

OLD MAN IN THE SANTA SUIT

Written by

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FADE IN:

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

Its' 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 hear 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 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 head and turns his attention to Pete.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

That goes for you too Pete.

A hush falls over the people at 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)

Not tonight. Not any night. Not anymore.

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: