

'THE SANTA PARTY'

Story by

Andy Stavrou & Richard Rudy

Written by

Andy Stavrou

Something Awesome
14 Hertford Road, London, N2 9BU
+44 (0)7713 391 002

SAM Films
946 N Hudson Ave #4, LA CA 90038
+1 917 319 1879

FLASH TITLE: FINLAND. CHRISTMAS EVE, 1965.

EXT. TOWN HALL, SAARISELKÄ - LAPLAND - AFTERNOON

A clock tower strikes NOON. Dusk approaches. All the Sámi villagers gather to witness the Declaration of Christmas Peace. Like a frozen Terracotta Army it's as if they're suspended in time. Total silence.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

T'was the night before Christmas. Even though it was day. Not a creature was stirring. Not even a-

FATHER

-HEY.

LAPPI, 8, fidgets, trying to escape his **FATHER's** monkey grip.

LAPPI

This. Isn't. Christmas.

FATHER

It's tradition, Lappi.

LAPPI

But--

FATHER (CONT'D)

Ssst.

A **MILITARY BRASS BAND** announces the arrival of the **MAYOR** at a balcony overlooking the CROWD. He unfurls an ANCIENT PARCHMENT and starts blabbing in 13th century Finnish.

LAPPI (CONT'D)

Ugh. I need to peeeeeeee.

FATHER

Sisu.

LAPPI

I don't need courage, I need toilet.

FATHER

Hold it inside.

LAPPI

It's already coming outside.

His Father reluctantly releases his monkey grip and watches Lappi bolt from the Crowd, past the Toilets and into the Forest. Bound by tradition his Father stews in silence.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
You see, this was no time for festivity.
T'was the time to reflect in
tranquillity.

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

A thick forest of Christmas trees; the sound of an axe
CHOPPING wood - soon followed by a SLOW CRACK and a final
THUD to the ground.

Overjoyed, Lappi drags a small tree towards a LOG CABIN.

INT. LOG CABIN - DUSK

An antler chandelier illuminates a wondrous world of beige.
The only signs of Christmas; a traditional Finnish straw **YULE**
GOAT on the living room table and the reek of fermenting
herring wafting from the kitchen.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The house stank of Yuletide. But not as
we know it. There was no turkey, no tree,
or presents below it.

A disgusted Lappi and the Yule Goat exchange icy stares;

NARRATOR (V.O.)
With a glint in his eye our boy had a
mission.

LAPPI
This time will be different. With NO
Finnish tradition.

Lappi turns the Yule Goat to face the wall.

CONT. -- INT. LAPPI'S BEDROOM, LOG CABIN - DUSK

Lappi's room is messy, colourful, American pop culture
everywhere. The pièce de résistance - a vintage Coca Cola
poster of his idol, SANTA.

Lappi opens his CLOSET; a fake SKELETON springs out, guarding
a secret stash of boxes. He howls with excitement, grabbing
Halloween CANDY and a box labelled 'CHRISTMAS'.

Munching on sugar like a drugged-up elf at Disneyland he
empties decorations all over the floor.

INT. LOUNGE, LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Lappi's crashed out on the sofa, grinning. The house looks like Macy's took a Christmas dump all over it; decorations strung up, tree spruced up. And the fireplace cleared of wood - ready for Santa's landing.

The Yule Goat glares at the tree, unamused.

INT. LAPPI'S BEDROOM, LOG CABIN - EARLY MORNING

Lappi's asleep in bed. He hears some rustling downstairs and jolts up wide awake. It must be -

LAPPI
SANTA!

INT. LOUNGE, LOG CABIN - MORNING

Lappi runs downstairs to find...

The fireplace BURNING. All his creations - GONE... But wait. There's something in his stocking.

LAPPI
PRESSEEEENTS!

He rushes over, shoves his hand in - only to find;

LAPPI (CONT'D)
Soot?

Lappi's face fills with rage as a teapot whistles.

CONT. -- INT. KITCHEN, LOG CABIN - MORNING

Lappi trudges in; his Father enjoying a bowl of porridge.

LAPPI
There's soot in my stocking.

FATHER
Maybe you were a naughty boy.

LAPPI
Where's my tree?

FATHER
Outside. Where trees belong.

CONT. -- EXT. BACKYARD, LOG CABIN - MORNING

Lappi bursts outdoors - OH NO!

He falls to his knees seeing the BURNT TREE CARCASS that was, only a few hours ago, his beacon of Christmas hope.

Bereft of joy, Lappi confronts his father who's already hammering nails into the back PORCH.

LAPPI

What about my Christmas? My presents?

FATHER

This is NOT America where everything is gifted to you. Finnish Christmas is about being silent and remembering the hard times. 'When you face adversity you must show courage'. This is sisu.

LAPPI

SOOOO DEPRESSING. Why can't we have roast turkey instead of rotten fish?

FATHER

Because until you are 16 you will do what I say. Now please Lappi. You are destroying my Christmas peace.

LAPPI

YOU are destroying my Christmas dreams. I want Santa.

FATHER

(stops hammering)

Santa Claus is NOT real. He was made up by America so they can sell to us the cola. Now be SILENT.

LAPPI

I will not--

His Father starts hammering, drowning out any response.

CONT. -- INT. LOUNGE, LOG CABIN - MORNING

Lappi storms past his Father into the Lounge. The sound of hammering only fueling his tantrum. The Yule Goat's passive-aggressive grin mocks him, proud and Finnish - *'now that is the last straw'*.

LAPPI

I WILL NOT BE SILENCED.

In a fit of rage, Lappi LAUNCHES the Yule Goat into the fire, grabs his Christmas stocking, peppering the Lounge with soot.

His father runs in and slaps him across the face.

FATHER

You do NOT treat our traditions this way.
March up the stairs and EMPTY your
cupboard from ALL the naughty sweets.
Then you take saw and clear tree. NOW.

Lappi stares down his father, the redness on his cheek ripening... Tense beats.

Beaten, broken, Lappi drags himself upstairs.

CONT. -- INT. LAPPI'S BEDROOM, LOG CABIN - MORNING

In silent tears Lappi takes down his posters, clears out his cupboard and surrenders his festive treats.

EXT. BACK YARD, LOG CABIN - DUSK

Lappi stands mourning his burnt Christmas tree. A saw in his hands. A tear in his eye. He looks to the edge of the Northern Forest, 20 feet away. The tall trees sparkle in the twilight. It'll be dark soon.

FATHER (O.C.)

I don't hear any sawing. Do you want me
to take you behind the sauna again?

Bruised. Battered. He places the saw on his tree, closes his eyes and slowly starts executing his father's will. As he dismembers his tree his father hammers away inside the Cabin.

It starts snowing. Lappi pauses for thought... and then LEGS IT! His furry little boots run across the backyard as he disappears through white trees into the Northern Forest.

CUT TO:

TITLE OVER: **APRIL 1ST, PRESENT DAY.**

A montage of NEWS CLIPS (4);

1. INT. YLE NEWS STUDIO - MORNING

A 40-something emotionless female **NEWS ANCHOR** sarcastically delivers some 'exciting' news to camera.

NEWS ANCHOR

Ho ho hoax at this year's elections, as the April Fool's joke 'Far North Party' have secured the most seats, with their ludicrous proposal of 'Vote for Santa'.

2. EXT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - DAY

International **COLLEGE STUDENTS** picket with pro-Santa posters.

COLLEGE STUDENT 1

I think Santa would make a great Prime Minister. If he was real.

COLLEGE STUDENT 2

He only works one day of the year. So he'd already get more done than those corrupt, conservative, capitalist--

3. EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

A lonely **OLD LADY** sits, staring into the camera lens.

OLD LADY

(emotionless)

I am happy with the election results.

REPORTER

Are you sure?

OLD LADY

Ecstatic.

4. EXT. HELSINKI AIRPORT, TROLLEY STATION - DAY

A stout, smartly dressed, **TIMO**, 35, with shaggy hair and an orange beard tries to look cool for the cameras. He leans on a row of TROLLEYS but falls over as they roll away;

REPORTER

We're here with Timo Pukki, who claims to be a Santa expert.

TIMO

Hello. My name is Timo Pukki. Premium Santa Expert. Where is my business card?
(pats him self down)

REPORTER

No that's ok. What we would like to know is what you think Santa will stand for?

TIMO

Everybody knows S.A.N.T.A stands for
Selfless Ambitious Naturist Truthful
Assessor.

REPORTER

Right. And you believe he is real?

TIMO

What a stupid question. Of course he is
real.

REPORTER

So where is he?

TIMO

Where else? In Santaland, way up in--

A CACOPHONY OF CAR ALARMS erupts as the runaway Trolleys
crash through the carpark. Timo rushes off in a panic.

REPORTER

Very informative Mr Pukki...

(to camera)

And while our expert rushes off to find
his Moomins, another imaginary character
in an imaginary place is expected as our
new Prime Minister. I cannot wait to see
who he will give the sack to first.

Behind her the **AIRPORT MANAGER** confronts Timo, demands his
shirt and tie and points him away from the premises.

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE, PM'S OFFICE - DAY

On the wall a POLITICAL POSTER; *"Right For Finland"* with an
austere 'Saarinen' logo. A suave, smart, clean-shaven silver
fox, **ERNO SAARINEN**, 60-something, watches the muted 'Timo'
news broadcast on his TV while negotiating on his landline.

ERNO

(to the phone)

--believe me Rex. Please look at the
bigger picture. Help us now and when we--

The Caller hangs up as a neurotic balding man, **MIIKA**, and a
collected female advisor with a newspaper, **KRISTA**, burst in.

MIIKA

(points at the TV)

These are the kind of idiots that believe
in Santa.

ERNO

At least they believe in something-

MIIKA

-you should've been more like-able.

KRISTA

Maybe we still have a chance-

MIIKA

-oh wake up.

(snatches her newspaper)

People didn't vote Right or Left. They voted North. We knew the stats but we still backed a loser. I'm gonna lose everything. What do I tell my wife? Goddammit, I think I need--

(starts hyperventilating)

KRISTA

Miika, calm down. I'm not driving you to the emergency room today, I have yoga.

MIIKA

What's the point in having advisors if you won't take our advice.

Miika, rips off his tie and throws it at Erno.

MIIKA (CONT'D)

I quit.

(storms out)

KRISTA

What do we do now sir?

ERNO

Everybody loves Santa. And Finland needs a father figure.

(rummaging through his closet)

So what we need is...

(he pulls out...)

FEMALE ADVISOR

A snow globe?

ERNO

To call our American friends.

I/E. FAR NORTH PARTY HQ - NIGHT

Outside; a dilapidated apartment block. Inside; worse. Cracked walls. Broken doors. Decaying furniture.

And fake MOVIE POSTERS: *"Santa Jaws"*, *"Silence of the Reindeers"*, *"American History X-mas"*, *"Fly Hard"*...

Among a horde of hooded **TECH-SAVVY NERDS** we find Erno, sat on his jacket on the edge of a sofa, arms folded tight. He doesn't want to touch anything in there. It smells funny.

A **NERD** hands Erno a cup of coffee.

NERD

So old man, why should we help you?

ERNO

I was going to ask you the same question.

NERD

Did you not come to us? Is it not protocol for the person who is doing the coming to be asking for the something?

ERNO

Firstly, I'd like to congratulate you. Somehow you've managed to trick the nation into voting for Santa Claus.

NERD

We just gave them what they wanted. Hope.

ERNO

False hope.

NERD

How so?

ERNO

Well where's Santa? Stuck in a chimney? Off shooting another Pepsi commercial?

NERD

HEY SANTA. Someone to see you.

Erno almost spills his coffee as another Nerd, **YONNI**, pokes his head through a HOLE in the BROKEN DOOR wearing a Santa hat and fake beard.

YONNI

Heeeere's Yonni.

Two **STONED NERDS** by the window have a sudden revelation;

STONED NERDS

THE SLEIGHING!

Yonni rushes over to an **ASIAN NERD** on a 27 inch iMac.

YONNI

Ooh, that's a good one. Mac it up.

ASIAN NERD

Already on it.

Erno stands up, dusting himself off.

ERNO

Well I can see you're not interested in making any significant progress here. Good luck governing your Twittagram. You're just a bunch of jay-peg jokers.

Erno takes three paces towards the exit.

YONNI

Now hold on, there's no need for name calling. Come, step into my office. Let's talk politics.

INT. FAR NORTH PARTY HQ, 'YONNI'S OFFICE' - NIGHT

Yonni squeezes Erno into a dirty single cubicle **TOILET**.

YONNI

We can talk freely in here. We had to have it soundproofed after Big Larry moved in. Can I get you anything? Some mouthwash? A tampon?

ERNO

I can get you Santa.

YONNI

Ha. And I thought I was the joker.

ERNO

You promised the people a Santa Prime Minister. How do you think they'll react when they realize what they voted for was just a kid with a fake beard? You don't have a leader. You don't have a clue.

YONNI

Our influencers can make people see the world however we want them to see it. With a click and a post.

ERNO

Government is real. Your actions in office will have an impact in the real world. You must make snap decisions.

Yonni's phone pings. It's 'The Sleighing' POSTER.

YONNI
(chuckles and posts on Instagram)
SNAP.

ERNO
Think about national security.

YONNI
My Agents of Chaos can hack into any
database in the world.

A **TEENAGE GOTH** walks past the Toilet and hisses at Erno.

ERNO
How will you deal with pensions,
infrastructure, healthcare, education?

YONNI
Well, I guess we would err--

ERNO
Appoint me as your Finance Minister. I
can do all the face-work and you can do
all the... FaceBook.

YONNI
Why should I trust you? I can do more
damage with one Tweet than you can do
with a whole year of campaigning.

Erno's phone RINGS.

ERNO
I have the contacts.

Yonni's Instagram notifications light up; 103... 164... 284.

YONNI
I have the followers.

Tense beats... They exchange glances in a sort of new-age-
cyber showdown. Erno puts his phone on speaker.

ERNO
Tell me.

KRISTA (O.C.)
Sir, the CIA are at your disposal.

ERNO
 Good work Krista.
 (ends the call)
 So, do we have a deal?

YONNI
 (a beat)
 If you can help us find Santa, THE Santa,
 you've got a deal.
 (offers his hand)

Erno reluctantly shakes Yonni's hand and immediately reaches into his pocket for a wet wipe to sanitize himself.

FLASH TITLE: WASHINGTON, DC.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - WATERGATE HOTEL - DAWN

A trashed suite littered with expensive alcohol and women's lingerie. A large West African man, **EMANUEL**, talks on his FLIP PHONE as he rushes to pack. On the TV, Al Jazeera reports a refugee crisis in BURKINA FASO, AFRICA.

EMANUEL
 Kill dem all. It's just an-adda village.

In the background, an African-American **MAID**, picks up a thong.

EMANUEL (CONT'D)
 Let me deal with da refugees General. Dat region is yours now.

Emanuel breaks his Phone in half and dumps it in the bin. He turns off the TV, grabs his suitcase and opens the front door to find a stiff, suited;

EMANUEL (CONT'D)
 Dick!

DICK
 (backs Emanuel into the room)
 Manny. My main Manny. Off so soon?

EMANUEL
 Ouagadougou. Terrible news. Da rebels have taken da Sahel region.

DICK
 Have breakfast first.
 (holds up a bottle of champagne)
 Almondy Bricknack?

EMANUEL
It's Armand de Brignac. And you don't
drink this for breakfast. An-adda time.
My jet is waiting.

DICK
I can't let you do that.
(pulls out a gun)
Sit.

EMANUEL
(sits on a wooden chair)
CIA scum. I knew it.

DICK
We've tried it the nice way Manny.
(tying Manny's hands)
The parties. The women.

EMANUEL
I've no time for dis. What do you want?

DICK
General Issa.

EMANUEL
What are you tokkin about? I don't know
any General Issa.

DICK
Oh Manny.

Dick drags Emanuel into the bathroom, plugs the toilet bowl
with a towel and tops it off with champagne.

EMANUEL
What are you doing?

DICK
Just some good old CIA-ing.

Dick tips the chair forward plunging Emanuel's head into the
toilet bowl.

Dick pulls Emanuel's head out the bowl.

DICK (CONT'D)
Where is he?

EMANUEL
(spluttering)
I can't... He's crazy.

DICK
Where is he Emanuel?

EMANUEL
I DON'T KNOW.

Suddenly, the Maid BURSTS into the bathroom knocking out Emanuel with a Krav Maga style move.

DICK
Amy. What the hell?

AMY
Enhanced Interrogation Techniques aren't the right protocol here, Dick.

DICK
It's Agent Wadd to you. And how I choose to extract information from my targets doesn't concern your pay grade. All you had to do was shut up and keep watch.

AMY
But the Geneva Convention-

DICK
-screw the Geneva Convention and it's Austrian propaganda.

AMY
It's Swiss.

DICK
Even worse. Have you seen their little army knives? No wonder they don't war.

AMY
I don't think-

DICK
-no you don't.
(whips out his phone)
You're terminated from Special Ops, effective immediately.

Amy's world collapses.

EXT. CIA HQ, SPECIAL ACTIVITIES CENTER ASSAULT COURSE
LANGLEY, VIRGINIA - DAWN

The rain beats down on a platoon of cadets climbing, running and crawling their way through an assault course.

Among them we find Amy. Earbuds on. The sound of Steel Panther's 'Eyes of a Panther' helps her keep up with a stereotypical **G.I. JOE**.

Just as she's about to turn on the afterburners, the CADET in-front sprains his ankle and falls to the ground. G.I. Joe races ahead; Amy rips off her sleeve to make an ankle brace.

A Jeep pulls up and the **DRIVER** barks at her.

DRIVER
Agent Wolf. Operations office. Now.

INT. CIA HQ, OPERATIONS MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

A beefy, militant Minnesotan man in his 60's, **ERIK**, stares at Amy from behind his desk;

AMY
Sir?

ERIK
I've got a mission for you.

AMY
Somalia?

ERIK
No.

AMY
Afghanistan?

ERIK
I'm afraid you've been downgraded back to Level 1 after what happened in DC.

AMY
But sir-

ERIK
-you won't work with anyone. You barely talk to your fellow agents. So I'm sending you to Finland.

AMY
Great. The land of sociopaths.

ERIK
Yah, you'll fit right in.

Erik slides Amy a brown folder marked 'Operation Snowball'. She opens it to find a mugshot of Santa.