

"I'm Dreaming of a Tropical Christmas"

by
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WGA Registered

1 INT. HOME - DAY

1

In an empty room in an unnamed home, we see green grass outside through the one open window. The TV is on, broadcasting to no one, but shining its light on the tattered recliner in front of it.

A male ANNOUNCER speaks.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

We'll be right back to the KOLD-TV
afternoon movie, 1964's *Santa
Claus Conquers the Martians* -
starring a very young Pia Zadora -
after this commercial message.

We zero in on the TV screen as the commercial begins.

First, we hear some poorly sung Christmas carols. In front of a blue screen showing several lovingly decorated Christmas trees, MILT LANDON, 51, stands. He is dressed in an ugly checked suit coat and Bermuda shorts. His graying hair is slicked back, and he speaks in an excited pitchman style, often waving his hands and arms about. In the bottom, right-hand corner of the screen is a bug reading "Landon Travel."

LANDON

Hello, folks. This is "Mad" Milt
Landon of internationally famous
Landon Travel right here in the
N.P. - that's right, the North
Pole. The *sunny* and *warm* North
Pole!

On the blue screen behind him, a picture of a strong sun melting a snowman replaces the previous image.

LANDON

If you've been watching the news
lately, you've no doubt heard
about the tropical weather pattern
that has unexpectedly hit the old
N.P.

(beat)

No need for boots, mittens,
scarves, and parkas here. No, sir!
They're out. Shorts, tank tops,
and flip-flops are *in*.

A picture of some pretty girls wearing next to nothing replaces the previous image.

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

Yes, you heard me right, friends:
For the first time in many, many
years, we are *snowless*. Not a
flake to be seen. . .

(sotto voce; aside)

. . . unless you count some of my
wife's family.

(giggles slightly)

A picture of crickets replaces the one of the scantily
clad girls.

LANDON

And, in honor of this *most* unusual
yuletide weather, we're running a
unique vacation getaway as only
Landon Travel can.

A picture of a happy, smiling Santa Claus comes on the
screen.

LANDON

Through a special arrangement with
jolly old St. Nick - that's right,
kids, Santa Claus *himself* - you
can now visit the N.P. and take a
tour of Santa's home and workshop
. . . and that's whether you've
been naughty or nice.

(beat)

The big guy in the red suit has
agreed to twice-daily tours of his
"crib" - as you youngsters say -
for as long as this warm weather
holds.

(beat)

See Santa's workshop, meet the
elves and reindeer, visit the
hangar deck where Mr. Claus keeps
his sleigh.

A picture of Santa's sleigh takes over the blue screen.

LANDON

You can even *sit* in that famous
sleigh and have your picture taken
- for an extra, though *reasonable*,
fee.

(sotto voce for
attention)

Wouldn't that make a *great*
Christmas card pic, Mom and Dad?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

1

CONTINUED: (2)

1

LANDON (CONT'D)

(beat)
Don't delay!

A phone number is superimposed over the picture of Santa's sleigh.

LANDON

Call Landon Travel at the number
on your screen and ask about our
N.P.P. - North Pole Package. Do it
today!

(beat)
Once the snow comes - as it sadly
will - the tours will be out,
along with the T-shirts, shorts,
and flip-flops.

A frowning emoji takes over the blue screen.

LANDON

Call Landon Travel today, folks,
and book the vacation of a
lifetime!

FADE TO:

2

INT. SANTA'S HOME - LATER

2

The door is opened. A tired, sweating, grumbling SANTA
lumbers in, closing the door behind him. He is dressed in
his usual red suit.

SANTA

(windy)
It is so hot out there!

MRS. CLAUS walks into the room. She is wearing a red
dress, mostly covered by an apron. She is carrying a tall
glass of lemonade.

MRS. CLAUS

Of course you're hot. You're
wearing your full red suit, silly!

(beat)
Why didn't you put on something
lighter?

SANTA

(catching his breath)
Force of habit, I guess.

(beat)
Is that for me?

(CONTINUED)

She hands him the lemonade. He drinks most of it quickly, then wipes his sweaty brow with one arm of his red suit.

SANTA

Thank you, Edna.

(exasperated)

Why didn't we ever have air conditioning installed in this house?

MRS. CLAUS

We've *never* needed it. It's always been snowy and cold outside. I don't remember ever even opening a window.

(beat)

Where were you?

Santa drinks some more lemonade.

SANTA

Down at the Ice Bar.

MRS. CLAUS

(shocked)

Kris Kringle!

SANTA

It wasn't for *me*, dear.

(beat)

Fergus, the bartender, called and said that I'd better get down there and bring him home right away.

MRS. CLAUS

Him who?

SANTA

Blitzen. He was. . . "tipsy."

MRS. CLAUS

(hoping she's wrong)

The buttermilk?

SANTA

(sighs)

Yes.

MRS. CLAUS

How many times have you told those reindeer of the effect buttermilk will have on their systems?

(CONTINUED)

SANTA

(exasperated)

More than I care to remember.

(beat)

It *must* be the warm weather.
Blitzen has never acted like this
before - not even when he was a
new recruit on my sleigh team so
many years ago.

(beat)

It's very unlike him.

MRS. CLAUS

So Blitzen was. . .

SANTA

Blitzed, yes.

(beat)

We had to walk all the way back
here. The FAA wouldn't approve of
a reindeer flying under the
influence of buttermilk.

(beat)

They'd bring me up on charges for
sure!

MRS. CLAUS

Where is old Buttermilk Blitzen
now?

SANTA

I put him in his stall. He was
falling asleep when I left. He
should be alright in the morning.

MRS. CLAUS

(beat)

This is probably a bad time to
tell you about Rudolph then.

SANTA

(exasperated)

What is *he* up to?

MRS. CLAUS

He's lying outside on a chaise
lounge sunning himself.

Santa drinks some more lemonade.

SANTA

That doesn't sound too bad.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. CLAUS

He's been drinking milk shakes.
Lots of them. The empty glasses
are *everywhere*.

SANTA

Oh no!

MRS. CLAUS

His nose is even redder than
usual.

SANTA

(beat)
Well, they're not good for him,
but buttermilk would be *worse*.
(beat)
He's young. He'll learn once the
headache kicks in.

Santa puts the empty lemonade glass down on a table.

SANTA

Have you seen *any* of the elves
around?

MRS. CLAUS

No. It's been very quiet. No
sawing; no hammering.

SANTA

I was afraid of that.

MRS. CLAUS

Afraid of what?

SANTA

No work is getting done! The elves
must all be out gallivanting in
this tropical weather instead of
doing their jobs.

MRS. CLAUS

I don't suppose you can blame
them. I can't remember the last
time we had weather like this.

SANTA

If this heat wave keeps up for
much longer, we'll *never* have all
the toys built in time for
Christmas.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SANTA (CONT'D)

(beat)
Have you seen the latest forecast?

MRS. CLAUS

(stalling)
Uhm. . . yes.

SANTA

(prompting her)
Well?

MRS. CLAUS

I. . . don't want to tell you.

SANTA

Sunny and warm?

MRS. CLAUS

Yes - for at least the next two weeks.

SANTA

Two weeks! I have to get the elves working on the toys again or we'll never be ready for the 25th.

MRS. CLAUS

(with sudden realization as she speaks)
Why don't you just dock their. . .

SANTA

Exactly. I've never paid an elf one thin dime in all our years here at the N.P.

MRS. CLAUS

Why do they stay then?

SANTA

It's in their blood. Elves *live* to make toys.

MRS. CLAUS

All of them?

SANTA

Well, the ones around here. Away from the Pole, it might be a different story.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SANTA (CONT'D)

Have you ever seen an elf doctor,
lawyer, or pharmacist in these
parts?

MRS. CLAUS

No.

SANTA

That's because they're all making
toys.

(beat)

This is also the only place left
where you can call them "elves."
Away from here, they like to be
known as "little people."

MRS. CLAUS

That doesn't sound right: "Santa's
little people."

SANTA

Darn right it doesn't. "Santa and
his little men?" *Ick!*

(beat)

They're all probably down at the
Ice Bar too.

MRS. CLAUS

What would those little men be
doing down at the Ice Bar?

SANTA

Looking for little women?

MRS. CLAUS

Kris, you *do* give all the elves
room and board.

SANTA

True.

MRS. CLAUS

Couldn't you hold *that* over their
heads. . . use it as a bargaining
chip to make them get back to
work?

SANTA

Room and board are in their
contract. If I tried to change
that, I'd get in trouble with
their union.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. CLAUS

(surprised)

The elves have a union?

SANTA

Yup, the B.P.O.E. - the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elves. You *don't* want to mess with them!

MRS. CLAUS

Could you bring in *other* elves?
Replacements?

SANTA

That would be *asking* for union trouble. "Scabs," they'd call the new guys. Besides, any elves *not* born and bred at the North Pole would need training in toy making. It would be time and cost prohibitive for a non-profit organization like us to train new elves from, say, Micronesia, and I'd probably have to *pay* them.

(beat)

No, Edna, that's not the way to go.

MRS. CLAUS

We have to do *something*.

SANTA

It's this darn tropical weather system! Everybody wants to go out and play, and leave the work for later.

(sighs)

I guess I can't blame the little guys. For many of them, it's the first warm weather they've *ever* seen. It's a lot easier to concentrate on making toys when a blizzard is blowing outside.

MRS. CLAUS

But we *can't* let the weather jeopardize Christmas.

The door opens. About two dozen noisy, dressed-for-summer tourists enter, all of them following Landon.

(CONTINUED)

SANTA

Don't worry. I've got a fallback plan. I was hoping not to use it, but I may have to.

The door is closed. The tourists look in awe at the Clauses.

LANDON

What did I tell ya, folks? *There's* the big guy himself and his lovely Mrs.

(beat)

Does Landon Travel deliver or what?

DAVID, a young boy, speaks to his MOM.

DAVID

(excitedly)

Mom, is it *really* him?

MOM

Yes, dear. It is.

DAVID

(excitedly)

Oh boy!

Santa approaches David.

SANTA

Ho, ho, ho!

(beat)

What's your name, young man?

DAVID

(nervously)

David. . . David Kelly, sir.

SANTA

(thoughtfully)

David Kelly?

(beat)

David Kelly from Belchertown, Massachusetts?

DAVID

(nervously)

Y-Yes.

SANTA

So we *finally* meet.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
(nervously)
Am I in trouble?

SANTA
(amused)
Certainly not! You've been on my
good list for some months.

MOM
(chuckles)
That must be a relief, David.

DAVID
You betcha!

SANTA
You've been a good boy since last
Christmas?

DAVID
I've *tried* to be.

SANTA
Do you help your mom out around
the house?

DAVID
Sure I do.

SANTA
You clean up your room when she
tells you to?

DAVID
(ashamedly)
Well. . . as soon as I can.

SANTA
And you help take care of your
beagle, Snuffles?

DAVID
(surprised)
Mom, he knows about Snuffles!

MOM
Santa knows *many* things, son.

DAVID
I *do* help with Snuffles, Santa. I
feed him every day and take him
for walks sometimes.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)
Well, maybe *he* walks *me*. He's
pretty strong for a puppy.

SANTA

I'd say you've been a good boy,
David. I don't think you have
anything to worry about.

LANDON

You made the cut, kid.
Congratulations!

DAVID

(hopefully)
No coal?

SANTA

(chuckles)
No coal.

DAVID

(relieved)
Good!

LANDON

Now, folks, Santa has been kind
enough to allow these tours, but
we have to let him get back to
work. This *is* his busy season.

DAVID

(excitedly)
Christmas is only a month away!

LANDON

You're right, David. Santa's a
very busy man.

SANTA

I *certainly* am.
(calling)
Merry Christmas to all of you!

DAVID

Merry Christmas, Santa!

TOURISTS

(call back similar
phrases)

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

Now, if you'll all follow my
lovely wife, Anita, we'll show you
the workshop and the hangar deck.

(beat)

Is the sleigh there, big guy?

SANTA

It certainly is, Milt.

LANDON

Remember, folks, pictures on the
famous sleigh are available. . .
for a *small* extra charge.

DAVID

(excitedly)

Can I get my picture taken, Mom?
Can I? Please?

MOM

We'll see, honey. I've already
bought you so many souvenirs.

LANDON

We take VISA, Master Card, and
Discover, if that helps, ma'am.

MOM

(sarcastically; sotto
voce)

Swell.

LANDON

Anita, would you please lead the
way?

ANITA, 47, Milt's lovely wife, dressed in a tank top,
shorts, and flip-flops, urges the tourists to follow her.

ANITA

(calling)

Come along, everyone! The workshop
is down this way.

The tourists follow Anita out of the room. Landon brings
up the rear.

MRS. CLAUS

(longish beat)

Why did you agree to these tours,
Kris?

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (11)

2

MRS. CLAUS (CONT'D)

Milt Landon is known for being
tight with a buck. He can't be
paying you too much.

SANTA

He's not, but we need every penny.

MRS. CLAUS

For *what*? We're a non-profit. You
said so yourself.

SANTA

True, but the person who's going
to put a stop to this heat wave so
I can get Christmas back on track
isn't. She won't work for free.

FADE TO:

3 INT. SANTA'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

3

SANTA

(in the distance;
from the end of
scene 2; heard from
Landon's position)

. . . person who's going to put a
stop to this heat wave so I can
get Christmas back on track *isn't*.
She won't work for free.

Landon stops in his tracks. Anita and the rest of the
tourists go on without him.

LANDON

(sotto voce)

Stop this warm weather?

(beat)

Never! These tours are a gold
mine!

FADE TO:

4 EXT. HOOT NANNY'S HOME - LATE AT NIGHT

4

A spooky forest. A whistling wind blows sporadically.
There is the occasional owl hoot along with the
unfamiliar cries of other animals. The trees move in the
wind. The moon's light is obscured now and again by patchy
clouds and tree limbs.

(CONTINUED)

Frightened, Landon carefully climbs the steps to HOOT NANNY'S (the local witch's) molding gingerbread house.

LANDON

(nervously)

It *must* be her Santa was talking about. No one else at the N.P. has the power to change the weather *but* Hoot Nanny, the witch.

He presses the doorbell. A woman's scream is heard.

LANDON

(sarcastically)

Cute.

The door slowly creaks open by itself. FRUMP, a black cat wearing a bright red collar, disdainfully looks up at Landon from the wooden floor.

LANDON

(friendly)

Hello, kitty.

FRUMP

(always
sarcastically)

Hello yourself.

LANDON

(shocked)

You *talk*?

FRUMP

How perceptive of you.

LANDON

But how?

(beat)

Cats don't talk. They *meow*.

FRUMP

I'm *not* a cat.

LANDON

You *look* like a cat.

FRUMP

I'm a familiar.

LANDON

(confused)

A familiar *what*?

(CONTINUED)

FRUMP

Not "familiar." A familiar. A!

LANDON

You're from Canada?

FRUMP

Oh boy!

(very sarcastically)
Hello, Mensa. I have a hot
prospect for you!

LANDON

What are you talking about, kitty?

FRUMP

The name's Frump.

LANDON

(beat)
I can't believe I'm talking to a
cat.

FRUMP

Here we go again!

(beat)
I'm a familiar - a non-Canadian
familiar. A *noun*, not an
adjective.

LANDON

I don't -

FRUMP

What's a noun, human?

Landon gets a blank look on his face.

LANDON

(chuckles)
It's been a while since I went to
school.

FRUMP

(prompting him)
A noun is a. . . C'mon! Your
teachers *must* have taught you the
parts of speech.

LANDON

I went to a Catholic school.

(CONTINUED)

FRUMP

Nuns? Then you *surely* know the answer.

(beat)

What did Sister Mary Discipline tell you a noun was?

LANDON

(surprised)

How did you know her name?

FRUMP

Oy vey! I give up!

(beat)

A noun is a person, place, or thing.

LANDON

And *you're* a noun?

FRUMP

That's right. I'm a thing.

LANDON

I still don't -

FRUMP

(sighs heavily)

To quote Mr. Webster: **Familiar** - noun: An animal that embodies a supernatural spirit and aids a witch in performing magic.

LANDON

Oh, *that* kind of familiar!

FRUMP

Bingo, Gomer.

LANDON

Why didn't you say so?

FRUMP

(exasperated)

Why didn't. . .

LANDON

Why a cat, Frump?

FRUMP

Because a mongoose would be too showy.

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

Oh.

FRUMP

Do you understand now?

LANDON

I *think* so.

FRUMP

This *will* be on the final exam.

LANDON

(confused)

Final. . .

FRUMP

Forget it. A little wasted humor.

(beat)

Are you here to see Hoot Nanny or
just to annoy me?

LANDON

To see Hoot Nanny.

FRUMP

Are you a client?

LANDON

Not yet, but I hope to be one very
soon.

FRUMP

I'll announce you.

(beat)

C'mon in.

Frump steps aside. Landon enters. The creaky door closes by itself behind him. Hoot Nanny's home is run down and full of spider webs. There are several pieces of one-step-away-from-collapsing furniture all about. In one corner, by an unlit hearth, a cauldron bubbles from the roaring fire beneath it. HOOT NANNY is stirring the contents with a wooden spoon the size of an oar.

Frump approaches the witch. Landon is beside him.

FRUMP

H.N., we've got a valedictorian
here!

(CONTINUED)

Hoot Nanny stops stirring and turns around. She is what you would expect of a witch: Short, hunched, dressed in a black robe and pointy hat. Her skin has the texture of leather. Her filthy hair pokes out from under the brim of her hat, and a large wart hangs from the very tip of her pointed nose.

HOOT NANNY

(cackles briefly)

Thank you, Frump. You have served me well, my fuzzy friend.

FRUMP

Don't I always?

HOOT NANNY

(beat)

I think that pesky mouse has snuck back into the kitchen from the fields.

(beat)

Could you. . . do away with him?

FRUMP

I am feeling rather peckish.

(beat)

Where's the Tabasco?

HOOT NANNY

Top cabinet, second shelf, on the right - behind the walrus wart and the power bars.

FRUMP

Good luck with Einstein.

Frump meows and pads away.

LANDON

Frump eats mice?

HOOT NANNY

Only with Tabasco sauce. He says it hides the rodenty taste.

(suddenly)

Hey, I've seen you on TV! You're from that travel agency that's offering tours of Santa's workshop.

LANDON

(proudly)

That's right - Landon Travel.

(CONTINUED)

HOOT NANNY

Are the tours going well?

LANDON

Very well. As a matter of fact,
that's what I came here to talk
with you about.

HOOT NANNY

No thanks. I don't want to burn a
vacation day to see Santa's
workshop.

LANDON

Where *would* you care to vacation?
Maybe I can help.

HOOT NANNY

I've always wanted to see Truth or
Consequences, New Mexico.

LANDON

(beat)
For what reason?

HOOT NANNY

The name intrigues me.

LANDON

I could arrange that for you.

HOOT NANNY

Could you?
(beat)
We must talk in the new year.

LANDON

Hoot Nanny, has Santa asked you to
bring winter back to the N.P.?

HOOT NANNY

He has.
(beat)
It's an easy spell to cast -
certainly not worth the amount of
money he paid me.

LANDON

I want you to break that deal and
keep the warm weather here for as
long as possible.

(beat)
For ever, if you can.

(CONTINUED)

HOOT NANNY

I could, Mr. Landon, but I already made a deal with Santa.

LANDON

I'll give you twice what he paid you.

(beat)

Three times!

HOOT NANNY

The answer is "no."

(beat)

I'm a witch of my word, and I *did* accept his offer first. Breaking my promise to him would go against the Witches' Code.

LANDON

(surprised)

Witches have a code?

HOOT NANNY

Not much of one, but yes.

(beat)

No one's all bad.

LANDON

How about Justin Bieber?

HOOT NANNY

The verdict's still out on her.

LANDON

Him.

HOOT NANNY

Are you sure?

LANDON

Positive.

HOOT NANNY

(amused)

Even at the ripe old age of 146, you're *never* too old to learn something new.

LANDON

You don't look a day over 130.

HOOT NANNY

You're too kind.

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

What *would* make you break your promise to Santa?

HOOT NANNY

I can't.

LANDON

Theoretically, what would have to happen for you *not* to cast that spell?

HOOT NANNY

Santa would have to cancel. Only the person who asked for the spell to be cast can ask for it *not* to happen.

(beat)

I *do* have a 30 percent handling fee, but he'd get the rest of his money back.

LANDON

If he canceled, could you take *my* business?

HOOT NANNY

Yes.

LANDON

How long before Santa's spell takes effect?

HOOT NANNY

I haven't cast it yet. I have a few to finish for some other clients first: Lady Gaga, Ryan Seacrest, and Joyce DeWitt.

(beat)

I plan on taking care of Santa's spell tomorrow after dinner - fricasseed toad bellies. Yum!

LANDON

So if Santa cancels before the toad bellies, you'll take *my* spell?

HOOT NANNY

For the same fee, yes.

There is a loud meow in the distance. We hear running cat feet. Then a vase shatters on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (9)

4

HOOT NANNY
(calling)
Pounce, Frump. *Pounce!*

FRUMP
(calling back)
Sorry!

FADE TO:

5 INT. LONDON KITCHEN - EVENING

5

The Landons are in their modest kitchen washing the dishes. Landon is drying what Anita washes.

ANITA
I missed you on the nighttime
tour, honey.

LANDON
I had some business to tend to.
(beat)
Did everything go well?

ANITA
A full house. Some of the kids
were kind of bratty, but I guess
that's to be expected so close to
Christmas.
(beat)
The long-range forecast is calling
for another couple of weeks of
this weather.
(beat)
After the heat wave breaks, well,
that's it.

LANDON
Really?

The last dish washed, Anita hands it to her husband and turns the water off. Landon dries it as they speak.

ANITA
Of course! Once the cold and snow
come back to the Pole, no one's
going to want to visit here.

LANDON
Anita, what if I told you that we
might be able to have this warm
weather *permanently*?

(CONTINUED)

ANITA

(chuckles)

Don't be silly, dear.

(yawns)

And *poor* Santa! I feel so bad for him.

LANDON

What about him?

ANITA

This weather is putting him way behind schedule. None of the elves wants to stay in the workshop and make toys while the sun is shining. Even the reindeer are causing him trouble.

(yawns)

I'm beat. Time for bed.

(beat)

Are you coming?

LANDON

In a few minutes.

Anita gives him a peck on the cheek and walks off to bed.

LANDON

(longish beat)

So Christmas might be in trouble if this weather sticks around, huh? All the kiddies will be disappointed?

(beat)

Tough, you little brats! Life isn't fair, and it's about time you knew the truth. Your parents won't tell you that, but *I* will. Me - "Mad" Milt Landon. If it comes down to a choice between a merry Christmas or *big* tour profits, guess who wins?

(longish beat;

menacingly)

Now, how do I make the big guy cancel his deal with Hoot Nanny?

FADE TO:

6

INT. SANTA'S HOME - AFTERNOON

6

The door opens, Several tourists walk in, led by Landon and Anita.

The door is shut.

A young BOY and his MOTHER look around angrily.

BOY

What a *rip*! He's not here! No Santa!

BOY'S MOTHER

Mr. Landon, you said -

TOURISTS

(express their disappointment)

LANDON

(loudly, at first, to be heard among the moans)

Have no fear, everyone! Just because Santa isn't in *this* room doesn't mean that he isn't nearby.

(beat)

Anita, would you please lead everyone to the workshop? I'll be right behind you.

ANITA

(calling)

If you'll follow me.

BOY

He'd *better* be there.

The tourists follow Anita out of the room. One of them can be heard saying, "I want my money back."

Landon starts pacing and talking to himself.

LANDON

Think, Milt. *Think!*

(beat)

You have to make Santa cancel his deal with Hoot Nanny so these tours can continue indefinitely. But *how*? What can I. . .

(CONTINUED)

Landon stops pacing as hears very bad singing coming from outside. It is RUDOLPH.

RUDOLPH
 (tipsy and singing
 badly off key -
 though *roughly* to
 the right tune)
 "He's making a fist. . . uhm, *list*
 and checking it twice. Gonna find
 out who's naughty and. . . *nice*.
 Santa Claus is coming to. . . uhm,
somewhere."
 (hiccups)

Landon moves a window curtain slightly and peers outside. He sees RUDOLPH lying on a chaise lounge, sunning himself. His red nose flashes and beeps occasionally. Around him are *many* empty milk shake glasses.

LANDON
 He'd better control himself.
 Santa's *counting* on him to. . .
 to. . .
 (with sudden
 realization)
Of course!

Landon quickly walks to the door, opens it, steps outside, and closes the door behind him.

RUDOLPH
 "So be good for goodness sake!"

FADE TO:

Landon walks to the reclining Rudolph.

RUDOLPH
 (still singing badly)
 "Better not pout. I'm telling you
 why. The. . . b-i-g. . .
 (hiccups)
 . . . guy is coming to frown! He
 sees you when you're sleeping. He
 knows - "

Landon accidentally kicks one of the milk shake glasses, getting the reindeer's attention.

(CONTINUED)

LANDON
(overly friendly)
Hello, old chum.

RUDOLPH
Hi, Mr. Landon.
(beat)
Beautiful d-day, isn't it?

LANDON
It *certainly* is.

He gestures at the several empty glasses on the ground.

LANDON
It looks like you've been having a
little party for yourself.

RUDOLPH
(chuckles)
I always wanted to try a milk
shake. Donder told me they're
delicious.
(quickly)
Donder. Delicious. Donder.
Delicious.
(hiccups)
That's a lot of Ds.
(beat)
I was only going to try *one*.

Landon intentionally kicks another glass.

LANDON
It looks like you've had *several*.

RUDOLPH
(ashamed)
I thought I was safe as long as I
stayed away from the. . . the
buttermilk. I guess reindeer are
just naturally. . . lactose
intolerant.

LANDON
(correcting Rudolph)
Intolerant.

RUDOLPH
That too.
(hiccups)

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

I hope Santa doesn't seen you like this.

(beat)

He'd be *really* angry.

RUDOLPH

(concerned)

Do you th-think so?

LANDON

I *know* so.

(beat)

He's counting on you and that wonderful nose of yours to lead the team on Christmas Eve, and you're in no shape for that at the moment.

RUDOLPH

How long until the. . . the big night?

LANDON

It's *not* far away.

RUDOLPH

(hiccups)

That's not good.

(beat)

What can. . . can I do?

LANDON

You'd better straighten up, and *quickly*.

RUDOLPH

How do I do that?

LANDON

I can help you.

RUDOLPH

You can?

LANDON

I have something back at my house that will fix you right up.

Landon kicks another empty glass.

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

It will be like none of these
glasses was ever full.

RUDOLPH

That's *just* what I need. Can't let
the. . . the kiddies down. Not
this reindeer!

LANDON

Why don't you come back to my
place? I'll fix you up.

RUDOLPH

But I can't fly like this!

LANDON

You don't *have* to. My car's out
front.

RUDOLPH

(excitedly)
A car! I've never ridden in a car
before.

(beat)
You'd do this for. . . for *me*?

Landon smiles a crooked smile.

LANDON

Happily.

FADE TO:

Anita angrily walks in, slamming the door behind her.

ANITA

(calling)
Milt?

LANDON

(calling back)
In the kitchen!

Anita hurriedly walks to the kitchen. Landon has a
variety of sandwich fixings on the center island.

LANDON

(innocently)
Want a turkey and Swiss.

(CONTINUED)

ANITA

What are you doing here?

LANDON

I live here.

Landon starts making a sandwich.

ANITA

You abandoned me on the tour again.

LANDON

I had something to take care of.

ANITA

Again?

(beat)

You could have told me. I was worried.

We hear Rudolph's low moan in the distance. Landon stops preparing the sandwich.

ANITA

(startled)

What was *that*?

LANDON

What was *what*?

Rudolph moans again.

ANITA

That!

LANDON

(chuckles)

It must be the radiators. You know the noise they make when the oil burner fires up.

ANITA

We *don't* have the heat on, Milt. It must be 90 degrees outside.

Rudolph moans once more.

ANITA

It. . . It sounds like it's coming from. . . from the bedroom.

She briskly walks away. Landon hurries after her.

(CONTINUED)

LANDON
(calling)
Honey, honey!

Anita turns, angry.

ANITA
What?

They both stop outside the bedroom door.

LANDON
(nervously)
Don't be *silly*. That. . . That
sound isn't coming from our
bedroom.

Rudolph moans again.

ANITA
No?

She starts to turn the doorknob.

LANDON
Don't!

ANITA
(with sudden
realization)
It's another woman, isn't it?

LANDON
Of course not!

ANITA
That's why you left the tour.
(getting teary-eyed)
After I've given you the best
years of my life!

LANDON
Anita -

ANITA
And in our home.
(beat)
How *could* you?

Anita quickly opens the bedroom door.

A sleeping Rudolph, moaning occasionally, is chained to
their bed.

(CONTINUED)

ANITA
(flabbergasted)
It's. . . It's *Rudolph*.

LANDON
(quickly)
I told you it wasn't another
woman.
(giggles nervously)
It's *not* what you think.

ANITA
What am I thinking?

LANDON
I don't want to think about it.

ANITA
Explain yourself, Milt!

LANDON
(longish beat)
I. . . I drove Rudolph here. He's
got a milk shake hangover, and I
was going to help him sober up.
(beat)
He fell asleep on our bed before I
could do anything. I didn't have
the heart to wake him - the poor
thing.

ANITA
But you *did* have the heart to put
a chain around his neck and tie
him to our bed?

LANDON
(uneasily)
Well. . . *yeah*.

ANITA
(getting very angry)
What are you -

LANDON
It's all for the good of Landon
Travel, Anita. We'll be *rich*!
Filthy rich!

Rudolph moans one last time.

FADE TO:

9

INT. LONDON KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

9

Rudolph can be heard moaning occasionally in the distance while the Landons talk in the kitchen.

ANITA

No, Milt. It's not right.

LANDON

I'm doing it for *us*, for our future. Think of the money we'll make!

ANITA

I'm thinking of Christmas!

LANDON

Then think of all the money we'll have for Christmas presents. We can buy your mom that trip to Albuquerque she's always wanted -
(sotto voce)
. . . one way.

ANITA

If Christmas comes. With all the trouble poor Santa's having already, if the weather is like this *permanently*. . .

LANDON

There will *always* be Christmas.

ANITA

Not with what you're trying to do.

LANDON

Anita -

ANITA

We'll make what money we can on the tours while the weather *naturally* permits. I won't have you ruin Christmas for everyone because of your greed.

LANDON

But, honey -

ANITA

You're going to unchain Rudolph, bring him back to Santa, and abandon this silly idea of yours.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANITA (CONT'D)

(beat)
Understand?

LANDON

But -

ANITA

(adamantly)
Understand?

LANDON

(longish beat;
defeated)
Perfectly.

ANITA

I have one more tour to host. When
Rudolph's safely home, I'd
appreciate some help with this
one.

LANDON

Of course.

Anita angrily leaves the house, gets in her car, and
drives off. Landon sits down in a wooden chair to think.

LANDON

(sighs)
No, Anita. I've given into you on
a lot of things, but an
opportunity like this won't come
around again.

(beat)
Rudolph and I are going on a
little road trip. We'll hide out
until Santa agrees to my terms.

(beat)
You'll thank me for this one day.
You *will*. You'll see.

Rudolph moans in the distance.

FADE TO:

MRS. CLAUS

No, honey. I haven't seen him for
the past couple of hours.

(CONTINUED)

SANTA

All his empties are still outside.

We hear the sudden crackle of static coming from the speaker of a shortwave radio in the corner of the room.

SANTA

A call's coming in.

Santa hurries to the radio. He pulls up a chair in front of the console and presses an assortment of buttons.

In a split screen, we see Landon talking into an old mike. He is in some kind of wooden structure.

LANDON

Santa, can you hear me?

SANTA

(confused)

Yes.

(beat)

Who is this?

LANDON

It's Milt Landon.

(beat)

I have someone here who wants to speak with you.

Chained, Rudolph clacks up to the mike.

RUDOLPH

Santa, it's me.

SANTA

Rudolph?

RUDOLPH

That's right, sir.

SANTA

Where are you?

LANDON

I'll explain the rest, Rudy.

Rudolph backs up.

LANDON

There's been a change of plans,
big guy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

LANDON (CONT'D)

Here's what you're gonna do if you
ever want to see the milk shake
king here again.

FADE TO:

11 INT. SANTA'S HOME - MINUTES LATER

11

Many tourists enter, led by Anita.

ANITA

Ladies and gentlemen, the one, the
only -

We return to the split screen - Santa and Landon.

LANDON

Do we have a deal?

Anita quickly walks over to Santa at the radio.

ANITA

(disbelieving)
Is that my husband?

SANTA

It *certainly* is.

MRS. CLAUS

He's kidnapped Rudolph!

ANITA

Can he hear me?

SANTA

Fire away!

ANITA

(very annoyed)
Milt, I *told* you to let that poor
creature go.

RUDOLPH

(off-mike; trying to
sound tough)
Yeah!

LANDON

We need the money.

(CONTINUED)

ANITA

Not like this! What you're doing
isn't right.

MAN

(calling from the
group of tourists)
Hey, what about the tour? We came
all the way from Poughkeepsie.

ANITA

(angrily)
Hold your reindeers!
(beat)
You'll get what you paid for when
I'm done here.

MAN

(sotto voce)
Whatever happened to the customer
is always right?

Some of the tourists grumble.

SANTA

Landon, is Rudolph OK?

LANDON

He's coming off a milk shake
hangover, but he'll be fine.

SANTA

If I cancel my deal with Hoot
Nanny, you'll set him free?

LANDON

I will.

Santa presses a button.

SANTA

I've killed the mike.
(beat)
Mrs. Landon, do you have a
shortwave radio at home?

ANITA

Yes, but it's been broken for
months. I keep telling Milt to get
it fixed, but he's too cheap.

SANTA

Then where *is* he?

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

Well?

Santa presses the button again, reactivating the mike.

SANTA

(sighs)

I don't see that I have a choice.

RUDOLPH

(off-mike)

No, boss. Don't do it!

MRS. CLAUS

Kris, you can't! We'll *never* get back on schedule if this weather becomes the norm. The elves -

SANTA

What else can I do? I can't fly without Rudolph.

LANDON

What's your answer?

SANTA

(beat; dejected)

I'll talk to Hoot Nanny and cancel the spell.

LANDON

Good choice.

ANITA

I'm disappointed in you, Milt.

LANDON

I'll learn to live with it, and so will you.

(beat)

Oh, and. . . uhm, Santa?

SANTA

Yes?

LANDON

This doesn't put me on the "naughty" list, does it?

FADE TO:

12

INT. LANDON FISH HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

12

Landon and Rudolph are in a small fish house that has been pulled off the lake. Rudolph is chained to the bunk Landon is sitting on. Landon turns off the short wave.

RUDOLPH

Can I go now?

LANDON

Not *quite* yet.

(beat)

I'm not sure I can trust him.

RUDOLPH

(aghast, at first)

Not trust *Santa*?

(beat)

Oh, you're going on the bad list for *sure*. You won't see a Christmas present for the rest of your life!

LANDON

I need to make certain he does what he said he will.

Landon stands, reaches into his suit coat pocket, and removes a gold pocket watch. He starts swinging it back and forth before Rudolph's eyes.

LANDON

You are going to be my eyes and ears at Santa's house. You'll report back to me if he's keeping his word.

RUDOLPH

Spy on the boss? *Never!* Not in a million, billion, gazillion years!

LANDON

You are getting very sleepy.

Sleepy. . . Sleepy. . .

(starts drifting off)

RUDOLPH

Mr. Landon?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

LANDON
(yawns)
Slee. . . py. . .
(begins snoring)

FADE TO:

13 EXT. SANTA'S HOME - NIGHT

13

Santa is outside with his wife and Anita.

SANTA
I'm off to see Hoot Nanny.

MRS. CLAUS
But, Kris -

SANTA
What choice do I have, Edna?

ANITA
Boy, am I going to let my poor
excuse for a husband *have it* the
next time I see him!

SANTA
Give him some extra for me.

MRS. CLAUS
And me!

ANITA
Don't you worry!

MRS. CLAUS
How will we *ever* get back on
schedule without snow?

We hear approaching sleigh bells. Anita points up to the sky.

ANITA
(calling excitedly)
Look!

Rudolph is flying toward the Claus house. Landon is chained to his back.

SANTA
It's Rudolph!

(CONTINUED)

MRS. CLAUS
Who's that with him?

ANITA
It's Milt! I'd recognize that ugly
suit coat *anywhere*.

Rudolph hovers above them and calls down.

RUDOLPH
Permission to land, sir?

SANTA
(calling back)
Granted!

Rudolph lands by Santa and the ladies.

SANTA
(concerned)
Rudolph, are you OK?

RUDOLPH
I'm fine, sir, though I'll never
have another milk shake.

Very annoyed, Anita wags her finger at her husband.

ANITA
Milt, do you realize you've
jeopardized Christmas for millions
of people? *Do you?*
(beat)
Answer me, Milton Landon!

Landon does not respond. Instead, he stares off glassy-
eyed into the distance.

ANITA
(concerned)
What's. . . What's wrong with him?

RUDOLPH
He's hypnotized.

ANITA
What?

SANTA
How, Rudolph?

RUDOLPH

He hid me in his fish house.
That's where he called you from.

ANITA

Just like him! The shortwave in
the fish house works, but the one
at *home* is broken.

RUDOLPH

He didn't trust you to keep your
word, sir. He took out his pocket
watch to hypnotize *me* into spying
on you.

MRS. CLAUS

(incredulously)
He hypnotized. . . *himself*?

RUDOLPH

(chuckles)
I think he must have seen his
reflection in my nose.

ANITA

How'd you get the chains off?

RUDOLPH

He did that for me.
(beat)
I *told* him to - a post-hypnotic
suggestion. After we got outside,
I chained *him* to *my* back and took
off for here.

SANTA

(beat)
He's hypnotized *now*?

RUDOLPH

Yes. Watch.
(beat)
Cluck like a chicken for me, Mr.
Landon.

LANDON

(clucks like a
chicken for several
seconds)

MRS. CLAUS

Amazing!

(CONTINUED)

SANTA

(laughs)

RUDOLPH

He's very susceptible to suggestion.

SANTA

(happily, at first)

Is he?

(beat)

Mr. Landon, can you hear me?

LANDON

(trancelike while
hypnotized)

Yes, sir.

SANTA

Starting now, you'll give up your plan to keep tropical weather at the North Pole year round.

LANDON

I will.

SANTA

And you'll realize that Christmas is *much* more important than mere money.

LANDON

True.

SANTA

You'll also devote yourself, when you're not busy with your travel agency, to helping me get Christmas ready on time - not only this year but every year.

(beat)

Do you understand?

LANDON

Yes, sir.

SANTA

(pleased)

I think that's about it.

(CONTINUED)

ANITA

Hold on one minute!

(beat)

My turn.

MRS. CLAUS

(chuckles)

You go, girl.

ANITA

Milt, starting *right* now, you're going to be a much more romantic husband.

LANDON

Romantic, yes.

ANITA

Every once in a while, you'll surprise your wife with flowers and candy just because you love her.

LANDON

Flowers and candy.

ANITA

And, when you come out of your trance, you're going to take her to a very romantic dinner at the Mistletoe Bistro.

LANDON

Romantic dinner.

MRS. CLAUS

(chuckles)

Anything else?

ANITA

No, I think that covers it, but I'll keep that watch handy.

RUDOLPH

It's in his suit coat pocket.

SANTA

Mr. Landon, when I count to three, you will awaken, feel refreshed, and will have forgotten all about the *naughty* thing you tried to do today.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SANTA (CONT'D)

(beat)

One. . . two. . . *three*.

LANDON

(comes to suddenly)

Time for another tour, dear?

A light snow starts falling.

LANDON

(excitedly)

It's *snowing*!

SANTA

(confused)

But Hoot Nanny said it wouldn't happen until tomorrow night.

MRS. CLAUS

It must a natural thing then.

SANTA

Do you like the snow, Milt?

LANDON

Who doesn't?

SANTA

But won't this mean an end to your tours?

LANDON

Yeah, but there are more important things than money.

ANITA

Wow!

LANDON

After we finish the tour, do we have time to head down to the Bistro, dear? Your eyes always sparkle so beautifully by candlelight.

ANITA

We *certainly* do.

Landon holds up his chained hands.

LANDON

(confused)

Why am I wearing these?

(CONTINUED)

ANITA
(chuckles)

SANTA
(chuckles)

MRS. CLAUS
(chuckles)

RUDOLPH
(chuckles)

FADE TO:

14 INT. HOME - THE NEXT DAY

14

The same home as in scene 1. The window is now closed. Snow is falling on the previously green grass.

Focus on the TV. Landon's new commercial comes on. The blue screen behind him shows the Christmas tree picture from before.

LANDON
(earnestly; not
pitchman style, as
before)
Hello, everyone out there in TV
land. Milt Landon here from Landon
Travel.

(beat)
Well, the snow has returned to the
old N.P., as we *knew* it would. I
hope you all got your Santa tours
in while the warm weather was
here.

(beat)
All of us at Landon Travel wish
all of you a merry Christmas and a
happy new year. Remember, it's all
about giving, *not* receiving. It's
the thought that counts, not the
price of the gift. Be happy this
holiday season. *I* am.

(beat)
Now, if you'll excuse me, I have
this undeniable urge to run out
and buy my dear wife some roses
before the snow gets too deep.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LONDON (CONT'D)

(beat)

Merry Christmas, everyone!

FADE TO BLACK.