord looks on from behind the bar counter with a frothy tankard in one hand.

Alfi and Clarice sit at a table. They both drink from tankards, chatting over the singing and music.

CLARICE

So, what's it like? Is it as fantastical as they say?

ALFI

Well... it's a lot more colorful than the D.C. That's for sure.

CLARICE

That wouldn't be too difficult. The D.C. runs the presents through to our department. That's all it does.

She takes a swig.

ALFI

We have all our separate stations --

CLARICE

Is it fun?

ALFI

It's okay. Don't get me wrong. But I think the place is lacking something. Needs some kind of oomph. The others, they sing and dance in their breaks, but... They all take it very, very seriously.

CLARICE
Who's your supervisor?

ALFI
There's only one supervisor.

He takes a long swig.

CLARICE
Hogglерim, that blowhard.

She glances around.

CLARICE
At least he never comes here. We
should be thankful for that.

ALFI
I'll drink to that.

Alfi and Clarice raise their tankards and toast.

INT. HOGGLERIM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hogglерim sits behind his desk reading an application form.
His eyes dart over the job title at the top of the page.

"KEY MASTER ELF POSITION"

He dips a quill in a pot of ink and scribbles on the
application form.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Jolly Landlord hands Alfi and Clarice a tankard each.

INT. HOGGLERIM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hogglерim licks an envelope and seals it.

He goes toward a glass tube that travels up the wall and
vanishes through a hole in the ceiling.

He pulls out a glass ball-shaped-capsule with the name "KRIS
KRINGLE" on it.

He opens up the glass ball, places the envelope in it and
closes it.

He inserts the glass ball into the glass tube, hits a button
and watches it get sucked upward and vanish.

Hogglерim beams as he rubs his hands together.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - DAY

The Two Uniformed Guards stand outside the entrance. They watch the neon sign on the roof flicker and the two candy canes spin round.

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Christmas music plays in the background.

The doors slide open and the elves trundle in.

Alfi's workstation is empty.

Hogglерim watches the elves from the top of the wooden staircase. He peers at a list of names on his clipboard and ticks them off one by one.

He shakes his head as he stares at Alfi's empty station. He claps, as he makes his way down the staircase.

HOGGLERIM

Does anyone know where our new recruit, Alf --

Alfi bursts in covered in snow, almost knocks over Hogglерim.

HOGGLERIM

Late again. What do you have to say for yourself this time?

ALFI

Better late than never.

HOGGLERIM

This will not do. Wait until Mr. Kringle hears about this.

He writes "LATE" next to Alfi's name on the clipboard.

ALFI

I'm a few minutes late. Big deal. Take a chill pill, will you.

HOGGLERIM

Do you want the good children of this world to miss out? Just because you believe it's better to be late than never.

ALFI

That's not what I said.

Alfi pats down his hair.

HOGGLERIM

No. But you imply it with your
slack attitude. Take a look
around.

He points at the robotic singing elves at their stations.

HOGGLERIM

Don't see them slacking.

ALFI

Neither do you see them letting
their hair down.

Hogglерim steps towards Alfi's station and hits the green
button. The conveyor belt bursts to life.

HOGGLERIM

Christmas draws near.

He points at the sign on the wall.

"7 days until Christmas"

Hogglерim goes toward the staircase and climbs the steps. He
addresses the elves.

HOGGLERIM

As you're all aware. The position
for Key Master Elf will be
available soon and I've put my name
forward. So I'd ask that you all
do your very best from here on in.

Elves stop what they are doing and murmur amongst themselves.

Alfi perks up.

ALFI

Key Master?

Hogglерim glares at Alfi.

HOGGLERIM

Nothing to trouble yourself with.

Alfi watches Hogglерim leave. He claps as he scans the elves.

ALFI

Okay. Who's up for a little fun?

The elves roll their eyes.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - DAY

A large Christmas tree sparkles in a corner. Christmas music plays from ceiling-mounted speakers.

Kringle sits behind his desk nodding as he reads Hogglerim's application form.

He peers over the top of the application form at Hogglerim seated opposite.

HOGGLERIM

I don't believe this. The number of hours I've put into this place over the years. And for what? For you to tell me that the person for this position will be randomly picked out of a hat.

KRINGLE

I'm sorry, Harvey. The boss feels that everyone should get an equal crack at the Key Master role.

He places the application form on the desk.

HOGGLERIM

You realize that once they get it. There's no way of getting rid of them.

KRINGLE

Unless they change their mind or do something to put Christmas in jeopardy.

Hogglerim gasps.

HOGGLERIM

Sheer madness. What happens if a newbie gets it? What then?

KRINGLE

That's a little sore. You were a newbie once. Need I remind you or had you forgotten?

Hogglerim mumbles under his breath.

HOGGLERIM

Now that you mention it. I can't believe you've given Alfi a position in the workshop. Especially after all the commotion he caused in the distribution center last year.

KRINGLE

A few hiccups.

MONTAGE - ALFI'S INCIDENTS IN THE DISTRIBUTION CENTER

-- Alfi balances a bucket of paint over a doorway.

-- Hogglerim enters, and the bucket of paint falls on him.

HOGGLERIM (V.O.)

Is that what you call it?

-- Alfi puts SUPER GLUE on a stool.

-- Alfi traps Hogglerim in a bathroom stall.

-- Alfi tries to stifle a laugh, as he watches an elf slip on a banana peel and go head over heels.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - DAY - BACK TO SCENE

Kringle leans against his desk.

KRINGLE

Give him time to settle in. I'm sure he'll turn his hand to the work in no time at all.

HOGGLERIM

There's no time to settle in. There's less than a week to go.

Kringle goes toward a red filing cabinet. He places Hogglerim's application form in a drawer.

KRINGLE

All elves go through a period of mischievous behavior at some point. You were young once. And I'm sure a year has made him more mature. Besides...

MONTAGE - ALFI MISBEHAVING IN SANTA'S WORKSHOP

-- Alfi ties a bow round the beard of an elf and attaches it to a present.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

He can't be that bad, can he?

-- Alfi places whoopee cushions under several elves as they sit down.

-- Alfi speeds around the room in a motorized toy car.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - DAY - BACK TO SCENE

Hogglерim shakes his head, not convinced.

HOGGLERIM

He's been constantly late since he took up the position, and an irritant.

KRINGLE

An announcement will be made tomorrow.

Hogglерim leaves.

Kringle pulls out a snow globe from a drawer and shakes it.

An image of Alfi appears at his workstation. He sings along to a Christmas song with the other elves.

Kringle shakes the snow globe and the image vanishes. He smiles as someone knocks at the door.

KRINGLE

Come in.

The Two Uniformed Guards enter.

Kringle's smile fades, as he looks at their "CHRISTMAS HOMELAND SECURITY" badges on their jackets.

INT. COLORFUL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Kringle stands on a stage with his back towards a long red curtain. As he addresses a large crowd of elves, his eyes fall on Clarice and Alfi standing at the front.

The elves whisper amongst themselves.

Clarice and Alfi stand next to FAT ELF.

Hogglirim stands at the back near the exit.

Kringle speaks into a microphone.

KRINGLE

I want to thank you all for coming.
I'll be as quick as I can. As I
know you are all extremely busy.
It saddens me to announce that the
current Key Master Elf is stepping
down from his role after many years
of service --

FAT ELF (O.S.)

Get on with it.

The elves laugh.

KRINGLE

All right, all right. To cut a
long story short. The Key Master
position is now available. To make
it fair to everyone, we are holding
a random selection. The elf that
is drawn will be awarded the
position of Key Master Elf.

He clears his throat as he glances behind him.

KRINGLE

Key Master.

Key Master Elf appears from behind the curtain and shuffles
toward Kringle.

An array of mechanical beeps and clicks can be heard from
behind the curtain.

The crowd of elves look on intently.

A large bingo style contraption emerges from behind the
curtain, as Two Red-Faced Elves push it towards Kringle and
Key Master Elf.

The contraption rolls to a stop and Kringle eyes the two out
of breath elves.

KRINGLE

Thanks, boys. Much appreciated.

The Two Red-Faced Elves leave the stage and join the rest of
the elves.

Hogglarim looks on.

Key Master Elf taps some buttons on the contraption and it rumbles to life. They watch hundreds of silver balls tumble inside the barrel-shaped cage as it spins.

The crowd of elves gasp and look on in amazement.

ALFI

Wonder what it's doing?

CLARICE

Quiet.

ALFI

Sorry.

Kringle punches a button on the control panel. The contraption chugs and blows out steam and smoke and the barrel stops spinning.

One of the silver balls drops out from an opening and Kringle picks it up. He hands it to Key Master Elf.

Key Master Elf splits the silver ball in half and stares at a piece of parchment lodged in one side. He removes the piece of parchment and opens it up.

He reads "ALFI" written on it.

His eyes go to Kringle.

KRINGLE

Well, don't keep us in suspense.

Key Master Elf coughs and splutters.

KEY MASTER ELF

It gives me pleasure to pass on
this coveted role to --

The sound of a drum roll echoes from speakers on the ceiling.

KEY MASTER ELF

It gives me pleasure to --

The crowd of elves mutter.

FAT ELF (O.S.)

Speak up.

KRINGLE

Here.

He hands Key Master Elf the microphone.

KEY MASTER ELF

The position goes to... Alfi. Is Alfi present?

Kringle and Key Master Elf observe the elves as they chuckle and laugh.

Hogglерim watches Key Master Elf, and glances at Alfi. His eyes fill with rage. His face turns beetroot red and smoke billows from his ears.

Kringle scans the elves.

KRINGLE

Alfi. Don't be shy. Come on up here and accept this wonderful role.

He spots Alfi and motions him to join him on the stage.

Clarice nudges Alfi forward.

CLARICE

Go on.

She pecks him on a cheek and pushes him toward the stage. He runs toward the stage, up the steps and joins Kringle and Key Master Elf.

ALFI

I don't know what to say.

KRINGLE

Just say you'll accept.

Alfi turns toward the crowd of silent elves.

ALFI

I... I accept.

KEY MASTER ELF

Well done. My boy.

The elves cheer and throw their hats in the air.

Hogglерim storms toward the entrance.

HOGGLERIM (V.O.)

This is an outrage. What a travesty. A total humiliation. Well, it won't last. I'll have that role yet.

He exits.

Key Master Elf hands Alfi the chain with the two gold keys.

Alfi's eyes light up as he examines the chain and keys.

KEY MASTER ELF

Look after it, boy. Look after it.

The elves cheer.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - DAY

The Jovial Elves sing and bop along to Christmas music.

Elves from the previous night play giant Jenga, and chess.

Jolly Landlord balances on a rickety chair near the bar and raises his tankard to the patrons.

JOLLY LANDLORD

Would everyone make a toast to Alfi. The newest recruit to take on such a prestigious position.

MERRY ELF holds up her tankard.

MERRY ELF

Hear, hear!

JOLLY LANDLORD

Everyone, please raise your tankards. Here's to Alfi.

Elves raise their tankards, as they dart toward Clarice and Alfi at a small table.

ELVES

Here's to Alfi. Hip, hip, hooray.

They guzzle down their drinks.

Clarice and Alfi scan their audience.

CLARICE

You'd better soak it up. I can honestly say that it's not often that you get fifteen minutes of fame. Apart from when you're playing the joker.

Alfi raises his tankard toward the elves.

ALFI

I am humbled. Thank you. Thank
you all.

The elves cheer and go back to their business.

ALFI

Thanks for your vote of confidence.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Alfi and Kringle stand at the side of the glass cabinet,
staring at the scroll on the plump red cushion.

ALFI

If this is the good list. Where is
the naughty list kept?

KRINGLE

The Coal Giver takes care of that.

ALFI

Coal Giver?

MONTAGE - CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS ARE FILLED

-- Red Christmas Stockings with a name and number move along
a motorized conveyor track.

-- A mechanical hand opens each of the stockings.

-- A second mechanical hand drops a lump of coal into each
Christmas stocking as they move along the mechanical track.

-- COAL GIVER ELF, wearing a black-sack-cloth suit scans a
list of names and numbers on a clipboard and crosses them off
one by one.

-- Coal Giver Elf watches snow fall through a window.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Kringle stares at the scroll.

KRINGLE

Coal Giver Elf is in charge of the
Naughty List and distribution of
coal to all the naughty children.

ALFI
Does the Naughty List have a
security room?

Kringle laughs.

INT. HOGGLERIM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hogglерim stares at the headline in the Winter Wonderland Gazette.

"Jack Frost Escapes Custody"

KRINGLE (V.O.)
Who would want to steal the naughty
list?

Hogglерim glances up and smirks.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Ella's letter emerges out of a fluffy cloud. A gust of wind catches it and blows it down toward the iceberg covered sea.

EXT. ICEBERG COVERED SEA - DAY

Ella's letter darts between icebergs.

Penguins slide down an iceberg and dive into the water.

EXT. CARRIER PIGEON DEPOT - DAY

Pigeons in a large walk in cage coo.

Hogglерim grins as he tickles the neck of a plump SEEKER PIGEON in ELF CLERK's hands.

HOGGLERIM
How much?

ELF CLERK
Five candy sticks.

HOGGLERIM
And you're sure he's reliable? He
looks a little on the heavy side.

The pigeon coos.

ELF CLERK

Never you mind that. This is the best and fastest Seeker Pigeon we have. If it's a message you want delivering, then this here bird is the one you want.

Hogglерim ponders this.

HOGGLERIM

I'll... I'll take it.

He hands Elf Clerk five multicolored candy canes.

Elf Clerk scans "Santa Enterprises Incorporated" etched into one of the candy canes.

ELF CLERK

Do you work at Santa's workshop?

HOGGLERIM

Indeed, I do. Now, if you don't mind?

Hogglерim places a small slip of paper in a tiny satchel located under the pigeon's belly.

HOGGLERIM

What now?

ELF CLERK

Just tell him who you want the message delivered to. And he'll be on his way.

Hogglерim takes the pigeon. He turns away from Elf Clerk and whispers to it.

The pigeon perks up.

ELF CLERK

Let him go.

Hogglерim releases the pigeon.

It struggles to stay in the air.

HOGGLERIM

I thought you said --

ELF CLERK

Wait for it.

They watch the pigeon's wings speed up and down.

ELF CLERK

Wait for it.

The pigeon rises into the sky. Like a rocket, it shoots off into the distance leaving behind a trail of smoke.

HOGGLERIM

Whoa.

ELF CLERK

What did I tell you?

The trail of smoke retreats over the horizon.

EXT. PINE FOREST - NIGHT

The moon glares down.

Streaks of moonlight burst through the canopy of branches and hit the ground.

The streaks of moonlight hit the partial silhouette of JACK FROST sitting on his throne made of ice and snow.

Moonlight bounces off the throne and spreads a rainbow of color across the surrounding snow.

The plump seeker pigeon swoops down from above and heads for Jack Frost's silhouette.

Jack Frost snaps his head towards the pigeon as it lands on his knee. He picks it up.

JACK FROST

Hello there, my little feathered friend.

He notices the tiny satchel under the pigeon's belly as it freezes in his hand.

Jack frost jumps out of the chair and his eyes flash a bright blue. As he walks away from the throne, the snow crunches under his feet.

He waves his hands like a magician, exploding into a whirlwind of snowflakes and rises skyward.

INT. PACKING AND DELIVERY AREA - NIGHT

Clarice walks toward a "REINDEER STABLES" sign.

EXT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Alfi scurries through the snow toward the entrance.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Christmas music plays.

Elves banter and laugh amongst themselves.

Alfi bursts in, stamps his feet and goes toward Jolly Landlord at the bar.

ALFI

One of your finest tankards. Kind sir.

JOLLY LANDLORD

How goes you, Mr. Alfi?

ALFI

I shall tell you after I've satisfied my thirst. Good man.

Jolly Landlord hands Alfi a tankard overflowing with froth. He takes a long, long swig.

ALFI

Thank you kindly, good sir.

He goes toward the group of Jovial Elves. As he approaches the Jovial Elves, he bumps into a disguised Jack Frost.

He's wearing a woolly hat, long coat and a long scarf wrapped around his face. Only his blue eyes are visible.

Jack Frost leaves frozen footprints on the floor.

ALFI

Excuse me.

JACK FROST

(hisses)

You're excused.

He pushes past Alfi.

ALFI

How rude.

As Alfi continues toward the Jovial Elves, he glances back and notices the frozen footprints on the floor.

EXT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Hogglерim scurries toward the entrance.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Alfi and the Jovial Elves sing and dance together.

The front door swings open and Hogglерim stumbles in.

Bewildered patrons and wide-eyed elves stare at him.

Hogglерim goes toward Jolly Landlord.

JOLLY LANDLORD

What brings you to these parts?

HOGGLERIM

Just a tankard of ale.

He scans the interior and notices Jack Frost waving at him.

HOGGLERIM

You'd better make that two tankards.

JOLLY LANDLORD

Yes, sir.

He places two tankards on the counter.

JOLLY LANDLORD

That'll be two candy sticks please.

HOGGLERIM

How much?

JOLLY LANDLORD

Two candy sticks, please.

Hogglерim reluctantly drops two candy canes on the counter and grabs the two tankards. He crosses to Jack Frost and sits down opposite him.

Alfi tries to obscure his face as he watches Hogglерim.

Hogglерim slides the tankard toward Jack Frost.

HOGGLERIM

What's with the disguise?

JACK FROST
I'm on the run from the
authorities.

HOGGLERIM
Oh, yes. Good point.

JACK FROST
My thirst does not require
quenching.

He touches the tankard and it freezes.

HOGGLERIM
Nice trick.

JACK FROST
What exactly do you want? Speak.

Alfi watches mist spill over the rim of the frozen tankard.

HOGGLERIM
Well, there's something I'd like
you to do...

TIME LAPSE

- Hogglerim and Jack Frost chat.
- Patrons and elves dance to music.
- Alfi observes Jack Frost and Hogglerim.
- Hogglerim and Jack Frost shake hands and exit.

LATER

Jolly Landlord picks up the tankards from the table where
Hogglerim and Jack Frost were sitting.

JOLLY LANDLORD
I'll be.

Alfi comes alongside Jolly Landlord.

ALFI
What?

JOLLY LANDLORD
It's frozen solid.

Alfi's eyes widen, as Jolly Landlord shows him the frozen
tankard of ale.

Alfi glances at the melting footprints on the floor.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

A small residence lodged between a row of very large houses looks out of place.

EXT. SCROOGE'S SMALL RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A rusted gate hangs off its hinges. A weed infested walkway leads up to a weathered door.

INT. SCROOGE'S SMALL RESIDENCE - SMALL STUDY - NIGHT

EBENEZER SCROOGE, sits at a desk in front of a slightly ajar window. The flame of a candle flickers on the windowsill.

Scrooge scans numbers on a writing pad. He scribbles down some numbers and scrutinizes them.

SCROOGE

That can't be right.

RAT-A-TAT-TAT at the front door.

SCROOGE

What now?

RAT-A-TAT-TAT at the front door.

Scrooge stares at his weathered reflection in the window.

Cheery carol singers sing a song outside.

Scrooge gets up and grabs a walking cane.

SCROOGE

Wretched carolers. Do they have nothing better to do with their time? Than to annoy people.

EXT. SCROOGE'S SMALL RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Several cheery CAROL SINGERS stand outside the front door.

CAROL SINGERS

We wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a...

The front door swings open.

An irate Scrooge appears, waving his cane.

The Carol Singers look on bewildered as they whisper amongst themselves.

SCROOGE

Should I suffer this torment every year? There is nothing to be happy about. What poppycock.

CHEERY CAROL SINGER steps toward him.

CHEERY CAROL SINGER

We offer you good tidings, sir. To wish you well during this time of giving and sharing --

SCROOGE

What? Giving... sharing. I will not listen to such hogwash and silliness.

He waves his walking cane at Cheery Carol Singer. She gasps as she retreats into the group of carol singers.

SCROOGE

Be off with you. Do you hear me? Get off my property at once.

He slams the door.

Wide-eyed Carol Singers stamp their feet as they look on.

Cheery Carol Singer ushers the group toward the gate.

CHEERY CAROL SINGER

Come on people. I thought they were joking when they said he was grumpy. What an awful old man.

The not so Cheery Carol Singers recede down the sidewalk.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Scrooge ambles toward the entrance to the small study.

Bright white light bursts from the entrance to the small study and bounces off the walls.

Scrooge gawks at the light as he approaches the study.

INT. SMALL STUDY - NIGHT

Scrooge stands at the entrance bathed in white light.

The walking cane clatters to the floor. He shields his eyes.

SCROOGE

Who... what are you?

He watches icicles form over the door frame.

Footfalls crunch ice.

Scrooge peers between his fingers, watching a blurred image of Jack Frost approach.

SCROOGE

What do you want from me?

INT. ROUND ROOM - NIGHT

A wiry-framed CHRISTMAS PRANKSTER, late 20s, wearing a black suit and cape stands in front of a glass orb on a pedestal.

He stares at an image of Alfi in Santa's workshop.

Double doors swing open and Scrooge hobbles in.

Prankster waves a hand. The image turns to a smoky haze. He turns toward Scrooge.

PRANKSTER

This is going to cost you, big time.

Scrooge steps in front of Prankster.

SCROOGE

Perhaps this task is too large. Maybe we're wasting our time.

PRANKSTER

No task is too large. It's just, you're talking about --

JACK FROST (O.S.)

Ho, ho, ho.

Prankster watches icicles shoot up the door and along the ceiling. The floor becomes an ice rink.

Footfalls crunch the ice.

Prankster's breath crystallizes and falls to the floor.

JACK FROST (O.S.)

The big red guy. I know, but think of it like this. The world famous Christmas Prankster takes out Christmas. Think about the media coverage alone, you'll be worth millions.

Jack Frost struts in, carrying two large money bags in either hand. His white shoes crunch the ice covered floor.

JACK FROST

Perhaps this will ease your conscience.

Hundreds of gold coins clatter against the floor, as he empties the money bags.

Scrooge's eyes light up as he watches the money.

JACK FROST

With the help of my esteemed colleague, there should be plenty here.

SCROOGE

My life savings is that. But, if it means one less Christmas, so be it.

Prankster picks up a gold coin.

PRANKSTER

What exactly do you want?

He runs the gold coin across the top of his fingers.

JACK FROST

Well, there's this list as you know. We'd like you...

EXT. SKY - DAY

Hundreds of letters flutter through the air.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - DAY

The letters arc downward and split into two lines.

They disappear down two huge metal cylindrical tubes that protrude out of the slated roof.

INT. RADAR ROOM - DAY

RADAR CONTROLLER ELF monitors a radar.

Hundreds of blips move across the screen and converge on a square titled "Santa Enterprises Incorporated."

The blips vanish.

Kringle appears behind Radar Controller.

KRINGLE

All done?

RADAR CONTROLLER

I think so, Mr. Kringle.

He pushes a few buttons on a control panel. A faint blip makes its way across the radar screen.

RADAR CONTROLLER

Mr. Kringle, I hate to worry you.
But there's still one more to come.

Kringle stoops toward the screen. Watches the blip.

KRINGLE

How long?

RADAR CONTROLLER

Hard to tell. Looks like it's
having trouble with its trajectory.

The blip zig-zags across the screen.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Ella's letter flutters against the wing of an aeroplane.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

There's always one.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Two glass pipes make their way down a wall that overhang two large wicker baskets.

The wicker baskets are marked "GOOD" and "NAUGHTY".

Letters tumble down the glass pipes into the wicker baskets.

Letters spill over the rim of the "GOOD" wicker basket.

LIST MAKER ELF sits at a desk. He scribbles on the scroll from the security room. He grabs a pile of letters from the "GOOD" basket and dumps them on the desk.

He opens the letters and scribbles on the scroll.

MONTAGE - LIST MAKER WORKS

-- List Maker scribbles on the scroll.

-- List Maker grabs a pile of letters from the "GOOD" basket.

-- List Maker scribbles the last name on the scroll and rolls it up.

-- Alfi enters. List maker hands him the scroll.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

List Maker picks up a small pile of letters from the wicker basket marked "NAUGHTY." He heads toward the table and sits. He opens up the letters and scribbles in a weathered scroll.

INT. COAL HOUSE - NIGHT

List Maker enters.

He flicks a switch on the wall. A dirty light bulb bursts to life. He eyes the drab, dirty interior, and the piles of coal scattered across the floor.

A glass cabinet similar to the one in the security room stands in the middle of the floor.

List Maker approaches the cabinet and opens a panel.

He places the weathered scroll on a soiled display cushion and closes the panel.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Alfi closes the panel on the glass cabinet.

The lock vanishes.

He eyes the scroll in the cabinet.
Heads toward the entrance.

Alfi places the chain with the two gold keys around his neck. There's a rumble and the cabinet sinks into the hole.

And the floor panel slides into place.

A KNOCK at the door. Alfi opens the door to Kringle.

KRINGLE

Alfi, how's it going?

ALFI

Very good, Mr. Kringle. But I don't understand why there needs to be all this security.

KRINGLE

Neither do I. Neither do I. But the big guy insists on it. In all my years, not once has anything ever happened to Santa's Wish List. But that's not to say something won't. You just never know.

He throws an arm around Alfi and they exit.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

As elves sleep, they snore in the tune of a Christmas song.

Alfi reads "Murder on the Orient Express" in bed.

His eyes dart across the words.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - NIGHT

The wiry frame of Christmas Prankster darts in and out of the shadows as he crosses the floor.

His long black cape flutters behind him as he glides across the floor like a spectre.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Alfi yawns and stretches.

He places the novel on the bedside table next to the chain and two gold keys.

He flicks off the spotlight, lies down and falls asleep.

The letter "Z" floats from Alfi's mouth and joins the rest of the "Zs" floating around the room. He snores a Christmas tune in time with the other elves.

The wiry silhouette of Prankster glides between bunk beds.

The Christmas Prankster checks the face of each elf with a flashlight, as he moves between each bunk bed.

He stops at Alfi's bed. He grabs the chain and gold keys and heads for the entrance.

INT. COAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Christmas Prankster's wiry hand flicks on the light switch.

He taps the light bulb as he walks toward the cabinet.

Eerie shadows dance over the walls and ceiling.

Prankster eyes the "NAUGHTY" scroll on the weathered cushion. He pulls open the panel and reaches inside.

The Coal Giver hides in the shadows as Prankster removes the scroll from the cabinet.

The Christmas Prankster flamboyantly raises his cape, does a twirl and heads for the entrance.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Prankster stands in front of the glass cabinet under the glare of the spotlights.

He removes the gold key and the lock vanishes.

He goes toward the yellow button on the wall and pushes it. The glass cabinet descends into the floor.

The floor panel slides across as he exits.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

The chain and gold keys are back on Alfi's bedside table.

INT. RADAR ROOM - DAY

Radar Controller watches the blip on the radar screen and grabs a phone.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kringle speaks into a phone.

KRINGLE

What's the E.T.A?

RADAR CONTROLLER (V.O.)

Should be arriving shortly, Mr.
Kringle.

KRINGLE

That's fantastic news. I'll let
the List Maker know that he'll need
to update the Wish List.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Ella's letter weaves and darts its way between fluffy white clouds. It flutters down and heads toward the distant outline of Santa Enterprises Incorporated.

A white dove comes alongside the letter.

A small camera sits on top of its head and eyes the letter.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - DAY

List Maker watches Ella's letter on a view screen. He pushes a button on a panel.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - DAY

The two huge metal cylindrical tubes extend out of the roof.

Ella's letter swoops down and glides towards one of them.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - DAY

List Maker speaks into an intercom.

LIST MAKER

It's almost here, Mr. Kringle.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

I'll be there shortly.

List Maker watches Ella's letter tumble down a glass tube and land in the "GOOD" wicker basket.

He sighs with relief and picks up Ella's letter.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Alfi reads the Agatha Christie novel in bed.

INT. HOGGLERIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Hogglерim stands behind his desk. He eyes a list of names on his clipboard. He focuses on Alfi's name.

Kringle's voice comes over a speaker.

 KRINGLE (V.O.)
 Would the Key Master meet me in the
 List Maker's office.

Hogglерim eyes the Jack Frost escaping custody headline at the top of the newspaper.

An evil grin spreads across his face, as he folds the newspaper and drops it in a waste basket.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Clarice plumps herself down at the foot of Alfi's bed.

 KRINGLE (V.O.)
 (over speaker)
 For one last pick up.

Clarice watches him flip a page.

 CLARICE
 Duty calls.

Alfi peers over the top of the novel.

 ALFI
 What?

 CLARICE
 Weren't you listening? The
 announcement. Mr. Kringle wants you
 to go to the List Maker's office.
 Pickup or something. Chop, chop.

 ALFI
 Oh.

He places the novel down.

 CLARICE
 Yeah, oh. Get a move on.

Alfi hops off the bed. Dashes toward the exit.

Clarice jangles the chain with the two gold keys.

Alfi stops at the door and pats himself down.

CLARICE
Forgotten something?

Alfi darts toward her.

CLARICE
A Key Master isn't much good if
they don't have keys.

Alfi grabs the keys.

ALFI
Thanks.

Clarice shakes her head as she watches him run off.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - DAY

List Maker sits at his desk and reads Ella's letter.

Kringle enters.

KRINGLE
What's the verdict?

LIST MAKER
It's good to end on a happy note.

KRINGLE
When has Christmas ever ended on a
sad note?

List Maker waves the letter above his head. Kringle snatches it out of his hand. He raises his eyebrows as he reads Ella's letter.

A breathless, red-faced Alfi enters.

LIST MAKER
Better late than never, eh?

Alfi props himself up against the door.

ALFI
Sorry. Sorry.

KRINGLE

Glad you could make it. The final letter just came through. So I'm going to need access to the security room.

LIST MAKER

You don't want me to write the name in?

KRINGLE

No. Not necessary. I'll take care of it.

(to Alfi)

C'mon, you. Time's tickin'.

He brushes past Alfi as he exits.

Alfi rolls his eyes.

INT. ROUND ROOM - DAY

A look of confusion sweeps across the faces of Jack Frost and Scrooge. They glare at the Christmas Prankster.

Jack Frost slaps himself on the forehead.

JACK FROST

You did what?

PRANKSTER

Swapped them over.

JACK FROST

The plan was to cause as much chaos as possible. To hopefully shut down Christmas.

PRANKSTER

As long as they don't find the scroll. Christmas will be in chaos.

Prankster considers what he's said.

PRANKSTER

At the very least. Santa's workshop will be in chaos. I bet my black cotton socks on that.

He hitches up his black pants. They eye his black socks.

SCROOGE

Why didn't you just take the scroll? Wouldn't that have been easier?

Disbelief washes over his face as he shakes his head.

PRANKSTER

I'm the Christmas Prankster, right? If you wanted the scroll to disappear, then perhaps you should've hired the Christmas Thief.

A slack-jawed Jack Frost and Scrooge look at him.

JACK FROST

If you want something done, do it yourself.

He goes toward the exit.

JACK FROST

Let's hope you're right.

He exits.

SCROOGE

My life savings was that. If you fail, I shall demand a full refund.

PRANKSTER

Refund.

Prankster stifles a laugh.

SCROOGE

Something amusing?

PRANKSTER

Take a look at the contract.

He pulls out a sheaf of parchment. Hands it to Scrooge.

PRANKSTER

You didn't read the small print. No refunds. Now, be on your way.

Scrooge's eyes scan the parchment. He scrunches it into a ball and tosses it at Prankster.

SCROOGE

Outrageous.

He shuffles toward the entrance.

PRANKSTER

Scrooge by name. Scrooge by nature.

He cackles.

PRANKSTER

Good day to you.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - DAY

Alfi and Kringle watch the glass cabinet rise out of the hole.

Alfi's gaze shifts to the floor. He notices small traces of black dust on the wooden panels leading up to the cabinet.

The cabinet stops rising and clicks into place.

They go toward it.

Kringle's eyes widen. Shock and panic washes over his face.

KRINGLE

Quickly. The cabinet. Open the cabinet.

He edges in front of the cabinet.

ALFI

What's the matter, Mr. Kringle?

KRINGLE

It can't be. It's just not possible.

He eyes the weathered scroll on the plump red cushion.

KRINGLE

Hurry, hurry.

Alfi opens the cabinet.

Kringle pulls out the weathered scroll.

He unrolls it as he paces away.

KRINGLE

This cannot be.

He unrolls it some more.

KRINGLE

Oh, no.

The scroll hits the floor and unrolls.

Alfi darts over to the scroll and kneels next to it.

His eyes dart over the long list of names.

ALFI

Oh, dear.

He scans the title at the top of the list.

"SANTA'S NAUGHTY LIST"

KRINGLE

Alfi, where is the good list?
Without the good list. There can
be no happy Christmas for the
children.

Alfi peers inside the cabinet.

He notices speckles of fine, black dust on the glass shelf.

ALFI

Mr. Kringle --

KRINGLE

Do not speak. You are, were in
charge of this room. What do you
have to say for yourself?

ALFI

You don't think I had anything to
do with this?

KRINGLE

I don't know what to think. But
Christmas is in jeopardy now. This
matter must be put before the other
elves.

Kringle paces back and forth.

KRINGLE

A vote must be taken as to what
should happen to you.

ALFI

This isn't my fault. If only you
take a look at --

KRINGLE

I ask that you return to your living quarters.

ALFI

Mr. Kringle --

KRINGLE

Alfi, please.

Alfi reaches into the glass cabinet and presses his thumb into the black dust.

KRINGLE

Before you leave. I'll need to take the keys.

Reluctantly, Alfi hands him the chain and gold keys.

KRINGLE

I'm sorry, Alfi.

He picks up the scroll as Alfi sprints away. Kringle rolls up the scroll as he goes toward the glass cabinet.

He notices a spot of black dust as he places the scroll on the cushion.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Alfi wipes the black dust off his thumb into a tissue and pockets it in his waistcoat.

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Hogglерim scans the elves at their workstations. He watches them sing along to a song.

The music stops.

KRINGLE

(over speaker)

Would the Elf Supervisor please come to my office immediately. I repeat, would the Elf Supervisor please come to my office.

The elves glance at each other.

HOGGLERIM

Keep up the good work. Not long now.

He glances at the sign on the wall.

"2 Days Until Christmas"

The elves watch Hogglerim run up the staircase and exit.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kringle sits behind his desk tapping his pen.

A knock at the door.

KRINGLE

Come in.

Hogglerim enters.

HOGGLERIM

You wanted to see me, Mr. Kringle.

KRINGLE

Please.

Motions him to sit.

KRINGLE

Looks like you were right.

HOGGLERIM

I'm sorry, Mr. Kringle. I don't follow.

KRINGLE

I should've listened to you. I think making Alfi the Key Master, was probably a miscalculation on my part.

He gets up, walks around his desk.

KRINGLE

We have an emergency. I don't really know how to say this. So I'll tell you straight. The Good Wish List... is gone.

HOGGLERIM

Gone?

KRINGLE

I'm afraid so. It has been replaced with the Naughty List.

HOGGLERIM

Oh, that's just terrible, terrible news. What are you going to do about Alfi?

KRINGLE

Put it before the other elves. Have a general consensus and a vote of confidence.

Kringle slumps into his chair.

HOGGLERIM

What about the position of Key Master? You're going to need a replacement. Someone to fill that role.

KRINGLE

That's a bit of a strange question to ask. What's going to happen to Christmas?

He gets up.

KRINGLE

You shouldn't be worrying yourself about the Key Master position. You have enough on your plate.

He steps in front of Hogglerim.

KRINGLE

But since you asked. Here.

He pulls out the chain and two gold keys. Hands them to Hogglerim.

KRINGLE

Although, I don't see the point. As the list is missing.

HOGGLERIM

Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Kringle, you won't regret this.

KRINGLE

I already do. How's the big guy going to take it? We must find that Wish List.

HOGGLERIM

First things first. You must get rid of that incompetent elf, Alfi.

Kringle's eyes narrow as Hogglerim gets up.

HOGGLERIM

You won't regret this. No siree,
Mr. Kringle.

He goes toward the exit with a huge grin plastered across his face. He eyes the keys in his hand as he leaves.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Alfi sits alone at a table. He takes a long swig from his tankard as he scans the interior.

Jolly Landlord stands behind the bar holding up his tankard towards Alfi.

Alfi forces a smile and holds up his tankard.

Clarice approaches and sits down opposite Alfi.

CLARICE

Cheer up, Mr. Long Face. It might
never happen.

Alfi buries his head in his hands.

ALFI

It already did.

CLARICE

What? I can't hear a word you're
saying.

Alfi peeks between his fingers at Clarice.

ALFI

It already happened.

CLARICE

What are you talking about? You're
not making any sense.

ALFI

What am I going to do? I'll be the
laughingstock, ridiculed.

CLARICE

Did you drop a bucket of paint on
Hogglerim again? You remember how
he reacted last time, don't you?

Alfi takes a swig from his tankard. Gulps down the last dregs and places it on the table.

ALFI

That would've been better.

CLARICE

Please tell me.

ALFI

It's not that I don't want to. I just can't. You'll hear about it soon enough.

CLARICE

What will I --

Alfi jumps up and runs toward the exit.

CLARICE

Hear about what? Hey, Alfi.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Alfi sits in bed and watches the other elves sleep.

Letter "Zs" float around the room and vanish.

He grabs the Agatha Christie novel off the bedside table and turns on his light.

TIME LAPSE

-- Alfi flicks through the pages of the novel.

-- Alfi closes the novel and places it on the bedside table.

-- Alfi turns off the light.

-- Alfi lies down and falls asleep.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kringle stares at a "Christmas Eve" sign on the wall as he steps toward his desk. He eyes a bright red button with the words "PRESS ONLY IN EMERGENCIES" under a translucent cap.

KRINGLE

I think this qualifies as a major catastrophe.

He flicks open the cap. Punches the button.

A red flashing light emerges out of the ceiling.

A siren WAILS.

A robotic voice comes over the speaker on the ceiling.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Will all elves meet in the
auditorium. Will all elves meet in
the auditorium.

Kringle stuffs a Christmas pudding shaped earplug in each of his ears.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Red lights flash on the ceiling.

The siren wails.

Elves stumble out of their beds and bump into each other. They stagger and fall as they struggle to put on their clothes and shoes.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Will all elves meet in the
auditorium. Will all elves meet in
the auditorium. This is not a
drill.

GRUMPY ELF throws a shoe at the siren. It bounces off the siren and hits Tall Elf on the head.

TALL ELF

Hey, watch where you throw those
things.

Grumpy Elf struggles to pull on his jacket.

GRUMPY ELF

What's going on? Has Santa lost
his suit?

Tall Elf throws the shoe at Grumpy Elf.

TALL ELF

How would I know?

Alfi sneaks a peek from under his bed covers.

He watches the chaos as elves fall over each other as they scramble out the entrance.

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Red lights flash on the ceiling. Sirens wail.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Will all elves meet in the
auditorium. This is the final
announcement. Will all elves meet
in the auditorium.

Hogglерim stares at the "Christmas Eve" sign on the wall.

He spins round. Scanning the workstations as he goes toward
the entrance.

The siren silences.

The red lights retract into the ceiling.

INT. COLORFUL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Kringle stands at the front of the stage. He watches elves
pile in and sit down. Clarice enters and scans the area.

Elves murmur and whisper amongst themselves.

KRINGLE

I want to thank you all for coming.
Unfortunately, I have some very
grave and terrible news.

Hogglерim appears behind Kringle.

The murmuring grows louder.

KRINGLE

It has come to our attention that
the Wish List that is so much
relied upon this time of year has
apparently gone missing.

Elves burst into a raucous.

FAT ELF (O.S.)

What do you mean by missing?

KRINGLE

Exactly that. It's no longer in
the security room.

PANICKED ELF (O.S.)

Without the scroll, how will the
toys be delivered?

KRINGLE

We have the Naughty Scroll.

FAT ELF (O.S.)

Are you suggesting that the big guy delivers the toys to the naughty children? I don't think he'll go for that.

Clarice shoves a hand in the air.

FAT ELF (O.S.)

What does the Key Master have to say about this?

INT. WHITE HALLWAY - DAY

Alfi stands at the entrance to the auditorium. He stifles a gasp by throwing his hands over his mouth.

KRINGLE (O.S.)

I believe he is innocent. But he is still responsible for the safe keeping of the scroll. So I put it to you to decide the fate of Alfi. Should he remain or should he go?

A dejected Alfi shakes his head.

INT. COLORFUL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Clarice waves, tries to get Kringle's attention.

CLARICE

Excuse me. Excuse me. Mr. Kringle, sir.

KRINGLE

Please, everyone. Try and keep the noise down.

The elves hush down.

KRINGLE

Clarice.

CLARICE

Couldn't you just write a new list?

The elves burst into a raucous.

KRINGLE

Quieten down. That would be impossible. That list has been compiled throughout the year. To ask the List Maker to create a new list, well, it's never been done.

INT. WHITE HALLWAY - DAY

Alfi runs toward a doorway.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

It's an impossible task.

Alfi exits.

CLARICE (V.O.)

So, that's it? Give up and banish Alfi.

INT. COLORFUL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Kringle stares at Clarice.

KRINGLE

I never said give up.

He glances at Hogglerim.

KRINGLE

Inform the List Maker to crack on with a new list.

HOGGLERIM

Mr. Kringle, is that wise?

KRINGLE

Some names will be better than no names.

HOGGLERIM

If you insist.

KRINGLE

I do, I do.

Hogglerim scurries away.

KRINGLE

Sorry to burden you all with this sad news. You may go.

Elves whisper amongst themselves as they leave.

FAT ELF (O.S.)

Let's go see what that Alfi has to say for himself.

PANICKED ELF (O.S.)

Where is he anyway? Has anyone seen that troublesome elf?

FAT ELF (O.S.)

Probably has his nose stuck in a book. C'mon.

Clarice approaches Kringle.

CLARICE

You don't honestly believe that Alfi had anything to do with this?

KRINGLE

I don't. But my hands are tied. Whether he's to blame or not. The spirit of Christmas is in jeopardy.

INT. ELF LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Elves crowd around Alfi's bed.

Grumpy Elf pulls back the bed covers to reveal a couple of pillows. The elves gasp and murmur amongst themselves.

GRUMPY ELF

Looks like this horse has bolted.

TALL ELF (O.S.)

What?

GRUMPY ELF

Oh, well. Guess he realized he wasn't welcome anymore.

He scans the bed.

GRUMPY ELF

C'mon people. There's work to be done.

PANICKED ELF (O.S.)

Work?

GRUMPY ELF

There's still packing to be done.

The elves turn and trundle out.

Clarice drops down from a top bunk and goes toward Alfi's bed. She searches the bed and finds the Agatha Christie novel under a pillow.

On closer inspection, she discovers a piece of paper lodged in the back pages of the novel. She pulls out the piece of paper and studies it. Her eyes light up.

EXT. SMALL HILL - DAY

Alfi shoulders a bindle as he ambles along a cobbled path.

In the background, smoke billows from chimney stacks dotted across the roof of Santa Enterprises Incorporated.

INT. REINDEER STABLES - DAY

A row of nine reindeer stalls. Each one has a name plaque on the gate. "Prancer, Dancer, Dasher, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen, and Rudolph"

Clarice approaches Rudolph's gate and pats him on the head. She holds the piece of paper in her hand.

Elves dart past her carrying presents. Others push trolleys loaded with presents.

CLARICE

What am I going to do?

Kringle walks alongside her.

KRINGLE

I suggest you find Alfi and listen to what he has to say.

CLARICE

Do you know something?

KRINGLE

Only that Alfi needs your assistance and that time grows short.

He points at a wall clock.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - DAY

Alfi sits alone in a corner.

Elves whisper amongst themselves as they stare at him.

Alfi takes a long swig from his tankard.

ALFI

Good sir.

He waves his tankard at Jolly Landlord at the bar.

ALFI

May I have another.

Jolly Landlord pours a tankard and slams it on the bar.

Alfi crosses to the bar. He fishes in his pockets. Pulls out the lining.

ALFI

Oh, dear. It appears that --

JOLLY LANDLORD

No need to trouble yourself, lad.
I can see you're in a bit of a
bother.

ALFI

Why, thank you, kind sir.

Alfi grabs the tankard and goes toward the table.

Clarice bursts in. She goes toward Alfi. Grabbing him as he tries to sit down. Spilling his drink over him.

ALFI

Can my day get any worse? I have
no more candy canes. Out of work
and out of candy.

CLARICE

You wanted to see me, remember? Or
did you make this stuff up?

ALFI

Stuff?

CLARICE

Yeah. The stuff you wrote on this.

She pulls out the Agatha Christie novel with the piece of paper tucked inside it. Places it on the table.

CLARICE

You remember then?

Alfi slaps himself on the forehead.

ALFI

Well. Strictly speaking. I left it behind on purpose. Didn't think anyone would believe me.

CLARICE

This could be your ticket back to Santa Enterprises. And you're just going to give up?

ALFI

It's Christmas Eve. The scroll with all the names of the kids on it that Santa, the big guy, the big cheese uses to deliver all the presents is missing. Gone, vanished. The list that I was meant to keep secure and safe.

CLARICE

Wait up now. You're not the one that stole it, took it. Or whatever happened to it. And according to this.

She pulls out the piece of paper from the novel.

CLARICE

You're half way to finding out who did.

ALFI

What I wrote on there doesn't prove anything.

CLARICE

Why was Hogglerim here? He never comes here. Who was this mysterious character you saw and bumped into?

Alfi shrugs.

CLARICE

Why was the tankard frozen? Why was there black dust... black dust in the glass cabinet?

ALFI

I don't know. I wish I did.

CLARICE

Wouldn't you like to know?

Alfi stares at the bottom of his tankard.

CLARICE

You want to clear your name?

ALFI

What do you think? But I can't do it alone.

CLARICE

Alone? You're not alone, silly. Why do you think I'm here?

ALFI

I don't know. I don't want to get into trouble again.

Clarice picks up the Agatha Christie novel.

CLARICE

Would Herman Poirot give up on a case? Would he let the innocent suspect take the fall?

ALFI (V.O.)

Herman?

He glances away and considers.

ALFI

Of course he wouldn't. He'd gather all the clues and solve the mystery.

CLARICE

Well. What's it going be? What are you going do?

Alfi ponders.

CLARICE

Well?

ALFI

Okay, you're on. I can solve this mystery. We're going to find out what happened to Santa's Wish List.

CLARICE

That's more like it.

ALFI

Come on.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - NIGHT

Snowflakes fall as smoke billows out of the chimneys.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Kringle glances at a wall clock -- 6:16 PM.

He paces back and forth.

A knock at the door.

KRINGLE

Come in.

Hogglерim enters.

HOGGLERIM

Any news?

KRINGLE

I'm afraid not. The scroll is still missing. It looks like Christmas will end on a sad note this year.

HOGGLERIM

There must be something we can do.

KRINGLE

I suggest you go and manage the packing. I'll check on the List Maker and see how far along he is with the new scroll.

HOGGLERIM

Yes, Mr. Kringle.

Kringle watches him leave.

INT. SLEIGH AND REINDEER TAVERN - NIGHT

Alfi and Clarice stand at the bar with Jolly Landlord.

CLARICE

It was definitely frozen?

JOLLY LANDLORD

I'm not in the habit of serving frozen drinks. If that's what you mean?

ALFI

Do you remember who you served them to?

JOLLY LANDLORD

I only served the one elf. Bit of a stranger to these parts. The other I do not know.

ALFI

Thank you.

JOLLY LANDLORD

Glad to be of assistance, lad.

He notices the other elves glaring at Alfi.

JOLLY LANDLORD

Best be on your way.

ALFI

Let's go.

He drags Clarice out the entrance.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

List Maker sits at his desk with a small pile of letters in front of him. He removes a letter from the pile, glances at it and scribbles a name on a scroll.

He repeats the process.

Kringle enters. He spots the letters and sighs with relief.

KRINGLE

Good man. I knew you had it in you.

LIST MAKER

What, what? Oh, Mr. Kringle, it's you.

He goes toward a door.

LIST MAKER

Don't let appearances fool you, Mr. Kringle.

Kringle gasps as he scans the scroll on the desk.

KRINGLE

Oh, my.

LIST MAKER

I'm going as fast as I can. But you must understand. This has never been done before. Compiling a list on Christmas Eve.

He opens the door. An avalanche of letters smothers him.

Kringle's eyes widen.

KRINGLE

What are we to do? I fear that Christmas will be lost this year.

List Maker emerges from under the letters.

EXT. SANTA ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED - NIGHT

Clarice, and Alfi, who's now wearing a cap, shades, and a scarf wrapped around his face are standing at the entrance. They scan the huge wooden doors.

ALFI

Are you sure this'll work?

CLARICE

Why wouldn't it?

She goes toward the doors.

ALFI

Wait.

CLARICE

What now?

ALFI

Let's go in the back way. I'll feel more comfortable if we go in the back way. I feel a little... silly.

CLARICE

Okay. You're right. You do look a little odd. But it is a disguise after all.

Clarice examines his appearance.

CLARICE

And don't take off the sunglasses. You don't want to be recognized.

INT. PACKING AND DELIVERY AREA - NIGHT

Christmas music plays.

Alfi and Clarice poke their heads out from behind a door.
They watch elves dart back and forth.

Elves struggle with armfuls of presents.

Tall Elf carries a stack of presents. Flanked by Grumpy Elf.

Clarice pokes Alfi as they tiptoe in.

CLARICE

Look, it's Hogglerim.

ALFI

We need to confront him. Get him
to confess.

CLARICE

First things first. We need to
visit the Security Room.

ALFI

Why?

CLARICE

The black dust you found.

ALFI

Yeah, but I already have some. Not
to mention, how do you propose we
get in?

CLARICE

They're not going to lock away the
Naughty List. Are they?

Alfi ponders this.

ALFI

I guess not.

Clarice walks into the mass of elves.

ALFI

Are you crazy?

Clarice glances back at him.

CLARICE

Follow my lead.

Hogglерim scans his clipboard and glances at the elves. He watches CLUMSY ELF stumble with a load of presents.

HOGGLERIM
Careful. Mind those presents.

He adjusts his spectacles.

HOGGLERIM
We may not know where these presents are going. But we can certainly have them packed and ready.

CLUMSY ELF
What's the use if we don't know where they're heading?

Clarice walks past Hogglерim and catches his eye.

HOGGLERIM
Excuse me. Where are you meant to be stationed? You can't wander in here all willy-nilly like.

CLARICE
The stables, Mr. Hogglерim. Those pesky reindeer are going to need their feed. If they're going to be flying around the world later.

HOGGLERIM
Who says they'll be flying anywhere?

CLARICE
Why, that's a terrible thing to say.

She glances at Alfi and motions him to walk past.

CLARICE
Mr. Hogglерim, you must be pretty pleased now that Alfi has gone. I'm guessing you were made Key Master?

Alfi sneaks behind the back of Hogglерim.

Just as he disappears into the sea of colorful elves, Hogglерim spins around.

HOGGLERIM
Where do you think you're going?

Clarice gasps.

Tall Elf glances at Hogglerim.

TALL ELF
Coffee break.

HOGGLERIM
What do you think this is? Get
back to work.

Tall Elf scurries away.

Clarice breathes a sigh of relief. She spots the chain and two gold keys hanging around Hogglerim's neck.

CLARICE
Mr. Hogglerim, I must dash.

Hogglerim watches her run off.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Kringle sits behind his desk. He peers into his snow globe. He places it down and spins around in his chair.

INT. DISTRIBUTION CENTER - NIGHT

Alfi and Clarice stand at the entrance to the Security Room. They watch the door open.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Alfi and Clarice stand in front of the cabinet. They eye the weathered scroll on the cushion.

CLARICE
Wow. This is amazing.

She eyes the spotlights on the ceiling.

ALFI
What would be amazing is if I
wasn't in this mess.

He kneels down and examines the black dust on the floor.

ALFI
Thank goodness no one's mopped in
here yet.

Clarice kneels down next to him. She presses a finger tip in the black dust.

CLARICE

What do you think it is?

QUICK FLASHBACK - SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Alfi and Kringle stand at the side of the cabinet.

KRINGLE

The Coal Giver takes care of that.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT - BACK TO SCENE

Alfi beams a smile.

ALFI

Coal dust. Has to be.

CLARICE

Coal dust?

ALFI

Yep. Coal dust. It all makes perfect sense.

CLARICE

It does?

ALFI

Come on.

He heads for the exit.

INT. HOGGLERIM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hogglерim polishes his "Key Master Elf" badge on his jacket.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

List Maker scribbles names on the scroll.

INT. PACKING AND DELIVERY AREA - NIGHT

Elves fill large red sacks with presents.

INT. REINDEER STABLES - NIGHT

An elf leads each of the nine reindeer out of the stalls toward the majestic sleigh.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Kringle swings open the doors to a closet. He sighs as he scans a Santa suit. He stares at his reflection in one of the shiny black boots.

The door flies open. A breathless Alfi and Clarice burst in.

Kringle jumps with a start, slamming closed the closet doors.

ALFI

Mr. Kringle.

KRINGLE

It's customary to knock.

CLARICE

Please, Mr. Kringle. You must listen to what Alfi has to say. You really must listen.

KRINGLE

So, you took my advice.

INT. PACKING AND DELIVERY AREA - NIGHT

Kringle's voice comes over a speaker.

KRINGLE

Would the Elf Supervisor, Hogglerim. Please report to my office immediately.

Hogglerim adjusts his collar as he makes his way through the sea of elves and heads toward the exit.

INT. WHITE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hogglerim steps in front of Kringle's office door. He knocks on the door. Waits. Knocks again.

As he reaches for the doorknob, the door swings open.

The Coal Giver steps in front of Hogglerim. Hogglerim jumps back with start.

HOGGLERIM

You trying to send me to the grave?

The Coal Giver shakes his head as he brushes past Hogglerim.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The door slams as Hogglerim goes toward an empty desk. He spins round and sees Clarice, and Alfi in his disguise.

HOGGLERIM

What are you doing here?

CLARICE

We'd like to ask you a few questions.

HOGGLERIM

What's going on?

ALFI

(mumbles)

Why were you at the Sleigh and Reindeer?

CLARICE

Who were you talking to?

HOGGLERIM

I don't have to explain myself to you.

The door opens. Kringle stands in the doorway.

KRINGLE

No. But you'll explain yourself to me.

Hogglerim backs towards the desk as he stares at Alfi.

HOGGLERIM

Who are you?

Kringle enters.

Distant footfalls echo along the hallway.

Hogglerim glances at them.

Dozens of footfalls grow louder and louder.

Kringle closes the door.

Alfi removes the cap and scarf.

HOGGLERIM
What's with the disguise?

Alfi removes his sunglasses.

HOGGLERIM
You.

ALFI
Who has the power to freeze the
contents of a tankard? Who leaves
frozen footprints when they walk?

HOGGLERIM
I have no idea what you're talking
about.

ALFI
I saw you.

HOGGLERIM
That doesn't prove anything.

KRINGLE
Own up and all will be forgiven.

Hogglерim struggles to get the words out.

HOGGLERIM
I didn't -- it wasn't --

KRINGLE
There's a witness.

CLARICE
You were jealous of Alfi. So you
hired someone to break in and steal
the Good Wish List.

Hogglерim collapses in a chair. Places his head in his hands.

HOGGLERIM
Okay, okay. I hired someone to --

ALFI
To do your dirty work for you.

Hogglерim nods.

Kringle walks behind his desk. Opens a drawer and pulls out
a copy of the "Winter Wonderland Gazette" and stuffs it into
the hands of Hogglерim.

KRINGLE

That explains everything. The frozen tankard, footprints. Christmas Homeland Security paying me a visit.

Hogglarim scans the newspaper.

KRINGLE

I can't tell you how disappointed I am. This is not what I've come to expect from you.

Kringle opens the door. Elves crowd the hallway and peer in.

Hogglarim glances at the elves and bows his head.

HOGGLERIM

I'm sorry.

KRINGLE

Tell us everything.

He closes the door.

INT. WHITE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Elves crowd near the doorway, whispering amongst themselves.

The speakers on the ceiling crackle.

The ears of the elves perk up.

KRINGLE (V.O.)

(over speaker)

It has come to my attention that Santa's Wish List has not been taken. It is still on the premises somewhere. One-hundred candy canes to the one that finds it.

The elves break into a raucous.

INT. KRINGLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The raucous outside the door dimmers down as --

Footfalls recede into the distance.

Kringle shakes his head and laughs.

KRINGLE
The Christmas Prankster?

A bemused Hogglerim looks on.

Alfi and Clarice shrug.

 HOGGLERIM
Was it something I said?

 KRINGLE
Had you said the Christmas Thief.
I would've had cause for concern.
But the Christmas Prankster, the
clue's in the name. C'mon.

He darts out the office.

Alfi, Clarice and Hogglerim follow.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Kringle eyes the coal dust on the floor. He goes toward the cabinet. Scans the dust on the shelf. He turns around and heads toward Alfi, Clarice and Hogglerim at the door.

 KRINGLE
Just as I suspected. Follow me.

They watch him leave.

INT. COAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Kringle flicks on the light. Alfi, Clarice and Hogglerim appear behind him. Kringle crunches coal underfoot, as he goes toward the cabinet.

Alfi and Clarice follow close behind.

 ALFI
Is that the --

 KRINGLE
The thing is... the Christmas
Prankster is exactly that.

 CLARICE
Are you saying that all he did was
swap the scrolls over?

 KRINGLE
Yep.

He opens the cabinet and pulls out the scroll. His eyes beam with excitement. He unrolls the scroll and scans the title at the top of the scroll:

"THE GOOD LIST"

ALFI

So all we had to do was look in here?

He rolls his eyes.

CLARICE

Shush.

KRINGLE

Yes.

Kringle glances at a dirty wall clock -- 11:23 PM

KRINGLE

We still have time.

He tries to hand Alfi the scroll.

ALFI

I couldn't. Especially after everything that's happened.

KRINGLE

It wasn't your fault.

He pushes the scroll into Alfi's hands.

CLARICE

Mr. Kringle's right.

HOGGLERIM

I'll second that.

KRINGLE

You need to get that to the departure bay. Time's tickin'.

Kringle stares at Hogglерim.

KRINGLE

Make sure they get there, Harvey.

ALFI

Harvey?

CLARICE

Harvey?

ALFI AND CLARICE
That's your name, Harvey?

They share a laugh.

Hogglarim crosses his arms.

HOGGLERIM
Let's go.

He heads off.

Alfi and Clarice glance at Kringle.

KRINGLE
Don't worry about me. I have to
inform the big guy that all's well.
And that there's nothing to worry
about.

He ushers them toward the entrance.

ALFI
Thank you, Mr. Kringle.

Kringle watches them run off.

Footfalls approach Kringle from behind. He spins around.

The Coal Giver steps from the shadows.

Kringle smiles and darts out.

INT. ENORMOUS DEPARTURE BAY - NIGHT

A wall clock ticks -- 11:44 PM.

A red carpeted runway leads to two huge metallic doors.

Elves stand at barriers that line either sides of the runway.
They stare at two smaller doors on the opposite side of the
huge metallic doors. The smaller doors rumble open.

Elves gasp and whisper.

Hogglarim, Clarice and Alfi enter. They watch the two
smaller doors clunk to a stop.

HOGGLERIM
Follow me.

He goes toward the huge metallic doors. A huge clunk and a
bang and they slowly slide open.

Alfi and Clarice follow him towards the doors.

SANTA (O.S.)

Ho, ho, ho.

Alfi glances over his shoulder. He watches nine reindeer trot out of the smaller entrance.

They strut along the carpet.

Rudolph's nose glows bright red as he glances at the elves.

The elves murmur.

TALL ELF (O.S.)

Look, it's Rudolph.

GRUMPY ELF (O.S.)

Prancer.

The regal sleigh appears behind the reindeer.

A small mountain of red sacks sit in the back.

SANTA (O.S.)

Ho, ho, ho. Merry Christmas.

Santa appears behind the sleigh. His belly hangs over his belt. His shiny black boots and belt glisten in the light.

His white, wiry beard hangs from his rosy cheeks.

He waves at the elves, as he follows the sleigh along the red carpet toward the huge doors.

A clunk and a clang. The huge metallic doors roll to a stop.

Alfi stares at the moon backlit against the stars.

SANTA

Ho, ho, ho.

Santa walks alongside the reindeer. They stop several feet back from the entrance to the outside.

Santa scans the sky.

Hogglarim nudges Alfi forward.

HOGGLERIM

Go on.

Alfi glances at Clarice.

She motions him to go to Santa.

Alfi steps around the barrier with the scroll.

SANTA

Come here. Come here.

The elves look on as Alfi goes toward Santa.

Alfi comes face to face with Santa. He glances at his face in one of Santa's shiny black boots.

SANTA

You did good kid. Real good. Now, if it's okay with you? I'll be on my way. But, I'm going to need that.

He reaches for the scroll.

Alfi gawks as he hands the scroll to Santa.

SANTA

Here's to another wonderful Christmas. Bless you all. Ho, ho, ho.

He hops onto the sleigh. Examines the sacks of presents.

SANTA

Wonderful.

He grabs the reins and flicks them.

SANTA

Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and not forgetting Rudolph. Yee-haw.

He flicks the reins.

Elves cheer.

Alfi steps back.

Clarice and Hogglerim look on.

The reindeer and sleigh rise several feet above the floor.

SANTA

Time's tickin', boys.

He glances at the wall clock -- 11:59 PM.

SANTA
Time's tickin'.

He flicks the reins.

ALFI (V.O.)
Time's tickin'.

Alfi watches the reindeer and sleigh move toward the exit.

ALFI
Hold on a sec. Mr. Kringle says
the exact --

Santa snaps his head toward Alfi and winks at him.

The reindeer and sleigh shoot off, leaving behind a trail of stardust and smoke.

Alfi looks on, flat on his behind.

Elves cheer and throw their hats in the air.

Alfi watches the smoke and stardust fade.

Hogglерim and Clarice step in front of him.

ALFI
Mr. Kringle says the exact same
thing.

Hogglерim grabs Alfi and pulls him to his feet.

HOGGLERIM
What was that?

CLARICE
You saved Christmas.

She pecks him on a cheek and hugs him.

Alfi shakes his head.

ALFI
It's probably nothing. Forget I
mentioned it.

SANTA (V.O.)
Oh. I forgot to mention. Someone
had better let the List Maker know.
Ho, ho, ho.

Alfi steps to the edge of the exit.

He watches the distant outline of the reindeer and sleigh arc over the horizon and shrink into the distance.

ALFI

Oh, dear. The poor List Maker.

Two Elves hoist Alfi onto their shoulders.

ALFI

Whoa.

ELVES

Alfi. Alfi. The elf that saved Christmas.

Clarice and Hogglerim look on.

EXT. STAR STREWN SKY - NIGHT

Santa's sleigh weaves and darts between clouds, as it arcs downward toward a suburban skyline.

EXT. SUBURBAN SKYLINE - NIGHT

Columns of smoke rise from chimney stacks.

A few house lights sparkle in the darkness.

Street lights flicker along a snow covered sidewalk.

EXT. ELLA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Partially snow covered Christmas decorations glow.

Ella's face appears at a first floor window.

INT. ELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ella sits on the windowsill, peering out the window.

She breathes on the window and uses a finger to write "XMAS" on the glass.

Ella scans the sky. She sighs, as she climbs down and gets into bed.

Floorboards creak outside her door. Ella springs out of bed.

She tiptoes toward the door and inches it open. She sneaks a peek into the hallway and glances at the staircase landing.

ELLA
(whispers)
Santa.

She slips through the doorway.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Ella eyes the living room door as she creeps down the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ella tiptoes toward the living room door. She peeks through the keyhole. She watches Santa drink a glass of milk and chomp on a cookie.

Ella gasps and throws a hand over her mouth.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Santa tries to brush cookie crumbs out of his beard as he stares at the doorway. He gulps down the milk and smiles.

The doorknob turns. The door inches open. Ella sneaks in.

She glances at the empty glass and plate by the fireplace.

Santa's outline appears behind Ella. She turns around and walks straight into him. She jumps back with a start.

SANTA
Ho, ho, ho. You must be Ella.

Ella scans his white beard.

SANTA
Are you really Santa?

Santa points at his beard as he leans toward her. Ella grabs his beard and pulls it.

SANTA
Ouch.

ELLA
Wow. You're really him.

SANTA
Sure am. The one and only.

He heads for the door.

ELLA

Where are you going?

SANTA

I have to go. Other wishes must be granted. Other children to see.

ELLA

What about the chimney?

SANTA

Oh, no. Last time was a real squeeze.

He grabs his belt. Rubs his tummy and exits. Ella follows.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Santa opens the front door and stares at the sky. He makes his way out, into the front yard.

Ella watches Santa whistle.

A ball of bright light. The reindeer and sleigh appear.

ELLA

Wow.

Santa appears in front of Ella. He kneels down and hugs her. He gets up, darts toward the sleigh and jumps in.

SANTA

It was nice meeting you, Ella.

He flicks the reins. They rise into the sky.

SANTA

Time's tickin', boys.

A slack-jawed Ella watches the sleigh and reindeer head skyward and shoot off into the distance.

EXT. ELLA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Ella runs into the front yard and waves.

ELLA

Bye Santa. Merry Christmas.

INT. LIST MAKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

List Maker sits at his desk. The pile of letters on his desk has decreased a little.

Alfi and Clarice enter.

List Maker gets up and faces them.

ALFI

We don't know how to tell you this.
So we won't.

He points at a wall clock -- 12:42 AM.

Realization washes over List Maker's face.

LIST MAKER

I don't believe it. Has Santa
left?

Alfi and Clarice nod. List Maker throws his arms in the air.

CLARICE

Sorry.

She and Alfi leave.

List Maker scans the letters and scroll. His face turns red and smoke pours from his ears. He grabs the scroll and letters and throws them in the air.

INT. WHITE HALLWAY - NIGHT

The sound of paper being shredded and torn.

List Maker's screams echo along the interior.

Alfi and Clarice shrug at each other.

ALFI

Oops.

CLARICE

Oops.

They sing along to a Christmas song as they head off.

EXT. SKYLINE - NIGHT

Santa's sleigh and reindeer fly framed against moon.

SANTA
Ho, ho, ho.

INT. COLORFUL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Christmas music blares.

SUPER: CHRISTMAS DAY

Elves watch Alfi, Clarice, Kringle and Hogglerim on stage.

Alfi steps in front of Kringle and bows.

Kringle slips the chain with the two gold keys over Alfi's head. They shake hands and Kringle turns toward the elves.

KRINGLE
Here's to another successful
Christmas. Now, let's go have some
fun.

The elves cheer as they throw their hats in the air.

Alfi winks at Clarice.

MONTAGE - ELVES HAVING FUN

-- Santa's Candy Castle - Elves stuff themselves with candy.

-- Wonderland Amusement Park - Elves ride roller coasters,
and bumper cars.

-- Main Street - Elves build snowmen and throw snowballs at
each other.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Alfi and Clarice watch elves sing and dance in the snow.

Clarice hugs Alfi and pecks him on a cheek.

KRINGLE (V.O.)
Merry Christmas everyone.

Alfi and Clarice watch snowflakes fall from the sky.

FADE OUT.