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North by North Pole

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

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Guy Nicolucci

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North By North Pole
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The black screen becomes a night sky. No moon, no stars. Not a darned thing hits your eye like a big pizza pie.

EXT. ARCTIC PINE FOREST – NIGHT

A row of blinding lights cut through the blackness. Snow swirls through the air.

WORKMEN guide cables from a crane into an icy hole.

ECU of a crane operator’s gloved hands, as he pulls back the levers in his cab.

Crane operators POVs: The crane slowly hoists what looks like a mud rectangle, about the size of an SUV.

The workmen scramble to hold the muddy monolith steady.

A man (30s) in an orange parka (we can't see his face but will later find out his name is DANIEL KETTLE), rushes forward to the rectangular block, yelling at the other men to stand back. Kettle scrapes at the mud.

Under the mud, through the mottle ice a flash of silver glints: a SLEIGH BLADE.

Kettle turns around to grab a pick-axe from a WORKMAN but overbalances. He swings his arms frantically and stabs himself in the face with the pick-axe, then falls into the hole.

Titles Appear on Screen

“One year earlier, and a lot farther south.”

EXT. FLORIDA – SUNSET

It's the end of another perfect Florida day. Blue skies, white clouds, green palms. Everything you pay for.

EXT. PLANTATION-STYLE WHITE BUILDING – TWILIGHT

A sign on the front reads OCEAN PINES: A SENIOR RESORT AND ELDER HOSTEL. MERRY CHRISTMAS.

The main building is surrounded by tennis court, a pool, and several smaller outbuildings.
Next door to Ocean Pines is a sign that reads: "HIGH & WIDE DRIVING RANGE -- HITTING THEM HIGH SINCE 1971"

EXT. DRIVING RANGE - CONTINUOUS *

Palm trees along the fringe of the range are strung with golf-ball-shaped Christmas lights.

Two six-foot-high “golfer” nutcrackers stand at either end of the tee mats.

The back fence is decorated by silhouette of a golf cart pulled by reindeer.

Jimmy Buffett’s laid-back version of “Jingle Bells” plays on the loudspeaker.

The world’s most beat-up range picker, a rusty-sorta-red jeep with patches of algae green, crisscrosses the range.

The driver, SONNY (a 30-year-old manchild wearing cargo shorts, Hawaiian shirt, golf hat) talks into an fashioned 1970s-style microphone.

SONNY (O.C.)
Good evening golferinos and a Merry Night Before Christmas. We're closing a little early because it is Christmas, but thank you for coming and please pack up your bag like Santa before you leave. Ho, ho ---

SFX: DING!

A golf ball hits the ROOF. Sonny looks up.

SONNY
Whoa!

DING! DING!

Two golf balls stick into the chicken-wire windshield.

Sonny’s POV: The tee mats Silhouetted in front of the setting sun, we can sort of make out a VERY FAT GOLFER.
SONNY (CONT’D)
(into microphone) )
Nick, not cool, dude.

Sonny pulls to the Tee Mats but we still can’t see the golfer because he’s next to candy-apple red golf cart with the license plate NICK#1

NICK
(Voice is pure New York)
How do you keep that junker running?

NICK NORTH (Two or three white-bearded Ernest Hemingway impersonators stuffed in one XXL Greg Norman shirt and a straw hat), steps around the cart, golf club in one hand, McDonald’s Big Mac in the other.

SONNY
Cuz I can fix anything. Look, Nick buddy, we’re closing up and I got plans. Tonight’s Christmas Eve.

Sonny hops out of the range picker and unloads the metal baskets filled with golf balls.

NICK
(points to decorations)
Like I could forget. Where do you get all this schlock?

SONNY
I make it myself. You don’t like Christmas?

NICK
Overrated. How about you and me having some fun. Unlimited fried pickle at Jake’s Crab Shack. Eat till you plotz.

Nick tees up to take a swing.

SONNY
I can't. Tonight's the night. I'm proposing to Maggie.

Nick freezes at the top of his backswing.
NICK
Maggie? Maggie Hernandez?

Sonny nods.

NICK (CONT’D)
I didn't know you two were still dating.

SONNY
Sure we are.

Nick swings too hard and hits under the ball. It's a moonshot, which means the ball shoots almost straight up. Nick steps back out of the way.

Sonny looks up from loading the baskets, turns around and gracefully catches the Nick's shot in the basket.

NICK
Smooth. Now pardon me for sticking my schnozz in, but I though she had broken up --

SONNY
Oh that. It was just a rough patch. When I propose, she'll realize --

NICK
(Not convinced)
Hmmm.

SONNY
You're not being a bummer again, buddy?

NICK

SONNY
If?

Nick points to the giant nutcracker eight feet to his right.
NICK
If I can’t hit that golem in the kishkes five times in a row with my putter.

Sonny stops unloading balls.

SONNY
Anywhere? Like Tampa or Disneyworld?

NICK
Think big. Paris or London.

SONNY
They've got that stuff at Epcot.

Nick shrug with an “eh” expression.

SONNY (CONT’D)
What do I have to do if you win?

NICK
Some day -- and this day may never come, I will...

SONNY
I know, I owe you a favor. Deal, dude.

Nick pulls out a putter and holds it up to Sonny

NICK
Our bet is I can hit that nutcracker five times in row, using only this putter?

Sonny nods. Nick drops five balls in front of him, sights the distance, checks the wind, etc.

SONNY
Dude.

Nick walks to the nutcracker, and taps it five times with his putter.

NICK
I win.
SONNY
Not cool.

NICK
Examine the rules of our bet. I said --

SONNY
I know “five times in a row with the putter.” Merry Christmas, not.

NICK
Don’t forget, boychik, you owe me a favor. And aren’t you late ---

Nick lights a cigar as Sonny runs off.

EXT. SONNY’S SHED BEHIND THE DRIVING RANGE – CONTINUOUS

A corrugated metal tool shed that’s been converted to a tiny house. It’s covered with Christmas decorations, and has a hand-painted sign on the door that "Sonny’s Shack."

INT. SONNY’S SHED – CONTINUOUS

A mix between a workshop full of broken gadgets and a museum of stuff a teenage boy thought was cool in 1995, from Ninja turtle statues and a Jumanji posters and a bikini shot of Elle McPherson.)

The only closet is a curtained area under the loft bed. Sonny pulls off his Hawaiian shirt and whips open the closet, which is filled with thirty more Hawaiian shirts.

EXT. OCEAN PINES EDUCATIONAL CENTER – CONTINUOUS

A small white clapboard building with a sign: “OCEAN PINES EDUCATIONAL CENTER: TEACHING OLD DOGS NEW TRICKS.”

INT. EDUCATIONAL CENTER – FEW MINUTES LATER

A door with a nameplate: MAGGIE HERNANDEZ, EDUCATIONAL COORDINATOR

INT. EDUCATION OFFICE – CONTINUOUS

Stacks of moving-boxes and framed posters give it a “last day of school” look.
MAGGIE HERNANDEZ (brunette, 30, calm, confident) holds a tie in front of her son, Alex (9, exuberant).

Maggie lifts Alex’s collar, loops tie around his neck.

ALEX  
Sonny doesn't wear a tie. And you're chokkkekkekkeking me.

MAGGIE  
Cute kid, bad actor. Watch this. I'm creating a heliocentric loop that back-threads through an inverse path in what could be an cosmic reordering of this polyester tie from Target.

ALEX  
I liked it better when you did the rabbit around the tree and down the hole.

SONNY (O.S.)  
Dude, you look good in that tie.

Alex sees Sonny in doorway, runs and leaps into his arms.

ALEX  
Duuuuude!

SONNY  
You're getting too big for this.  
(see Maggie)  
Whoa! You make that dress look beautiful.

MAGGIE  
(bemused)  
Hi Sonny.

SONNY  
(looks around)  
Wow, you really are packing up.

MAGGIE  
My new job starts January second.

Sonny swings Alex down.
ALEX
Sonny, when are you coming to New York City?

MAGGIE
Alex!

SONNY
We can talk about that over dinner. Let’s go, I’ve got reservations.

EXT. EDUCATIONAL CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Sonny, Maggie and Alex get into a beat-up golf cart.

MAGGIE
Where are we going for this “extra special” Christmas Eve dinner?

Sonny just smiles, then drives the cart to the other side of the parking lot and parks in front of the white plantation building.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Sonny, you’re not seriously taking us...

INT. OCEAN PINES DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Red decorations, green tablecloths and white-haired diners. A sign reads, “OCEAN PINES DINING ROOM.” There’s a microphone and small stage at the front, and an ancient couple karaoke-croak a duet on “It’s a Marshmallow World”.

Sonny, Maggie and Alex walk in. Everyone shouts at once.

OLD PEOPLE
"Sonny!"/"Hey it’s Sonny!/ "Merry Christmas!"

Sonny works the crowd, high-fiving the old men, kissing the old ladies. They love it. Maggie shakes her head.

MAGGIE
Sonny, only you would take us to Christmas dinner at the dining hall.
Sonny takes them to a table with a marker that says “RESERVED”, right next to the karaoke machine.

SONNY
I know, isn’t it great?

Alex sees the buffet table loaded with every kind of soft food known to man.

ALEX
(excited)
Cool, look at all that Jell-O.

Yolanda, the kitchen manager (50s, stout) comes to table.

YOLANDA
Three of my favorite people.

MAGGIE
You’re so sweet, Yolanda.

YOLANDA
You’re lucky to have such a great boyfriend.

MAGGIE
Ex.

Maggie realizes she snapped that out a little too fast.

INT. OCEAN PINES DINING ROOM - HALF HOUR LATER

Maggie, Sonny and Alex finish up dinner. In the background, old couples lindy-hop to Christmas music.

SONNY
How was everything, Maggie?

Maggie, a little bored, looks up from her cellphone.

MAGGIE
My new boss is texting me on Christmas Eve. New York is intense.

ALEX
I like that they cut up the hotdogs for you.
SONNY
You don’t get that at most places.
How’s the blue Jell-O? I thought
you had the red last time.

ALEX
That was last time. Gotta try new
stuff.

Sonny stands up and takes the microphone from an old lady
(MRS JACOBS, 80s, wearing a reindeer sweater). Some old
people start to clap, and say “Sing!”

Maggie cringes, embarrassed.

SONNY
Let’s give a big round of applause
for Mrs. Jacobs.

Mrs. Jacobs leaves the tiny "stage" to applause.

SONNY (CONT’D)
I’m not going sing, don’t worry
folks. Maggie, presents are my
favorite part of Christmas, so is
it okay if I give Alex his present
early?

ALEX
Oh yeah!

Maggie nods. Yolanda steps up to the table carrying a tray
with a big wrapped gift.

SONNY
A big Merry Christmas to you,
buddy!

Alex tears it open. It’s the latest video-game console.

ALEX
Thank you, this is awesome! I can
set it up so we can play together
on it, even over the internet.

MAGGIE
Thank you, Sonny.
SONNY
And now it's time dessert for everyone.

The old people clap.

SONNY (CONT’D)
But an extra something for the special lady in my life.

MRS. JACOBS
Oh Sonny, you shouldn't have.

SONNY
Sorry Mrs. Jacobs, I meant Maggie.

Yolanda holds out a small tray with a ring box. Still holding the microphone, Sonny gets down on one knee.

MAGGIE
What are you doing?

SONNY
Maggie, will you marry me?

Before Maggie can answer, the music blares “All I Want For Christmas” and balloons and confetti drop from the ceiling. The old folks run over and start hugging everyone. Sonny and Alex give high-fives. Yolanda holds up a cake that says “Congratulations.”

Maggie gets up and pulls Sonny towards the Jell-O bar

MAGGIE
We need to talk.

SONNY
What’s wrong, don’t you like the ring?

MAGGIE
Sonny, we’re not even dating.

SONNY
How can you say we’re not dating? I see you every day.
MAGGIE
When you come over to play video games with Alex. Why do you want to marry me?

SONNY
You’re the coolest, most beautiful, smartest woman I’ve ever met and I don’t want you to go to New York. I want to marry you so we can keep everything the same. Isn’t that the point of getting married?

MAGGIE
Sonny, I have a great job waiting for me in New York.

SONNY
New York is cold and noisy and dirty.

MAGGIE
How would you know? You’ve never been anywhere. I’m sorry, Sonny.

She hands the ring back to Sonny. Alex sees this.

ALEX
Does this mean we're not going to be a family?

Maggie winces.

SONNY
(to Maggie)
Can we talk about this?

MAGGIE
Later. Much later.

Maggie leaves fast, pulling Alex and barrelling past Nick who’s entering.

NICK
Hey Maggie.

But Maggie and Alex are gone.
Nick grabs a piece of a cake as looks around the room and spots Sonny looking crushed.

NICK (CONT’D)
(sympathetic)
Hoo-boy.

SONNY
(defensive)
You were right, she said no.

NICK
Oy. I'm sorry. Wait a sec.

Nick turns to the table to pile some more cake and ice cream on a plate as he talks.

NICK (CONT’D)
Cake cures most problems. Have a slicke and then then why don't you and me take a road trip. See a little of the world, get you out of your rut. If you don't which way to go, go up.

Nick turns around. Sonny has gone.

NICK (CONT’D)
Or not.

Nick bites into the cake.

EXT. OCEAN PINES - MORNING

Sonny watches Maggie and Alex get in a car packed with luggage. Sonny waves and Alex, a bit sad, waves back.

EXT. DRIVING RANGE - DAY

Time Lapse shots over the next eleven months.

The Christmas decorations are still there but we see the grass growing, and balls piling up on the range. Golfers try to practice, but the grass is too high.

Nick stands on the shaggy putting green next to an old golfer (MR VITONE, 80s, wearing purple tam o'shanter)
NICK
I bet you I can do it five times.

MR. VITONE
What?

NICK
(louder)
I said that if I can hit the nutcracker five times --

SFX: STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT

Nick pulls out his phone.

NICK (CONT’D)
(to Mr. Vitone)
Hold it.
(into phone)
This better be important. I've got a live one.

MR. VITONE
What?

NICK
At least for now.
(Long pause)
What?

MR. VITONE
What?

NICK
They found it? Oy!. Yeah I know we got to get it back, schmendrick, But even if we do, how do we get it working? ... Wait a minute. I know just the handy-dandy.

Nick drops his putter and jumps into his cart.

EXT. SONNY’S SHED – NIGHT

It’s gotten more rundown, like the driving range.
INT. SONNY’S SHED – CONTINUOUS

Sonny, also rundown, sits in bed holding a controller and wearing a headset as he plays a video game on his TV. On-screen, a hot-rod run overs a thug, who goes SPLAT!

SONNY
(into headset mouthpiece)
My hot-rod ends your evil crime spree.

ALEX (O.S.)
No fair, dude, you’re supposed to use the weapons.

SONNY
My weapon of choice is a 1985 Camaro.

INT. MANHATTAN SCHOOL WAITING ROOM

Lots of bright colors and the sign “MANHATTAN PS 314 AFTER SCHOOL ROOM.” A clock reads 5:45. Alex, holding his cell-phone and wearing an earbud, sits on a hard plastic chair.

Intercut between Alex and Sonny

ALEX
One more game.

SONNY
Love to dude, but I’m having dinner with Nick.

ALEX
I miss you.

Sonny freezes. That hurt.

SONNY
You gotta get some friends in New York, dude.

Alex’s thug shoots Sonny’s. KA-POW!

ALEX
Score!
Maggie, in business suit and carrying a briefcase, walks in, takes one of Alex’s earbuds and puts it in her ear.

SONNY
I really gotta go. I’m an adult playing games over the internet with a young boy. That sounds illegal.

MAGGIE
Only if you pretend you’re not an adult.

SONNY
Whoa, Maggie, is that you? How’s the job?

MAGGIE
It’s fine, Sonny.

SONNY
Glad to hear it. I was telling Alex he needed to make some new friends.

MAGGIE
That’s a good idea for everyone. I have to get back to the office. Bye, Sonny.

SONNY
Merry --

Maggie disconnects the phone.

SONNY (CONT’D)
Christmas.

INT. SONNY’S BUNGALOW - CONTINUOUS

Sonny stares at the blank TV Screen. The front door bursts open and Nick barrels in.

SONNY
Dude! You're early for dinner. Even by Florida time.

NICK
Let's go to my house, now!
Nick pulls Sonny up and out the door.

EXT. OCEAN PINES -RESORT - NIGHT

Nick, pounds potato chips while speeding his golf cart behind the main building into a cul-de-sac of small suburban houses with garages.

SONNY
You know, I've never been to your house --

Nick swerves and Sonny has to hang on tight.

EXT. NICK’S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Nick turns into a driveway. The mailbox says “North.” Sonny grabs the garage door opener and clicks. Nothing.

Nick takes the opener from Sonny.

NICK
(mouth still full of chips)
Did you ever wonder what I do for a living?

Nick has sprayed Sonny with chips. Sonny picks them off his shirt.

SONNY
Careful dude. I just wonder why you never had me over to you’re house before. Anyway You’re retired.

NICK
Smart guy. What I did.

Sonny shrugs.

NICK (CONT’D)
Why are you my best friend? Don't answer. Just pay attention.

Nick taps the opener three long, one short.

SFX: Garage door opening

ECU: Sonny’s face. A huge light emanates from the garage.
SONNY

Whoa!

Sonny's eyes dilate.

Sonny’s POV: The garage is a huge warehouse that seems to go on and on for acres and it’s full of ELVES. Tons of ‘em. Elves in red hats and green stockings. Girl elves chasing boy elves, fat elves wrestling, skinny elves doing handstands, and elves swinging from the rafters.

The elves see Santa and start to shout.

ELVES
Hi boss/ Did you bring pizza? /
look at what I’m doing/ Who’s this,
do you have candy?/ Hey Santa look
at me.

Sonny stands up straight in the golf cart and hits his head on the roof.

The screen goes black.

Sonny’s POV: Nick leans over him, him putting ice on his head.

NICK
Wake up already.

Sonny grabs his head.

SONNY
Whoa. I just had a dream that there all these midgets --

Sonny sits up and looks around. Hundreds of elves stare back.

SONNY (CONT’D)
I’ve got brain damage.

NICK
It’s just a bump, boychik.
(points to elves)
Don’t worry about them. They’re mostly housebroken. I want to show you something.

Nick shuts the door with the clicker.
NICK (CONT’D)

Rabkin! Where are you

RABKIN, the tallest elf (streetwise, wears a backwards New York Mets ballcap and hightops) kneels on the floor with two other elves, throwing dice against the wall.

RABKIN

Hey Santa, who’s the rube?

NICK

Stop shooting craps, you putz.

(To Sonny)

Sonny, this Rabkin, my head elf.

A cute girl elf named FELDER (blues eyes, pink elf cap) does a backflip past Nick. She lands on her head, starts to cry. Without thinking, Nick pulls out a lollipop, pats Felder on head.

SONNY

(confused)

Why are these midgets calling you Santa?

RABKIN

Hey!

SONNY

I’m sorry. Little People?

RABKIN

Elves, mushhead.

NICK

(to Rabkin)

Put away the dice and show Sonny the footage.

Rabkin isn’t happy about it, but he points a clicker and the garage goes black. The elves squeal. Rabkin clicks again. A square of light appears on the garage door.

RABKIN

Can it, knuckleheads.

The elves immediately shut up and turn to the “screen.” The square of light becomes a snowstorm. Small, grainy figures start to emerge.
It’s the workmen we saw at the beginning of this story. They are lifting the large block of ice with the sleigh into a truck.

Kettle (the man in the orange parka from before) waves angrily at the workmen. He gets his hand caught between the ice block and the truck. The elves laugh.

RABKIN (CONT’D)
It’s not funny. They found the sleigh where Santa ditched it.

NICK
I didn't ditch it. It broke down so I parked it safely.

The garage lights come on. Sonny blinks.

SONNY
Santa?

NICK
Yeah?

SONNY
(to Nick)
You are Santa? And you ditched your sleigh?

NICK
(annoyed)
I didn’t ditch it! It broke down, so I parked it safely. Then someone stole it.

Rabkin holds thumb up to his mouth and mimes “drinking.”

SONNY
If you’re Santa and you're retired, how does everyone get presents?

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA’S HOUSE – NORTH POLE – DAY

A long line of Fed-Ex planes taxi past the house.
NICK (V.O.)
The elves still make the toys, but I cut a deal with Fed-Ex to handle shipping.

SONNY (V.O.)
What about the reindeer? I thought they flew your sleigh

The Fed-Ex take off as several very fat reindeer watch from the front yard. They chew slowly. One poops.

NICK (V.O.)
Ech, reindeer. They’re like hood ornaments. Look good but don’t do bupkus. And they stink up the place with reindeer poop.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK’S GARAGE - SIMULTANEOUS

SONNY
Where's the sleigh now.. Santa, uh Nick, uh dude.

Nick holds up GPS device.

NICK
The GPS says it’s heading south to the center of the Universe. New York City.

SONNY
No.

RABKIN
Why're you wasting your time with him? We don't need him. I'm your number one guy.

Nick ignores Rabkin

Sonny gets up woozily to leave.

NICK
Where are you going?
SONNY
I'm not sure, but I can tell you that I'm not going to New York, even as a favor to you.

NICK
Sonny, Christmas is in three days. If we don’t get the sleigh back, and if evil people get hold of it, Christmas will be over forever.

SONNY
(looking for exit)
Why? You already quit, and you told me Fed-Ex --

NICK
You know that Christmas is more than toys. It's --

SONNY
But why do you need me?

NICK
Because you can fix anything, or so you say and the sleigh needs fixing, so I can take it out of there.

Sonny thinks about this.

SONNY
But ---

NICK
And if you go to New York, you can see Maggie. And Alex.

Sonny sits down on a pile of tires.

SONNY
You're Santa. So If I help you and go to New York, you'll grant me a wish.

NICK
I’m Santa, not the genie in a lamp.
SONNY
I mean a gift, dude, a present.

NICK
(suspicious)
What kind?

SONNY
If go to New York, I want you to get Maggie to marry me.

NICK
Hold it. I can’t guarantee that.

SONNY
Sure you can. If you expect me to believe you're Santa. And go to New York. Do we have a deal?

Nick grabs Sonny's hand.

NICK
Deal.

EXT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY - DAY

A stately pile of red bricks turrets and a gray-slate roof sitting directly on Central Park West. A wood sign with old-fashioned lettering reads, “NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY.”

Underneath that sign is a new plastic and metal Sign that says, “SPONSORED BY COLDWATER INDUSTRIES.”

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A freshly painted sign on a door reads, “CHILDREN’S EDUCATIONAL CENTER”

INT. CHILDREN’S ED CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Maggie, wearing a smock, paints a mural that says “PLAY WITH HISTORY”. Cardboard boxes pile up in one corner and old lab equipment has been pushed to the side.

Alex stands in front of Maggie’s desk.

ALEX
I’m done.
MAGGIE
All your homework?

Alex nods.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Great. Then you can help me paint.

Her phone beeps. She checks the number.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
It’s the new museum director, Mr. Westmoreland.

Maggie hands Alex the brush, then starts to text. Alex walks over to wall, slowly dips the brush into the bucket, and holds it up to wall.

ECU Alex's face. He's seeing something strange.

ALEX
Mom?

MAGGIE
(not looking up)
Just a minute. This seems important.

There’s a loud creak and a rattle. Maggie turns.

ALEX
Mom!

Maggie’s POV: What used to be a wall is now an open door. A flatbed truck backs up to a loading dock outside.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - CONTINUOUS

DR. KETTLE (the man in the orange parka from before) yells at the truck driver.

KETTLE
Watch out, you boob. This isn’t a U-Haul full of futons and neon Budweiser lights.

Maggie grabs Alex, puts him behind her.
MAGGIE
Excuse me?

KETTLE
Wha! Who are you?

MAGGIE
I’m Maggie Hernandez. I run the Museum’s children’s program. This is my office and I’m calling security. Who are you?

KETTLE
Lies! The museum doesn’t have a children’s program. You’re a spy.
(Kettle pauses)
Not an unattractive spy, but

MAGGIE
I'm not a spy, and I’ll ask again. Who are you?

KETTLE
I’m Dr. Daniel Kettle, chief of research and archaeology for the museum.

MAGGIE
Dr. Kettle. You’re supposed to be dead!

KETTLE
An exaggeration. I’ve been on an extended research expedition. No cell phone service, lots of igloos, some questionable snuggle partners. After years of wandering, missed opportunities and dead trails, I finally found ---

Kettle sees Alex.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
(displeased)
A child!

Alex points to the large crate on the truck.
ALEX
What’s that?

Kettle ignores the question.

Kettle’s POV: the brightly colored playroom.

KETTLE
What’s this!

EXT. SMALL AIRFIELD - NIGHT

A neon sign reads, “TIMONEY’S AIRPORT.”

EXT. HUGE HANGAR - CONTINUOUS

Nick and Sonny pull up in a bright red Jeep Cherokee and Nick honks twice. The hangar door opens, light spills out, and Rabkin steps out to wave them in.

INT. HUGE HANGAR - CONTINUOUS

Nick drives in. In the center of the hangar, sits a red-and-white vintage cargo plane.

SONNY
What is that?

Nick hops out of the jeep. Sonny stays seated.

NICK
Curtiss C-46 Commando. Bought it used from Fed-Ex. Grab your gymbag and get in.

SONNY
I’ve never flown before.

The plane’s cargo door opens and ELVES tumble out, yelling, swarming to Sonny and Santa.

ELVES
“Flying’s fun.”/“Wheee”/“I can’t wait.”/“I gotta peepee.”

Rabkin pulls the chocks out from the plane wheels.
RABKIN
We don’t have time to wait for
Hawaii Five-schmo to make up his
mind.

NICK
Sonny, do want to help me? And
didn’t you tell Alex you were
coming? Do you want to disappoint
him?

Sonny hesitates. This is one argument he can’t win.

SONNY
As you always say, if you don’t
know where to go ---

NICK
Go up.

RABKIN
I may throw up.

EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - NIGHT TIME

Nick’s plane is silhouetted in the cold winter air against
the lit-up skyline

INT. NICK’S AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

Nick clearly loves it, but Sonny keeps his eyes scrunched.

NICK
You’re missing the best view in the
world.

SONNY
I’ve seen it on TV.

VOICE
Unidentified aircraft, please
identify yourself. You are flying in
a restricted zone in violation of
FAA regulations.

Sonny jerks his eyes open.

SONNY
Why he’s calling us unidentified?
Because I didn’t file a flight plan.

Why not?

I never bother.

Nick turns around and pokes Rabkin, who’s snoring.

Nick (CONT’D)
Wake up, Rabkin. I need you to get this orange-crate home.

Rabkin stretches and crawls over the front seat.

Rabkin (points to Sonny)
He gets to come to New York with you and I don’t? That ain't fair.

Someone’s gotta get the elves home.

Rabkin scrambles to the front and takes the controls, while Nick walks into the back. The elves sleep strapped to a bench along the side of the plane.

This is where we get off.

Nick hands a parachute to Sonny and starts strapping on himself.

I don't want this.

You ever jumped out of plane without one?

I never jumped out of plane.

Nick starts strapping Sonny's chute on.
NICK
It’s like falling. Actually it is falling. You fall, count to 10 and pull this keyn shticket...

SONNY
The kind sticky?

NICK
The rip-cord
(Nick holds up rip-cord)

The plane takes a hard bounce. Nick and Sonny lose their balance and fall toward the door. Nick hits his head on the side of the door and falls out. Sonny sees this and dives after him.

EXT. NICK’S AIRPLANE

Nick fall out unconscious followed by Sonny, who's screaming and yelling.

Sonny dives for Nick, flailing. Sonny reaches Nick and grabs him.

SONNY
Nick! Wake up.

Nothing.

SONNY (CONT’D)
Nick. We’re going to die if you don’t wake up.

Nothing.

SONNY (CONT’D)
Nick, I got some fried pickles!

Nick wakes up with a start and looks around wildly.

NICK
Who are you!

SONNY
Pull the rip-klein shticklerer!
NICK
What are you taking about? And where’s the pickles?

Sonny grabs Nick’s ripcord.

SONNY
Downstairs.

Sonny pulls Nick’s ripcord and lets go as Nick pulled up by the chute.

EXT. MANHATTAN NIGHT SKY.

Two parachutes drift against the Manhattan skyline.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - EARLY MORNING

A NYC TRASH COLLECTOR named DIANA (40s, green uniform) walks under a tree carrying a bag of trash.

DIANA
(sings)
Feliz Navidad. I wanna wish you pick up your own damned trash so I can have a Merry Christmas.

SONNY (O.S.)
Excuse me, ma’am.

Diana’s POV: Sonny dangles from the tree, trapped by his parachute cords.

DIANA
Oh great, another one of you pajaritos.

SONNY
I'm sorry to bother you, but could you help me get down?

DIANA
Kitty cat up the tree, call the fire department. I'm sanitation. Firemen got a better pension than me. Cops too.

SONNY
Where am I?
DIANA
Is this where I say you're not in Kansas, muchacho? You're in Central Park, messing up my trees with your parachute. Second one today.

SONNY
You saw another parachute?

DIANA
Yeah, some crazy fat guy was taking it off.

SONNY
Nick!

DIANA
No, my name is Diana.

SONNY
No his name is -- do you know where he went?

DIANA
He ran off when he saw me. But he dropped this. Litter bug.

Diana holds up Nick’s well-worn ZAGAT’s guide

SONNY
Nick!

DIANA
I told you, my name is --

Just then the straps give way and Sonny falls. Sonny lies there dazed. Diana starts to pull at the cords.

DIANA (CONT’D)
What a mess.

SFX: Sirens

DIANA (CONT’D)
I’m betting those sirens are for you.

Sonny stands up.
SONNY
(a little dazed)
Do you know how to get to PS 314?

DIANA
It’s New York City. Take the subway.

SONNY
Thank you...

DIANA
And here.

She tosses him the Zagat’s guide.

DIANA (CONT’D)
Clean up your own damn mess.

EXT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY- MORNING

New fallen snow makes everything look clean and bright.

INT. CHILDREN’S EDUCATION CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Maggie enters with Alex. Maggie’s equipment has been pushed to one wall. In the center, a large cloth covers what is probably the sleigh, which is hooked up to several computer monitors.

ALEX
Whoaaa. What's going on here?

MAGGIE
It's not your business. But you picked a bad day to miss your ride to school.

ALEX
You don’t need to take me to school, I know my way around New York.

The door opens and ANDREW WESTMORELAND, (30s, slick, corporate, pin-striped suit) enters. He holds a E-Tablet and checks it constantly.

MAGGIE
Dr. Westmoreland, thank you for ---
WESTMORELAND
Ms. Hernandez what was so important that you needed me to come from my offices downtown?

MAGGIE
Someone is trying to take over my space.

KETTLE (O.S.)
Her space? This vixen is encroaching on my lab.

A disheveled, Kettle crawls out from under the cloth covering and comes toward Maggie and Westmoreland. Kettle has clearly spent the night sleeping in the sleigh.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
(to Westmoreland)
Who are you? Her husband?

WESTMORELAND
I’m Andrew Westmoreland, the museum director. Who are you?

KETTLE
You’re not the museum director! That was Tom Leander’s job...

WESTMORELAND
I replaced him when my company Coldwater Defense industries became the sole corporate sponsor of the museum. And I repeat, Who are you?

KETTLE
I’m Dr. Daniel Kettle, distinguished archeologist and cultural historian, a --

WESTMORELAND
Kettle?
(checks his tablet)
Dr. Kettle! It says you're dead.

KETTLE
An exaggeration, I’ve been on an expedition for several years ---
Alex has walked over to the sleigh and is checking it out.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
(to Alex)
Gets your mitts off my sleigh, kid.

Alex jumps back.

MAGGIE
Alex!
(to Kettle)
There’s no reason to speak to a child like that.

Kettle looks flustered.

ALEX
I’m sorry, but this is so cool.
This technology has got to be a thousand years old --

KETTLE
(proudly)
Several hundred at least. Yet incredibly aerodynamic.

ALEX
It flies? Really?

WESTMORELAND
Kettle, if that’s who you are, what is this?

KETTLE
This is what I’ve been looking for. Something that will make me famous and earn billions of dollars for the museum.

WESTMORELAND
Billions?

MAGGIE
Dr. Westmoreland, if you could find another place for Dr. Kettle, I have to get Alex to school --

ALEX
I want to see this!
WESTMORELAND
(to Kettle)
Very well. Show me what this is quickly. Then you’re going to have take this heap elsewhere

Kettle leaps to the computer screen and starts clicking.

KETTLE
Have you ever wondered how Santa delivers all his toys in one night?

ALEX
I have.

An image of Santa (who doesn’t look much like Nick) appears on screen in a sleigh, flying across a globe.

KETTLE
He flies his sleigh around the globe in one night, visiting approximately 378 million homes in twenty-four hours at---

ALEX
--- 822.6 visits per second.

Kettle’s calculations flash across the screen.

KETTLE
Correct! How can he do this? Some would say magic, but since we are men of science, we know there’s no such thing as magic.

WESTMORELAND
Kettle, what are you --

KETTLE
The only logical answer would have to be an engine with ---

ALEX
A Faster Than Light drive!

KETTLE
Yes, exactly! An FTL!
A diagram of the sleigh appears on-screen, with parts of an engine visible.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
A sleigh that can go faster than light would allow Santa to bring presents to every child in the world with time ---

WESTMORELAND
Are you insane? There’s no Santa Claus.

ALEX
Yes there is!

KETTLE
(triumphant)
He’s right. Because this is Santa’s sleigh.

Maggie and Westmoreland look stunned. Alex looks delighted.

MONTAGE

-- Sonny, shivering in his shorts and Hawaiian shirt stands on a sidewalk looking up and gets stampeded by a New Yorkers who practically walk over him.

-- Sonny goes down a subway staircase but see a herd of New Yorkers coming up. He goes down under like a surfer caught by a wave.

-- Sonny stands in front of a subway turnstile, holding a MetroCard. He swipes it, then looks up and sees a crowd of New Yorkers heading toward the turnstile he's trying to use. Sonny turns and flees.

EXT. MANHATTAN SCHOOL - MORNING

Maggie leans out of a taxi window, while Alex stands on the sidewalk.

MAGGIE
I didn't say there isn't a Santa, I just said that it wasn't his sleigh.
ALEX
Whatever. I can't believe I have to go to school, when you've got Santa's sleigh ---

MAGGIE
You can see it after school. Now, I can trust you to walk up the steps and not get lost.

Alex rolls his eyes. Maggie kisses him, which makes Alex roll his eyes more. The taxi drives off.

Alex turns around, and turns on his phone, which buzzes.

ECU: Phone screen. It reads "SONNY" and "16 calls."

EXT. COLUMBUS CIRCLE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Sonny, shivering in Hawaiian shirt and cargo shorts is standing under the STATUE of Christopher Columbus, talking to a MOUNTED POLICEMAN named MCCANN

SONNY
No, really, I'm not homeless, I'm just waiting for a friend.

MCCANN
Do you have any ID in those beach shorts of yours?

SONNY
(panicky)
Just a Zagat's guide...

Alex run up to Sonny and bear hugs him.

ALEX
Sonny, you're here. You're not going to believe what I saw today.

MCCANN
(to Alex)
Do you know him?

ALEX
It's okay, officer, he's my friend.

McCann stares hard at both of them.
ALEX (CONT'D)
He’s new here. Visiting from Florida.

MCCANN
Tourists.

McCann turns the horse away. Sonny hugs Alex.

SONNY
Dude, I’m so glad to see you. I need your help.

ALEX
Yeah, let's start with your look.

Off Sonny's look.

INT. TIMES SQUARE TOURIST SHOP - A FEW MINUTES LATER

It's crammed with T-shirts, posters, snowglobes all with the words "NEW YORK" on them. A CHINESE WOMAN named LU (40s, hair in bun) is helping Sonny, who's got on a knit watch cap that says "NYC", try on a blue-and-orange New York Mets warm-up jacket.

ALEX
So Nick is really Santa Claus?

SONNY
Yeah... but I don't like getting new clothes.

ALEX
Dude, you're gonna freeze.

Sonny eyes himself in mirror, not happy. He turns to Lu

SONNY
Ma'am, do you have anything that doesn't say "New York."

LU
You don't like New York?

ALEX
It's just the word "new" that bothers him.
Lu shrugs her shoulders as if to say "whatever."

ALEX (CONT’D)
He'll take it. Sonny, give her your credit card.

Sonny reaches for his wallet and opens it.

SONNY
Can I bring them back if I don't --

LU
(runs credit card through iPhone)
Ha! Funny man.

ALEX
Stop worrying about it Sonny. We gotta find Nick, I mean, wow, he's really Santa Claus.

SONNY
Yeah, I know it's hard to believe but...

ALEX
Why? He's fat, got a white beard and has a magic sleigh. Or had one until Dr. Kettle got it. But at least I know where it is. Where's Nick?

SONNY
This is the only clue I've got to find him.--

Sonny holds up Zagat guide.

ALEX
What are waiting for?

INT. NEW YORK CITY BUS - FEW MINUTES LATER

Sonny and Alex are sitting in the back. Alex is thumbing through the book.

ALEX
Don't you get it? Nick always hungry.
So we check out all the places Nick marked up on the Zagat’s guide.

SONNY
As long as we don't have to take the subway. Are you sure this is going to work.

Sonny’s POV: Zagat’s guide: Almost every restaurant on every page is marked with red checks and stars.

ALEX
No but it means I get to show you around New York. This is going to be fun!

Sonny doesn't look so sure.

INT. CARNEGIE DELI - MORNING

Nick, a bruise on his forehead, sits at booth eating a pastrami reuben. The WAITRESS, (stout Indian woman named CALPANA in black pants and white shirt) leans over.

CALPANA
Another one? You already had two pastramis.

NICK
I’ll try a corned beef this time.

CALPANA
You may have forgotten your name, buddy but your stomach works. Wait a minute. Is your name Henry?

NICK
That’s not it. Can I get a root beer with that.

CALPANA

Nick shakes his head “No” to all of them.

CALPANA (CONT’D)
You sure you look familiar.
Behind Nick we see through the front window of the Deli. There a STREET CORNER SANTA RINGING A BELL.

MONTAGE -

- Nick eats an entire at JOHN’S PIZZERIA on Lombard street.

- Alex and a nervous looking Sonny walk through WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK. They stop at a hotdog cart and Alex shows a phone picture of Nick to the vendor. He smiles and points south. A pigeon swoops down and Sonny ducks.

- GUSS’S PICKLE STORE on Essex Street. Nick is sampling one from every barrel.

- MURRAY’S BAGEL SHOP. Sonny and Alex are talking to a COUNTERMAN, who nods and points out the door.

- CHINATOWN Nick sits inside a basement dumpling shop eating dumplings with chopsticks. Through the window above we see two pair of shoes run by: Sonny and Alex’s.

--BROOKLYN BRIDGE Sonny and Alex walk across the bridge, each eating an ice cream cone. Sonny stops for a minute, and Alex turns, thinking Sonny needs help. Instead Sonny just smiles soaks up the magnificent view.

EXT. RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL – AFTERNOON

It’s Christmas, so the street is jammed with people and cars and noise. Sonny and Alex stand on the sidewalk in front.

SONNY
We hit every place in that book and didn’t find him.

ALEX
This is the most Christmassy part of New York. If Nick is Santa, he’s going to be around here.

Alex points up to the RADIO CITY AWNING, which is decorated with a CHRISTMAS PAGEANT, including WOODEN SOLDIERS and a FAKE SLEIGH. Sonny steps away for a closer look.

SFX: Alex’s phone rings
ALEX (CONT’D)
(into phone)
Hey Mom... You’re coming to pick me up now? But it’s early... I mean... Okay.

Alex turns around and sees Maggie.

ALEX (CONT’D)
Mom! How did you find me?

MAGGIE
The finder app I put on your phone.

Sonny turns around and sees Maggie.

SONNY
Whoa, Maggie!

MAGGIE
(shocked)
Sonny?

SONNY
(playing it casual)
Yo Maggie, I thought I'd swing up to the city during the holidays and see how you guys were doing.

MAGGIE
You dropped by New York City? And what are you wearing?

ALEX
I picked them out.

MAGGIE
/remembers why she's here/
Wait... Alex. Did you skip school and run off because of Sonny?

SONNY
Sort of, but it's not his fault. He's just a boy.
MAGGIE
And you’re supposed to be an adult? You come up here, yank Alex around when I-- he --- are just getting used to.

SONNY
(holds Zagat guide)
So would you guys like to have dinner. Alex and I found there are some cool restaurants in New York.

MAGGIE
Look Sonny, I've got a job and I'm trying to build a life, and I've already got one child to take care of. I'm not interested in another.

ALEX
But Sonny needs our help.

MAGGIE
Alex is right, Sonny you do need help. But Sonny I need your help.

SONNY
Sure, whatever I can --

MAGGIE
Let Alex alone. Let us get on with our lives.

SONNY
I can't --

MAGGIE
Please. Promise.

SONNY
Okay, sure, I -- yes.

Maggie hustles Alex away. Sonny’s hesitates, steps off the curb to follow but gets knocked over by a PEDICAB.

DRIVER
Watch it, buddy.

Sonny looks around, but Maggie and Alex are gone.
EXT. SIXTH AVE. - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Sonny is walking through the crowds, nearly getting trampled. Sonny steps off the curb and is nearly hit by a BUS.

Sonny steps back and sees a street-corner Santa ringing a bell.

**SONNY**
Nick! Is that you?

Street-corner Santa is actually a woman.

**WOMAN SANTA**
Throw in something in or move along.

Sonny steps back and looks around to see a SANTA ringing a bell on every corner, and large BILLBOARDS of Santa selling Coca-Cola, sexy models wearing only bikinis and Santa hats, etc.

Sonny wades back into crowd and turns to ask a SKINNY BUSINESSMAN.

**SONNY**
Excuse me have you seen ---

The skinny businessman brushes past Sonny.

**SONNY (CONT’D)**
A man with a white beard.

Sonny keeps going up to people, who brush past him. Disoriented, Sonny’s steps into the street, where he’s nearly hit by a bike messenger, who brakes hard.

**BIKE MESSENGER**
Watch where you’re going, man.
(looks at Sonny)
Where are you going?
Margaritaville?

**SONNY**
No, I’m looking for my friend Nick. He’s got a white beard.

**BIKE MESSENGER**
Long one?
SONNY
Yeah!

BIKE MESSENGER
Old guy?

SONNY
You’ve seen him?

BIKE MESSENGER
(pointing)
He just went around the corner onto 47th Street.

SONNY
Thanks so much, man.

Sonny takes off.

BIKE MESSENGER
Oh, my pleasure

Sonny turns the corner onto 47th Street.

Sonny POV: hundreds of Hasidic Jews, all bearded.

Sonny POV: A SIGN reads “WELCOME TO THE DIAMOND DISTRICT”

Sonny approaches a group of white-bearded men and starts grabbing them.

SONNY
Nick? Nick?

A SECURITY GUARD named SERGE (20s, Russian) come up to Sonny.

SERGE
Excuse me, sir.

SONNY
Can you help me? I’m looking for my friend Nick. He’s got a long white beard and white hair.

SERGE
Please come with me, sir.
NICK (O.S.)
It's mustard, it's not made out of
gold. Don't be stingy.

Sonny looks up and sees Nick arguing with a PRETZEL VENDOR

SONNY
NICK!

Serge grabs Sonny, who struggles.

SONNY (CONT’D)
Nick! It's me Sonny!

NICK
(looks up at Sonny)
Unless you're carrying mustard, I
don’t care.

SERGE
(into walkie talkie)
I'm going to need backup.

Serge pushes Sonny along.

SONNY
Nick! Don’t you know me?

NICK
(takes bite of pretzel)
Nick? Nick?

SERGE
(to Nick)
Do you know this man?

NICK
I’m not saying I don’t.
(to Sonny)
What’d you call me?

SONNY
Nick! You’re Santa Claus! You came
to New York to find your sleigh and
save Christmas.

SERGE
Everybody is crazy in New York --
SONNY
(to Nick)
Show him you’re Santa, tell him what he got for Christmas.

Nick looks at Serge. Thinks.

NICK
Serge Illych Postnikov. From Minsk. You always got the latest Dungeons and Dragons. Complete kit with all the vercocktahtah six-sided dice.

SERGE
How did you know that?

NICK
(puzzled)
How do I know that?

SONNY
Because he’s... because you’re ---

NICK
I’m Santa Claus!

Takes a bite of pretzel.

NICK (CONT’D)
But that ain't gonna put mustard on this pretzel.

SONNY
Serge, could you let me --

SERGE
I don’t know...

NICK
Serge, all those years I overlooked you dangling your sister off the stairwell.

SERGE
(lets go of Sonny)
Thank you for the D&D. It was my favorite gift ever.
NICK
My pleasure. You want a pretzel?

SONNY
Nick we have to get ---

NICK
The sleigh!

EXT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY - TWILIGHT

Tourists are coming down the steps. Nick and Sonny trot up.

INT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY - CONTINUOUS

A sign reads, “LEGO PRESENTS NEW YORK IN THE MOVIES.” The exhibit is a Lego re-creation of New York City with a Lego King Kong climbing a LEGO EMPIRE STATE BUILDING; four LEGO GHOSTBUSTERS; a LEGO SPIDERMAN, etc.

Nick grabs Sonny and pushes him behind the Lego Empire State building. Nick puts his finger of his lips.

SONNY
We're going to get arrested.

NICK
(whispers)
Only if you don’t cork it. Now stay put.

Sonny nods.

INT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY - AN HOUR LATER

It’s gotten darker, but we see Sonny crawling out from behind the model Empire State Building.

SONNY
(whispering)
Nick... Nick...

Sonny sees Kettle walking down the main staircase.

KETTLE
(to himself)
I wish me a merry Christmas and ---

Sonny ducks back behind the Empire State Building.
Kettle walks past Sonny to a door labeled “BASEMENT. He turns the knob. It’s locked.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
This shouldn’t be locked.
(looks around)
Security? Is anyone here? I can’t get to my offices. Where the heck is anyone?

Kettle walks away.


SONNY
Whoa!

NICK
Shhhh!

SONNY
(whispers)
Sorry.

NICK
Fuggedaboutit.

Nick climbs out of trunk, fiddles with GPS gizmo. He signals Sonny to follow him to basement door.

SONNY
That's locked.

NICK
Another headache I don't need.

SONNY
But you get into everyone’s houses all around the world. What’s your trick?

Nick looks around. Takes a deep breath. Centers himself. BAM! Nick kicks the door open

SONNY (CONT’D)
Oh.
INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Nick and Sonny tiptoe down the stairs.

SONNY
I've been meaning to ask. How did you deliver toys before you got this Faster than Light thing for your sleigh?

NICK
This ain't the time for that.

SONNY
Come on, dude.

Nick stops at the bottom of the stairs. He look at Sonny.

NICK
All right. Since you asked -- "Kischef."

SONNY
Christmas.

NICK
Kischef, it's a --

SONNY
Kissy?

NICK
Kischef! It's Yiddish. It kind of means magic, but it's something more. I just reached inside and found I could do it.

Nick starts walking down the hall and pauses in front of the Children's Ed Center dooer.

SONNY
Then why did you need to add the technology. And why did you retire?

Nick ignores him and taps GPS several times.

SONNY (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

51
NICK
Battery must be dying.

ECU: GPS signal fades Nick opens the door.

INT. CHILDREN’S ED CENTER/LAB - CONTINUOUS
Rabkin sits in the middle of the room, gagged and trussed. There’s no sleigh. Nick and Sonny run over.

NICK (CONT’D)
Where’s my sleigh? And what are you doing here.

RABKIN
Mmmmmf.

Sonny pulls Rabkin’s gag out of his mouth.

NICK
Where are the elves?

RABKIN
Never mind, “How are you, Rabkin?” “Can I untie you Rabkin?”
(off Nick’s look)
I parked them where they’re safe.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD’S PLAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS
The elves are clambering up the slides and doing cannonballs and swan dives into the colored-ball bin.

CUT TO:

INT. LAB/PLAYROOM - CONTINUOUS
Sonny unties Rabkin while Nick looks around the room. The loading dock door is wide open.

NICK
Back to Question A -- Where’s my sleigh?

RABKIN
When I got here some goons were loading it onto a truck.
Kettle bursts into the room.

    KETTLE
    Freeze!

    SONNY
    That’s all I’ve been doing since I got to New York.

Kettle hits an alarm button, which starts clanging as the security lights start FLASHING

FLASH! A MUGSHOT of Nick

FLASH! A MUGSHOT of Sonny

FLASH! A MUGSHOT of the top of Rabkin’s head.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Nick sits alone on a bench, glum. Sonny watches disbelieving as Rabkin shoots dice with a prisoner named RONNIE (50s, scary-looking)

    RABKIN
    You owe me two packs of cigarettes.

    RONNIE
    Those things stunt your growth.

    RABKIN
    I’ll stunt your --

    SONNY
    Leave him alone Rabkin. We need to figure out how to get out here.

    RABKIN
    I told the cops I’m a juvenile. They’ll just send me to foster care.

    (to Ronnie)
    Wanna go double or nothing, buckaroo?

Ronnie nods. Sonny walks over to Nick.

    SONNY
    We need to get out of here.
NICK
Show me a chimney and I'm good as gone.

SONNY
Really?
(realizes it's a joke)
Dude.

Sonny sits down next to Nick.

SONNY (CONT’D)
You know, you never told me why you retired.

NICK
I got old.

SONNY
How old --

Sonny shuts up off Nick's look.

SONNY (CONT’D)
No, I mean, you're Santa Claus and everyone loves you, you're like bigger than --

NICK
--- Is this turning into a fat joke?

Nick stands up and starts to pace?

NICK (CONT’D)
Why I quit? I'll tell you why. One day not too long ago I was in the house of a little boy named Jackie, somewhere outside of Toronto. He was pretty much the last delivery of the year so I got there a little late. I left his presents under the tree and was getting ready to go when I looked up and saw that Jackie was looking down the stairs at me. I looked at him. He looked at me with his big blue eyes.
I held up my fingers to my lips to tell him to be quiet, and then he started yelling "STRANGER DANGER, STRANGER DANGER." An alarm went off, and I had to take off through the window, with the cops chasing me for hours, and I'm hiding under cul-de-sac with an Amber Alert for my rest, and I said, if I get out with this without going to jail, I quit. It's not the world I want to live in.

SONNY
But Nick, it was just one little boy. You can't run away from the world and hide in Florida forever because of ---

Nick turns to look at him.

NICK
What's your excuse?

SONNY
No fair, dude.

Cell door opens and a jailer looks in at our heroes.

JAILER
(to Sonny)
You three birds. Follow me.

RABKIN
(points to Ronnie)
I'm not leaving until this guy pays me.

Sonny grabs Rabkin and pulls him out of the cell.

INT. COURT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sonny, Nick and Rabkin stand behind a table facing JUDGE MARTA ROMAN (50s and she's seen it all.)

RABKIN
I shouldn't be tried as an adult.
JUDGE ROMAN
You will stand when you're addressing the court.

RABKIN
I am standing.

JUDGE ROMAN
Ah. In any case, in light of the fact that the museum has decided not to press charges, you will be released.

RABKIN
I knew they couldn't keep me locked up.

NICK
Why aren't they pressing charges?

SONNY
Nick, dude, don't argue with --

JUDGE ROMAN
They say that since nothing was stolen, there's no need ---

NICK (O.S.)
What do mean nothing was stolen? Someone stole my sleigh.

JUDGE ROMAN
Then you should file charges with the police. Merry Christmas gentleman, and get out of my court room.

EXT. COURT HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Nick and Sonny stand on the court steps arguing, while Rabkin watches.

SONNY
I promised Maggie that I wouldn't call her. Or Alex.

NICK
But she's the only person we know who knows where my sleigh is.
SONNY
How do you know she's the one who got the museum to drop the charges? She hates me.

NICK
Who else would help you out? She must've done you a favor --

SONNY
Even if she did, I especially can't break my word and --

RABKIN
Kettle.

NICK
Rabkin, don't interrupt.

RABKIN
Kettle The crazy doctor who find the sleigh and called the cops ---

NICK
I already put him on the coal in the stocking list, so --

SONNY
Rabkin's right. That guy Kettle knows where the sleigh is!

RABKIN
(to Sonny)
You're not as dumb as -- yes you are, but you're learning.

NICK
Even if he knows, why would he tell us.

EXT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES - DAYTIME

A glass tower in Midtown. SECURITY GUARDS patrol the sidewalk, and there are cameras everywhere.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

A sterile white room, rising several stories high to a glass dome.
The sleigh sits atop a high-tech carlift, surrounded by wires, computers, and a TEAM OF SCIENTISTS. Kettle is being shown around by Mr. Westmoreland, the Coldwater CEO.

KETTLE
I wish you’d told me you were moving the sleigh here before you did it.

WESTMORELAND
It was necessary for security reasons. As you see our faculties are world class, and we’ve assembled a research team of Nobel Prize winners to unlock the mysteries of the sleigh.

KETTLE
I found it and ---

WESTMORELAND
Of course, you’ll get to continue work on the project. My people tell me the implications of your discovery are world-changing. The ability to travel faster than time, the energy resource implications, even the military implications.

KETTLE
Military? I didn’t realize --

WESTMORELAND
They’re just implications. But think of the ability to deliver missiles, outfly the enemy, to create planes that fly faster than light.

KETTLE
But it’s Santa’s sleigh. And it’s supposed to be used for good. And I found it!

WESTMORELAND
You found it as an employee of the museum, which means that the sleigh belongs to the museum.
KETTLE
But I don’t want --

WESTMORELAND
If you have any objection to working on this, we can turn the project over to someone else.

EXT. BROWNSTONE APT. - DAY

Kettle comes up the steps carrying a bag of Chinese food, fiddling for his keys.

KETTLE
(muttering) Military implications.

INT. KETTLE’S APT. - CONTINUOUS

Kettle opens door and we see that every square inch is decorated in Christmas paraphernalia. Santa dolls, Santa paintings, posters, a model train set of the North Pole and three Christmas trees all with Santa decorations.

Kettle sets the food on the table and turns around to see Nick sitting on the couch.

NICK
Do I smell mu-shu pancakes from Sam Lo’s?

KETTLE
Don’t hurt me! Get out of my apartment. I’m calling the cops.

NICK
So it isn't mu-shu?

KETTLE
It’s dim-sum, you thief.

NICK
Almost as good -- and I'm not a thief. You’re the no-good goniff who stole my sleigh.

Kettle backs up, but trips over the Christmas schlock. He grabs a Santa candle and waves it at them.
KETTLE
Your sleigh? Who are you?

NICK
Mind the candle. Who do you think.
I am ... Dan-Dan?

SONNY
Dan-Dan?

KETTLE
No one’s called me Dan-Dan since I was...

NICK
Since you were five, Dan-Dan. As for me my name is Santa Claus and you are the bad boy who stole my sleigh and turned it over to some shtarkers who are going to use it to make weapons and turn what was the best time of year into an annual remembrance of death and destruction.

KETTLE
They took it from me without asking.
Wait a minute. Why am I talking to you. You broke into my apartment. If you really are Santa, prove it. Tell me --

NICK
This trick again. All right, you wanna know (pauses) Why I didn’t bring you that ten-speed bike when you were eight? Because you were too young, you putz. You’d have fallen off it and cracked your noggin. Like you did two weeks later when you rode your big sister Megan’s ten-speed without permission.

Kettle runs to hug nick.

KETTLE
SANTA! You are real!
NICK
Don't singe my beard with that candle.

KETTLE
Oops. Sorry, I’ve spent so many years trying to find you..

Sonny walks in the room.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
What are you doing here?

SONNY
I'm one of Santa's helpers, dude. We need your help getting the sleigh back. Where is it now?

KETTLE
They took it out of the museum. It’s under incredibly tight security at Coldwater labs.

NICK
From bad to worse.

SONNY
(to Kettle)
But you can get to it, right?

KETTLE
Of course.
(He looks at Sonny)
You look tall for an elf.

INT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES LOBBY - MORNING

The lobby is several stories high, with a plate glass window that shows the street. There are cameras and armed security guards. Dr. Kettle show his ID, goes through and metal detector and is then patted down and practically strip-searched.

KETTLE (V.O.)
There are two sets of guards who give me a better examine than I get from my doctor.

Cameras in every corner of the room follow him.
KETTLE (V.O.)
Then there’s the cameras

Kettle gives his palm-print to the wall to get into a sliding door.

KETTLE (V.O.)
A palm-print.

Kettle enters an elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Kettle stands next to security guard (REX, 40s, surly), holding a the lease of DOBERMAN PINSCHER named BRUNO, which growls at Kettle

KETTLE (V.O.)
Rex and Bruno. Bruno’s the dog.

EXT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Kettle exits the elevator into the lab and shows his credentials at a desk with TWO GUARDS. They scan Kettle credentials and a door opens behind them. Through the door we see lab, where the sleigh sits under the glass dome.

KETTLE (V.O.)
The sleigh sits in a sterile ---

We hear high-pitched squealing.

CUT TO:

INT. KETTLE’S APT. - NIGHT

Sonny and Kettle sit at a laptop on the kitchen table, surrounded by empty boxes of Chinese food. The elves run around, playing tag and hide-and-go-seek.

KETTLE
They’re going to break something.

NICK
Trust me, I know where to get more.

Sonny points at screen.
SONNY
If we turned the alarm off, and we
 got your sleigh down the elevator,
 we’d still have to go through about
 fifteen layers of armed guards to
 get to it, before we fly it out of
 there.

NICK
I’m not sure what shape the Sleigh
 is in. You’re going to need some
time to make sure it works.

Sonny and Nick stare glumly.

SONNY
How do we get rid of the guards?

NICK
Offer them nice gifts to look the
 other way?

Sonny gets up and starts pacing. Elves are grabbing his legs
and running around him.

SONNY
What do guards do?

KETTLE
They guard stuff.

SONNY
Right.

NICK
Glad that’s settled.

SONNY
But what if ...

NICK
Out with it.

SONNY
What if there was nothing left to
 guard?

Sonny starts to jump around the apartment with glee, swinging
elves in the air.
KETTLE
Are you all right?
(to Nick) )
What's wrong with him?

NICK
I wish I knew.

SONNY
Here's a list of things I'm going
to need. Papier-mache, paint,
paintbrushes, hammers, ten yards of
canvas, bamboo poles --

NICK
Where are you going to get that?

KETTLE
It sounds like a children's art
project.

SONNY
Children art project. That's it!

INT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY - BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT
Maggie walks toward her door. She hears something inside,
stops to listen. It sounds like hammering.

INT. CHILDREN’S ED CENTER - CONTINUOUS
Maggie opens the door to see her space has been converted
into a workshop. Elves hammer away at mysterious shapes, or
stir paint while Christmas music plays.

Sonny stands in the center, directing everyone, holding up a
blueprint. He sees Maggie. All of the work stops, and the
elves stare.

MAGGIE
Sonny?

SONNY
Maggie, I'm sorry, I know I
promised that --

MAGGIE
I'm sorry I was angry Sonny, but
then I heard you were arrested--
SONNY
You were the one who got the museum
to drop the charges!

MAGGIE
Well -- what are you doing here?

Elves swarm around Maggie, making faces, poking each other.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
And who are these children?

SONNY
They're actually elves?

MAGGIE
Elves? Like from Santa Claus?

Sonny nods. Nick nods. Maggie gets it.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Nick! He's --

SONNY
Santa Claus.

An elf chases another elf, pointing a GLUE GUN.

MAGGIE
Sonny, this is the second time,
you've broken into my --

Kettle comes from behind a canvas flat.

KETTLE
He didn't really break in. I still
have a key.

Maggie ignores Kettle.

MAGGIE
Sonny, you really believe that Nick
is Santa and that these are elves
and that the sleigh is real?

SONNY
Yes!
MAGGIE
Now I'm really worried about you.

SONNY
And even if I didn't, I'm helping my friend.

Maggie nods.

MAGGIE
You are a good friend Sonny. And I don't think I've appreciated that. But you can help me by doing two things.

SONNY
Anything!

MAGGIE
First, don't encourage Alex to skip school. And second, I don't know if your sleigh is real or Nick is Santa or if the elves are real or fake. But whatever you do, clean up after them. They're making a mess.

An elf jumps into Maggie’s arms, hugs her and spits glitter.

EXT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

The sun through on the three-story glass front wall of the lobby. Kettle walks in past the guards.

INT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Kettle gets patted down by a Security Guard named Mel (60s. white hair).

MEL
You’re early. No one else here.

KETTLE
That’s the way I like it.

Kettle turns around to face the street.

Kettle's POV: Through the lobby windows we what looks like Santa’s sleigh, hovering 10 feet above the street.
KETTLE (CONT’D)
My god! They’ve stolen the sleigh!

The guard looks up and sees the sleigh. He hits an alarm.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
Get it, get it!

Kettle, Mel and the other guards run toward the exit as the sleigh rises higher and starts moving fifteen feet over Sixth Avenue. The guards chase it, but Kettle stops at the door. Two security guards step up and we see that they’re Nick and Sonny, in bad imitation guard uniforms, both carrying tool kits.

KETTLE (CONT’D)
(looks at uniforms)
Really? Those look awful.

NICK
Elves make better toys than uniforms.

SONNY
They didn’t have to make the shoes pointy-toed.

Nick and Sonny enter the building and run to the elevator, Kettle gives his palm print, and the door opens. REX and BRUNO, the guard and guard dog are standing there.

BRUNO
Grrrrrrrr.

KETTLE
They’ve stolen the sleigh, go get it.

Rex and Bruno run out of the elevator. Nick, Sonny and Kettle run in.

INT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES LAB - MOMENTS LATER

The elevator door opens and Sonny and Kettle runs toward the sleigh.

SONNY
Nick, the cameras.
Nick pulls out a can of Cool Whip and starts spraying the cameras.

    SONNY (CONT’D)
    That's not paint, Nick

    NICK
    (shoots Cool Whip in his mouth)
    Stop complaining and get my sleigh going.

Kettle tears wires from the computer monitors attached to the sleigh. Sonny lifts up the back seat and looks at the engine.

    SONNY
    Whoa!

    KETTLE
    Isn’t it amazing?

    NICK
    Just fix it, Mr. Fixer.

Sonny starts tinkering.

    SONNY
    It’s a steam-powered volition engine that gives you the regular stop and go. And then there’s this thing ...

Sonny points to a tiny black cylinder with curlicue hoses and wires coming out of it.

    SONNY (CONT’D)
    I’ve never seen anything like it.

    NICK
    That’s because it’s the only one. Don’t worry about that yet. Can you get the main engine started?

EXT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES LAB - CONTINUOUS

The guards chase sleigh, which swoops and dives about 20 feet above traffic, circling in front of the building.
INT. LIMOUSINE – CONTINUOUS

In the back seat, Westmoreland taps his phone, which flies out of his hand when the car screeches to a halt.

WESTMORELAND
What the hell is that?

DRIVER
I’m sorry sir, there’s some people running in traffic.

Westmoreland looks out window, sees Mel rushing by. He rolls down window.

WESTMORELAND
Why aren’t you guarding the building?

MEL
(points up)
They stole the sleigh.

Westmoreland's POV: The sleigh hovers overhead.

Westmoreland jumps out into street and starts chasing. Just then the sleigh dive-bombs toward the street.

Everybody scatters and the “sleigh” hits Westmoreland’s car. The sleigh splinters and we see that it’s a giant balsa wood KITE.

EXT. ROOFTOP ACROSS THE STREET – CONTINUOUS

The elves are lined up along the roof, each holding a set of strings. When the KITE crashes they roar with laughter.

INT. LABORATORY – MOMENTS LATER

Sonny is sweating away on the engine, while Kettle hands him tools. Nick holds a phone to his ear.

NICK
(to Sonny)
The kite just went down.

SONNY
I need five more minutes.
KETTLE
We need to fly this out of here now.

SONNY
It’s not ready to fly.

NICK
Can we stick it on the elevator?

KETTLE
No, they’re coming up that way.

Sonny stops tinkering.

SONNY
Dudes, this isn’t about flying, it’s about belief. Kishkes.

NICK
KISCHEF! This is really bad time for you to start playing Torah scholar.

SONNY
It isn’t about whether this can fly, it’s about whether they believe it can fly.

Sonny holds up a large wrench.

NICK
I understood you better when you stuck to “Whooooaaa”.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Westmoreland is surrounded by security guards and the dog

WESTMORELAND
Shoot anyone that moves!

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Westmoreland and guards rush into the laboratory but it’s empty. Westmoreland nearly slips on shattered glass, which covers the floor. A guard looks up and sees that the glass ceiling is shattered.
GUARD
They got away!

WESTMORELAND
Call the police. I want them shot down.

INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

The sleigh sits tilted sideways on a landing Nick catches his breath while Sonny tinkers furiously. Kettle listens with an ear pressed to the door.

KETTLE
It worked! They think we’re gone.

SONNY
(pushing wrench)
I... think.. I got .. it.

The engine roars and cloud of exhaust shoots out the back, blackening Kettle in the face.

KETTLE
(coughing)
Was that necessary?

NICK
Sonny, let's go already.

Sonny fiddles with the controls, and the sleigh rocks back and forth from side to side.

SONNY
I don’t think it flies yet.

NICK
Does it move?

SONNY
Sorta.

NICK
Good enough. Let’s get out of here.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

Westmoreland yells into his phone.
WESTMORELAND
I already told you, Commissioner, if you ---

He turns at the sound of the sleigh engine roar.

WESTMORELAND (CONT’D)
They’re still in the building!

INT. STAIRWELL – MOMENTS LATER

Sonny drives the sleigh down the stairs, banking hard at each floor as Nick and Kettle hang on tight as the sleigh almost tips over.

NICK
Watch the corners!

SONNY
Yell when we get to the basement.

KETTLE
I’m yelling already.

INT. BASEMENT LOADING DOCK AREA – MOMENTS LATER

The stairwell door crashes opens and the sleigh hurtles out and skids to a halt.

SONNY
Man, that’s fun.

KETTLE
How do we get out of here?

Nick runs to the wall and hits a button. The loading dock door opens.

NICK
Open Sesame. Bagel.

The loading dock door opens. Outside the elves, dressed like a pit-crew, and holding bamboo poles and giant rolls of canvas.
EXT. COLDWATER INDUSTRIES BUILDING - SIDE ENTRANCE.

The street is jammed with taxis. The loading dock door is open and the alarms continue to ring. Westmoreland runs around the corner leading a battalion of guards.

WESTMORELAND
Where the hell did they go?

Westmoreland looks up and down the street but doesn’t see the sleigh.

In the middle of the street we see a taxi cab that looks a little off. The markings on the door are hand-painted and the car the body is yellow-painted canvas.

INT. FAKE TAXI - CONTINUOUS

It’s the sleigh, camouflaged to look like a taxi by the elves, who are holding bamboo rods to keep the canvas stiff. Sonny sits behind the steering wheel. Nick and Kettle crouch in the back seat.

NICK
We’re not moving.

SONNY
Dude, that’s the point. We can hide out in this traffic forever and they’ll never find us.

Sonny’s POV: A YOUNG WOMAN in a mini-skirt business suit waves from the curb and runs over.

MINI-SKIRT WOMAN
Are you available?

Before Sonny can answer, an older man in a Yankees jacket runs up.

YANKEES JACKET MAN
Excuse me, miss, I saw this cab first.

MINI-SKIRT WOMAN
Tough!
She tries to yanks the door handle, but since there’s no door, she stumbles into Yankees Jacket Man and they fall. The elves laugh.

SONNY
We got to get out of here.

Bruno the guard dog pulls away from the security guards and runs for the camouflaged sleigh. Sonny sees him coming and hits the gas. The guard dog is caught by the guard and Sonny makes it around the corner and up the block, but the sleigh starts to misfire and sputter. Sonny pulls over.

SONNY (CONT’D)
This thing only goes a couple hundred yards at a time. I need time to clean the fuel lines.

KETTLE
We can't stop, they’ll be looking for this everywhere.

ALEX (O.S.)
Hey Sonny, can I drive?

Sonny's POV: Alex leans into the driver's side window.

SONNY
Alex, what are you doing here ---

ALEX
I staked out the Coldwater building because that's where the sleigh would be. This is the worst looking taxi I've ---
(looks around sees the elves)
Are those real elves!

NICK
Of course they're real! I don't do fake.

SONNY
Alex, your mom is going to be real pissed at me. You've got to get back to school.

SFX Sirens.

74
NICK
We've got to get out of here.
Sonny fires up the engine. It turns over.

SONNY
Alex, I'll see you --
Alex jumps in between Nick and a startled Sonny.

ALEX
Let's go!

SONNY
Dude ---

NICK
Just go already. We'll drop him off at school.

Sonny hits the gas and goes.

SONNY
I'm on record, dude as not being happy about this.

Alex leans over and high-fives the elves.

NICK
(to Sonny)
Where are you going?

SONNY
The one thing I learned from Taxi drivers here is --

KETTLE
Never stop at a red light?

NICK
Don't go to Brooklyn?

ALEX
Overcharge tourists?

SONNY
No. Always take the park.
EXT. CENTRAL PARK – A FEW MINUTES LATER

It's starting to snow and we see one of the famous cast-iron bridges over a path. The elves are playing in the snow. Rabkin sits at distance, watching everyone sullenly.

The sleigh, which has lost its camouflage is tucked under the bridge. Sonny working on the FTL drive. Nick looks at an old-fashioned map with Alex.

ALEX
So if you go to Asia first, you'd cut time off because of the international date line ---

SONNY
When is Kettle getting back with the tools?

NICK
I keep telling you I'm Santa, I don't tell the future.

SONNY
It's just that trying to fix this thing with a screwdriver and penknife ---

RABKIN
I could help with the --

NICK
Rabkin, I told you to round up the elves and get them back to the North Pole.

Diana, the garbage collector drives a Parks-and-Rec GOLF CART/TRASH TRUCK loaded with garbage cans.

DIANA
If it isn't the two turkeys who left their parachutes. I'm just trying to get a break from the snow and you ---

SONNY
Miss, I'm real sorry but don't arrest ---
DIANA
I told you, I'm not a cop. Butt you locos have got to get out of here before the cops do see you. They don't take kindly to shade-tree mechanics working on their ---

Diana pauses to look at it.

DIANA (CONT’D)
Sleigh? Is that a Santa Claus-Papa Noel filled with Christmas presents up on the rooftop ho-ho-ho sleigh?

NICK
(in Spanish)
Si, Diana. It's my Christmas sleigh. Some crazy nuts want to steal it from me.

DIANA
(in Spanish)
Next you're going to tell me you're Santa Claus...

SFX Sirens

SONNY
The police!

DIANA
Bunch of know-it-alls with their fancy pension plans.

ALEX
Could you help us, please ma'am. Nick here is Santa Claus and...

DIANA
What?

SONNY
He really is.

Diana looks at Sonny like he's crazy.

Diana looks at Nick. Nick nods at her.
Diana jumps out of the cart and pulls some bungee cords off the cords and starts pulling down the cans.

DIANA
Tie the sleigh to the back, come on, come on.

Sonny leaps up and starts to do it.

NICK
You believe I'm Santa.

DIANA
If every fat old white dude with a beard who said he was Santa was real I'd have a million presents.

RABKIN
You're putting the sleigh on a garbage truck?

The other elves, Sonny, Alex and Nick push the sleigh up on to the back of the cart.

SONNY
This is so nice of you. Why are you helping strangers?

DIANA
It's Christmas.

NICK
You're giving me new --

DIANA
And besides, the cops piss me off.

No one's been watching Rabkin, who has climbed into the sleigh. He hits the engine.

NICK
Rabkin, what are you doing?

Rabkin reverses the sleigh off the cart. It leaps back, knocking people and garbage cans every where.

RABKIN
I'm tired of taking orders from you. I'm the boss.
If you want the sleigh back, you can get it from me.

Sonny leaps for the sleigh but misses. Rabkin takes off down the path, careening past horse-carriages and pedestrians. The sleigh disappears in the thickening snow.

Kettle, holding a tool kit runs up with Maggie, as Nick, Sonny and Diana start to pick themselves up:

MAGGIE
Sonny, are you all right?

SONNY
What are you doing here?

KETTLE
She caught me at the museum and insisted on -- Where's the sleigh?

NICK
Rabkin stole it. I can't believe he'd turn on me. Elves can be vicious.

We look at the remaining elves. They look hurt.

NICK (CONT’D)
Not you guys. Just Rabkin.

Elves cheer up.

MAGGIE
Where's Alex?

SONNY
He's right --

They look around. Sonny sees Alex's phone on the ground, picks it up.

MAGGIE
That's Alex's. He dropped it.

SONNY
He's on the sleigh!

CUT TO:
INT. SLEIGH - CONTINUOUS
Alex crouches in the back seat, hiding from Rabkin.

CUT TO:

CENTRAL PARK BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS
The sirens are getting louder.

MAGGIE
Sonny, help me find Alex.

KETTLE
The cops are coming.

SONNY
Kettle, can you distract them while we look for Alex?

DIANA
He can come with me. I'll decoy the cops. They chase me, you get away.

KETTLE
Chase? Uh-uh.

NICK
I need your help again, Dan-Dan.

Kettle shrugs, not sure.

NICK(CONT'D)
You can take the elves.

Kettle doesn't seem sure this is a perk, but the elves lose no time and pile into the cart, grabbing Kettle.

DIANA
See you turkeys later.

The trash cart takes off with Kettle holding on for dear lives as the elves wave and cheer.

MAGGIE
How are you going to find Alex? We should go to the police.
SONNY
Maggie, they're going to arrest us and Rabkin's going to get away. We need to find Alex. You've got to trust us.

NICK
And me. He's got me to help.

Maggie looks at them.

MAGGIE
Let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK 59TH STREET ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Nick, Sonny and Maggie run out of the park onto Central Park South. The snow is getting heavier.

MAGGIE
Where are we going?

SONNY
I'm not sure.

NICK
(breathing heavily)
Then we take a cab there is what you're saying.

SONNY
Let's think a minute. Rabkin can't get far in that sleigh because it keeps breaking down.

NICK
Kind of like my lungs, right now.

MAGGIE
Quiet Nick. Sonny, what are you saying.

SONNY
That Rabkin has to hide the sleigh somewhere so he can fix it.
NICK
Where's he going to hide a sleigh in New York City.

Sonny doesn't answer but points to:

Sonny’s POV: RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

Over the entrance is The AWNING. On top of that awing 30-foot high Christmas tree made out of lights, a line of Wooden Soldiers, but instead of a fake Santa’s sleigh, it’s the real one.

EXT. RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL - AWNING

Rabkin works on the engine, banging and muttering. He hits the FTL cylinder. Tubes glow, dashboard lights flicker, engine snorts, but no luck.

RABKIN
(to himself)
Ho, ho,.. Where’s the wrench when I need one.?

Rabkin lifts up the seat, and sees Alex hiding there.

ALEX
Boo.

RABKIN
(grabs Alex)
This ain’t Halloween. What are you doing here?

ALEX
Why are you stealing the sleigh?

RABKIN
Because I’m going to be rich, not just a dumb elf. No more bosses. I’m selling this to anyone who’ll pay.

Rabkin slams the seat shut, hurting his thumb.

RABKIN (CONT’D)
OUCH!
Rabkin pulls out a giant padlock and locks the seat with one hand while sucking his thumb.

ALEX (O.S.)
Let me out, you ---

RABKIN
Don't come out before Christmas.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK EAST - CONTINUOUS

Police cars whiz by chasing a garbage cart. The police and the cart go over a bridge. After they go, we see Kettle and Diana are hiding in a trash cart under a bridge. Kettle is looking at his phone.

DIANA
Cops think all garbage trucks look alike. That’s discrimination.

The elves laugh.

KETTLE
(looking at phone)
Sonny and Nick found the sleigh at Radio City.

Kettle gets out of cart.

DIANA
Where are you going?

KETTLE
To Radio City.

DIANA
Don't I get to come?

KETTLE
Why? This is dangerous and it's not your problem.

DIANA
No, it beats the heck out of picking up gum wrappers. Get back your butt back in and let's go.
EXT. RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Nick, Sonny and Maggie stand beneath the awning, getting buffeted by the crowd.

    NICK
    We need a ladder.

    SONNY
    I thought you were good at climbing on roofs.

    NICK
    That’s Spiderman.

Sonny turns and sees a OPEN ROOFED RED DOUBLE-DECKER BUS.

    SONNY
    There’s our ladder.

Sonny grabs a confused Nick and runs onto the bus through the door in the middle. Maggie is looking up and doesn't see them go.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus is crowded with tourists. Sonny and Nick run up the stair and onto the top deck, where tourists are taking pictures.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Maggie sees Nick and Sonny are gone, and spots them running on the bus.

    MAGGIE
    Sonny, where are ---

EXT. BUS SECOND STORY - CONTINUOUS

Sonny takes a running leap off the bus and makes it onto the awning. The tourists cheer.

Nick takes a running leap, but the bus has started to move, so he tumbles toward the cement.

The tourists all go “oooh” and run to see what happened.
EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Nick is lying on the back of the Diana’s garbage cart, which has just pulled up. Maggie and Kettleturn around to look at Nick.

DIANA
Careful, that garbage is city property

MAGGIE
Oh my god, Nick, where’s Alex?

Nick’s arm reaches out of the pile of garbage bags to point up.

EXT. RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL AWNING - CONTINUOUS

Sonny’s crouched behind a WOODEN SOLDIER. He stands up and sees Rabkin working at the sleigh. Rabkin sees Sonny.

RABKIN
Don’t come any closer or I’ll --

SONNY
Or what?

RABKIN
A cute widdle elf like me?

Rabkin pulls up Alex, who’s gagged with a Christmas stocking; his hands are tied with Christmas ribbons with a bow on top.

RABKIN (CONT’D)
You’re not going to get your present here, unless you get out of my way.

SONNY
Let him go.

RABKIN
You’re good at doing what people tell you. That’s what Nick likes. To boss people around. He’s bossed me the last time. This sleigh is my ticket to being rich and never having to work for anyone again.
SONNY
Give me Alex --

RABKIN
Don’t boss me!

Rabkin pushes Alex down, flicks a switch and hits the gas. The sleigh roars toward Sonny.

Sonny dives in front of it, so Rabkin has take a hard right into the 30-foot fake Christmas tree, which bends over at 33 degree angle. The sleigh’s runner gets caught in one of the metal hoops that makes up the tree.

Sonny runs up the tree and grabs the back of it as Rabkin breaks loose. The sleigh shoots down to about five feet off the ground, scattering traffic as they cross Sixth Avenue.

Rabkin sees Sonny and tries to shake him, flying the sleigh.

In the back, Alex kicks through seat, splintering the padlock. He reaches over and tries to grab the wheel from Rabkin, who pushes him away.

The sleigh is wobbling around at eye level as Rabkin tries to gain control

In the gargabe cart, Nick and Maggie see the sleigh, get out and start chasing it on foot.

Rabkin and Alex are wrestling for the controls. Sonny has climbed to the front of the sleigh and reaches for Rabkin but Rabkin flips the sleigh over. Alex falls out. Sonny grabs Alex’s foot, clinging to the sleigh with one leg looped around the rail.

MAGGIE
(from below)
Alex!

SONNY
I told you you’re getting too big for this.

Nick runs toward the sleigh.

SONNY (CONT’D)
Nick, get ready!
Sonny swings Alex toward Nick. Alex hits Nick with a BONK! and Nick go tumbling head over heels.

NICK
Oy!

Maggie runs over and starts hugging them all.

MAGGIE
You’re okay!

ALEX
Mom, not cool.

MAGGIE
Sonny!

Rabkin has driven the sleigh into a LONG LOW FOUNTAIN next to a building, dragging Sonny through the water.

Rabkin hits the brakes and reverses, allowing Sonny to climb on-board as the sleigh leaps out of the fountain and into the plaza, where it skitters at ground-level.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Sonny, be careful.

Distracted, Sonny turns to look. Rabkin takes advantage of this by biting Sonny’s hand.

SONNY
OOOOOOWI

Sonny tumbles out. Maggie and Alex runs over to him

Nick, who’s been chasing the sleigh, reaches it and grabs one of the runners and swing in to the back. The sleigh dips a little under his weigh.

Rabkin doesn’t see Nick, but realizes he’s cut off in the sky by helicopters and on the street by traffic

Rabkin POV: SUBWAY ENTRANCE.

Rabkin aims the sleigh down the steps, scattering pedestrians. To make the narrow passageway, Rabkin turns the sleigh sideways, causing Nick to fall to the side and hit his head, knocking him unconscious.
SONNY’s POV: The sleigh disappears down the steps.

ALEX
We gotta save Santa!

SONNY
No, you stay here with your mom.

MAGGIE
You’re not leaving me here either.
Let’s get that bastard.

Maggie grabs Alex’s hand and runs toward the subway. Sonny stands there a moment, shocked. Then he runs after them.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - CONTINUOUS

Rabkin skids toward the turnstiles, propels the sleigh over them and then down the steps to the subway platform. Nick lies limp in the back.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

A D-Train sits on the downtown tracks with a flashing sign that says “OUT OF SERVICE. Another D TRAIN pulls into the station on the uptown side.

Rabkin screeches to a halt, looking for a way out. He sees a staircase but it’s been closed off.

RABKIN’s POV: At the other end of the platform, Sonny, Alex and Maggie run down the steps.

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)
The D Train is leaving the station.
Please stand back from the platform.

The doors shut on the D Train and it pulls out, leaving the track clear.

RABKIN
Dig this.

Sonny has almost reached the sleigh. He leaps for it, but Rabkin hits the gas and shoots onto the uptown track but heading downtown. Sonny stumbles and nearly falls onto the track. Alex grabs him.
ALEX
He’s going to get away.

MAGGIE
How are we going to get him?

SONNY
It’s New York. We’ll take the subway.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL – MOMENTS LATER

The sleigh shoots down the tracks at a superfast speed and Rabkin is laughing maniacally. Nick is passed out in the back.

Rabkin sees a D train coming straight at him. It looks like he’s going to collide, but at the last second he shifts to his left on the express track and shoots past the train.

RABKIN
Yeeeessss-haw.

In the back of the sleigh, a groggy Nick starts to revive.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY CAR – CONTINUOUS

Sonny walks over to the conductor’s box, and sees the window is open. He dives in.

Maggie and Alex run up behind him.

ALEX
This is so cool, we’re going to steal a train.

Sonny starts hitting levers, and trying to figure out the controls.

MAGGIE
Come on Sonny, I know you can do it!

SONNY
(surprised)
Really?
Maggie leans through the operator’s window and KISSES sonny

MAGGIE
Hurry up.

SONNY
(happy)
That isn’t helping.

Sonny pulls a lever and the car doors open. Alex runs on.

ALEX
Hurry up Mom!

SONNY
All aboard!

Two policemen run toward Sonny. Maggie sees them and runs onboard after Alex.

The doors shut behind Maggie. The police bang on them, but the train leaves the station

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY TRACKS - MOMENTS LATER

The sleigh shoots down the tracks. In the distance Rabkin sees, yes, Light At The End Of The Tunnel.

RABKIN
Once I’m out there, no one can catch me.

The sleigh BACKFIRES, then stops dead.

RABKIN (CONT’D)
What the...

Rabkin starts hitting the control panel.

NICK (O.S.)
Gimme that.

Nick reaches over and grabs the steering wheel from Rabkin. Rabkin fights back. Nick and Rabkin wrestle.
RABKIN
(hitting Nick with one hand) Let go of it, you’re going to kill us!

NICK
Elves don’t die.

RABKIN
I don’t want to be the first.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - MOMENTS LATER
Maggie and Alex peer out of front window, while Sonny drives.

MAGGIE
Faster, Sonny!

ALEX
I see them!

Alex’s POV: The rear of the sleigh, lit up by a red glow from the engine.

MAGGIE
You’re going to hit them.

SONNY
They’re on the other track.

The train shoots past the sleigh

INT. SLEIGH - CONTINUOUS

Nick and Rabkin fight. Nick’s boot hits the control panel and the sleigh shoots forward, veering from side to side on the tunnel walls, sending up sparks.

EXT. MANHATTAN BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

We see the subway tunnel opening on to the bridge and Sonny driving the Subway car out.

The sleigh shoots out of the tunnel upside down, with Rabkin and Nick still fighting over the wheel. The sleigh shoots up into the sky.
INT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

ALEX
There they go!

The subway car shoots over the bridge. Police cars are driving up on the roadway on either side, sirens are blaring and flashers flashing.

Sonny’s POV: There’s another Subway Train coming straight for them.

MAGGIE
Sonny, what are we going to do?

SONNY
Remember, what Nick said. If there’s no where to go...

ALEX
Go up already!

Sonny hits pushes the Throttle forward.

EXT. MANHATTAN BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Sonny’s Subway car is gathering speed. Just seconds before it should collide with the other subway train it LIFTS UP and FLIES into the sky.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

SONNY
I’ll be -- YEEAAAAAAAA!

ALEX MAGGIE
How did you ---

SONNY
Kischef.

INT. SLEIGHT

The sleigh has made it into the sky, and police choppers are approaching.

Rabkin sucker-punches Nick, who gasps and teeters. He falls out of sleight but grabs the side at the last minute.
RABKIN
Get of my sleigh, lard-butt. I’m the new Santa in town. I’m sick of working for you, never getting promoted, never getting respect.

NICK
I treated you like a son, you momzer, I made you the head elf. But there’s only one Santa. ME!

Rabkin starts to bang on Nick’s fingers, which begin to peel away.

RABKIN
You were Santa, but now you’re a lazy quitter.

NICK
I will always be Santa, you pisher.

Rabkin hits Nick’s last remaining finger and Nick disappears over the side.

RABKIN
Ho!
   (hits Nick’s finger)
Ho!
   (hits Nick’s other finger)
HO!
   (hits Nick’s last finger)

Nick lets go and tumbles back.

RABKIN (CONT’D)
Who's Santa now!

Nick tumbles down but only falls a few feet because Sonny has maneuvered the subway train underneath the sleigh.

Nick has managed to grab the metal guard chains the front door, and is hanging on, yelling.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Alex tries to open the front door of the car, but can’t.

ALEX
I can’t get it.
Maggie rushes up and pulls it open.

    ALEX (CONT’D)
    All right, mom!

EXT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Nick sees the door open. He climbs over the top of the hanging guard rails and is about to get in, but stumbles and falls back out, his body swinging to block Sonny’s view.

    SONNY
    Nick, quit playing around.

Sonny sticks his head out the side window to try to steer. Alex and Maggie grab Nick and pull him in.

    SONNY (CONT’D)
    Nice of you to drop in.

    NICK
    How are you flying this crate?

Off Sonny’s look ---

EXT. NEW YORK CITY SKYLINE - CONTINUOUS

Rabkin shoots past the police helicopter, when he sees the subway car on his tail.

Rabkin’s POV: Nick stands in the open door at the front of the subway car.

    RABKIN
    That’s it. I’m....

The sleigh backfires. Then nothing. Silence. The engine is dead. The sleigh continues to fly forward on momentum.

    RABKIN (CONT’D)
    I gotta get the FTL going.

He crawls over the seat into the back, and looks down where the FTL was

Rabkin’s POV: There’s an EMPTY SOCKET.
RABKIN (CONT’D)

Oh no.

Rabkin scrambles to the front and starts hitting every control in sight, but nothing happens.

The sleigh nosedives down and heads straight for the river.

INT. SUBWAY CAR – CONTINUOUS

Sonny, Maggie, Alex and Nick watch as Rabkin plunges.

SONNY

Whoa!

ALEX

Cool!

NICK

My sleigh!

EXT. RIVER – CONTINUOUS

The sleigh hits the river and explodes in a thousand pieces.

No Rabkin in sight. Just foam and sleigh splinters.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

Alex, Maggie, Nick and Sonny scan the river.

ALEX

Where is he?

NICK

He might be herring bait.

Rabkin pops up, flailing and snorting water.

RABKIN

HELP!

INT. SUBWAY CAR – CONTINUOUS

ALEX

There he is!

NICK

Not even the fish want him!

95
SONNY
Let’s get out of here.

NICK
We still need to get the FTL drive out of the sleigh.

SONNY
Alex, show Nick what you’ve got.

Alex holds up a small shiny black object. It's the FTL. Nick takes it from him.

NICK
Where’d you light-finger that?

ALEX
I took it from the sleigh when I was in the back.

SONNY
That’s how I got the subway car to fly.

NICK
No you didn’t. The drive has to be attached to the engine.

MAGGIE
Then how are we flying?

SONNY
Kishef!

NICK
It hurts my ears whenever you talk Yiddish!

ALEX
Magic! That’s even cooler than computers

SONNY
Um, great. But how do you land a subway car.

NICK
I’ll show you tomorrow. Right now we need to deliver some toys.
SONNY
Fantastic. As long as you can drop us off in New York.

NICK
You’re staying here?

Maggie takes Sonny’s hand.

MAGGIE
We’re staying here.

ALEX
Are you kidding? I want to go to the North Pole.

EXT. RIVER – CONTINUOUS

Rabkin is flailing but a large NYC GARBAGE SCOW drops a net on him, and winches him up.

Rabkin’s POV: The winch is being operated by the ELVES, who are swarming over the boat, dressed in nautical gear.

Diana and Kettle stands on the deck next to them.

KETTLE
We’ve got him!

RABKIN
Let me out of here you bum. I’ll whip your hides.

DIANA
You got a lot of attitude for a piece of bait.

Diana turns to elf who’s operating the winch, and gives him nod. The elf hits a toggle switch

Rabkin sputters as the net falls back into the water. Kettle, Diana and the elves laugh uproariously.

EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE

In the background we see the subway car outlined against the moon... then it disappears.

MONTAGE
Christmas music plays as

-- Subway car Flies over Hong Kong Skyline

--- Nick and Sonny slide downon side of DUBAI TOWER, like Tom Cruise in "Mission Impossible."

-- Subway car flies past Eiffel Tower

We see a couple kissing on the roof deck.

Nick hands them a bottle of gift-wrapped wine and two gift-wrapped glasses

-- Subway car flies past Sphinx

Maggie tossing them presents from down from subway car to Nick while Sonny holds the gear

The cutting gets faster as we see the subway car passing:

-- Taj Mahal

-- Angkor Wat

-- Leaning Tower of Pisa

-- Mount Rushmore

-- Hollywood Sign

EXT. SANTA'S HOUSE - NORTH POLE - PRE-DAWN

It's still a little dark, but the sun is coming over the horizon lighting up the snow and the house. We hear a whoosh and then the subway car appears

INT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Nick, Alex and the elves sleep, sprawled of the seats, with torn bits of Christmas wrappers and ribbons scattered everywhere.

Sonny steers the subway car from the engineer's booth, while Maggie stands next to him.

    MAGGIE
    I still don't believe it.
SONNY
I know, it's like Nick is Santa Claus, Elves are real and we just delivered Christmas presents all over the world in a flying subway car.

MAGGIE
That's the easy stuff. I still can't that you actually left Florida to come to New York.

Sonny pulls the engineer's lever toward him.

SONNY
I'd go where ever you are. Which is what I want to talk --- *

There's a slight bump as Sonny lands the subway car crunching white snow.

SONNY (CONT'D) *
Whoa --- *

The motion wakes up Nick and Alex as well as the elves, who shake themselves off and stretch like dogs awaking from a nap.

ALEX
Wow. We're at the North Pole.

SONNY
How about that, Nick?

NICK
Why'd we come here? I thought we were heading to Florida.

SONNY
I thought you'd want to get home --

Alex tries to open the door.

ALEX
I want to see the reindeer.

Nick opens the door and looks out. Alex jumps out ahead of him, followed by the elves.
The yard is deserted. Maggie and Sonny step out of the subway car, as Alex and the elves run around.

SONNY
Are they sleeping?

NICK
They usually come running for treats. Worse than chihuahuas. Bigger poop too.

MAGGIE
Alex, be careful, it's still dark --

ALEX
It's okay mom, the elves are going to show me Santa's house and the reindeer.

Alex runs off with the elves.

MAGGIE
Are you sure he's okay?

NICK
Unless he gets wet elf smell all over him, he's fine.

MAGGIE
Sonny, I need to talk to you. Sonny, I need to talk you.

SONNY
Whoa, stereo.

NICK
Maggie, let me go first, because it involves you.

SONNY
(nervous)
If this is about that whole present thing, don't worry about it.

MAGGIE
What present thing?
SONNY
Nothing really. Nick was going to give me a present for helping, but he's a friend, so I --

MAGGIE
What present?

NICK
It doesn't matter, since I couldn't give that kind of thing.

MAGGIE
Sonny, what did you ask Nick for?

SONNY
To let me marry you.

MAGGIE
You asked Nick? I was your bribe to to do all this?

SONNY
Not a bribe, Maggie, a present.

NICK
A present is not a bribe or I'd've been in the hoosegow many times over.

MAGGIE
Sonny I thought for a minute you were a grownup, someone that I could ---

WHOOSH! Floodlights come on. Sonny, Nick, Alex and the elves * all cover their eyes blinded.

WESTMORELAND (O.S.)
(through a bullhorn)
Ho, ho, ho.

Sonny's POV Westmoreland, wearing a white parka steps forward. He's backed by HUMMERS and several guards wearing snow masks, white storm-trooper style uniforms and carrying guns.
WESTMORELAND (CONT’D)
I'm so sorry to interrupt your Christmas morning but I have business with you.

NICK
What are you doing here? How did you find us?

WESTMORELAND
A little bird told me.

Westmoreland pushes Rabkin forward.

NICK
Rabkin, you dirty bird. How could you do this?

RABKIN
I'm sorry boss, but he was going to torture me and --

WESTMORELAND
I never said that. I just offered you a lot of money.

RABKIN
It would've been torture for me to turn it down.

WESTMORELAND
(to armed guards)
Would you put him back on the plane. He's giving me a headache.

The guards drag Rabkin away.

RABKIN
Hey, get your hands off me.

NICK
Hey you big bullies, stop picking on that little bully.

SONNY
(To Westmoreland)
What do you want, dude?
WESTMORELAND
Dude? I'm still not sure who you even are?

NICK
He's my friend.

WESTMORELAND
I'll remember that if I have to shoot him to get what I want. Now where is the Faster than Light Drive?

MAGGIE
What do you want it for?

WESTMORELAND
Ms. Hernandez, why are you -- Never mind. I don't want to know.
(to Nick)
Where's the Faster than Light Drive?

SONNY
It's in his workshop.

Sonny points to Santa's house. The sun is starting to rise behind it.

NICK
What?
(Then he gets that Sonny is lying)
Yeah it's in my place. Come on in and I'll make cocoa.

WESTMORELAND
(signals guards)
Well then, let's pay a call.

The guards herd Nick, Maggie and Sonny toward the house.

MAGGIE
(whispers)
Sonny, Alex is in the house.

SONNY
I forgot. What are we...
WESTMORELAND

Quiet!

EXT. SANTA'S HOUSE - NORTH POLE - DAWN

The guards stand on the steps. Westmoreland tries the door. It's locked. Westmoreland looks at Nick, who shrugs.

INT. SANTA'S HOUSE - NORTH POLE - CONTINUOUS

The front door is kicked open. Westmoreland enters behind the a guard, who has his gun drawn.

Westmoreland looks around. The house is entirely bare. Not a stick of furniture, no carpet. More importantly, there's nobody there. A guard pushes in Nick, whose hands are tied together.

Nick looks around.

NICK
You really can get rid of everything by using Craig's List.

WESTMORELAND
I don't like being lied to. Where is the FTL.

NICK
Maybe the moths ate it.

EXT. SANTA'S HOUSE - NORTH POLE

Westmoreland pushes Nick out on the porch. Maggie and Sonny are under guard, tied up on the porch.

MAGGIE
Where's Alex?

WESTMORELAND
Who's Alex? Does have the FTL?

SONNY
No, not a chance --

WESTMORELAND
Whoever he is, he must be back at where they landed. There's no place else to go.
Westmoreland starts to run toward the subway car with the guards.

Sonny, Nick and Maggie, follow, but their hands are still tied behind their backs.

EXT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Westmoreland and the guards are 20 feet away from it.

SFX: Ride of the Valkyries.

A herd of Reindeer ridden by elves, divebombs from sky. Riding the lead reindeer is Alex.

Westmoreland and the guards look behind them to see where the noise is coming from, but don't look up until it's too late.

          ALEX
    On Dasher, on Dancer.

The reindeer trample Westmoreland and his men, who drop their guns as they try to run away.

          ALEX (CONT’D)
    On Cupid, on... Wheeeeeeeee!

Sonny runs up, followed by Nick. Both of their hands are tied.

Alex is riding like a cossack, thrilled, but doesn't see that Westmoreland has jumped and grabbed Alex's reindeer's leg.

The reindeer loses balance, tossing Alex into the air.

Sonny hands still tied, dives under Alex, and turns around to catch him on his back.

          SONNY
    You are getting too big for this.

Meanwhile the reindeertakes off into the sky with Westmoreland clinging to the hind leg.

          WESTMORELAND
    Let me down, let me ---

Westmoreland loses his grip and we his silhouette tumbling out of the sky.
Maggie, her hands untied, runs up to where Sonny and Alex are laying. She grabs Alex and starts hugging him.

ALEX
(embarrassed)
Mom, do you have to--

MAGGIE
Alex, do not give me attitude when I'm being grateful you're alive. And deciding whether you should be punished for this.

Alex shuts up.

SONNY
I'm sorry about all this --

She sets down Alex and stares at Sonny.

MAGGIE
And that goes for you too.

Then Maggie grabs Sonny and kisses him. Sonny is shocked. Then he kisses her back.

SONNY
Maggie, will you

MAGGIE
Marry you? Yes!

SONNY
I was going to ask you to untie my hands but this is nice too.

Nick runs up slowly, panting.

NICK
What'd I miss?

Nick realizes what's going on.

NICK (CONT’D)
Come on, Alex, let's leave them alone and go get a snack.
ALEX
I'm old enough to see this.

NICK
You may be, but I'm not.

Titles Appear on Screen

“One year later and lot further south”

EXT. NEW YORK CITY MUSEUM - MORNING

The old sign has been replaced and we see that it’s now the NEW YORK CITY CHRISTMAS MUSEUM.

Crowds of children and their families run up and down the steps.

INT. MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

CHRISTMAS TREES and CHRISTMAS DECORATION, SANTA STATUES

in all shapes and sizes, etc. There are also SWING SETS, A CAROUSEL and even a two-story high Christmas-themed FERRIS WHEEL.

There’s also SANTA’S OLD SLEIGH sitting on a platform. Children are climbing over it.

The ELVES act as docents, showing the families around, doing handstands and headstands.

Maggie walks through with a TV REPORTER (20s, Perky)

REPORTER
But where is the funding coming from for this museum, now that Coldwater is gone.

MAGGIE
As the museum director, I can tell you that we’ve had a very generous donor who insisted we on being anonymous.

REPORTER
Really, you can tell me.
MAGGIE
Okay, but you can’t tell anyone else.

REPORTER
I promise.

MAGGIE
His name is -- Santa Claus.

REPORTER
Ha, ha. If that’s all you have to say, this interview is over.

Reporter stalks off as Alex comes up, out of breath.

ALEX
Come on Mom you gotta see it, it’s ready.

MAGGIE
See what?

Alex pulls Maggie toward the basement door.

As they go we see a group of SCHOOL CHILDREN go by. One of them stops, and we see it’s RABKIN, wearing t-shirt and jeans. He follows Maggie and Alex.

INT. NEW YORK MUSEUM OF HISTORY - MAGGIE’S OLD PLAYROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kettle and Nick are walking around. It’s high-tech silver, with sleek red trim. (It looks a lot like Nick’s old GOLF CART.)

KETTLE
Are you sure this is aerodynamic?

NICK
If I say it flies, it flies. I’m Santa Claus.

KETTLE
It does look magnificent.

NICK
Does the microwave work?
Sonny pokes his head from the sleigh.

SONNY
Dude, I spent the last year
building this thing.
(Sees Maggie and Alex)
Hey! Let me show you what I got.

INT. SLEIGH - CONTINUOUS

It’s a giant room, impossibly out of proportion to the
outside of the sleigh, a cross between an industrial kitchen
and a rec room, with giant refrigerators, glass jars full of
candy bars, a soda dispenser, TV set etc.

Elves are playing ping-pong and video games.

SONNY
Nick, Dude, I spent the last year
here in New York, building this
thing down to every specific
detail. There’s a soda machine, a
hot dog roaster, that ice cream
freezer you wanted and I just put
in the bbq sauce dispenser.

NICK
Spicy or sweet?

SONNY
Both.

ALEX
Is it cool or what, Mom?

MAGGIE
Did you leave any room here for
toys?

ALEX
Of course they did, Mom. Geez.

KETTLE
(to Alex) Did you ask her?

MAGGIE
Ask her what?
ALEX
Um, if I can go.

MAGGIE
You’ll have to ask Sonny.

NICK
Why?

KETTLE
Why?

MAGGIE
Because he’s Alex’s new dad.

SONNY
We got married at City Hall today.

Maggie holds up engagement ring.

NICK
Mazeltov!

KETTLE
Congratulations!

NICK
Did you pay retail?

SONNY
Never mind. And yes Alex, if it’s okay with Nick, you can go with us tonight when we deliver toys.

ALEX
Awesome!

SONNY
But I’ve got a question too. Whatever happened to Rabkin?

NICK
Beats me

CUT TO:

INT. MALL - DAY

A sign reads “SANTA WORLD, FRESNO MALL.”
A children and their parents wait to have their picture taken with SANTA, who is actually Rabkin wearing a ratty Santa’s outfit. A BOY sits on his lap crying.

BOY
You’re too short to be the real Santa.

RABKIN
If you mouth off to me, you’re not going to get any presents.

Boy starts to CRY.

RABKIN (CONT’D)
Get off me. You just spilled a coke on me and got me all wet.

BOY
That’s not a coke.

RABKIN
Or Sprite, I don’t care what it is.

BOY
No, I just went peepee.

RABKIN
Why me?

INT. SLEIGH COCKPIT – CONTINUOUS

Maggie, Sonny and Kettle sit in the back seat. Alex sits in front next to Nick, who’s fooling around with the dashboard and eating a candy bar.

KETTLE
(nervous)
You’re sure you can fly this without the FTL drive?

NICK
Of course. Never needed the gadget. It’s all in here
(points to himself)

ALEX
Can I drive? I helped Sonny build it so I know how it works...
SONNY
Dude, you're really pushing it.

NICK
Why not? Christmas is for kids.

KETTLE
Maybe I’ll wait to go with you until next year.

MAGGIE
I was hoping to wait until he was 16 for this moment. But all right. And Alex, no fooling around.

Nick slides over and Alex climbs into the front. Alex looks around, hits a switch ——

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - MOMENTS LATER

The sleigh shoots up into the night.

INT. SLEIGH - CONTINUOUS

Maggie and Sonny cheer. Kettle grabs his stomach and his mouth.

ALEX
Sorry about that, I’ll go a little slower.

KETTLE
I’m all ---

He starts to barf again, but runs out of the cockpit to the back.

NICK
I hope he makes it to the bathroom

SONNY
(To Nick)
I’ve got one question I’ve been meaning to ask you.

NICK
Make it fast. I got work to do.
SONNY
How can Santa Claus be Jewish?

NICK
Who else works on Christmas?

EXT. NEW YORK CITY SKYLINE -- NIGHT

The sleigh loop-de-loops into the night, silhouetted by the moon.