

NAUGHTY LIST

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FADE IN

**INT. MALL, SANTA LAND - DAY**

Santa Land is down a side corridor in a mall that has seen better days and needs a lick of paint and a damn good clean. Santa's house is a makeshift hut, cardboard reindeer dot the external 'garden' and a helper ELF picks his nose.

A small line of kids wait their turn behind the Elf, parents at their sides and all of them look like they'd rather be anywhere else. All except DONOVAN, 9, wearing the biggest grin in the world.

Donovan tugs his bored DAD's, hand.

DAD  
(exasperated)  
What?

Donovan skips excitedly next to his Dad.

DAD  
Enough, it's embarrassing.

Donovan stops, smile fades.

Dad's cellphone RINGS.

DAD  
What?

MOM (O.S.)  
Where the fuck are you?

DAD  
You said take the brat to see Santa.

A couple of the other parents turn and give Donovan a sympathetic smile.

MOM (O.S.)  
Fuck, I got bingo!

DAD  
You mean you're boning what-his-face.

MOM (O.S.)  
Fuck you, you limp dick assho --

Dad cuts her off mid rant, notices everyone watching him.

DAD  
(aggressively)  
What?

Everyone turns back to their own kids.

Dad grins, smug. Donovan looks embarrassed and angry at the same time.

DAD  
So know what you want from Santi?

DONOVAN  
Santa, and yes I do.

The queue shuffles forward.

ELF  
(to Dad and Donovan)  
Got your list ready?

Donovan nods.

ELF  
Good, Santa doesn't like to hang around.

Dad plays poker on his phone and tunes out the conversation.

Donovan takes the opportunity.

DONOVAN  
Can I ask him for anything?

ELF  
Sure can kid, might have to bring it to you later though.

SANTA (O.C.)  
Next!

In the background another pair of dissatisfied customers trudge back towards the tawdry mall.

ELF  
Yer up.

DONOVAN  
Dad, it's our turn.

Dad looks up from his poker.

DAD  
Hang on, big hand.

SANTA (O.C.)  
I said next, for fucks sake.

Dad slams his phone back into his pocket.

DAD  
Another ten bucks down the drain.

He grabs Donovan by the hand and leads him into the hut,  
almost knocking the Elf to the floor in the process.

**INT. SANTA'S HUT - CONTINUOUS**

SANTA, 50s, disheveled, beard flecked with food, scowls at  
Donovan from his seat.

Dad wrinkles his nose.

DAD  
Jeez, must be hot in that suit.

SANTA  
Funny.

DONOVAN  
Dad.

Dad shrugs.

DAD  
He smells, Santa or not... of booze.

DONOVAN  
Dad!

SANTA  
Don't worry kid, grown ups.

He shrugs - what ya gonna do.

SANTA  
What's your name kid?

DONOVAN  
Donovan.

SANTA  
And have you been a good boy this  
year?

Donovan nods enthusiastically.

SANTA  
Great, so what do you want Santa to  
bring ya?

Donovan shuffles.

DAD  
Tell him so we can get out of here  
would ya.

SANTA  
Maybe it's a secret? Wanna whisper?

Donovan nods.

Santa beckons him over.

Donovan advances and dips his head so he can get close to  
Santa's grubby ear.

He starts to whisper.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Donovan sits in front of a large TV, a Christmas cartoon  
fill the screen. He pays rapt attention.

DAD (O.C.)  
No, I'm not going back out.

MOM (O.C.)  
(slurred)  
Fucks sake, I'm completely out.

DAD (O.C.)  
Teach you to not sit home all day  
drinking.

MOM (O.C.)  
C'mon... make it worth your while.

A zip UNZIPS.

DAD (O.C.)  
Get your paws off me.

BUMP something heavy hits the floor.

MOM (O.C.)  
Bastard!

Donovan sighs, picks up his tablet, and puts his earphones on.

SILENCE.

Donovan smiles at the Santa on his screen.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Mom is on her knees crying.

Dad zips his pants back up.

DAD  
You're pathetic.

He storms out of the room as she slumps down further.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Dad strides in, kicks Donovan to get his attention.

DAD  
I'm off out.

Donovan rubs his leg.

DONOVAN  
Dad, it's Christmas Eve.

DAD  
So?

DONOVAN  
Family time.

Dad laughs.

DAD  
Tell that drunken bitch in there.

He doesn't wait for an answer.

BEAT.

The door SLAMS.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Donovan enters the kitchen. Mom is still prone and SOBBING.

DONOVAN  
Mom, you okay?

He goes to help her up.

MOM  
Leave me alone.

DONOVAN  
But --

MOM  
It's all your fault!

DONOVAN  
Mom --

MOM  
I wish I wasn't!

Donovan winces though he's heard it before.

MOM  
We had fun before you came along.  
Fucking fun.

She turns to face him.

MOM  
And you ruined it.

Donovan runs from the room.

**INT. DONOVAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Donovan cries in his sleep.

Downstairs a door SLAMS open and someone barges in.

Donovan stirs in his sleep and sits up. He looks at the kids  
clock by his bed.

1 a.m.

He shakes his head.

Downstairs someone falls upstairs and CURSES loudly.

Donovan goes back to sleep.

**INT. MOM AND DAD'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Mom is prone on the bed, SNORING like a rhino.

Dad is sprawled on the floor, trousers half off, shirt partially over his head.

BANG from downstairs.

Dad SNORTS between SNORES.

BANG.

Dad's eyes flutter open, then shut again.

Glass SHATTERS downstairs.

Dad's eyes open.

DAD  
What the --

SLAM.

FOOTSTEPS downstairs.

DAD  
Fuck.

He get to his feet, unsteady. Pulls up his trousers and adjusts his shirt.

He makes to wake Mom, a quick glance at her comatose form persuades him otherwise.

He exits the room.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Dad peeks round the corner.

The door is ajar, the window pane shattered and glass scattered over the doormat.

NOISE from the kitchen. Dad picks up an umbrella and follows the sound.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Dad tiptoes into the room.



The large fridge door is open, the light casting a small penumbra around it.

Dad pounces and slams the door shut, jumping back expecting to see the intruder collapse in a heap.

The door shuts, the room darkens.

Dad glances to the window above the sink, the knife block by the sink... the missing-a-knife block.

Dad spins.

Straight onto the the knife, which sinks into his stomach to the hilt.

Dad's eyes follow the handle, to the hand holding it, up the arm encased in the red sleeve, up to the stubble faced grin of Santa.

SANTA

Well fancy seeing you here.

He grins at Dad.

SANTA

What, no snappy comments running me down?

Santa pulls his other hand from behind his back, a bottle of Bud.

He smashes it over Dad's head.

SANTA

Now who smells of booze you sad sack!

Dad shakes his head, realisation dawns.

DAD

You're fucking insane.

Santa's cackle answers.

Dad shoves forward bringing the umbrella up, opening it as he moves. It catches Santa totally off guard.

Santa sprawls to the floor struggling to extricate himself from the umbrella.

Dad runs.

**INT. DONOVAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A BANG from downstairs.

Donovan sits bolt upright and looks at his clock.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Dad, knife still protruding, looks to the open door, then to the stairs.

DAD

Fuck.

SANTA (O.C.)

Ho ho, motherfucker, it's time for another sharp present.

DAD

Donovan, Son, go to Mum's room and lock yourselves in, call the police. I'm off to get --

Dad looks down to his stomach, the point of another knife protrudes next to the handle of the other.

SANTA

Ha, stuck like a suckling pig, kinda apt.

Dad sinks to his knees.

DAD

(spitting blood)

Fuck, it's Christmas Eve man, why?

SANTA

It's Christmas day you fool, and you were so on my naughty list.

Dad falls to his side, life bleeding out.

Santa kicks him in the head.

No response.

Santa shrugs and retrieves his knives.

**INT. MOM AND DAD'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Donovan runs into the room.

DONOVAN

Mom, Mom, wake up there's someone downstairs.

Mom, snorts in her sleep.

Donovan shakes her.

DONOVAN

Mom, wake up.

MOM

Is it morning?

He shakes her again.

DONOVAN

No, there's an intruder downstairs.

Mom snaps awake.

MOM

Where's Dad?

DONOVAN

I think he went downstairs.

MOM

Shit.

FOOTSTEPS

MOM

Quick, the door.

Donovan doesn't move.

MOM

Now!

Too late, Santa rounds the corner.

MOM

Fuck! You get away from my son.

Santa laughs.

SANTA

He ain't on my naughty list lady.

Mom looks confused.

Santa advances knives out.

MOM  
Donnie, run, get out of here.

DONOVAN  
Not before you get your present.

MOM  
What --

Santa hands Donovan one of the knives.

**EXT. DONOVAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Donovan walks at the side of Santa.

Santa looks at the next house.

SANTA  
What about your neighbors?

DONOVAN  
They're nice.

SANTA  
Not on the naughty list then?

Donovan shakes his head, points across the street.

DONOVAN  
They are though.

Santa and his little helper cross the street to deliver some more presents.