OLD MAN IN THE SANTA SUIT

Written by

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MONTAGE

1) Christmas Eve as shoppers scurry around making last minute shopping choices.

2) People on the street corner playing a Christmas tune.

3) Salvation Army volunteers ring their bells in hopes of last minute donations during the holiday spirit.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF A FOOD-BANK NEXT TO A BANK - DAY

People walk along the sidewalk bundle up as a bitter wind picks up.

A family stands in front of the food bank. Alison, fidgets with her DAUGHTERS dated scarf in an effort to keep her warm in the bitter wind.

ALISON
You have to keep this pulled up, it’s cold out, sweetie. I don’t want you getting sick.

SALLY
But it stinks mommy.

ALISON
Sorry sweetie, this is all we have.

The Father, FRANK (50s), stares down to the ground, his hand rubs his face as if he hasn’t slept in days.

Few steps from the Father is a little boy, ROGER (10). The Little boy has a toy in hand. The toy has seen better days and appears quite used and fragile.

BETTY a Food Bank worker steps out onto the sidewalk carrying a small bag of groceries.

BETTY
Sorry, Alison, but this is what’s left. It’s been a really tough holiday season.

ALISON
Thank you Betty, every bit helps. Frank, take the bag please.

Betty hands the bag to Frank.
Three men approach.

JIM (20s) tall and slender with black shoulder length hair. Black faded and cracked nail polish on his finger nails. Wears a dark ski mask and a long coat to cover up a weapon, runs into Frank as he takes hold of the bag spilling the contents across the sidewalk. Jim loses his balance a bit and bumps Roger, the toy falls out of Roger’s hand and crashes onto the sidewalk.

Jim stares at the mess.

PETER (42s) walks with Jim, behind is SAM (50s) dressed similarly to Jim and Peter but with an earpiece mostly hidden from sight.

    PETER
    Dammit, we don’t have time for this.

Jim covers his face so the group doesn’t really get a good look at him.

    JIM
    Sorry kid, life’s tough.

    ROGER
    Santa’s coming tonight, I’ve been good all year.

    JIM
    I wouldn’t count on him, he never did for me. Ever.

Sam raises his arm and taps on his wrist watch.

    SAM
    Let’s go. Now.

Alison bends down to help Roger collect the broken toy

    ALISON
    I think you’ve done enough here.

Kissing Roger on the forehead.

    ALISON (CONT’D)
    Roger we’ve talked about Santa this year.
INT. BANK - DAY

A Christmas tree shines in the corner of the Bank as soft Christmas music emanates from the overhead speakers. Atop the tree is a Christmas Star which appears to be burning out as it flickers. Beneath the tree is empty, not a fake present in sight.

A CELLPHONE crashes down on the floor, shattering.

SELFIE BOY (17) hip, dressed in the current fashions. Scarf carefully wrapped around him, more as a statement than for warmth. He stares with a blank expression on his face, in disbelief.

A rifle butt crashes across Selfie Boy’s face spraying blood as his nose now appears broken.

PETER (42s) description needed.

PETER (V.O.)
Seriously, A selfie? What the hell is wrong with this generation?

Peter raises his rifle threaten to pound again.

Peter’s starts to strike.

Jim grabs Peter’s arm struggling to hold the next vicious clash.

PETER
Come on, you can’t tell me you’ve never wanted to do that. God Damn selfies!

JIM
You’ve made your point. Everyone here agrees with you. Right?

Jim scans the room looking at the bank patrons lying on the ground, terrified of the ordeal unfolding in front of them.

JIM (CONT’D)
RIGHT!

Everyone nervously nods their head agreeing with Jim and Peter.

Peter kicks Selfie Boy in the stomach

PETER
Get over there dumb ass.
(looking back to Jim)
(MORE)
PETER (CONT’D)
We need to pick up the pace here.
Way to long.

JIM
Only been a minute or so. Give him
time.

Jim scans the room, watching over his flock.

JIM (CONT’D)
Everyone stay down and this will
all be over soon. You’ve all seen
this in the movies, just stay calm.
No heroes.

A twinkling light catches Jim’s attention, quickly he turns.
Standing next to the Bank Counter, close to the Christmas
tree is an OLD MAN in a Santa suit.

JIM (CONT’D)
Hey! You! -- old man, hit the deck
NOW!

Jim moves towards the Old Man as Peter turns pointing his
rifle.

JIM (CONT’D)
Where’d the hell did yah come from?

Jim is now at the Old Man in the Santa Suit. Slowly Jim
looks the Old Man over.

JIM (CONT’D)
I said hit the Deck!

Jim points his automatic weapon towards the ceiling and
squeezes the trigger. The air is filled with the noise of
gun fire as the bullets hit the white ceiling tiles, empty
casings ricochet around on the ground.

The Old man bends at the knees, carefully making his way down
as he slowly makes contact with the floor assuming the prone
position.

JIM (CONT’D)
That’s better old man.

Jim turns back towards the group on the ground as he scans
the rest of the them for any hint of trouble.

Now turning back towards Peter, he checks in on the progress.
A little girl EMILY (8) who is holding her MOTHERS hand suddenly lets go and runs over to the Old Man in the red Santa Suit.

EMILY
SANTA CLAUS!

Emily wraps her arms around the Old Man giving him a big hug.

Jim quickly turns back towards the Old Man.

PETER (O.S.)
What the hell? What’s going on?

Jim points his rifle at the Old Man and Emily.

JIM
What’s this!

Emily’s MOTHER (31) screams in horror waving to her little girl to come back to her.

JIM (CONT’D)
Don’t do that again or you won’t be opening your presents tomorrow kid.

Emily’s Mom attempts to get up, still waving at her little girl to come back to her.

EMILY’S MOM
Emily! Come back here now! Please.

Peter sticks his rifle barrel sharply into Emily’s Mom’s back.

PETER
Down -- NOW!

EMILY’S MOM
Emily, Please.

Emily’s Mom looks up at Peter as she begs him.

NATHAN(30s) a business man who is perched on the floor caught up in the heist.

NATHAN
Control your kid, she’s going to get us all killed.

EMILY’S MOM
She’s just a child for god sakes. Please.
NATHAN
Child or not, does it look like
these idiots care?

Peter quickly turns his attention to Nathan, points his automatic weapon at him.

PETER
Idiots?

Nathan looks down to the floor.

PETER (CONT’D)
You want to be the first to go here?

Peter places the automatic weapon back into Emily’s Mom’s back.

Nathan turns to the person next to him, scared and curled up on the floor. Trying not to acknowledge Nathan.

NATHAN
I’m telling you, they are making things worse here.

Emily steps back and stares at the Old Man completely oblivious to her surroundings.

She turns her attention back on her Mother.

EMILY
(sternly)
But Mommy, it’s Santa Claus. Look Mommy.

Emily now focuses her attention back to the Old Man in the Santa Suit.

EMILY (CONT’D)
Hello Santa. How are you tonight? Santa, are you going to deliver your presents now?

OLD MAN
Don’t worry Emily, I’ll deliver the toys.

JIM
Really.
(beat)
Sure you’ll deliver your toys Santa. Just like every year. Am I right old man?
Jim glances around the room, people huddle on the floor scared and confused, his focus returns back to the old man

JIM (CONT’D)
Somehow you always seemed to miss my house. Fifteen years I believed in you. I believed you would be there. Every Christmas morning I would wake up and run down the stairs hoping to see at least one present under the tree for me.

Jim lowers his automatic weapon.

JIM (CONT’D)
Nope! Nothing! Every damn year. Just an empty tree. (beat)
Cookies half eaten, my old man passed out on the couch, too drunk to make it up stairs.

The Old man gazes upon Jim with empathy, wanting to reach out to him.

EMILY
That’s very sad. My Mommy always says sorry to hear that when people tell her sad news so, sorry to hear that. Why would your daddy do that?

JIM
Why? Because he’s a miserable old drunk. That’s why. He didn’t care about us. He only cared about the next bottle.

EMILY
You shouldn’t be sad on Christmas. It’s a time for magic. A time to believe in the season.

JIM
Believe! I stopped believing in Santa long time ago.

Now staring down the Old Man like high noon in an old west shoot out.

JIM (CONT’D)
I stopped believing in you when I finally grew up and realized the foolishness of it all. (MORE)
JIM (CONT’D)
(beat)
Why the hell am I calling you Santa? Nothing but a drunk old man! Just like my father.

Jim turns back towards Emily on the ground taking a step towards her. Emily’s mom trembles as Peter pushes the barrel of his rifle further into her back.

JIM (CONT’D)
That’s right kid, It’s not Santa. Just some old drunk with nothing better to do at Christmas.

EMILY
He’s not a drunk. Drunks don’t smell cookies. He’s Santa. Why is that so hard for you to believe.

Reaching down the Old Man places a hand on the ground as he uses his other to grab a chair.

With all his Christmas energy the he lifts his body up.

OLD MAN
I’m sorry. I didn’t know you were not getting the gifts.

JIM
Yeah, sorry.

Turns back to his flock, as they tremble on the ground.

JIM (CONT’D)
Fifteen years and he says - sorry

EMILY
Maybe you were bad? You’re not being very nice tonight, that’s for sure. You will most likely get nothing again this year, maybe even grounded.

JIM
Grounded? Kid, I’m twenty four. I don’t get grounded.

EMILY
Well you are not acting like a twenty four your old. I’m eight.

OLD MAN
What do you want me to say . I do make mistakes too.
EMILY
Maybe your brother was taking the gifts? Do you have a brother.

JIM
No, I don’t

EMILY
I’m an only child too. Mommy keeps promising me a sister.

Emily turns to her mother for the moment.

EMILY (CONT’D)
Right Mommy?

EMILY’S MOM
Emily, this isn’t the place to be talking about this stuff.

EMILY
But Mommy, Santa’s here, you could ask Santa to bring me a little sister.

EMILY’S MOM
Emily, please.

OLD MAN
It’s okay, you’d be surprised how many times I’ve asked to bring a little sister or little brother.

Jim steps next to the Old Man.

JIM
Enough bullshit old man.

Jim slings his automatic weapon and pulls out a hand pistol. He puts the pistol to Santa’s forehead.

A collective gasp is heard coming from the group of hostages on the floor.

JIM (CONT’D)
For fifteen years the same house? You missed the same house! I don’t think so!

Nathan sits up.
NATHAN
This old guys is going to get us killed. I can’t believe you guys are talking about Santa.

Peter pulls back the rifle barrel from Emily’s Mom and takes a step towards Jim.

PETER
Take it easy man, you’re going to blow this. Forget about this bum who think’s he’s Santa. He’s nothing more than a loony old drunk.
(beat)
Don’t let him get to you. We gotta job to do man.

Emily stands up, her delicate face has a touch of red in it, partially from the cold weather but mostly from anger.

EMILY
That’s no bum! That’s Santa Claus.
(beat)
You big people are all the same.
It’s Santa Claus! Now leave him alone.

Emily’s Mom jumps up and runs over to Emily clutching her in her arms.

EMILY’S MOM
EMILY! I told you to come back to me before you get hurt.

Jim slowly lowers his pistol from the Old Man.

EMILY’S MOM (CONT’D)
Please Emily listen to me. I love you baby. Mommy loves you

EMILY
I love you too mommy.

Emily’s mom reaches for her hand but Emily quickly ducks behind the Old Man in the Santa suit.

Sam enters the area of this Merry Christmas party. Clearly agitated.
SAM
What the hell is going on here! We have a job to do here.

A low murmur emanates from the group on the floor as they discuss the Santa in an adult world.

SAM (CONT’D)
This isn’t a God damn Christmas party!

NATHAN
I said this isn’t going to go well. Did I not say that, I said that.

Peter steps over to Nathan.

NATHAN (CONT’D)
Santa is nothing more then a tool to boost sales in the winter.

Peter raises his rifle and strikes Nathan across the face. Blood splatters across the floor.

PETER
Your the only one who’s gonna get yourself killed. You’re really annoying the hell out of me.

Sam turns to Jim who is staring intensely at the Old Man.

SAM
Hold on.

Sam tilts his head as he listens into his earpiece.

SAM (CONT’D)
The Cops have been alerted, they are on there way!

The Old Man rubs Emily’s head gently as Emily gleams brightly.

OLD MAN
The Police have been taken care of.

Jim snaps out of his trance.

JIM
What the hell are you talking about.
(beat)
(MORE)
JIM (CONT'D)
Tell me now what you mean the cops
have been taken care of?

PETER
Oh Jesus he's an undercover!

Peter points his rifle at the Old Man, then back at the crowd
to quite them down.

OLD MAN
(With a certain ton of
wisdom and confidence)
They won’t be bothering us for a
little while Jim.

JIM
The hell are you talking about?
Don’ screw with me man.

Jim raises his pistol and points it at the Old Man.

JIM (CONT’D)
I’m gonna pop you right now old
timer.

SAM
Take care of him. We’re running
out of time here. Dammit, months
of planning.

Sam turns, using the end of his rifle butt he strikes a bank
display on the table and exits back towards the safe.

The Old Man pauses for a moment, turning his head he looks up
on a slight angle as if in deep thought.

OLD MAN
I think you need a second chance
Jim. I’m giving you your second
chance. A chance to make good.

(beat)
Look at me Jim. In your eyes I’m
just an old man, a bum, but in that
little girls eyes I mean something
to her. I’m Santa. That’s right,
in her eyes I’m Santa

The Old Man sit’s down in the chair as he ponders the moment.

OLD MAN (CONT’D)
There are very few adults who
believe in Santa Claus anymore.

(MORE)
OLD MAN (CONT’D)
They all stop believing when they
get older, wiser or when they
simply just don’t get what they
want.
(beat)
They become adults. They think
they’re right. It’s a childish
thing to believe in me. There’s no
room for Santa Claus in the adult
world.

The Old Man shakes his head gathering his thoughts then
slowly raises it looking at Jim.

OLD MAN (CONT’D)
What if I am who that little girl
says I am?
(beat)
Then again, maybe I am just a
drunken old bum who puts on a red
suit every year to make children
happy. To try and give back, to
bring a little happiness and worth
in an otherwise miserable and
meaningless existences.
(beat)
If I at least make this little girl
happy at Christmas --

He looks down at his black boots.

OLD MAN (CONT’D)
Then my job is done. You adults
can go back to your cruel adult
world.

The Old Man raises his had and turns his attention to Pete.

OLD MAN (CONT’D)
That goes for you too Pete.

A hush falls over the people a the bank. All seems peaceful
and serene for the moment, as if time is halted.

A few of people on the ground just stare at the old man,
touched by his speech as they dig down deep, as if they are
trying to believe in Santa once again.

Jim glances down at his hard cold blue steel rifle.

Slowly Jim lifts his head and glances towards the little girl
who is now hugging her mother.
A tear manages to break free of Jim’s dark inner soul and tumbles down his cheek, hits the floor.

Suddenly the moment that seemed to be forming between the Old Man and Jim is broken once again.

PETER
Wait a minute old man! How the hell do you know our names?
(beat)
HOW! Answer me god dammit!

Peter makes his way to the Old Man.

Jim raises his head looking at the Old Man. He can see a sparkle in the Old Man’s eyes and a warm glow to his jolly round face.

Police siren breaks up what ever magic was forming between Jim and the Old Man.

The familiar siren sound triggers off a deep hate that has been building up in Jim for a long time.

JIM
NO! You’re a fake! You said the cops weren’t coming. You lied again, just like always. They all lie!

OLD MAN
I said they won’t be bothering us for a little while. I never said they would not come. After all you are robbing a bank Jim.
(beat)
Is this really the path you want to take. It’s never too late to change. To do good. To correct things and make things right. I see a lot of potential in you.

PETER
We need to get the hell out of here!

Peter grabs Jim’s arm.

Jim quickly pushes Peter off as he raises his rifle pointing it at the Old Man.

OLD MAN
Go on Jimmy, pull the trigger if you think that will make you happy.
(MORE)
OLD MAN (CONT'D)

(beat)
Pull the trigger, my job is to make
people happy, so maybe this is how
I can make it up to you.
(speaking calmly and in a
soothing voice)
Maybe it will release all that
anger you have build up inside of
you.

Sam returns to the room standing next to Jim and Peter, rifle
in hand ready to use.

SAM
This is getting old. This needs to
be done.

Sam’s finger muscles contract, pulling the trigger. The
sound of empty shell can be heard hitting the ground making a
ringing sound.

The sudden roar of a machine gun fills everyone’s ears

JIM
(screaming)
Noooo

The damage of the rounds cutting through the air, hitting the
objects all around can be felt as they rip through and stop
with a thump. Flour from from the food donation bin explodes
sending a white fog into the air.

The cries of sorrow also fill the room as the people in the
bank watch a childish fantasy fade away.

Click. Click. Click.

PETER
It’s empty man, take your finger
off the trigger.

Pete reaches out and touches Sam’s shoulder. Smoke and flour
fills the room. The smell of gun powder lingers in the air.

Jim’s stare is transfixed forward towards the Christmas tree.

PETER (CONT’D)
I told you man, he was nothing but
a drunken old bum looking for an
excuse to die.
(beat)
Sam just did him a favor that’s
all. A Christmas present just for
him.
Jim begins to look around frantically as the smoke clears

   JIM  
   Where is he! Where is he man! The body! Where the hell is the body!

The group on the floor slowly take their hands off their faces. Now in a daze they all begin to look around as they whisper to each other.

The Christmas tree set up in the corner of the bank’s entry, begins to illuminate. The bright coloured lights fills the darkened room. On the top of this glorious tree is a star. The beams of light sparkle as it blinks on and off.

The beauty of it's rays fill the eyes of its onlookers.

Jim turns his body around and stares at the tree. He is captured by the Christmas spirit that emanates from it.

Under the tree is one gift.

Confused, Jim walks over to the tree. Each step carefully chosen. Pausing for a moment he bends down to his knees. The sound of his rifle hitting the floor seems to be softened.

Reaching down he picks up the gift and reads the name on the tag;

SUPERIMPOSE: TO JIM, LOVE SANTA, the old man.

Jim's cold, dark heart now seem to have been broken from the spell cast on it as a child.

Tears begin to show in Jim’s face.

Opening the gift as if it was on Christmas morning when he was fifteen. He tears the rapping paper away.

Jim's eyes light up as he stares at the glorious gift which he has waited so long for. There before him is a model of a X-Wing, in all it's beautiful colours.

Jim looks up at the star perched upon the top of the tree. The light hits his eyes and sparkles.

Jingle, Jingle, Jingle.

Outside the window snow begins to fall gently.

DISSOLVE TO:
EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF A FOOD-BANK NEXT TO THE BANK - EARLIER

Snow gently falls as the intensity begins to pick up.

On the ground is the same broken toy from the earlier. Next to the toy stands Roger. Alison, Roger’s Mom bends down and hugs Roger.

Tears form in Rogers eyes.

Jim still wearing a ski mask bends down scraping up what’s left of the toy with one hand while a package in beautiful Christmas wrapping paper is tucked safely under his arm.

JIM
Sorry kid. I didn’t mean to.

ROGER
It’s okay.

Jim stares at Roger for a moment before he realizes the gift under his arm.

PETER
Come on man, we have to go.

Jim pulls off his ski mask.

PETER (CONT’D)
What are you doing? Seriously?

JIM
I’m not going. Sorry, I can’t do this.

Jim hands the gift under his arm to Roger.

JIM (CONT’D)

Jingle, jingle, jingle, the sound of sleigh bells fill the air.

Jim stands up and looks for the source of the jingle. Across the street, standing on the corner is an Old Man in a Santa Suit. Jolly as can be, ringing his Christmas sleigh bells.

A merry glow now seems to surround him. His rosy cheeks are redder than a cherry, his little round belly begins to shake as he chuckles.
OLD MAN
Ho, Ho, Ho!

Then like magic, bright sparkles fill the area around him as the Old Man in the Santa suit vanishes.

FADE TO WHITE: