

SANTA'S LAST STOP

By Todd Faulkner

THEME MUSIC

NARRATOR: You're riding along on a moonlit, but starless night. You've just missed your exit, and now there's only one way back home. So sit back, open your ears and hold on tight – because you're about to take a wquick detour – through Uncanny County...

MUSIC: Dark Christmas Music (continues until noted)

NARRATOR: Upon the high roof, he arrived with a thump.
He raced to the chimney, and down he did jump -
Through the flue in a flash, with a grin rather dark
On this – the last Christmas on which he'd embark.
See, he once was the best – a renowned Christmas thief
'Stead of handing out gifts in ironic relief
But they caught him to rights, and they sentenced him good
In a way that at first he had misunderstood
"Community service" had ordered the judge
And all these years later, he'd built quite a grudge.

SANTA: That judge will be first on my list – he'll regret
The day he made me Santa's marionette.

NARRATOR: See Santa'd begun to slow down with his years
And he couldn't let Christmas fall into arrears
And with the help of the courts (due to cost overruns)
Built an army of Santas, of which this was one.

But his sentence he'd served, in this weird masquerade
And startin' tomorrow – his debt would be paid.
The monitor worn round his ankle would go
And he'd gladly return to his old status quo.
He'd steal through the night until well in the dawn
'Cause who's going to hire an ungrateful ex-con?
With the powers he had now, he'd never be foiled.
And the people would pay for the years that he'd toiled.
Those powers they'd granted were meant to be loaned
But thanks to a loophole, by him they'd be owned.
Through chimneys and keyholes, under doors and through cracks
Stealing all he could carry, his "Post-Santa" Tax.
Then out whence he came in, T'would be quite a sight
Not that anyone'd see him move faster than light
From rooftop to rooftop, then off to some beach,
Or somewhere else pleasant and quite out of reach.
He'd drink the best drinks with their tiny umbrellas
Stead of working all year for the jolliest fella
Then he'd rob every house and he'd taunt every cop -
But that would come after this Santa's last stop.
He grinned, and his eyebrows like Nicholson's arched
On this, the last night of his long Christmas march.
He sized up the homestead, the last one he'd see
As Santa at least –

SANTA: I'll come back once I'm free.

NARRATOR: He shifted his girth in his red Christmas suit
And picked up his bag with a snort like a brute

SANTA: All right, let's get to this – let's get the job done.
Then I'll retrace my steps, every house - one by one...
Through chimneys, and keyholes!
And under the doors

Grabbing loot that will fill
Thirty-Two Mega-Stores!
I'll steal from the rich
And the poor just alike
And –

MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY

TIMMY: Hello?

NARRATOR: Came the voice of a sleepy young tyke.

SOUND: Wind, muffled by the windows. (continues underneath)

TIMMY (happily): Santa?

NARRATOR: he gasped.

TIMMY: It really is YOU!
I KNEW you would come!

NARRATOR: The tyke practically cooed.

SOUND: TIMMY RUNS DOWN THE STAIRS.

SOUND: SANTA RUSTLES A NEARLY EMPTY BAG.

SANTA: Uhhh... Timmy!

NARRATOR: He said, after glimpsing the tag
on the package he'd fumbled from out of his bag.

TIMMY: You know it!

NARRATOR: Said Timmy, a-nodding his head.

TIMMY: And Santa –

NARRATOR: Said Timmy

SANTA (sharply):

You should be in bed!

SOUND: (BEAT OF SILENCE)

TIMMY: I'm sorry,

NARRATOR: said Timmy

TIMMY: But here is the thing...
I'd just sent my letter, couldn't give you a ring –

NARRATOR: He rocked back and forth, clutched his hand to his chest.

TIMMY: And I know it's real late, but I have a request.

SOUND: PAUSE, SANTA PUTS DOWN HIS BAG.

SANTA: What is it...?

NARRATOR: said Santa, as he turned to the child,
Took the deepest of breaths and pretended to smile.
Timmy looked at his feet, and then to the fake elf
Then timidly, sort of asserted himself.

TIMMY: It's about my best toy, Jeffrey J. Unicorn
He was made by my Gramma - his fur was quite worn -
But I loved him with all of my heart and my soul and
this afternoon Jeffrey J. – he got stolen.

SANTA: Your unicorn's missing?

TIMMY: No, **STOLEN**, I said.
Some teenagers grabbed him, and laughed as they fled.
Don't know why they'd take him – he was just an old doll.
But he was my best-bestest friend above all.
And I know that you know that I've been pretty good,
Did homework, used manners, did stuff that I should.

It's not what I asked for, in the letter I done
But maybe – just maybe – could I get a new one?

SANTA: That's rough, kid. It sucks when a toy disappears.
Folks have stole lots from me, too -
(under his breath) Even years.
But here's the thing kid – You are her grandson
Just ask your Gramma to make you a new one.

NARRATOR: Timmy's chin dropped, and he tried not to cry
As he looked to the ground, and said

TIMMY: My gramma died.

NARRATOR: The world was now silent, but for soft-falling snow
And this Santa – for once – didn't just want to go.
He felt for the boy, and his heart filled with grace.
And he wished that this Unicorn could be replaced.

SANTA: I'm sorry.

NARRATOR: Said Santa.

SANTA: But that's not what I do.
And a loss like you've suffered is hard to construe.
I've brought you some presents – but this is my last stop.
There is nothing more in there – not even a top.

TIMMY: That's ok

NARRATOR: offered Timmy

TIMMY: It was worth a shot.
But I'm sure that I'll love anything that you brought.

SANTA: Timmy –

NARRATOR: said Santa.

SANTA: I wish I could help you.
If I knew where they lived, well - I guess I could break into –

TIMMY: No!

NARRATOR: offered Timmy.

TIMMY: That just wouldn't be right.
I'll be ok, Santa, so thank you. Good night.

SOUND: TIMMY WALKS UP THE STAIRS, SANTA PICKS UP THE BAG.

NARRATOR: Santa reached for his bag – all the presents dispersed
Well - at least that is what he believed there at first.

SOUND: SANTA GOES THROUGH THE BAG AND PULLS SOMETHING OUT.

NARRATOR: But something remained! Something small, slightly worn -
A beat up stuffed horse – with a shiny blue horn.

SANTA: (out of meter) Well I'll be. Timmy – Catch!

SOUND: SANTA TOSSES THE TOY TO TIMMY, WHO CATCHES IT.

TIMMY: (out of meter) JEFFREY J!!! Thank you Santa, Thank you!!!

NARRATOR: Timmy reached up, snatched the toy from the air
And Santa felt richer than ten billionaires.
His heart overflowed for the sweet little lad.
He'd wished he could help him, and somehow he had.
And this feeling exploding inside of his chest?
Though quite unfamiliar, he felt it with zest.
As the feeling in which he'd just started to delve
Started to overwhelm him –the clock - it struck twelve.

SOUND: CLOCK CHIMES TWELVE (underneath)

NARRATOR: The monitor fell to the floor with a clatter
And Timmy looked at him and said

TIMMY: "What's the matter?"

NARRATOR: He dabbed at his eyes – and he fell to his knees
For he'd found his true calling too late – he was free.

NARRATOR: His heart filled with grief at the joy that he'd missed
Giving freely, with love, to all folks on his list.
Then a sad little laugh, and the tiniest shrug.
As Timmy said,

TIMMY: "Santa – do you need a hug?"

NARRATOR: He nodded, and the boy hugged him right round the neck
And the ex-Santa held his emotions in check.
He hugged the boy back, then he patted his head.
And said:

SANTA: You and your unicorn best head off to bed.

TIMMY: (out of meter) Goodnight Santa! Thank you!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS UP THE STAIRS

NARRATOR: The boy toddled off, and the ex-Santa smiled
At the boy with his toy - still completely beguiled
He picked up a cookie, and enjoyed one last bite.

SOUND: COOKIE CRUNCHES.

NARRATOR: And then this ex-Santa slipped into the dark night.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS – DOOR OPENS, WIND HOWLS, DOOR CLOSES.

SOUND: SNOWSTORM/SQUAWK OF A CB

DILLARD: So what now?

NARRATOR: Said the Deputy, there by the car.

DILLARD: And what do we do with the reindeer up thar?

ROWLAND: We'll see -

NARRATOR: Said the Sheriff,

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS IN SNOW (APPROACHING)

ROWLAND: But first – wait a tic -
I think I see something - Well, howdy, there, Nick!

SANTA: Hey Sheriff.

NARRATOR: Said the ex-Santa, hanging his head.

ROWLAND: Hang on - You all right there? You look 'bout half dead.

SANTA: Oh, I wasted my time, and it does make me ill.
This was quite an adventure. I'll miss it, I will.

ROWLAND: Well, that's how it goes, but your time you done served
But as it's now Christmas – I could throw a curve.

SANTA: What do you mean?

NARRATOR: The ex-Santa said.
As he sized her up closely and tilted his head.

ROWLAND: There's a new judge in town

NARRATOR: Sheriff Rowland began.

ROWLAND: And he don't like this system. No - he ain't a fan.
 So your boots will stay empty, it's sad, I confess
 But you're the last Santa, I tell you. Unless -

SANTA: No Santa?!!?

NARRATOR: He cried.

SANTA: No! That can't be so!
 So my sentence is served, -!

ROWLAND: and you ARE free to go.

SANTA: But Sheriff

ROWLAND: No "but's." Nick, just hear me out.

SANTA: Sheriff Rowland!

ROWLAND: Now "Santa," do not make me shout.

NARRATOR: Santa, abashed, just nodded his head
 As the Sheriff grinned at him, winked and then said.

ROWLAND: How can I put this - not to be cavalier -
 Though your sentence IS served – You could – volunteer.

NARRATOR: Santa started to laugh, "Ho Ho Ho" filled the air!
 But it didn't matter, there was no one to stare.

SANTA: Why I'll do it forever! I'll do it with glee!
 I'll do it for them and I'll do it for me!

ROWLAND: Good!

NARRATOR: Said the Sheriff.

ROWLAND: Now you'd best be away!
To the rooftop with you, then off on your sleigh.

SOUND: MAGICAL WHOOSH!

SANTA: I owe you!

NARRATOR: He shouted below.

ROWLAND: I tell you, we're even, now go away - go!

SOUND: SLEIGH BELLS!

SANTA: (out of meter, from a distance)
Ho, Ho, Ho – Merry Christmas!!!

NARRATOR: The sleigh sailed away from the roof with a squeal,
And the deputy said.

DILLARD: Huh. He really is real.

SOUND: CAR DOORS OPEN, CLOSE.

ROWLAND: Of course.

NARRATOR: Said the Sheriff.

ROWLAND: Now set down that cup.
We've got to catch Krampus. You'd best buckle up.

SOUND: CAR DRIVES AWAY WITH SIREN.

NARRATOR: So try to remember each Christmas Eve night
No need to lock valuables up good and tight,
Secure all your doors, but leave a light on,
For this reformed Santa – The Jolly Ex-Con.

THEME MUSIC AND CREDITS