

SLAYRIDE

by

Michael Hickey

FINAL DRAFT

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SHOOTING SCRIPT

SLAYRIDE

FADE IN:

1 TITLE, white on black: 1
 "CHRISTMAS EVE, 1971"

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

2 EXT. UTAH LANDSCAPE - DUSK 2

Vast and silent except for the rushing WHISPER of a freezing wind.

The winter sun sinks slowly toward an endless horizon, coloring the snowy mountains crimson. The landscape is barren, uninviting.

In the distance, a two-lane road meanders through the snow. A station wagon winds slowly along the road.

3 THE STATION WAGON - MOVING SHOT 3

A family is visible inside: Father drives; Mother sits beside him, cradling an infant. A little boy sits in back. There is a baby chair on the back of the rear seat.

4 INT. STATION WAGON 4

A Christmas SONG PLAYS on the RADIO. The little boy's hands turn the pages of a large picture book, revealing cheerful, colorful pictures of Santa Claus in various stages of his Christmas eve activities: Packing his sleigh, flying through a snowy sky, arranging presents under a tree.

5 THE LITTLE BOY 5

BILLY, age 5. His eyes are filled with wonder and excitement as he takes in the pictures.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
This is KSCZ radio, wishing you
the joy of the season.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The weather looks good for Santa
Claus tonight, with a full moon
and a starry sky to help him find
his way. The temperature right
now in Bartlesville, twenty-one
degrees.

Another Christmas SONG STARTS. Billy looks up from his
book.

BILLY
Mom? What time is it?

His mother, ELLIE, turns down the radio and looks at him.
She holds a sleeping infant, RICKY, in her lap.

ELLIE
Almost four-thirty, hon. We'll
be at grandpa's pretty soon.

Billy looks at his book, thinking. Then:

BILLY
Mom?

ELLIE
Yes, Billy?

BILLY
What time does Santa Claus come?

ELLIE
Not until everyone's asleep in
bed.

BILLY
(frowns)
Can't I stay up and see him?

Ellie exchanges a grin with JIM, who is driving.

ELLIE
I wouldn't if I were you. It's
naughty to stay up past your
bedtime, and Santa Claus never
brings presents to naughty children.

BILLY
(worried)
What if we don't get home by
my bedtime?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED (2):

5

ELLIE

We will, hon, don't worry.
Santa's gonna bring you a big
surprise tonight. Just you
wait and see!

Billy looks at the cover of his book: "The Night Before Christmas." He slides over to the window and looks out at the darkening sky, searching for a sleigh and eight flying reindeer. Jim and Ellie grin at each other. It is all very sweet, very family, very fifties.

6 EXT. THE ROAD - DUSK

6

The station wagon winds away through the frozen landscape with Billy's face at the window, searching the sky. The car becomes tiny and silent in the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

7 EXT. OLD BRICK BUILDING - NIGHT

7

The sky is black, with a few violent streaks of red. Beneath it stands an ugly brick building encircled by a high wire fence. A battered Christmas WREATH hangs on the gate, FLAPPING in the WIND beside a sign: "Utah Mental Facility, Bartlesville." Jim's station wagon is parked in front.

8 INT. BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

8

DR. PIERSALL, a hard-edged woman of 40, marches down the hall followed by Jim, Billy and Ellie, who holds the sleeping Ricky in her arms.

DR. PIERSALL

I've had your father brought
to the recreation room.

She pushes open a set of double doors to another hallway, and stands aside. The family enters.

9 INT. HALLWAY

9

They are quickly engulfed in a bizarre scene: The long corridor is alive with strange, wandering people in hospital gowns, mumbling quietly or raging incoherently, their eyes locked on some private, insane world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jim and Ellie stare around in astonishment; Dr. Piersall strides right ahead. They follow her, Billy hanging on to his father's coat tail.

DR. PIERSALL

Right this way. Stay close
to me.

They do. A grizzled old CRAZY WOMAN reaches out for Billy with a gnarled claw.

CRAZY WOMAN

(shrieks)

Agh! There he is, that's him!
Catch him, doctor, throw him in
the locked room! He's the guilty
one! Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!

An orderly restrains the woman. She shrieks and GURGLES as Billy wraps himself around his father's leg, staring back at her in terror. The group disappears around a corner.

CUT TO:

INT. RECREATION ROOM - NIGHT

HAROLD, 75, craggy and emaciated, sits in a wooden chair staring with unfocused eyes at a spot on the dirty linoleum floor.

Jim sits before Harold, looking sadly into his eyes.

JIM

Dad? Can you hear me? It's
me, Dad. Jimmy.

Harold does not move, does not respond at all.

Billy sits between his parents, watching Harold.

ELLIE

(to Harold)

Dad? It's Ellie. Billy's here
too, and the baby, Ricky. We all
came to wish you a Merry Christmas.

Harold is completely inert.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

(whispers)

Why doesn't grandpa say something?

ELLIE

He doesn't hear us, honey. He doesn't even know we're here.

BILLY

Then what'd we come for?

ELLIE

Billy, shh.

JIM

(low; sick
at heart)

He's gotten so much worse.

The door behind them opens and Dr. Piersall looks in.

DR. PIERSALL

I have your father's records,
Mr. Nichols. We can review
them in my office.

ELLIE

(stands;
to Billy)

C'mon, hon.

DR. PIERSALL

Why not leave the older child
here? We can talk more freely.

ELLIE

Wait here, Billy. Daddy and
I'll be right back.

Billy casts an uncomfortable look at Harold.

ELLIE

(continuing)

Don't worry, grandpa won't hurt
you. We'll be back in a jiff.

Jim and Ellie, carrying the infant, leave with Dr. Piersall. Billy takes a deep breath and looks around the room, deliberately avoiding Harold. Curiosity gets the better of him, and his eyes are slowly drawn to the old man's face. Billy reacts, stunned.

11 INT. RECREATION ROOM - NIGHT - HAROLD

11

is now staring right back at Billy. For the first time he seems to know what he's looking at, where he is.

12 BILLY

12

amazed. He leans toward Harold, staring up at him.

BILLY

(whispers)

Grandpa...?

Harold grins at Billy, his yellow eyes dancing.

BILLY

(continuing;

calls)

Mom...!

HAROLD

(stern whisper)

Shh! Quiet! What do ya want her for, she can't help ya!

(a grim smile)

Nobody can.

Billy shudders, eyes wide, watching Harold.

HAROLD

(continuing)

Scared, ain't ya? And you should be! Christmas eve is the scariest damn night of the year. I'd be scared too, if I was you.

Billy is frozen. Harold leans in close to him.

HAROLD

(continuing;

whispers)

You know what happens on Christmas eve, don't you? You know all about... Santa Claus?

BILLY

(swallow)

He brings presents to all the good boys and girls.

HAROLD

(sneers)

Your daddy told you that, didn't he?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

Billy nods seriously.

HAROLD

(continuing)

Well, let me tell you something
your daddy, your goddam daddy,
left out! Santa Claus only brings
presents to the ones that have
been good all year, the ones
that ain't done nothing naughty.
You know anybody like that?

Billy looks at him silently.

HAROLD

(continuing)

All the other ones, all the naughty
ones, he punishes! That mean old
bastard's on the loose tonight,
and when he gets hold of them bad
little children, ain't nobody in
this world can save 'em!

(beat; a
cold whisper)

What about you, boy? You been
good all year?

Billy stares up at the old man, feeling sick. He doesn't
answer.

HAROLD

(continuing;
a big smile)

I knew it! You been naughty! You
see Santa Claus tonight, boy, and
you better run! You hear me, boy?
You better run for your life!!

Billy stares at him, shuddering. Harold giggles, sputtering,
his eyes dancing. There is a SOUND in the hall, FOOTSTEPS
approaching. Harold looks quickly at:

13 THE DOOR

13

The FOOTSTEPS get CLOSER and the door opens; Jim and Ellie
enter. The infant sleeps in Ellie's arms.

JIM

Time to go home, Billy.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

Harold stares at a spot on the floor, eyes unfocused, unresponsive. Jim kneels before him.

JIM
(continuing)
Dad... we have to go now.
We'll come back and see you
soon.

Harold stares vacantly. Jim stands and takes Billy's hand.

JIM
(continuing)
Come on, son.

Jim heads for the door with Billy. Billy pulls away from him and runs back to Harold. He puts his mouth close to the old man's ear.

BILLY
(whispers; afraid)
I'll be good from now on!
I promise!

JIM
Billy!

Jim pulls Billy away. They head for the door. But Billy's wide, frightened eyes remain glued to Harold.

14 INT. RECREATION ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSEUP - HAROLD

14

The SOUNDS of the family's FOOTSTEPS shuffle out the door, and the door closes behind them.

Slowly, a vague, lunatic grin spreads across Harold's craggy, yellow face.

DISSOLVE TO:

15 EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

15

Jim's station wagon cruises along the frozen road. There are no other cars.

16 INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

16

The CAR is HUMMING, quiet, a little spooky.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

Billy sits in the back seat, his expression intense, thoughtful.

BILLY

(gravely)

Mom... were you ever naughty
when you were little?

Ellie is dozing. The infant is asleep in the baby chair
in the rear seat.

ELLIE

Once or twice.

BILLY

Did Santa Claus punish you?

ELLIE

(looks at him)

Where'd you get an idea like
that?

BILLY

Grandpa!

JIM

Grandpa?!

BILLY

He said Santa Claus punishes
bad boys and girls!

Jim and Ellie look at each other.

JIM

Do you think Dad could have
talked to him?

ELLIE

I don't see why Billy would lie...
Maybe we better call Dr. Piersall --

BILLY

Mommy, I don't want him to come!
I'm scared!!

ELLIE

Of who?

BILLY

(the soul
of terror)

Santa Claus!

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED (2):

16

ELLIE

Honey, there's nothing to be
scared of --

BILLY

Grandpa said Santa Claus was
gonna punish me!

ELLIE

Billy, calm down. Your grandpa's
nothing but a crazy old fool.

BILLY

(stares at
her; solemnly)
Mommy, you shouldn't of said that.
It's naughty to say bad things
about old people. Santa Claus'll
punish you.

ELLIE

(getting upset at
being corrected
by a child)
I'll just have to take my chances
on that, won't I?

She turns away. Billy swallows hard and looks out at
the frozen night.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. STREET - CLOSEUP - SANTA CLAUS - NIGHT

17

His face colored a grimy yellow by the street light
overhead, SANTA CLAUS giggles quietly to himself, the
GUTTURAL SOUND tinged with madness. The slimiest-looking
Santa Claus you ever saw. He walks off, eyes dancing
with anticipation...

18 INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

18

Christmas MUSIC PLAYS on the RADIO. The proprietor,
LEVITT, 55, reads a newspaper.

LEVITT

(mutters)
Christmas...! I can't wait 'till
it's over...

O.S., the door opens, RINGING a BELL and sending a gust of
cold air through the store. Levitt looks up.

(CONTINUED)

LEVITT

(continuing; reacts)
Well, ho-ho-ho. I don't get
enough of this shit on the
radio, it has to come into
my store now?

Santa Claus giggles at Levitt and closes the door behind him.

SANTA CLAUS

You don't like Santa Claus?

LEVITT

Good for business, bad for
my stomach. A lot of phoney
sentiment! What are you,
Salvation Army or what?

Santa Claus snorts, grabs a bottle from a shelf and
walks toward Levitt reaching into his pocket as if for
money.

Levitt opens the cash drawer, then looks up at Santa Claus
and stops, stunned.

LEVITT

(continuing; low)
What the hell are you doing?

Santa Claus aims his gun at Levitt's head.

SANTA CLAUS

I'm holding you up, asshole.
Dump the cash in a bag!

LEVITT

All right, all right...

He reaches under the counter, his hand trembling.

LEVITT

(continuing; forces
a smile)
So it ain't all phoney sentiment.
Some of it is genuine greed.

His hand fumbles under the counter and finds his gun. He
aims at Santa Claus, using both hands.

LEVITT

(continuing)
All right, you!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED (2):

18

LEVITT (CONT'D)

Get the hell out of here
before I --

POW!! POW!! Levitt is blown backwards as his stomach
explodes red and POW!! His shoulder blasts open as he
slides down the wall, ITEMS CRASHING all around him.

SANTA CLAUS

(furious)

Stupid sonofabitch!!

He grabs the money from the cash drawer. But Levitt is
not dead, not quite. He picks up his gun and feebly aims
at Santa Claus.

Santa Claus sees him. Levitt FIRES, misses. Santa FIRES:
POW! POW! POW! The lead tears into Levitt, spewing blood
everywhere.

19 EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

19

Santa Claus comes running out of store, counting the money
as he scrambles.

SANTA CLAUS

(to himself)

Thirty-one bucks! Merry fuckin'
Christmas!

He jumps into a beat-up old Buick and ROARS away, careening
up the dark street.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

20

Dark, quiet, frozen. The yellow beams of Jim's headlights
crawl along the road.

21 INT. STATION WAGON

21

Billy is sprawled on the back seat, sleeping uneasily.
The RADIO is on, quietly PLAYING a Christmas SONG.
Ellie opens her eyes.

ELLIE

How's it goin'?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

JIM
Got a ways to go yet.

Ellie's attention is caught by something up ahead.

ELLIE
Jim... what's that?

JIM
Hmm?

ELLIE
(squints; shakes
her head)
I thought I saw something up
there on the road.

In the back seat, Billy squirms, starting to wake up.

ELLIE
(continuing)
There it is again! See?

JIM
Something up there, all right.

They watch, approaching...

Billy sits up slowly, rubbing his eyes...

ELLIE
(staring ahead)
I wonder what anybody'd be
doin' stopped out here in the
middle of the --
(her jaw falls open)
Well, I'll be -- do you see
what I see?

JIM
(laughs)
Must be on his way to a party.
Should we wake up Billy?

22 INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT - CLOSEUP, - BILLY

22

staring out at the road, frozen in terror, his eyes wide:

23 BILLY'S POV - THE ROAD AHEAD

23

lit eerily by the headlights. An old Buick sits in the road, blocking it, with the hood up, and beside it, waving his arms for Jim to stop, his red suit brilliant in the harsh light: Santa Claus. The RADIO PLAYS.

24 INT. STATION WAGON

24

slowing down.

BILLY
(cold terror)
Santa Claus!

JIM
Looks like you get to see
him tonight after all, Billy.

BILLY
I don't want to see him!
Daddy, keep going! Don't
stop!

The infant RICKY starts to CRY. Ellie looks at Billy nervously.

25 EXT. ROAD

25

The station wagon rolls to a stop. Santa Claus walks toward it, grinning, his hand in his pocket.

26 INT. STATION WAGON

26

Billy ducks down on the floor. Jim rolls down the window.

JIM
Need a ride, Santa Claus?

Billy flattens himself on the floor, trembling, his eyes shut tight.

SANTA CLAUS
Not exactly.

JIM
What's the problem?

SANTA CLAUS
No problem. Just lousy luck.

(CONTINUED)

- 26 CONTINUED: 26
- He takes his gun out of his pocket and aims at Jim's head.
Ellie shrieks; Jim slams the gearshift into reverse...
- 27 EXT. ROAD 27
- The station wagon lurches away from Santa Claus.
- SANTA CLAUS
(furious)
Shit!!
- He aims and FIRES: POW! POW! POW! POW!
- The WINDSHIELD SHATTERS. Ellie is screaming, the BABY
WAILING. The station wagon backs into a snow bank and stops.
- 28 INT. STATION WAGON 28
- Billy stares out the window, splattered with blood, then
ducks down, crawls frantically to the door and shoves it
open...
- 29 EXT. ROAD 29
- He jumps from the car and scrambles to the tall weeds at
the side of the road. He stops, gulping frozen air.
Ellie's screams of terror ringing in his head. He looks:
- 30 BILLY'S POV - THE ROAD 30
- Santa Claus runs to the station wagon and yanks the driver's
door open...
- 31 EXT. SIDE OF ROAD - CLOSEUP - BILLY - NIGHT 31
- Ellie's HOWLS drown out Billy's sudden gasp, and a look
of unspeakable horror comes over his face. His eyes
grow wide and his whole body tightens with fear and
revulsion.
- He watches, horrified, unable to tear his eyes away...
- Ellie's SCREAMS are suddenly cut off.
- Billy ducks behind the weeds.

32 EXT. THE ROAD - NIGHT

32

Santa Claus stands over Ellie's lifeless, bloody body.
In the station wagon, Ricky CRIES; the sound merges
with the CAR RADIO:

RADIO (V.O.)
(singing voices)
(LYRICS TO COME)

Santa Claus turns his eyes to the side of the road,
grinning fiercely, panting gusts of steam. Searching.

SANTA CLAUS
(low; panting)
Where are ya? Where'd ya
go, ya little bastard...?

He staggers toward the side of the road, right toward
Billy's hiding place.

RADIO V(.O.)
(LYRICS TO COME)

The BABY CRIES on and on, piercing through the MUSIC,
as Santa Claus staggers toward Billy...

DISSOLVE TO:

33 EXT. ROAD - DAWN

33

The music and the baby's lingering cries are replaced
by a HOWLING, freezing WIND, racing over the golden,
sunlit area.

Our VIEW descends slowly toward the road, which is
quiet and tranquil, with no signs of last night's horror...
except for the dark, thick pools of blood splashed across
the pavement.

As we COME DOWN CLOSE to the bloodstains, the relentless
wind grows stronger and snow drifts across the road,
gradually covering the blood beneath a thin, fragile
blanket of white.

The blood is removed from our view... for now.

FADE OUT.

34 FADE IN:

34

TITLE, white on black:

"DECEMBER, 1974"

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

35 EXT. ORPHANS' HOME - DAY

35

The sun shines brightly in a brilliant blue sky dotted with cotton-ball clouds.

Beneath it, a large red brick house stands nestled in a blanket of fresh snow. A sign near the winding driveway reads: "SAINT MARY'S HOME FOR ORPHANED CHILDREN." A Christmas wreath hangs on the front door.

36 INT. ORPHANAGE CLASSROOM - DAY

36

A small boy's HAND clutches a paper. A name has been scrawled with a red crayon: B-I-L-L-Y.

37 SISTER ELLEN

37

Age 35, wearing full nun's habit. She smiles.

SISTER ELLEN

All right now. Who's left?

She looks at the group of children, ages 6 to 8, before her... then her face turns sour.

SISTER ELLEN

(continuing)

Oh, yes. You haven't gone yet, have you?

There is no answer.

SISTER ELLEN

(continuing)

Billy! Answer me!

The children turn to stare at:

38 BILLY

38

standing behind the others, clutching his drawing tightly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Billy is 8, a bit heavy, and scowling fiercely.

SISTER ELLEN

Let's go, Billy. Come up here
and we'll tape your drawing
to the wall with the others.

Still scowling, Billy walks through the children toward Sister Ellen. A row of children's drawings depicting Christmas scenes is taped to the wall.

SISTER ELLEN

(continuing)

You hold your drawing in place,
Billy, and I'll put the tape
on. Right up here...

As she tears off some tape, Billy holds his drawing up against the wall. A little GIRL stares at it in horror.

GIRL

(screams)

Sister, look!!

The Girl starts to cry as the other children react to Billy's drawing with disgust. Sister Ellen looks... and her face freezes in revulsion.

SISTER ELLEN

Billy! Take that down! Young
man, you go find Mother Superior
and show her what you've done!
March!

Billy takes his drawing, still scowling, and walks away. The other children taunt him, pretending to be sick.

Sister Ellen watches him go, flustered and angry.

CUT TO:

INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY - ANGLE ON DRAWING

Billy's drawing is a wildly colorful, erratic, violent rendering of Santa Claus and a reindeer. Santa's fat body is plunged all over with long knives, and blood spurts furiously from his countless gaping wounds. The reindeer has been decapitated, and its gory head lies in the snow grinning insanely, with red goo oozing out of its ragged neck.

MOTHER SUPERIOR holds the drawing. She is 55. She turns abruptly to face Billy, who stands before her. Her stiff gray habit whooshes like a cold wind when she moves, and her rosaries TINKLE icily. Behind her, a Christmas tree is beautifully decorated.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(roars)

Explain this, William!

Billy squirms, keeps scowling. SISTER MARGARET, 31, pretty, stands nearby watching Billy with sympathy.

BILLY

I'm sorry, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Are you? I don't think so, William. But you will be. You'll learn what it is to be sorry, so you learn to avoid it better. Go to your room and stay there until I tell you to come out.

BILLY

Yes, Mother Superior.

He heads for the stairs and scrambles up.

SISTER MARGARET

Now you have what you've been asking for, Mother Superior. Proof!

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Of what, Sister Margaret?

SISTER MARGARET

What I've been saying. That it's all still inside him, all that terrible violence he saw. His drawing shows it.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

When did I ask for that?

SISTER MARGARET

The last time I told you what I thought --

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER SUPERIOR

I am not interested in what you think, Sister Margaret. I thought you finally understood that. As for the drawing, it shows exactly one thing. William is a little wretch who enjoys causing trouble for everyone around him. Simply because something unfortunate happened to his parents, something he knows nothing about, is no reason to allow him to run wild. He must be taught.

SISTER MARGARET

The memory is there. Waiting to come back. And someday it will, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

If it does, Sister, if he has received proper training, he will know how to cope with it.

SISTER MARGARET

If he goes on like this much longer, it may be too late. It seems to get worse for him every Christmas.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

It won't go on any longer, Sister. I am going to take charge of that child, personally.

SISTER MARGARET

But he needs help...

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(eyes flashing;
spits it out)

He'll get it!

Sister Margaret knows she'd better drop it... for now.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

Good day, Sister.

SISTER MARGARET

Good day, Mother Superior.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED (2):

40

Sister Margaret turns and heads out of the room, her face flushed with angry dismay. Mother Superior watches her with a similar attitude.

DISSOLVE TO:

41 EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

41

TIGHT ON WINDOW Billy looks out gloomily; very much alone. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal a group of children building a snowman in the front yard.

42 INT. BILLY'S ROOM - DAY

42

A small room with two bunk-beds. Billy sits alone with his dark thoughts. There is a KNOCK at the DOOR. Sister Margaret looks in.

SISTER MARGARET

(softly)

I think you've been locked away
up here long enough, don't you?
Come help us with our snowman.

BILLY

I can't.

SISTER MARGARET

Mother Superior only wants what's
best for you... and I think it
would be best for you to come
play with the other children.
(tenderly)

Okay?

BILLY

(reluctantly)

Yes, Sister.

Sister Margaret smiles and leaves. Billy pulls on his coat, takes his mittens off the heat register and heads for the door.

43 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

43

He pulls his mittens on. Then he stops... listens. It's as if the whole enormous house is deserted except for him. A slight shiver runs through him and he heads for the stairs.

Then: From the other end of the hall comes a SOUND...
"CHIRP-CHIRP-CHIRP"... barely audible. Billy listens.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

BILLY
 (smiles; whispers)
 A bird!

He turns and starts quietly toward the SOUND.

He gets closer to it... it's not so much a chirp now as a SQUEAK. He stops, listens. The SOUND is behind a closed door. It has a keyhole. It looks like an invitation to Billy; he gladly accepts.

44 INSIDE ROOM - CLOSEUP - THE KEYHOLE - DAY

44

SEEN from inside the room. Billy's eye appears on the other side.

45 BILLY'S POV - THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

45

His view shifts, framing different parts of the room, finding nothing. The SOUND CONTINUES: "Squeak -- Squeak -- Squeak."

His view locates the foot of a BED. It is heaving gently back and forth, SQUEAKING. Billy's view moves up the bed...

A pair of sneakered feet... then a pair of blue-jeaned legs, moving strangely up and down. The BED FRAME keeps SQUEAKING.

46 INT. HALLWAY - BILLY

46

withdraws his eye from the keyhole, frowning. Looks again.

47 BILLY'S POV

47

TRAVELING UP the bed... now another pair of legs appears, wrapped around the first pair from underneath. This pair is unclothed and definitely female.

48 BILLY

48

rears back. What's this?? He looks again:

49 BILLY'S POV

49

TRAVELING... REVEALS a boy, 17, shirtless, lying on top of a girl, 17, completely nude.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: 49

The boy is kissing her and gently thrusting his hips against hers: "SQUEAK -- SQUEAK -- SQUEAK." Now his hands move to her breasts, caressing them, squeezing them. The girl giggles.

50 INT. ORPHANAGE HALLWAY - BILLY 50

watches, amazed, dry-mouthed.

51 BILLY'S POV - THE BOY 51

struggles to remove his pants. The girl helps him. They toss the pants on the floor.

52 CLOSEUP - HALLWAY FLOOR 52

A small black leather shoe, shined to perfection, takes a careful, silent step. A ROSARY TINKLES softly...

53 BILLY 53

at the keyhole, his mouth wide open, watching:

54 BILLY'S POV - THE BOY 54

has entered the girl. He gently thrusts into her. She moans softly. He keeps going, harder and harder.

55 MOVING SHOT - IN HALLWAY - POV 55

MOVING SLOWLY TOWARDS Billy, from an adult's eye-level...

56 BILLY 56

His breath stuck in his throat as he watches:

57 BILLY'S POV - THE BOY 57

thrusts hard into the girl; she struggles to contain her gasps. The BED SQUEAKS.

58 BILLY 58

staring; suddenly he gasps as his whole body stiffens.

59 BLACK LIMBO

59

A red-gloved hand rises up INTO the FRAME clutching a switchblade knife which drips thick gobs of fresh blood.

60 INT. HALLWAY - BILLY

60

jerks away from the keyhole horrified, the image consuming him. Then a hand suddenly grabs his shoulder and shoves him aside, and he snaps back to reality to see Mother Superior kick the bedroom door open with her heel, screaming:

MOTHER SUPERIOR
You devils! Filthy devils!!

61 INT. BEDROOM

61

She lurches toward the bed, grabs the boy's pants from the floor, yanks the belt from them and whips the boy and girl mercilessly. Her wrath is inescapable..

62 INT. HALLWAY

62

Billy watches, shuddering, flattened against the wall. He turns and runs.

MOTHER SUPERIOR (O.S.)
Take your punishment, you devils!
Take it!

Billy scrambles down the stairs.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

63

The front door bursts open. Mother Superior steps outside.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(shrieks)
William!!

Billy, working on the snowman near Sister Margaret, looks up fearfully. Sister Margaret faces Mother Superior.

SISTER MARGARET
Don't blame him, Mother Superior.
I told him to come out.

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Stay out of this, Sister Margaret!
William!

Billy starts toward her slowly. RICKY, age 4, watches.

RICKY

Billy, what's wrong?

A BOY, 7, snorts.

BOY

Your brother's a nutcase, that's
what's wrong.

RICKY

No he's not! Take it back!

SISTER MARGARET

Boys!

All of the children stop and watch as Billy comes silently before Mother Superior. She gazes down at him, her hard gray eyes unwavering. Billy shivers from the cold. She doesn't.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

What did you see up there?

BILLY

Nothing, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Do you know what they were doing,
William?

BILLY

No, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Good. What they were doing is very, very naughty. They believed they could do it without getting caught. But we are always caught when we do naughty things, William. And then we are punished! Punishment is absolute. It is necessary. It is good!

BILLY

(whispers)

Yes, Mother Superior.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED (2):

63

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(looks him in
the eye; gently)
You left your room, William.
(whispers)
Naughty.

CUT TO:

64 INT. BILLY'S ROOM - DAY

64

The curtains are drawn. Mother Superior stands in the middle of the room holding a doubled-over leather belt.

Billy is bent over the back of a chair, staring at the floor, waiting.

Mother Superior rears back and swings the belt. THWAPPP!! Billy's eyes flood with tears. She swings gain. His face goes bright red. Again. Billy's mouth flies open, but he does not cry out. Again. He is seared by the pain.

She stops. Billy fights back the tears, shuddering.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Go to bed. And stay there.

She turns and walks out. Billy straightens up and stands there, slumped and miserable, fighting back the pain.

DISSOLVE TO:

65 EXT. ORPHANAGE - NIGHT

65

All the lights are out.

66 INT. HALLWAY

66

Dark, silent, still. A MUFFLED VOICE comes from behind a closed door.

BILLY'S VOICE (O.S.)
Mmmmm... no... uhhh... No, don't...

67 INT. BILLY'S ROOM

67

The room is dark, lit by pale moonlight.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

Billy sleeps fitfully, his face tight, dreaming.

BILLY

(growing
louder)

Uh... no... don't... no...
AAUUGHHHH!!

68 EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

68

A red-gloved hand yanks a car door open. Jim topples out. His head slams against the pavement, gurgling blood through a hole in the middle of his forehead. His eyes are open, staring as the blood keeps pulsing out onto the road.

69 CLOSEUP - SANTA CLAUS

69

turns directly toward us, grinning insanely, heavy gusts of steam pouring from his mouth in the cold night air.

70 BILLY

70

screams and wakes up, bolts out of bed and stumbles to the door, wailing with terror.

71 INT. HALLWAY - RIGHT

71

Billy lurches toward the stairs... Then a white hand clamps down on his shoulder, spinning him around. He gasps and screams as he turns and looks up into the face of:

72 MOTHER SUPERIOR

72

glaring down at him, sneering, angry.

73 BILLY

73

gasps and becomes silent, staring up at her, crying.

CUT TO:

74 INT. HALLWAY AT BILLY'S DOOR - LATER - NIGHT

74

The lights are on now, and a crowd of children in pajamas gathers outside Billy's open door.

BILLY (O.S.)

(cries)

Please let me up! Sister
Margaret...!

The children scatter in all directions as Mother Superior marches out of Billy's room in her nightclothes and SLAMS the DOOR behind her.

Sister Margaret stands nearby, watching. Mother Superior approaches her and pauses, briefly:

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(hisses)

Leave him alone!

She strides away. Sister Margaret looks at Billy's door for a moment, then turns and slowly walks away.

75 INT. BILLY'S ROOM

75

Billy's three roommates lie in their beds in the dark, staring silently at:

76 BILLY

76

lying on top of his bed with his hands and feet tied to the four corner posts with strips of bedsheet. He cries quietly, struggling to contain his sobs...

DISSOLVE TO:

77 EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

77

surrounded by snow. The sun is shining.

78 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

78

Under a big, lit-up Christmas tree, the children, dressed in pajamas and robes, tear their presents open excitedly. Mother Superior and Sister Ellen hover over them.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Fold that paper! I see nothing
but greed where there should be
gratitude!

(CONTINUED)

78

CONTINUED:

78

The children ignore her. She turns away, then goes to the doorway where Sister Margaret enters with Billy. He is exhausted. He shudders as Mother Superior stands before him.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

Are you prepared to behave properly, William?

BILLY

Yes, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Go and find your present.

Billy heads for the tree. Mother Superior takes a swaggering step toward Sister Margaret.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

We'll have no more trouble with him. You'll see how well my methods work.

SISTER MARGARET

Of course he'll improve once Christmas is over. He always does.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(her eyes narrow)

It isn't over yet, Sister Margaret. We still have our annual Christmas day visit from Santa Claus. And William is going to sit on his lap and behave! You'll see.

CUT TO:

79

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

79

Santa Claus sits in front of the tree receiving a line of excited children dressed in their Sunday clothes. A little girl sits on his lap.

SANTA CLAUS

Merry Christmas! Ho-ho-ho!

BILLY (O.S.)

(screams)

AAAUUUUUGGGGGHHHHHHHHH!!!

NO!! NO!!

(CONTINUED)

79

CONTINUED:

79

Startled, Santa and the little girl look off:

Mother Superior is trundling down the stairs, carrying Billy. She puts him on the floor and starts dragging him, kicking and screaming, toward Santa Claus.

BILLY
(continuing)
No! Let me go! LET ME GO!

Mother Superior drags him through the living room. She waves the little girl off Santa's lap as she approaches.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Get out of the way!

The astonished child jumps out of the way as Mother Superior picks Billy up and drops him on Santa's lap. Ricky steps forward from behind the other children and stares at his brother, amazed. Billy is crying, terrified.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(continuing; roars)
You will learn gratitude!
Say thank you to Santa Claus!

Billy looks up into Santa Claus' big, red face. He freezes in terror.

80

BLACK LIMBO

80

A woman's neck arches back. A blood-stained blade slices through it. Blood pours out of the gap.

81

INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM - BILLY

81

Billy screams, rears back and slams Santa Claus in the face with his fist. Santa reels and topples off his chair as Billy jumps to the floor. Santa's nose gushes blood.

SANTA CLAUS
What the fuck is wrong with
that kid??

Billy scrambles through the arms of Mother Superior and runs toward the stairway. Sister Margaret stands aside and lets him pass.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

The place is in chaos. Children scream and cry, Santa Claus bleeds, bewildered over what has happened.

Ricky takes off after Billy. Sister Margaret stops him.

82 INT. BILLY'S ROOM - DAY

82

The door flies open and Billy scrambles in. He SLAMS the DOOR, locks it, grabs a chair and shoves it under the doorknob. He is panting, crying.

He stands back from the door, his fierce energy collapsing into helpless tears.

BILLY

(whispers, weeping)
I'm sorry... I didn't mean to
be naughty. Don't punish me...
please...

He stands there, weeping, trembling... Then: there are THREE firm KNOCKS at the DOOR. Billy doesn't breathe.

MOTHER SUPERIOR (O.S.)

William...?

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

83 TITLE, white on black:

83

"SPRING, 1984 -- TEN YEARS LATER"

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

84 EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - DAY

84

In the middle of the shopping center stands a huge store: The World of Toys.

85 INT. WORLD OF TOYS - DAY

85

SIMS, a rather plump, sourpussed individual of 45, stands in the middle of the toy store.

(CONTINUED)

Sister Margaret, now 41, faces him. Various shoppers and children wander by as they check out displays.

SISTER MARGARET

Please, Mr. Sims. Every store in town has turned us down. There must be some job you can give this boy. He just turned eighteen and --

SIMS

I'm sorry, Sister, but I only have one job open and I need a man for that, not a boy. It's in the stockroom, hauling crates. Not exactly a job for a kid.

SISTER MARGARET

I suppose not...

SIMS

(turning away)
Sorry I couldn't help.

SISTER MARGARET

You can't expect some kid to haul heavy crates all day long, can you?

SIMS

(disappearing
behind display)
Glad you understand...

SISTER MARGARET

(looking off)
Oh, here's Billy now! Maybe you'd like to meet him, Mr. Sims...

SIMS

That's not necessary --

SISTER MARGARET

Billy....!

Sims groans and looks back around the display, and his face drops. His eyes travel upwards at least a foot. He is stunned.

(CONTINUED)

85

CONTINUED (2):

85

Standing beside Sister Margaret is Billy, age 18. He is enormous: Six foot two, two hundred pounds. He smiles shyly at Sims.

SIMS

As I said, Sister, I'm always happy to help the Church. He starts Monday morning.

Sister Margaret smiles triumphantly. But as she looks at Billy her smile fades; she is still very worried...

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE:

86

INT. STOCKROOM - DAY (MOS - MUSIC OVER)

86

Billy is hard at work, stacking heavy boxes against the wall. It's a hot day, but Billy works relentlessly. Sitting at a nearby desk, his feet propped up, watching Billy is ANDY, 30.

Billy manages to hoist a particularly heavy box into place, then turns to Andy, who merely indicates that there are plenty more boxes on the floor needing to be stacked. Billy gets back to work willingly.

DISSOLVE TO:

87

INT. STORE - DAY (MOS - MUSIC OVER)

87

Billy is straightening up a toy display as a woman and her little girl approach. The girl wants one of the boxes Billy is stacking, but the top one is too high for the woman to reach. Billy lifts the little girl up so she can take the top box, and deposits her gently on the floor again. The little girl kisses Billy on the cheek, and he lights up. He watches them walk away, grinning.

DISSOLVE TO:

88

INT. STORE - DAY (MOS - MUSIC OVER)

88

The time-clock says 8:58... then CLICKS to 9:00. Billy is at the front of a line of store employees. He punches his time card, puts the card in the rack and turns to wish the others a nice day before heading for the stock room.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

As he goes, he passes a display: One of the boxes is out of place. He straightens it and goes on his way. Sims watches, approvingly.

DISSOLVE TO:

89 INT. STOCKROOM - DAY (MOS - MUSIC OVER)

89

Andy sits at his desk making notes on a clipboard while Billy opens boxes with a razor. The clock on the wall hits 12:00. Andy pulls a sandwich out of his desk; Billy starts to unpack his lunchbox. Then Andy closes the stockroom door and takes from his desk two paper cups and a bottle of scotch. He offers some to Billy, who is shocked, refuses adamantly despite Andy's urging, and proceeds to tear open and drink a carton of milk. Andy watches, bemused, sipping his scotch.

DISSOLVE TO:

90 INT. STORE - DAY (MOS - MUSIC OVER)

90

Billy and PAMELA, a salesgirl, 21, are arranging a toy display together, having a good time. Pamela is cute, very sweet and sexy. She and Billy laugh as they work. Sims appears behind them with a new chore. He hands Pamela one end of a long, folded paper banner, then he takes the other end and they spread out until the banner is unfolded.

Billy watches, enjoying it... but then his smile slowly fades and his face takes on a look of vague apprehension descending toward doom.

The banner reads "MERRY CHRISTMAS", and in the center of it is a big picture of the jolly, laughing face of Santa Claus.

91 INT. STORE - DAY - CLOSEUP - BILLY

91

staring at Santa Claus. He swallows hard.

92 INT. STORE - DAY - CLOSEUP - SANTA CLAUS

92

laughing back at him.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

93 TITLE, white on black: 93
 "DECEMBER"

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

94 EXT. WORLD OF TOYS - DAY 94

The whole store is now decorated for Christmas, and
 holiday MUSIC PLAYS over loudspeakers.

95 INT. WORLD OF TOYS - DAY 95

Lighted Christmas trees everywhere, and countless animated
 displays of little mechanical Santas, snowmen and reindeer,
 spinning and dancing. Christmas MUSIC continues.

96 PAMELA 96

wearing a Santa hat. Pamela works on a toy display.

97 CLOSER 97

Our VIEW TRAVELS from Pamela's angelic face, framed by
 long blonde hair, down her body. She doesn't flaunt it,
 but she doesn't have to. She looks great.

98 CLOSEUP - BILLY 98

standing in the stockroom doorway, staring off at Pamela.
 His face is full of interest and a vague hint of dread.

99 PAMELA 99

looks up, sees Billy watching her. She smiles and waves.

100 BILLY 100

snaps out of his reverie, ashamed at being caught, and
 ducks back into the stockroom.

101 INT. STOCKROOM - DAY 101

Billy turns away from the door to discover Andy standing
 behind him.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

ANDY

And what the fuck do you think
you're doing?

BILLY

(stammering)

I... you shouldn't... you
shouldn't talk like that.

ANDY

Get back to work! What the
fuck's got into you lately,
anyway?

BILLY

Nothing!

ANDY

You were a pretty good kid for
a few months there. All of a
sudden you got an attitude
problem. Getting snappy with
me, staring off into space
all the time --

BILLY

(tight)

Will you just... just leave me
alone!

ANDY

When I leave you alone none of
your fucking work gets done!

BILLY

(bursts out)

I don't care about my fucking
work!

ANDY

What??!

BILLY

Leave me alone!

He storms out of the stockroom.

ANDY

Sims is gonna hear about this,
you sonofabitch!

102 INT. STORE

102

Billy strides angrily through the aisles. A VOICE
grabs his attention:

SANTA CLAUS (O.S.)
Merry Christmas, everybody!
Ho-ho-ho! Merry Christmas!

Billy stops short, looks:

103 BILLY'S POV - SANTA CLAUS

103

sitting on a big chair receiving a line of children.

104 BILLY

104

His eyes are locked onto Santa Claus, transfixed.

Suddenly he gasps, his eyes widen:

105 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT - BLACK LIMBO

105

The hulking figure of Santa Claus turns toward us, panting
thick gusts of steam, and starts staggering closer. The
knife in his red-gloved hand drips blood.

106 INT. STORE - BILLY

106

He rears back as the image washes over him, and knocks
over a toy display. He recovers, meets the eyes of
staring customers. A hand taps his shoulder. He jumps,
looks:

BILLY
Pamela!

PAMELA
You all right, Billy?

BILLY
Uh, yeah, yeah! I - I, uh...

PAMELA
Maybe you oughta go sit down.
You don't look so good.

BILLY
No, I'm fine... really.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

PAMELA

Well, don't worry about this stuff. I'll straighten it up for you.

BILLY

(lighting up)
Gee, thanks, Pamela...

He stares at her, a big smile on his face.

PAMELA

You sure you're all right, Billy?

BILLY

Yeah... I never felt better in my life.

Pamela smiles... and Billy smiles... and they stand there smiling at each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

107 BLACK LIMBO

107

Somewhere, a CLOCK is TICKING.

Billy's face comes up INTO the FRAME. He is smiling, relaxed.

Pamela's face smiles back at him. His hands reach out to her; he softly touches her hair, caresses her face.

His hands move downward, down her body. She is nude. He caresses her breasts gently, slowly...

Billy smiles, enjoying this in a dreamy, perfect way. So does Pamela. There is no nervousness, no resistance. Billy slowly leans forward and kisses her. His head travels down her body. He kisses her breasts.

Billy is also nude. Pamela's hands caress his shoulders. She smiles down at him lovingly. Then:

Pamela suddenly looks up and screams wildly, terrified. Billy turns around fast as a red-gloved hand raises a switchblade high in the air and brings it down quickly, viciously, and the blade slices through the thick, soft flesh of Billy's torso. Blood spews out furiously in all directions.

108 INT. BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

108

Billy bolts violently out of bed in the tiny, seedy apartment, screaming his head off. He stops and collapses, and bangs his head on the floor, trying to knock the terrible vision out of his mind.

Finally he stops, curls into a tight ball, his anguished face between his knees.

BILLY
(tight whisper)
I want to be good... don't
punish me...

On his desk, amid a clutter of magazines and letters from Sister Margaret, is a sheet of paper on which a single word is scrawled over and over again: "PAMELA... PAMELA... PAMELA..."

DISSOLVE TO:

109 INT. WORLD OF TOYS - DAY

109

Sims strides in cheerfully. His secretary, MRS. RANDALL, 60, approaches.

SIMS
Only one more day to go 'til
this Christmas crap is history!

MRS. RANDALL
Hate to ruin your party mood,
Mr. Sims, but a teensy problem
has arisen, personnel-wise.

SIMS
Well, do something about it.
Solution-wise.

MRS. RANDALL
It ain't so simple, Mr. Sims.
I just got a call from one of
the employees. Seems he went
ice-skating last night and broke
his ankle. He'll be out for the
remainder of the season.

SIMS
Lucky him. Call the temp agency
and get a replacement. I have
to think of everything around
here!

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

109

MRS. RANDALL

Well then, think of this. The agency's only got women. This job requires a person of the male persuasion. A big, jolly one. Are you receiving me?

Sims stares at her. Slowly, the answer to the riddle dawns on him and his face lights up... and then turns dark again, fast.

SIMS

Oh, no.

MRS. RANDALL

Ho, ho, ho.

CUT TO:

110 INT. STOCK ROOM - DAY

110

Andy sits behind his desk, smoking a cigar and glaring up at Billy.

ANDY

You pull another disappearing act like yesterday and I'll go straight to Sims. I'm giving you a break. That's more than he'll do. Sims is nobody's friend. Remember that!

The door flies open and Sims strides in with a huge smile.

ANDY

(continuing;
jumps up)

Mr. Sims!

Sims ignores Andy and goes straight to Billy.

SIMS

Billy boy! How are ya? Been meaning to come around and see how you're enjoying it here.

Andy can't believe it. Billy is speechless.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

SIMS
(continuing)
Well? Everything okay?

BILLY
Uh, yeah, yes! Fine!
Everything's fine, Mr. Sims...

SIMS
Glad to hear it! Ah, listen,
Bill. The reason I dropped
by. Seems I've got a little
problem you might be able to
help me with. If you'd like
to.

Sims flashes his teeth at Billy. Billy swallows hard.

BILLY
Of course, Mr. Sims. Anything
you want. Just tell me what
it is and I'll do it!

Sims chuckles and pats Billy's shoulder.

SIMS
Yes... good boy.

Billy smiles weakly.

DISSOLVE TO:

111 INT. WORLD OF TOYS - DAY

111

Sims stands behind Mrs. Randall. They both look off at
something.

SIMS
That's very good, Mrs. Randall.
Very realistic.

MRS. RANDALL
I guess I know a few things
about wrinkles.

SIMS
Take a look at yourself
in the mirror, Billy!

He gestures to a mirror:

112 THE MIRROR

112

A pair of big, black boots step INTO the reflection. Our VIEW TRAVELS upwards, past the boots, up the bright red pants, past the white fur hem of the red coat and the black belt covered with little jingle-bells, up the long white beard. We END up on the stricken, astonished, horrified face of Billy, made up to look older.

His eyes glaze over and his jaw goes slack as he stares at his reflection.

Sims steps up beside him, smiling.

SIMS

Just remember, be jolly!
Lots of ho-ho-ho! And try
not to scare the little
bastards.

Billy blinks, looks at him.

SIMS

(continuing)

Sometimes they cry their
heads off. Guess they think
the old guy's scary. Silly,
isn't it?

Billy's stricken eyes return to the mirror.

BILLY

(low, thick)

Yeah... silly.

Sims smiles. Billy does not.

CUT TO:

113 INT. WORLD OF TOYS - DAY

113

A little girl, age 5, cries uncontrollably.

WIDER

She sits on the lap of the new Santa Claus: Billy. Several other children and their mothers stand around watching. The little girl wails on and on. Billy is very unnerved. He looks around desperately for help, then turns his flustered attention on the little girl.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

(whispers)

Hey! Stop it! Stop crying!
Please?

She keeps crying. Billy's face tightens; his big, red-gloved hands curl into fists.

BILLY

(continuing)

What's the matter with you?
Shut up! Oh, come on...!

She keeps it up. Billy looks at the faces of the people who are crowded around watching him, waiting for him to do something. He looks at the little girl and his eyes narrow. His breathing starts to speed up and his jaw clenches. The little girl keeps crying. Suddenly he grabs her by her tiny shoulders and pulls her close to him: Their faces are inches apart.

BILLY

(continuing; a
tough whisper)

Hey! Listen to me! Do you
have any idea what you're
doing?

The little girl looks at his eyes and sees murder in them; her screams turn to hysterical sobs. Billy whispers close to her ear.

BILLY

(continuing; growls)

You're being naughty right on
Santa's lap! Are you crazy?
I don't bring toys to naughty
children! I punish them!
Severely!!

Her sobs turn to short gasps, which she tries desperately to contain, staring with wide eyes into Billy's ferocious face.

BILLY

(continuing)

That's right, stop it! Or
I'll have to punish you!

She emits one last shuddering gasp, then turns silent. Their eyes remain locked together. Billy's face softens.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED (2):

113

BILLY

(continuing)

Good little girl. Ho, ho, ho.

He lifts her off his lap and deposits her on the floor; as soon as her feet touch linoleum, she runs like hell into her mother's arms.

Sims arrives at the edge of the crowd in time to overhear the reactions of various mothers:

MOTHER #1

He sure knows how to handle kids!

MOTHER #2

Isn't he great?

MOTHER #3

I wonder what he said to her?

MOTHER #1

Whatever it was, it worked!

Hearing this, Sims smiles happily. He looks at Billy, who is reluctantly hoisting another child onto his lap, then he struts away, proud and satisfied.

The little girl's mother stands among the crowd, talking with another woman... while the little girl stares off at:

114 BILLY

114

talking to the child on his lap.

115 THE LITTLE GIRL

115

looks at him with an expression of utter terror, trembling...

DISSOLVE TO:

116 INT. WORLD OF TOYS STOCKROOM - DAY

116

The TELEPHONE RINGS. There's nobody around.

ANDY (O.S.)

I'm comin'! Keep your shirt on!

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

He runs in and grabs the phone.

ANDY

Stockroom, Andy speaking.
Who? Billy don't work in the
stockroom no more. Sure, I
can tell ya his new job...

117 INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

117

Sister Margaret is on the phone. She listens... and her
face reflects her astonishment. She hangs up the phone
slowly, stunned.

On the table beside the telephone is a desk calendar.
Today's date: DECEMBER 24TH.

CUT TO:

118 TITLE

118

White on black:

"CHRISTMAS EVE"

CUT TO:

119 EXT. WORLD OF TOYS - NIGHT

119

The sky is black. A freezing wind rushes through the
parking lot, and heavy snow is falling. The World of
Toys is still lit-up.

120 INT. WORLD OF TOYS - NIGHT

120

Sims steps out of his office, a big smile on his face.

SIMS

(shouts)

Seven o'clock! It's over!
Time to get shitfaced!

A cheer goes up from the employees as the front doors are
locked, and ice buckets, dip, chips, etc. appear from
behind sales counters all over the store.

(CONTINUED)

120

CONTINUED:

120

The piped-in Christmas MUSIC is replaced with something more danceable. Pamela stops in one of the aisles and looks off.

PAMELA

Hey, Santa Claus! Come join
the party!

Billy sits alone on his big chair, surrounded by fake snow.

BILLY

Party...?

At the front of the store, a bar and snack table have been set up, and some of the employees are dancing. Sims tosses down a drink and looks off.

SIMS

Hey! Santa Claus is coming!

Billy shuffles up, JINGLING. Sims hands him a drink.

BILLY

(looks at it)

I never had this before...

A couple of onlookers snicker. Billy looks at Pamela.

SIM

Stick with me, kid. By the
time this party's over, you'll
think you really are Santa
Claus!

Everyone laughs and drinks up. Seeing Pamela do so, Billy hesitates, then sips his drink. He takes another sip... and another...

DISSOLVE TO:

121

EXT. STORE - LATER - NIGHT

121

The snowstorm continues. The WIND HOWLS and whips around the store.

122

INT. STORE - NIGHT

122

Several drunk employees stand together, their arms draped over each other's shoulders, singing Christmas songs.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

122

Billy stands next to Pamela, glancing at her longingly. Andy stands on the other side of her, whispering in her ear, making her laugh. He wants her to go with him. She declines at first. He insists. They walk away together.

Billy watches them go. His face becomes a mask of growing, hopeless despair.

DISSOLVE TO:

123 EXT. STORE - LATER - NIGHT

123

The snowstorm has almost stopped. A few flakes drift through the air.

124 INT. STORE

124

A half-empty glass swirls in Billy's red-gloved hand. He sits slumped on the floor, propped against a counter, staring miserably into his drink.

The piped-in MUSIC stops. The store is quiet. Sims staggers by.

SIMS

Hey, Santa Claus... What're ya doin' down there? Huh?

BILLY

I was... thinking about my parents...

SIMS

That's fine! A boy should think about his family at Christmas.

BILLY

(sputters)

They're dead!

SIMS

Oh, yeah. Forgot. Hey! You better sober up, Santa. You got a long night ahead of you!

BILLY

Huh?

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

SIMS

You remember what Santa Claus
does on Christmas Eve, don't
you?

Billy thinks about it... and a frown grows.

BILLY

Yeah... yeah, I know what
he does...

SIMS

(laughs)

Not he... you! Better get
started! Fuckin' party's
dead, anyway...

He wanders away. Billy looks off. His mouth falls open.

125 BILLY'S POV

125

Pamela and Andy are at the far end of the store, standing
in an aisle, very close together, chatting and laughing.

126 BILLY

126

watches them. He is miserable, lonely, depressed.

BILLY

Pamela...

127 BILLY'S POV

127

Andy takes Pamela's hand and starts to pull her with him;
she resists, laughing... then she gives in and goes with
him.

128 BILLY

128

watches, wanting to see where they go. He topples forward
and lands on his hands and knees and starts crawling along
the floor, trying to keep them in sight.

129 BILLY'S POV - MOVING

129

Pamela and Andy walk along the wall at the far end of the
store, giggling, excited.

130 BILLY 130
crawls along pathetically, watching them. He stops.

131 BILLY'S POV 131
They disappear through a dark doorway above which a sign says: "STOCKROOM".

132 BILLY 132
stares off after them, frowning, deep in liquor-sodden thought.

133 INT. STOCKROOM - NIGHT 133
Dark and quiet. Pamela and Andy enter.

PAMELA

If you got me a present, Andy,
I don't see why you can't
just bring it out where
everybody can see it.

ANDY

This particular present
isn't for everybody to see,
Pammy. It's all for you.
Come on, it's right back
here... you're gonna love it...

He snickers as they head deeper into the dark stockroom.

134 INT. THE STORE - NIGHT 134
At the door, Mrs. Randall is trying to balance a drink while she pulls on her coat.

MRS. RANDALL

(singing)

(LYRICS TO COME)

Sims appears behind her and joins in the song.

MRS. RANDALL/SIMS

(LYRICS TO COME)

135 INT. STORE - NIGHT - BILLY

135

wanders down an aisle, his BELT JINGLING softly, the song reverberating through his drunkenness:

MRS. RANDALL/SIMS (O.S.)
(LYRICS TO COME)

Billy stops at the stockroom door and glowers into the darkness.

136 INT. FRONT OF STORE - MRS. RANDALL AND SIMS - NIGHT

136

She waves her arms like a conductor and he does a little jig, waving his bottle around.

MRS. RANDALL/SIMS
(LYRICS TO COME)

137 INT. STOCKROOM

137

Billy steps into the stockroom and is engulfed by darkness.

MRS. RANDALL/SIMS (O.S.)
(echoing)
(LYRICS TO COME)

Then: from somewhere in the back of the room...

PAMELA (O.S.)
Hey... Andy, don't!

Billy starts toward her voice, slowly...

MRS. RANDALL/SIMS (O.S.)
(LYRICS TO COME)

PAMELA (O.S.)
No... Andy, stop it!

Billy turns a corner. Then: He stops dead in his tracks at:

138

BILLY'S POV

138

Seen between stacks of boxes, lit dimly by moonlight: Andy on top of Pamela on the floor, his hands on her roughly.

PAMELA

Stop it! Andy!!

ANDY

Quiet!

He tears her blouse open. She flails at him, panicking, smacks his face.

ANDY

(continuing)

Hey -- !

He slaps her, she starts to scream. He clamps his hand over her mouth, hard, and yanks at her skirt as she struggles beneath him.

139

INT. STOCKROOM - BILLY

139

watching, horrified, petrified, his mind reeling through space as:

MRS. RANDALL/SIMS (O.S.)

(echoing)

(LYRICS TO COME)

Billy rears back as the words amplify and reverberate inside his brain and time stands still as a crashing wave of memories cascades over him, red hot, exploding:

140

EXT. PRAIRIE ROAD - NIGHT

140

A red-gloved hand FIRES a GUN: POW! POW! POW! POW!

141

THE WINDSHIELD

141

SHATTERS in slow motion.

142

BILLY - AGE 5

142

shoves the car door open and jumps out, and crawls frantically, crying, into the tall weeds beside the road. He turns and looks back:

- 143 BILLY'S POV 143
Santa Claus lowers his gun. The CAR RADIO PLAYS softly:
"Santa Claus is Coming."
- 144 INT. STOCKROOM - CLOSE ON BILLY 144
Behind the white beard, his face reflects utter horror...
- 145 EXT. ROAD - CLOSE ON SANTA CLAUS 145
full of insane fury.
- 146 EXT. ROAD - BILLY - AGE 5 146
hiding behind the weeds, shuddering, staring at:
- 147 BILLY'S POV - THE ROAD 147
Santa runs to the station wagon as it stops rolling and
yanks open the driver's door. Jim's body topples out and
his head slams against the pavement, gurgling blood through
a ragged hole, his eyes wide open.

Santa Claus grabs the screaming Ellie and drags her out of
the car. Ricky wails in the station wagon. Santa Claus
shoves Ellie on the road, falls on top of her and starts
tearing away her clothes.
- 148 INT. STOCKROOM - BILLY 148
staring, the memory burning his brain.
- 149 EXT. ROAD - BILLY - AGE 5 149
staring, horrified:
- 150 BILLY'S POV 150
Ellie smacks Santa Claus hard in the face. He backhands
her. Ellie bites his ear, drawing blood. He screams;
she holds on. He pummels her, howling. Then: a shiny
metal object appears in his red-gloved hand.
- 151 CLOSEUP - SANTA CLAUS 151
staring down at Ellie with a look of leering madness.

- 152 INT. STOCKROOM - CLOSEUP - BILLY 152
- An identical look of madness flickers on his face, his horror taking on an insane glee, a vengeful energy...
- 153 EXT. ROAD 153
- The switchblade plunges into Ellie and comes up dripping thick gobs of blood. It plunges again and again. Ellie stiffens under the brutal blows, then goes limp.
- Her neck arches back. The switchblade slices into it. Her throat gapes open.
- 154 EXT. ROAD - BILLY - AGE 5 154
- gasps, ducks down behind the weeds...
- 155 THE ROAD 155
- The infant Ricky cries. The lonely sound drifts across the quiet, snowy landscape.
- Santa Claus stands over Ellie's lifeless body, grinning fiercely, his eyes shifting, panting gusts of steam. He giggles deep in this throat as his dancing eyes search the side of the road, looking for something.
- SANTA CLAUS
Where are ya? Where'd ya go,
ya little bastard?
- 156 INT. STOCKROOM 156
- Billy wears an identical expression.
- 157 EXT. ROAD 157
- Santa Claus takes a few staggering steps toward the side of the road, toward Billy.
- 158 BILLY - AGE 5 158
- cowering behind the weeds. He stops breathing.

159 THE ROAD

159

Santa Claus takes a few more steps toward Billy.

SANTA CLAUS

(screams)

I know you're out there! Don't
ya know ya can't hide from
Santa Claus?! I'll get ya!
I'll do the same as I did to
them!!

160 INT. STOCKROOM - BILLY

160

A look of seething rage, his eyes narrowing and his
breath growing thick with anger...

161 EXT. THE ROAD - SANTA CLAUS

161

stares angrily into the darkness. He turns toward the
Buick, his eyes still searching.

SANTA CLAUS

(screams; starting
to laugh)

That's what happens when Santa
Claus catches you! That's what
Santa does to you... when you're
naughty!!

162 BILLY, AGE 5

162

stares from behind the weeds, not breathing.

163 BILLY'S POV - JIM

163

hangs out of the car, dead. Ellie lies on the road,
dead. Santa's LAUGH merges with the HOWLING WIND
and Ricky's cries, reverberating --

164 INT. STOCKROOM

164

-- and ECHOING inside Billy's head, behind his leering,
murderous eyes. He rears back, roars with insane rage
and comes lumbering toward Pamela and Andy, who see him
for the first time.

BILLY

Naughty!! Naughty!!

(CONTINUED)

Then: In one fast motion, Billy removes his broad, black, JINGLING BELT and loops it around Andy's neck, pulling it tight and lifting him up off the floor as Andy kicks and gurgles and gasps for air, his hands swinging frantically at Billy as the BELT JINGLES with his desperate effort: JINGLE, JINGLE, JINGLE...

Pamela stands back, half nude, petrified, as Andy's feet kick wildly, trying to find the floor beneath them. The belt digs into his neck, drawing blood. The blood trickles slowly down his body... Gradually, his kicks become weak... then they stop altogether. He is not breathing. His eyes bulge out. His face is blue.

Billy holds him aloft for another moment, then lets him drop to the floor in a heap, dead. Billy's red, dancing eyes turn to the whimpering Pamela. She cries helplessly, her body quivering under Billy's intense stare.

BILLY

What's the matter, Pamela?

He moves toward her slowly, buckling his JINGLING BELT. Pamela shudders, her eyes wide and terrified, her hands quivering before her as if they could keep him away.

PAMELA

Don't... Please...

BILLY

Don't cry, Pamela. Everything's going to be all right.

His red-gloved hand reaches out toward her hair. She smacks his arm with a fluttering hand.

PAMELA

(cries)

Don't touch me! Get away.

Billy stiffens. His eyes turn hard as they burn into her.

BILLY

Pamela, don't do that...

PAMELA

Oh, God... You're crazy!!

(screams)

Get away!!

BILLY

Pamela, stop it...

(CONTINUED)

164 CONTINUED:

164

PAMELA

You bastard, you're crazy!!
Get the hell away from me!!

She beats him with her little fists, crying wildly. He tries to dodge her blows, but he's smacked in the face several times. He finally grabs her and shoves her away with all his strength. She lands hard against the wall, knocked breathless, stunned, staring at Billy in utter horror. He stares back at her, sneering, angry.

BILLY

(low, menacing)

You shouldn't talk like that...
it's naughty.

Pamela shudders helplessly, as Billy's eyes dart to:

165

A RAZOR

165

used for opening boxes. His red-gloved hand grabs it.

166

PAMELA

166

screams as:

167

BILLY

167

lunges toward her snarling:

BILLY

Naughty! Naughty!

168

PAMELA

168

gasps as the razor is slammed into her guts with tremendous force, lifting her up off the ground.

169

BILLY

169

staring up into her face, holding her aloft, wild with gleeful rage.

WIDER

He lets her tumble to the floor and she lands in a heap.

170

PAMELA

170

eyes wide open, blood gurgling from her mouth onto the cement floor around Billy's boots.

171 BILLY

171

staring down at her, panting, utterly insane, grinning madly.

BILLY

(a snarling whisper)

Punishment is necessary, Pamela.
It is good!

172. INT. FRONT OF STORE

172

Mrs. Randall is pinning on her hat, humming. Sims looks off, head cocked, listening.

SIMS

Did you hear something?

MRS. RANDALL

I don't hear anything, Mr. Sims.
Must have been your imagination.

SIMS

I heard a scream.

He starts toward the back of the store. Mrs. Randall resumes trying to pin her hat on.

173 SIMS

173

walks slowly down an aisle, surrounded by cheerful toys and smiling stuffed animals. He is intense, listening.

174 INT. STOCKROOM

174

It is silent now, and dark. Sims approaches the doorway, stops and peeks in.

SIMS

Anybody in here?

No answer.

SIMS

(continuing)

Dammit, I know you're in here,
now answer me!

175 CLOSEUP - BILLY

175

in darkness. His eyes narrow in anger.

176 SIMS

176

takes a few steps into the stockroom. Silence. A shiver runs through him. He starts back toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED:

176

Then: a sudden SOUND beside him, BELLS JINGLING,
and a blur of red and white appears in front of him
as a flash of gleaming metal slices the air and Sims
screams.

Blood splashes the stock boxes and Sims is silenced.
As the blood drips down the boxes, the stockroom becomes
once again quiet and still. Then:

BILLY'S VOICE (O.S.)-

(a low, thick
whisper)

That's what happens when Santa
Claus catches you... that's what
I do to you when you're naughty...

177 INT. STORE

177

Mrs. Randall stands alone, looking off, listening.

178 MRS. RANDALL'S POV

178

the stockroom doorway at the end of a long aisle. The
stockroom is dark, still, silent.

179 MRS. RANDALL .

179

looks off, listening.

MRS. RANDALL

(high-pitched)

Mr. Sims? Oh, Mr. Si-immmms!

She listens. Silence.

180 WIDE - THE STORE

180

Big, bright, full of Christmas trees and toys... silent.

181 ANGLE - A DISPLAY

181

Little MECHANICAL SANTAS and SNOWMEN, twirling and dancing,
smiling... watching. Their MOTORS HUM and WHIR quietly.

182 MRS. RANDALL

182

frowns.

MRS. RANDALL

(a sudden scream)

Mr. Sims!

No response. Then: All at once, the overhead fluorescent lights go out all over the store. Only the lights on the Christmas trees are left on. The store is a fantasy of twinkling color and light, a surreal child's dream.

Mrs. Randall stands in the middle of it all, looking around, thrilled by the effect.

MRS. RANDALL

(continuing)

Oh, my!

(calls)

Mr. Sims, come out here and see this! It's lovely!

She starts off toward the stockroom, after Sims.

MRS. RANDALL

(continuing)

Mr. Sims?

183 POV - WIDE ON MRS. RANDALL

183

as she makes her way toward the stockroom... and somewhere nearby, little BELLS JINGLE softly.

184 CLOSE ON MRS. RANDALL

184

She walks through a corridor of twinkling lights toward the stockroom, smiling, enchanted. She stops at the stockroom doorway and looks in.

MRS. RANDALL

Are you hiding in there, Mr. Sims?

No answer. She steps into the room and is engulfed in its darkness.

Silence...

She takes another couple of steps, then she stops, her eyes bulge and she gasps and her mouth drops open and:

(CONTINUED).

184 CONTINUED: 184

MRS. RANDALL
(continuing;
screams)
AAAAUUUUGGGGHHHHHHH!!!

185 WIDE - THE STORE 185

Her SCREAM ECHOES in blood-freezing horror...

186 CLOSEUP - BILLY 186

surrounded by twinkling lights: The SCREAM CONTINUES as his eyes glisten and a mad grin spreads.

187 INT. STOCKROOM 187

Mrs. Randall stops screaming, out of breath, shuddering:

188 MRS. RANDALL'S POV - SIMS' HEAD 188

A ragged gash runs from ear to ear, nearly severing the head. His eyes stare back at her.

189 INT. STORE - STOCK ROOM DOOR 189

She backs out of the stockroom, wobbling on rubbery knees, her eyes darting around desperately, her breath fast and thick.

MRS. RANDALL
No... no... oh, oh, oh, oh,
God... Ooooooooooh, SHIT!

She turns and runs like hell for the front doors.

BILLY'S VOICE (O.S.)
(a sing-song
whisper)
Shouldn't of said that...
it's naugh-tee!

190 FRONT DOORS

190

Mrs. Randall slides into the doors. She yanks on the handles and beats the glass with her fists frantically, crying: they won't budge.

She stops, freezes, panting, listening... Somewhere in the store, little BELLS go "JINGLE-JINGLE-JINGLE."

Something catches Mrs. Randall's eye. She jumps and runs screaming to:

191 A SALES COUNTER

191

where a telephone sits. She races up, panting, grabs the phone and dials "O." She waits... and waits...

MRS. RANDALL

(screams)

Answer!!

OPERATOR'S VOICE

(filter)

Operator.

MRS. RANDALL

Thank God!

WWWHAMMM!! A big AXE with a bright red ribbon tied around the handle SLAMS into the counter and chops the telephone cord in two. Mrs. Randall screams and spins around to face her adversary, who is leering insanely, pulling the axe out of the counter, waving the axe at her.

BILLY

You said a naughty thing. Don't worry... Santa will punish you.

She stares at him, unbelieving, digesting it. Then she lets out a WHOOP and runs for all she's worth. Billy giggles and lumbers after her, cradling the ribboned axe in his arms.

He turns up an aisle lined with toys, through deep shadows and twinkling colored lights, past the smiling faces of countless stuffed animals, elves and snowmen.

He reaches the end of the aisle, stops, listens, his eyes darting from side to side. He frowns; he's lost her. Then he giggles and grins, his breath coming in excited spurts.

(CONTINUED)

191 CONTINUED:

191

He turns down the next aisle, moving slowly, cradling his axe, his eyes darting from side to side.

BILLY
(continuing; a
growling whisper)
'Twas the night before Christmas,
and all through the house...'

He giggles, a thick, throaty sound, and turns another corner.

BILLY
(continuing)
'... not a creature was stirring...'

He stops, his eyes widen, he looks:

192 BILLY'S POV - THE NEXT AISLE

192

Visible over a stack of boxes is Mrs. Randall's little pillbox hat.

193 BILLY

193

can barely contain his glee. He covers his mouth with his hand to stifle a giggle.

BILLY
(whispers)
'... not even a mouse!'

He moves silently, slowly around the end of the aisle, bringing his axe up, ready to let her have it, trying not to jingle. Then: He bolts around the corner, swings his axe and: He freezes, a look of furious confusion comes over his face. Then there's a NOISE behind him as a huge PILE OF BOXES TOPPLES and he turns as the boxes hit him. He goes sprawling on the floor, the axe flying out of his hand. Mrs. Randall, hatless, stands where the pile of boxes used to be. She sticks her hand out and picks up the axe.

MRS. RANDALL
(triumphant,
wild)
Yaaaa-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!!

She turns and runs.

(CONTINUED)

193

CONTINUED:

193

Billy climbs out from under the boxes, grabs Mrs. Randall's hat from the head of a big stuffed snowman and rips it apart furiously, then takes off after her, roaring.

Mrs. Randall reaches the doors, panting, and swings the axe, ready to slam it into the glass doors, when there is a tremendous ROAR behind her. She looks over her shoulder:

Billy stands twenty feet away loading an arrow into a huge bow.

BILLY

(mutters)

Naughty... naughty...

He draws the bowstring back and aims.

Mrs. Randall frantically turns back to the door, raises the axe and is about to swing it when: POIINNNGGG!! WHOOSH! The arrow flies. And THWAAAP! It goes right through her.

Billy lowers the bow, watching with gleaming, dancing eyes as:

Mrs. Randall stiffens, drops the axe, turns around and looks at him. The arrow sticks out of her stomach. She staggers about for several grotesque moments, and then down she goes, spread-eagled in a bank of artificial snow beneath a twinkling Christmas tree.

Billy's sick grin spreads. All around him, lights blink and little Santas and snowmen spin and twirl quietly, smiling.

CUT TO:

194

INT. WORLD OF TOYS - NIGHT

194

Looking out through the now wide-open glass doors toward the parking lot as a car drives up and stops in front of the store. Sister Margaret gets out and approaches the doors cautiously. She peeks in.

SISTER MARGARET

Hello...? Is anybody here?

Hello-oooooo!

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

194

No answer. The store is full of blinking lights and color. Sister Margaret steps in slowly, squinting through the dim light.

SISTER MARGARET

(continuing)

Is anybody here? Hello?

(stops; puzzled)

Billy? Are you in here?

She is about to give up and leave. She stops, turns, looks, sees:

195 SISTER MARGARET'S POV

195

Under a big Christmas tree lies the corpse of Mrs. Randall with an arrow through her. The fake snow around her is deep red.

196 EXT. STORE - NIGHT - SISTER MARGARET

196

opens her mouth to scream:

CUT TO:

197 EXT. DENISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

197

Her scream is displaced by the SOUND of TEENAGE CAROLLERS SINGING in front of the house. A large, lit-up plastic Santa Claus stands nearby, smiling.

CAROLLERS

(sing)

(LYRICS TO COME)

198 INT. DENISE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

198

DENISE, 17 and gorgeous, and her boyfriend Tommy, 18, are spread across the pool table. Tommy is on top of her and is well along in the process of getting her clothes off her. She offers little resistance. The SOUND of the CAROLLERS comes through:

(CONTINUED)

198

CONTINUED:

198

CAROLLERS (O.S.)
(LYRICS TO COME)

TOMMY
Shit! I can't concentrate
with that racket! Hold
on...

He gets up and turns on the STEREO. The basement is
filled with BLASTING ROCK AND ROLL.

199

INT. DENISE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

199

JOEY, age 5, stands at the top of the basement stairs
in his pajamas, holding a Santa Claus doll.

JOEY
Denise? Deneeeeeeese! I
wanna stay up and see
Santa Claus!

200

INT. BASEMENT

200

Tommy is on top again. He slumps in despair.

DENISE
(shouts)
Joey, go back to bed right
this minute!

201

JOEY

201

starts down the stairs.

JOEY
But I can't sleep!

202

BASEMENT

202

Tommy's eyes widen.

TOMMY
(whispers)
Holy shit! He's comin' down!

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED:

202

DENISE

Joey! Don't come down here!
We're doing our homework!
Joey, if you don't go back
to bed, Santa Claus won't come!

TOMMY

(whispers)
He's not the only one...

203 JOEY

203

stops.

JOEY

(alarmed)
He won't??

204 BASEMENT

204

DENISE

No! You're being bad, Joey,
now go back to bed!

They wait, listening.

JOEY (O.S.)

(reluctantly)
Well... okay.

They listen to his FOOTSTEPS as he goes back upstairs.
Tommy breathes a sigh of relief and leers at Denise.

TOMMY

Back to our studies...

Denise giggles and they resume: In a second, her blouse
is on the floor.

TOMMY

(continuing)
Two-ball in the corner pocket...

He starts to lay into her and it becomes hot. She pulls
his shirt off. Tommy is moaning pretty heavy when Denise
suddenly looks off, listening intently.

DENISE

Oh, shit.

(CONTINUED)

204 CONTINUED:

204

TOMMY

What?!

DENISE

Sorry, Tommy. I gotta go
upstairs for a minute.

TOMMY

What for?

DENISE

The cat wants to come inside.

She slips out from under him and heads for the stairs.

TOMMY

How do you know?

DENISE

(starting up the
stairs, breasts
bouncing)

I heard her collar jingling
at the door.

She disappears up the stairs and closes the basement
door. Tommy collapses in frustration, then gets up and
turns up the STEREO.

205 INT. UPSTAIRS - AT BACK DOOR

205

There is a JINGLING SOUND outside. Denise approaches through
the dark hallway, jiggling.

DENISE

I'm coming!

She unlocks the door and throws it open. There's no sign
of the cat. She looks out into the cold, black night.

DENISE

(continuing)

Puddy? Where'd she go?

206 EXT. DENISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

206

She stands silhouetted in the doorway. Around her, all
is dark, still, eerily silent...

DENISE

Are you out there? Puddeee!

207

CLOSE ON DENISE

207

A shiver runs through her.

DENISE

(to herself)

Okay... you're on your own
until morning. Merry Christmas.

She starts to close the door... then there's a JINGLING SOUND right outside and suddenly the cat runs around the edge of the door and into the house.

DENISE

(continuing)

There you are, you bad kitty!

Smiling, she starts to close the door again.

Then, just before the lock clicks: SMASHHH!! The gleaming blade of Billy's axe slams into the door. Denise screams and Billy explodes into the house, leering at her body.

DENISE

(continuing;
breathless)

Who, who are you?! You
better get out of here!
My boyfriend is right downstairs!!

Billy's eyes narrow in anger. Then a mad grin spreads.

BILLY

(a low growl)

You've been doing something
naughty.

DENISE

(screams)

Get out!

BILLY

You have to be punished.

Denise's eyes widen in terror as Billy suddenly raises his axe and swings at her. She ducks, he misses. She turns and runs.

208

INT. LIVING ROOM

208

Billy chases her into the room, lit by a CRACKLING FIRE.

(CONTINUED)

208

CONTINUED:

208

He throws the axe at her back; it lodges in a wall behind her. She jumps, screams, her breath coming in gasping spasms. Billy lurches toward her, grabs her under the arms and picks her up. She kicks and screams as he throws her over his shoulder and starts to stagger across the dark living room with her, taking the blows of her weak fists.

BILLY
Punished! Punished!

209

DENISE

209

sobbing hysterically as she is carried backwards through the room.

210

BILLY

210

His eyes light up as he sees:

211

BILLY'S POV

211

An enormous stuffed deer head is mounted on the wall over the fireplace right in front of him, getting closer fast. The deer has a great set of antlers with sharp, pointed tips.

WIDE

Billy staggers toward the fireplace with Denise, closer and closer to the antlers...

212

CLOSEUP - DENISE ON BILLY'S SHOULDER

212

sobbing, pathetic.

DENISE
(cries)
No... please...

And: POW. Her body jerks stiffly in response to a terrible blow from behind. Her eyes stare with astonishment into the darkness... then she goes limp. But she does not fall.

213

BILLY

213

stands back from her, looking up at her. Satisfied.

214 INT. BASEMENT

214

The HI-FI BLASTS. Tommy is playing pool. He sinks a trick shot, then turns down the music.

TOMMY

(calls)

Hey, Denise! What are you doing?

He listens: The house is quiet. He throws down the pool cue and heads upstairs.

215 UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

215

He enters from the basement stairway and looks around. The house is dark.

TOMMY

Denise? Hey, where are you?

He heads toward the living room. Then there's a SOUND nearby: JINGLE-JINGLE-JINGLE. Tommy stops, listens. Something moves, startles him, he gasps, jumps, looks... and smiles: The cat is scrunched in a corner, cowering. It shudders; its COLLAR JINGLES.

Tommy smirks and continues toward the living room. The cat watches him warily.

216 INT. LIVING ROOM

216

Tommy peeks in from the hall.

It's dark, except for the firelight. He enters slowly... something touches his shoulder, he jumps, turns... it's just a lampshade. He exhales slowly and backs away from it, moving deeper into the room.

TOMMY

Denise, will you quit playing games?

He stops.

217 CLOSEUP - TOMMY

217

listening. No answer. He resumes walking slowly backwards, getting closer to the fireplace. Closer... then he stops.

(CONTINUED)

217 CONTINUED:

217

The fireplace is right behind him. He thinks. Frowns.

TOMMY

I'm gonna kill her.

A small red drop falls on his bare shoulder. He scratches it. Another drop hits him; he wipes it and glances at his hand. His face freezes and he takes a step backwards, hits something behind him, turns and sees:

218 DENISE

218

hanging limp on the antlers, impaled, staring down at him.

219 TOMMY

219

His breath suspended, his mouth wide open. He starts trembling uncontrollably, then screams from deep in his guts; suddenly there is another scream in the room, a furious roar, and Tommy turns as Billy lunges at him from the darkness, swinging his axe. Tommy's eyes dart around frantically and light on the fireplace poker beside him. He grabs it, swings at Billy. Tommy misses, Billy swings his axe and Tommy throws himself to the floor. He jumps up again, winds up with the poker and smashes it into the side of Billy's head. Billy stops, wobbles, the axe slips from his hands and he collapses on the floor with a heavy thud.

Tommy stumbles to the telephone. Slowly, his hands trembling, he dials "0".

He waits. The house is silent except for Tommy's shuddering breath.

TOMMY

(weak)

Operator... I need the police.

He waits. The PHONE CLICKS.

TOMMY

(continuing)

Hello? Hello?

There's a SOUND behind him: JINGLE-JINGLE. Tommy spins around to see Billy standing a few feet away, blood running down the side of his head. He grins at Tommy, holding the ripped telephone cord away from the wall.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

Naughty, naughty!

Tommy drops the phone and Billy is right on top of him, lifting him off the floor as Tommy punches him, screaming. Billy throws him on the floor. Tommy lands hard, tries to stand; his ankle gives way under him.

Tommy tries to crawl away but Billy is right behind him, kicking him, driving him toward the fireplace.

Billy keeps kicking, roaring, furious, his BOOTS THUDDING into Tommy's ribs. Tommy cries. The fire is right behind him. Tommy screams, tries to escape; Billy has him cornered.

The flames lick at Tommy's clothes; it takes all of his strength to keep from being shoved into the fire. Finally, with one last desperate effort, Tommy kicks Billy hard in the groin and lurches past him as Billy lets out a furious wail. Tommy doesn't get far; Billy is right behind him, grabbing him, hoisting him into the air with a furious roar. Tommy struggles; it is no use. Billy heaves Tommy through the air and the boy crashes through a picture window. Billy giggles, grabs his ribboned axe from the floor and heads for the door, passing the stairway as he goes.

JOEY (O.S)

Santa Claus!

Billy stops.. Turns, looks all around. He comes back to the bottom of the stairway and looks up. Joey stands at the top of the stairs looking down at Billy with a wide, wondrous smile.

JOEY

I knew you'd come! Did you bring me a present?

Billy stops, considers.

BILLY

Have... have you been good...
Or have you been... naughty?

JOEY

Good!

Billy resumes climbing the stairs, slowly.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED (2):

219

BILLY

You haven't done anything
naughty?

JOEY

No, Santa Claus!

Billy stops climbing. He stands in front of Joey,
towering above him. Joey looks up at him, smiling.

Billy slowly bends over, until his face is just inches
from Joey, glaring fiercely into the child's eyes.

BILLY

Are you sure??

Joey swallows. Billy's eyes narrow. His red-gloved
hand moves to his pocket and removes a shiny metal
object: the razor.

220 EXT. HOUSE

220

Tommy lays in the snow under the smashed window, a shard
of glass through his heart. Blood spreads out around
his head turning the snow red.

Near the window, the front door opens. Billy starts
outside, then turns and looks back into the house.

BILLY

(a guttural growl)

Merry Christmas!

He giggles and heads off into the night, JINGLING softly.

221 INT. HOUSE

221

Our VIEW TRAVELS slowly UP the stairway... We DISCOVER
Joey's pajamaed feet, lying still on the stairs...
TRAVELING further, we slowly DISCOVER Joey... sitting
at the top of the stairs with Billy's razor in his
hand, unharmed, staring at the razor in befuddled
disappointment. Trying to make the best of it, he
makes a few chop marks in the bannister.

JOEY

(shouts)

Hey, Denise, wanna see what I
got from Santa Claus? Denise?
Deneeeeeeeeeee!!

The house is silent.

CUT TO:

222 EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - NIGHT 222

A police car rolls along slowly, its TIRE CHAINS CRUNCHING softly on the new snow.

223 INT. POLICE CAR 223

Two cops, MURPHY and MILLER, scan the dark yards.

MURPHY

Do you believe this? Christmas Eve, and we got orders to pick up Santy Claus! Hey, Miller... whaddaya think the Captain'd say if we brought in the real one?

MILLER

He's never satisfied. He'd send us back out for the Easter Rabbit. Or Peter Pan, maybe.

Murphy laughs and looks out the window.

MURPHY

Hey! Look!

Miller looks:

224 EXT. A HOUSE 224

A modest two-story home (not Denise's). There's a ladder propped up against the side of the house leading to an upstairs window, and Santa Claus is starting to climb in.

225 EXT. ROAD 225

The police car slides to a stop in front of the house. Murphy jumps out with his pistol drawn.

MURPHY

(shouts)

Hey you! Hold it!

Santa Claus disappears through the window. Murphy and Miller take off through the snow toward the front door.

226 INT. THE HOUSE - BEDROOM 226

ANGELA, a beautiful little girl of three, sleeps soundly, smiling.

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED:

226

Across the dark room, the hulking, ominous figure of Santa Claus stands silhouetted by the window. He starts to walk slowly toward the little girl's bed...

227 EXT. HOUSE

227

The cops reach the front door. It's unlocked. They race inside.

228 INT. HOUSE

228

They explode into the front hallway. In the living room a WOMAN sits watching Perry Como on TV. She jumps up and rushes into the hall in time to see the two cops bounding up the stairs.

WOMAN

(shouts)

Where do you think you're going??

She scrambles up the stairs after them.

229 INT. BEDROOM

229

Angela sleeps. Santa Claus stands right over her, his shadow falling across her frail form, breathing heavily.

230 THE COPS

230

reach the top of the stairs and race down the hall, guns drawn, with the Woman stumbling along behind them, trying to keep up.

WOMAN

Will you please stop and tell me what you want?!

231 SANTA CLAUS

231

reaches down to the little girl with a red-gloved hand. She sighs softly in her sleep.

232 THE COPS

232

scramble down the hall throwing open closet doors, bathroom doors, etc. The Woman flutters behind them.

233 ANGELA

233

sleeps... the red-gloved hand closes on her tiny shoulder... her eyes open slowly, sleepily, focusing on the big, bearded face looming above her in the darkness...

234 THE COPS

234

open a door.

MILLER

(screams)

Hold it! Stop right there!

235 INT. BEDROOM

235

They burst into the room, their guns aimed at Santa Claus, who stares at them in total amazement.

Angela looks at Santa Claus and smiles, then reaches up to him with outstretched arms.

ANGELA

Daddy!

The cops stare at her, then at each other. The Woman appears in the doorway behind them.

MURPHY

(to Miller)

'Daddy?'

They look at Santa Claus, who is staring at their guns, trembling, as one side of his beard comes unstuck and slips down to reveal his face: definitely not Billy.

CUT TO:

236 EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - NIGHT

236

Billy ambles along the side of the road, staying in the shadows of trees, hunched over against the cold, cradling the axe in his arms.

A pair of headlights approaches; Billy dodges behind a clump of bushes and watches a police car roll by.

237 INT. POLICE CAR

237

CAPTAIN RICHARDS, 45, drives. Sister Margaret sits next to him.

238 EXT. THE ROAD

238

The car passes a clump of bushes and races off down the road. Then Billy's head pokes up from behind the bushes, watching the car disappear. He giggles deep in his throat.

DISSOLVE TO:

239 EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

239

DOUG and JIM, both age 12, stand at the top of the hill with their Flexible Flier sleds under their arms.

DOUG

Wow! Look at this hill!
Virgin, man!

JIM

Only kind you'll ever get...

DOUG

I'm goin' down first!

Doug sets his sled down and sits on it, ready to go... but he doesn't move, just sits staring off into the darkness.

JIM

Go on! What's the matter?
Afraid?

DOUG

Shut up a second!

He stares around, trying to pierce the darkness.

JIM

Are you having a religious
experience? Or did you pee
in your pants?

DOUG

Shhh... there's somebody else
out here...

(CONTINUED)

239 CONTINUED:

239

JIM

Who'd be out here on Christmas
eve? Go on!

DOUG

Shhh! Just be quiet a second...

240 WIDE - THE HILLTOP

240

silent, dark and snowy, with a few clumps of dark bushes
scattered about.

241 DOUG AND JIM

241

DOUG

I don't know what it is...
I feel like somebody's watching
me.

JIM

Like who? Santa's little
elves?

DOUG

(giving in)
Well... maybe it's just my
imagination.

JIM

It would be if you had one.
Now ride your stupid sled.

DOUG

My sled ain't stupid! Watch
this!

(gets ready
to push off)
One... two...

Then: Right beside them, a big BUSH RATTLES and a low
VOICE GRUMBLES and rises to an insane roar and the bush
explodes with sudden movement as a huge, dark figure
jumps from behind it and grabs the astonished Doug,
getting him in an arm-lock. Another figure jumps from
behind a bush near Jim, who turns and runs but is tackled
and pinned in the snow.

(CONTINUED)

The attackers, BOB and MAC, two hefty, not very bright seventeen-year-olds, giggle.

Jim and Doug look at each other from their captive positions, disgusted.

JIM

Well, if it isn't Bob and Mac. We're both awful impressed by the skill and courage it took to pull this off, so now get the fuck off us!

Bob shoves snow down Jim's back and then punches him in the ribs hard. Jim yelps.

BOB

Glad to, little man. We're gonna go sledding.

JIM

That's the plan? You're gonna steal our sleds? You guys are great. I want to grow up to be just like you. Ugly and very stupid.

Bob punches him hard in the back.

BOB

Take that back, fuckface!

JIM

(moans)

Drop dead.

Bob grabs Jim's hand and bends the thumb back.

BOB

Take it back!

Bob keeps bending his thumb, giggling.

JIM

I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Let go!!

Bob gets off him.

(CONTINUED)

241 CONTINUED (2):

241

BOB
Get out of here!

MAC
Get lost, turds.

Doug starts away. Jim follows, holding his hurt thumb.

242 BOB AND MAC

242

grabs the boys' sleds.

BOB
All right! Let's go! You
try it first!

MAC
(shrugs)
Okay.

He sets his sled on the edge of the slope and sits on it.

MAC
(continuing)
Hey... What if I run into a
tree?

Bob shoves Mac's sled with his foot and Mac is off, sliding
fast down the steep hill.

243 WIDE - BILLY'S POV - ON MAC

243

seen from behind some bushes halfway down: Mac approaches
and sails on by toward the bottom, howling with excitement.

244 EXT. TOP OF HILL - BOB

244

stands at the top of the hill, watching Mac's ride.

BOB
(shouts)
Way to go! Beautiful, man!
All right, now watch this!

He sets his sled on the slope and carefully sits on it.
His size makes it awkward.

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED:

244

BOB
(continuing;
to himself)
Ready, set, go.

He shoves off with his hands and heads down the hill.

245 WIDE - BILLY'S POV - BOB

245

from behind the bushes, halfway down: Bob approaches,
howling and laughing.

246 CLOSER - BOB

246

racing down the hill, screaming. Then: Suddenly, his
eyes widen in astonishment and terror and he opens his
mouth to scream...

247 MAC

247

sits on his sled at the bottom of the hill, playing
with his thumb, bending it back. He bends it too far.

MAC
Ow!! Shit...

He looks off up the hill. Bob isn't howling anymore,
and he never got that scream out.

MAC
(continuing;
looking up
the hill)
Okay, Bobby! Way to go!
Bring it right in here,
man!

248 WIDE - THE HILL

248

The hunched-over figure of Bob rides his sled toward
the bottom of the hill, silently.

249 BOTTOM OF HILL - MAC

249

watches... and as the sled glides to a gradual stop in
front of him, his smile freezes in horror.

- 250 BOTTOM OF HILL - BOB'S SLED 250
with Bob's hunched figure sitting on it. His head is gone, lopped off. The stump of his neck oozes blood, pulsing.
- 251 MAC 251
screams, then sees something new which makes him scream louder:
- 252 BOB'S HEAD 252
comes rolling down the hill and stops at Mac's feet, staring up at him.
- 253 MAC AND BOB 253
Mac screams. Bob's body topples over into the snow, landing with the neck near to the head, as if it were trying to get reattached.
- 254 WIDE - BILLY'S POV - MAC AND BOB 254
seen from behind the bush on the hill. There is a JINGLING SOUND.
- 255 BILLY'S RED-GLOVED HANDS 255
holding the axe. The ribbon on the handle is worn out. The blade drips fresh blood on the snow.
Mac's screams continue, echoing into the night...
- DISSOLVE TO:
- 256 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAWN 256
surrounded by snow. The morning is cold and quiet.
- 257 INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING 257
Sister Margaret sleeps on a wooden bench in the hall. Cops walk by.

(CONTINUED)

257

CONTINUED:

257

She awakens with a start. A hand offers her a cup of coffee. She looks up.

SISTER MARGARET
Captain Richards. Thank you.
Do you have any news?

He sits beside her. He's been up all night and it shows.

RICHARDS
All bad, Sister. Three more murders. He's been eluding my men all night. The kid may be nuts, but he's not stupid.

SISTER MARGARET
No. In fact, I'm sure that in some strange way, what he's doing has a kind of logic behind it.

RICHARDS
(looks at her)
If that's true, Sister, there must be a way we can predict his next move. Where would Santa Claus go on Christmas day? At least, where does Billy think he'd go?

Sister Margaret thinks about it, and then it hits her. Hard. Her mouth drops open and her blood freezes.

SISTER MARGARET
(a gasp)
Oh, my Lord.

CUT TO:

258

INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

258

Under the Christmas tree, a new group of children play with their toys. Lots of laughter, excitement, colorful wrapping paper and toys everywhere.

Mother Superior, 65 and gout-ridden, sits in a wheelchair watching the children like a hawk.

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED:

258

MOTHER SUPERIOR

I want that paper folded and stacked, not tossed about! And I expect each of you to prepare a nice thank you for Santa Claus, for his visit later! Are you listening?

They're not. They continue playing happily.

259 NEXT ROOM

259

The CHILDREN'S VOICES drift into this small room, where a little GIRL sits at the telephone table with her new doll, teaching it to use the phone. She holds the receiver to the doll's ear.

GIRL

You better say goodbye now. Mother Superior wants us to write a note to Santa Claus.

She jumps down from the chair... and leaves the phone off the hook.

CUT TO:

260 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

260

Richards approaches Sister Margaret.

RICHARDS

Is that the only line out there, Sister? It's still busy!

SISTER MARGARET

I'm afraid so. I don't know who'd be on the phone so long...

RICHARDS

There's one thing I can do. I'm going down to the radio dispatcher, and then we're going out to the orphanage ourselves!

CUT TO:

261 EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY 261
A police car rolls by.

262 INT. POLICE CAR - INTERCUT WITH DISPATCH ROOM AT POLICE STATION 262
A cop, BARNES, listens to the police radio.
RICHARDS (V.O.)
(filter)
I need every available car to
get over to the orphanage on
the double! The Santa Claus
killer may be headed that way.
Responding officers are ordered
to shoot to kill if necessary.

263 EXT. THE ROAD 263
The CAR turns around and ROARS OFF in the other direction.
CUT TO:

264 EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY 264
The front door opens and a few kids run outside, bundled
up. Sister Ellen, now 45, watches from the doorway.
SISTER ELLEN
If any of you get wet or start
to feel too cold, come back
inside.
CHILDREN
Yes, Sister Ellen!
She closes the door and the children play in the snow,
making snowballs, working on a half-finished snowman,
making snow-angels.

265 EXT. ROAD - DAY 265
Richards' car races along.

266 INT. RICHARDS' CAR 266
He drives hard while Sister Margaret stares ahead
anxiously, her hands playing her rosary beads.
CUT TO:

267 INT. OFFICER BARNES' CAR - DAY

267

Barnes drives along. He looks:

268 BARNES' POV FROM INSIDE CAR - THE ORPHANAGE

268

comes into view.

269 BARNES

269

picks up his radio microphone.

BARNES

This is Barnes. I'm approaching
the orphanage now. Looks like
everything's okay. There's a
bunch of kids playing in the
yard.

(stops, stares)

Holy shit!!

He drops the microphone and slams down the gas pedal.

270 EXT. ROAD

270

The wheels spin, the car takes off.

271 EXT. ORPHANAGE

271

The children continue to play. Then one, RONALD, age 7,
stops and looks off. A big smile spreads across his
face.

RONALD

(whisper)

Wow!

A snowball hits him from behind. He turns angrily.

RONALD

(continuing)

Quit it! Don'cha see who's
coming?

The other boy looks, and smiles like Ronald.

Twenty feet away, headed right for them, Santa Claus
lumbers across the snowy yard.

(CONTINUED)

271

CONTINUED:

271

The police car slides to a stop at the bottom of the driveway. Barnes scrambles out, drops to one knee and aims his revolver.

BARNES

(screams)

Hold it! Don't take another
step or I'll shoot!

The children look off at him, startled. Santa Claus keeps coming toward them; his back is to Barnes. Ricky, now age 14, walks toward Santa, smiling at him. Ricky resembles Billy.

BARNES

(continuing;

screams)

Don't go near him! Get out
of there!

It's too late; Ricky is only a few feet from Santa Claus. Santa Claus reaches for him, smiling, as: POW! POW! POW! POW! POW! He spins, his body bursting apart, and down he goes, turning the snow bright red. The children scream and cry.

Barnes stands up slowly. He takes a deep breath, holsters his gun and starts up the driveway as the orphanage door flies open and Sister Ellen comes running out. She stops, horrified.

SISTER ELLEN

Oh, my God! Children! Inside!
Ricky! Come away from there!!

Ricky turns; he is splattered with Santa Claus' blood.

272

WIDE - BILLY'S POV

272

from within the thick trees which surround the orphanage: Barnes goes to Sister Ellen as she tries to herd the children into the house.

BILLY (O.S.)

Naughty...

CUT TO:

273 EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

273

Captain Richards' car races along.

274 INT. RICHARDS' CAR - INTERCUT WITH DISPATCH ROOM AT
POLICE STATION

274

He drives; Sister Margaret is beside him. They are
listening intently to the POLICE RADIO.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

(filter)

Repeat: A man dressed as Santa
Claus has been shot and killed
at Saint Mary's Home. Ambulance
is on the way.

RICHARDS

Thank God. It's all over, Sister.

Sister Margaret is stricken by the news.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

(filter)

Uh, we got a problem here, Captain.
The description of the dead man...
it's all wrong.

Richards grabs the microphone.

RICHARDS

What do you mean, it's all wrong?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Barnes says the guy's about
fifty, under six feet tall...

SISTER MARGARET

My God, it's Father O'Brien! He
was our Santa this year!

RICHARDS

The kid we're after is eighteen!

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Barnes warned him to stop, Captain,
but he didn't respond!

SISTER MARGARET

Of course not, he's nearly deaf!
He couldn't hear it!

(CONTINUED)

274 CONTINUED:

724

RICHARDS

(shouts into
microphone)

Tell Barnes to stay at
the orphanage! The killer might
still be on his way there!

Sister Margaret is horrified by the thought. She stares
out the window, distraught.

SISTER MARGARET

We've got to stop him. We've
got to...

Richards steps on the gas.

275 EXT. RURAL ROAD

275

The car speeds away.

DISSOLVE TO:

276 INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

276

Mother Superior, in her wheelchair, talks quietly with
Barnes near the entrance to the living room. The children
are huddled with Sister Ellen, near the tree at the other
end of the room.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

I don't understand what makes
you people think a murderer
would want to come here in
the first place... and dressed
as Santa Claus?

BARNES

Captain Richards can tell you
everything when he gets here.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(suddenly
anxious)

The children! No harm must come
to them! Do you understand?

BARNES

That's why I'm here, Sister.

(CONTINUED)

276 CONTINUED:

276

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(glares
at him)

I am the Mother Superior...

BARNES

Right. I'm going to check out
the grounds. In the meantime,
don't let anybody come through
that door unless you're absolutely
sure who it is.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

No one's going to get in here
who doesn't belong. No harm
is going to come to the children!

CUT TO:

277 EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

277

A cold WIND WHIPS around the big, silent house as Barnes
walks slowly around it, his gun drawn.

Then: He stops. Listens. He takes a few steps toward
the wooded area beyond the orphanage property.

BARNES

Is somebody out there?

No answer. He walks toward the trees, his eyes darting
to catch any movement there.

278 EXT. ORPHANAGE - EDGE OF THE WOODS - DAY

278

Barnes stops and listens. Stillness and silence surround
him. Behind him, the big house offers warmth and safety.
Barnes shivers, then takes a few steps into the woods.

He stops, looks all around.

BARNES

Is somebody there?

No answer except the chill WHISPER of the WIND. Barnes
steps deeper into the forest, and is surrounded by thick,
dark trees.

(CONTINUED)

278

CONTINUED:

278

He stands, looking around, listening... silence. Then:

BARNES

(continuing;
screams)

AAAAAUUUUUGGGGGHHHHH!!

He jumps nearly out of his skin as something taps his shoulder and he spins around, instinctively dropping to one knee and taking aim at:

279

A TREE BRANCH

279

bobbing up and down in the cold wind.

280

BARNES

280

A shuddering breath escapes him. He stands up. The tree branch taps his shoulder again, softly. He laughs a little, letting off tension, holsters his gun and heads back through the trees toward the house, and is almost at the edge of the woods, out in the open, when:

WWWHHOMMP!! Billy's axe slams into his guts. Blood gushes out of him.

CUT TO:

281

INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

281

The children sit around the tree with their presents. They are grim, frightened.

Sister Ellen and Mother Superior watch them.

SISTER ELLEN

Poor things. They're scared to death.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Yes. They need something to take their minds off it.

(calls)

Richard!

Ricky goes to Mother Superior.

(CONTINUED)

281

CONTINUED:

281

He has washed up, but still looks dazed by his earlier experience.

RICKY

Yes, Mother Superior?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Run and get my pitch-pipe from my office.

Ricky rushes away. Mother Superior watches him.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

Such a good boy. Reminds me of his older brother, William.

(then, calls)

Children! Come to me!

The children wander to her.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

I know you're upset, children, and I understand. But I want you to stop this moping.

They continue to stare at her miserably. Ricky arrives with the pitch-pipe. Mother Superior takes it.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

Thank you, Richard. Ready, Sister? A-one, a-two, a-three!

(sings)

Deck the halls with boughs of holly --

Sister Ellen joins in as Ricky goes back among the other children.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

Fa la la la la, la la, la la!

'Tis the season to be jolly!

Fa la la la la, la la, la la!

A few of the children begin to join in, half-heartedly.

(CONTINUED)

281 CONTINUED (2):

281

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(continuing)
Don we now our gay apparel,
fa la la, fa la la, la la la!

282 EXT. ORPHANAGE

282

The SINGING VOICES drift outside, where a snowman stands in front of the house, smiling a smile made of twigs and little stones... until his head is swiftly lopped off by a swinging axe.

283 INT. ORPHANAGE LIVING ROOM

283

Mother Superior finishes enthusiastically, with some of the children following:

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Fa la la la lahhhhh, la la, la
lahhhhhh!

Mother Superior claps her hands together, smiling.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(continuing)
See? Don't you feel better now?

CHILDREN
(very gloomy)
Yes, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
I knew you would!

ANDREW, age 6, glances distractedly out a window as something outside catches his attention. His eyes grow large, he slips away from the others and goes to the window.

284 ANDREW

284

smiles as he looks outside.

285 MOTHER SUPERIOR

285

wheels herself closer to the children.

(CONTINUED)

285 CONTINUED:

285

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Now, let's try 'We Wish You A
Merry Christmas,' shall we?
And no holdouts this time! Sing!

She and Sister Ellen start singing, and some children
join in. Mother Superior glances off and frowns.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(continuing)
Andrew, just where do you think
you're going? We need altos!

Andrew keeps going, headed for the front door.

286 EXT. ORPHANAGE FRONT DOOR

286

Above the cheerful Christmas wreath, a red-gloved HAND
KNOCKS.

287 INT. ORPHANAGE

287

Andrew is at the front door. Mother Superior stiffens,
starts shaking her head wildly, staring at Andrew. He
turns the doorknob. Mother Superior's mouth opens to
scream; she cannot make a sound. The CHILDREN'S SINGING
VOICES fill the air as Andrew opens the DOOR and then
stands back as it swings open slowly, CREAKING...

Mother Superior reaches out in silent terror until her
fear finally lifts her up out of her wheelchair and she
screams:

MOTHER SUPERIOR
NO! NOOOOOO!!

The front door swings wide open. And there, standing in
the doorway, his hands behind his back, hunched over, his
eyes wild and gleaming as he takes a step inside, is
Billy.

The children see him and stop singing as big smiles come
to their faces. Mother Superior falls back into her
wheelchair. Some of the children start to run toward
Billy.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(continuing:
screams)
Stay away from him!

(CONTINUED)

287

CONTINUED:

287

The children stop and stare at her, stunned.

Behind Billy's back, his red-gloved hands tighten on the axe handle.

The children stare at Mother Superior. Ricky, standing behind them, takes a few steps forward, staring at Billy with a quizzical look...

A GIRL standing beside him smiles.

GIRL
But, Mother Superior... it's
Santa Claus!

She starts to walk toward Billy, smiling. Mother Superior reaches for the Girl's arm, but misses.

Billy grins madly as the Girl approaches. No one else moves.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
No... stay away from him...

The little Girl keeps walking.

GIRL
Hello, Santa...

Ricky stares... and a dim recognition appears in his eyes. Mother Superior watches, helpless, weak, as the little Girl comes within reach of the leering, grinning Billy.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(screams)
Get away from him! He isn't
Santa Claus!! There is no Santa
Claus!!!

On that, the Girl stops dead in her tracks, turns slowly and stares at Mother Superior, numbed by such blasphemy. Mother Superior's outstretched hand trembles, her fingers reaching for the little Girl.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(continuing;
desperate whisper)
Come away from him. Please...

(CONTINUED)

287

CONTINUED:

287

Billy's grin fades slowly. His dancing eyes go suddenly dull. His stare locks onto Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

(continuing)

There is no Santa Claus...

Billy continues to stare at her, his head cocked, eyes narrowed. Mother Superior looks back at him, remaining defiant.

Then: A low GROWL starts deep inside Billy and grows quickly until it explodes in a sudden rush of fury:

BILLY

(screams)

No! No! NAUGHTY!! NAUGHTY!!!

And all at once he raises his axe high overhead and his huge, lumbering body bolts toward Mother Superior, raging, roaring, swinging the axe. The children scream and run for their lives as Mother Superior mutters a silent prayer. Billy rages toward her and then he's right on top of her and his axe races backwards as he raises it high over Mother Superior's head, ready to bring it crashing down into her skull; and: Suddenly, POW! POW! POW!!

Billy screams and spins around as his blood explodes everywhere and his axe flies out of his hand and lands harmlessly on the floor across the room... at the feet of one of the children: Ricky, who stares at Billy, trembling, white...

Billy staggers for a moment, then collapses and hits the floor with a loud, CRUNCHING THUD.

Sister Ellen and the children just stare, breathless, unable to move or speak.

Captain Richards stands in the doorway with his gun drawn. Sister Margaret runs up the yard behind him. She comes into the doorway, sees what has happened and bows her head in prayer.

Mother Superior stares down at Billy's body, and smiles a triumphant sneer.

Billy lies crumpled on the floor, covered with blood, breathing his last few shallow breaths. His glazed eyes turn toward the terrified children. He pulls off his beard slowly.

(CONTINUED)

287 CONTINUED (2):

287

Ricky gasps, his face contorts with astonishment and horror.

BILLY

(a thick
whisper)

You're safe now... Santa Claus
is gone.

His eyes close. He is dead.

The children stand still, staring at Billy, trembling, starting to cry quietly. No one moves. The room is quiet and still.

At the back of the room, behind the other children, Ricky wipes a tear from his eye and he mutters to himself in a thick, dry voice, barely audible:

RICKY

(a growled
whisper)

Naughty...

We HOLD ON his intense, angry, staring face, and slowly:

FADE OUT.

THE END