ALEX COOPER’S
CHRISTMAS CHEER

Written by
Alex Cooper
FADE IN:

EXT. LONDON STREET – DAY

SUPER: Olde London, December 24th

The street bears many poverty stricken houses. The stone paved street guides numerous horse and carriages down and into the unknown horizon that is blocked by a murky haze.

A house’s door swings open...

EXT. HOUSE – CONTINUOUS

An OLD MAN quickly and forcefully escorts WILLIAM (10) out of his home. William is covered head-to-toe in pitch-black soot. He holds a big brush in his hand.

WILLIAM
Chimney’s as clean as a whistle, mister!

OLD MAN
You’re getting smut on my floor, boy!

WILLIAM
Sorry, Gov. A discount for your troubles?

The old man gives William one last push and William trips out the doorway, falling on his stomach.

William quickly turns over and sits up.

The old man reaches into his pocket and throws a few coins at William, then shuts his door with a SLAM!

William gets up, wipes the dirt off his soot-covered clothes and then picks up the coins from the ground. He counts them in his hand.

WILLIAM
Two quid!
William runs off down the street, dropping his chimney brush.

INT. SHOP WINDOW – LATER

On display is a shiny red bicycle.

William runs up to the window. He puts his hands on the window and smiles in delight at the bicycle.

EXT. SHOP – CONTINUOUS

William runs from the window -- leaving dirty handprints on the window -- and to the shop door. He walks up the step to enter the shop when, all of a sudden, he is stopped by the SHOPKEEPER, who stands at the door. The Shopkeeper is French and looks like a mime with out the make-up.

SHOPKEEPER
(Shakes a finger)
Uh, uh, uh. Your not coming in here little boy.

WILLIAM
But mister, I want to buy that bike, there in the window!

The Shopkeeper tilts back his head and laughs.

SHOPKEEPER
I am not one to give charity.

WILLIAM
But I have money!

William digs deep into his pocket and, moments later, pulls out a hand full of soot-covered coins.

The Shopkeeper looks at it in disgust, but doesn’t look away.

SHOPKEEPER
(reluctantly)
And, how much is there?

William gives it a quick count.
WILLIAM
At least five quid, mister!

The Shopkeeper laughs again.

SHOPKEEPER
My dear boy, you know nothing of value do you? That bike is worth five times that amount.

The smile disappears from Williams face.

WILLIAM
But mister-

SHOPKEEPER
If you are not buying anything then go away. Please would you step away. And clean those dirty hands prints off my window.

William hangs his head in sorrow and puts his money back in his pocket.

He walks over to the window and wipes it with his soot-covered sleeve. The smudge gets worse.

The Shopkeeper runs out of the shop and grabs William by the arm.

SHOPKEEPER
Stop it! You’re making it worse!

The Shopkeeper pushes him away.

WILLIAM
Sorry, mister.

The Shopkeeper frantically tries to clean the smudge.

SHOPKEEPER
Go away! Don’t come back till you get money!
William runs off down the street.

EXT. STREET - LATER

William sits in the gutter with head-in-hands. He sighs.

The legs of SANTA CLAUS (...) step into frame. Instead of cheery red pants he wears brown pants.

    SANTA (O.S.)
    Excuse me, young boy.

William looks up and sees a rather portly old man with a snow-white beard and rosy cheeks. He wears a dark brown suit and a top hat. His hand is behind his back.

    WILLIAM
    Sorry mister, am I in your way?

    SANTA
    Oh no, my dear boy.
    (beat)
    I just thought you might have dropped this?

Santa reveals William’s chimney brush.

William stands up to face Santa.

    WILLIAM
    My chimney brush! Thanks mister.

    SANTA
    Why did you ever drop it?

    WILLIAM
    I didn’t mean to, I just, forgot about it ‘cause I was excited, mister.

    SANTA
    Oh? Excited about what?

William frowns.
WILLIAM
I thought I had enough to buy a bicycle, but... I didn’t.

SANTA
Well, how much do you need?

WILLIAM
Twenty quid, I would have to clean at least a hundred chimneys to get that much!

SANTA
Or one really dirty one, and what a coincidence this is! I’ve been meaning to get my chimney cleaned and now I meet you.

(beat)
Tell you what, if you clean my chimney, I’ll give you twenty pounds.

William’s face lights up.

WILLIAM
Really, mister! That would be bloody brilliant!

Santa gives a jolly laugh.

INT. SANTA’S HOME – LATER

Santa and William walking into Santa’s warmly furbished lounge room. The big chimney is decorated with Christmas decorations.

SANTA
It’s right there.

WILLIAM
I’ll get it as clean as a whistle, mister.
SANTA
Jolly good, while your doing that, I’ll go get some milk and cookies.

WILLIAM
Yum!

Santa leaves the room.

William gets his chimney brush ready and ducks down to get under the chimney...

INT. CHIMNEY – CONTINUOUS

William looks up into the coffin, only to see clear through the top.

William runs his finger across the chimney wall and finds no dirt.

He looks utterly confused.

William steps out from the chimney...

INT. SANTA’S HOME – CONTINUOUS

WILLIAM
Mister?

Santa walks into the room with a tray of cookies, a jug of milk and two cups.

SANTA
Yes?

William slightly frowns.

WILLIAM
Your chimney is as clean as a whistle...

SANTA
Already, golly that was quick.
Santa sets the tray on the coffee table.

    WILLIAM
    I didn’t do it mister, it was already clean.

    SANTA
    Really?

William’s frown grows and he drags his feet as he walks to the door.

    WILLIAM
    I’ll go.

    SANTA
    Oh, no. Don’t be silly. I said I’d give you twenty pounds for a clean chimney, and my chimney’s clean.

William stops and turns to face Santa.

    WILLIAM
    Does that mean...

    SANTA
    Yes, here is your twenty pounds.

Santa hands William a red pouch of coins.

William opens the pouch and looks at the coins in amazement.

He immediately hugs Santa tightly.

Santa smiles and pats him on the back.

EXT. SANTA’S HOME – NIGHT

Santa’s door opens and out steps William.
WILLIAM
Thank you so much, mister,
for your kindness.

SANTA
You deserve it William, now
go and buy your bicycle, I’m
sure the shops will be
closing soon.

William looks shocked.

WILLIAM
Bollocks! I forgot!

William bolts down the street.

Santa watches him run down the street.

WILLIAM
(yells)
Thanks again, mister!

Santa gives a small jolly laugh.

SANTA
(to self)
Call me Santa.

EXT. SHOP – LATER

William starts to slow down when he sees the shop’s side.

William all of a sudden stops.

WILLIAM
How did he know my name?

William thinks for a moment but eventually shrugs it off
and walks up to the shop window to see that his red bicycle
isn’t there.

William slowly approaches the window. He is stunned.

SHOPKEEPER (O.S.)
What are you doing back here?
William looks at the Shopkeeper who is standing on his shop step.

WILLIAM
I came to buy the red bicycle.

SHOPKEEPER
You’re a bit late, boy. I already sold it to someone with money.

William pulls out the red sack of money.

WILLIAM
But I have money! Is there anymore?

SHOPKEEPER
That was our last one.

William hangs his head and begins to walk away.

SHOPKEEPER
I do have a blue one left.

William turns back to the Shopkeeper with a smile on his face.

SHOPKEEPER (Con’t)
But that’s forty pounds.

The smile disappears.

WILLIAM
I only have twenty-five quid.

SHOPKEEPER
That’s to bad.

The Shopkeeper laughs and walks into his shop. He closes the door and turns over the open sign to close.

William stands, still and silent. A tear falls from his cheek.
All of a sudden a single snow icicle falls from the sky and lands on Williams cheek.

William looks up and sees Santa’s sleigh fly across the moon.

    SANTA
    (faint)
    Ho, ho, ho. Merry Christmas!

William rubs his eyes and looks back up at the sky to see nothing except falling snow.

Confused, draw his attention back to the world and turns to walk down the street when the sight of a red bicycle stops him.

William approaches it slowly. He sees a card hanging from the bicycle handle.

He takes the card and opens it.

INSERT: Christmas card that reads:

    To William,
    
    Merry Christmas and thank you
    for cleaning my chimney.
    
    From
    Santa Clause

William looks back up the sky with a smile on his face.

    WILLIAM
    Thanks Santa.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END