

# **A Very Hellmark Christmas Special**

by Butch Maxwell & Bert Furioli

## At a Glance

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**Genre:** Interactive Musical-Comedy Murder Mystery

**Running Time:**

Scripted elements: approximately 60 minutes

Entire experience with dinner/intermission: 2–2 ½ hours

**Cast:** 3M, 2W, plus multiple volunteer audience participants

**Setting:** Christmastown, East Dakota, on Christmas Eve, as Evil Incorporated threatens to level the town at the stroke of midnight and a boozy, disheveled Santa stand-in squares off against Hollywood, the press, and true love

**Audience Participation:** Extensive — audience members are pulled into scripted bits (an unwrapped-presents gag with Noel, the Mayor's key-to-the-city presentation, a haggling pantomime over a snow globe, and a pointing-and-laughing table bit at Sexton's expense), plus a “Nutcracker” interpretive-dance pull-in, a Q&A period, and Detective Cards

**Music:** Three musical numbers (“It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year,” “Wonderful Christmastime,” and “All I Want for Christmas Is You,” with “All I Want for Christmas Is You” reprised as the finale) performed by the cast, with prerecorded accompaniment

**Technical Requirements:** Recorded music and sound-effects playback, plus hand props

**Ideal Venues**

- Dinner theatres
- Community theatres
- Fundraisers
- Performing arts organizations
- Civic organizations
- Corporate and private holiday events

## The Mystery Theatre Experience

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An evening with Mystery Theatre Unlimited begins before the first scene. Upon arrival, guests are seated and receive a program, Detective Card, pen, and one Character Fun

Fact Card at their place setting. As the cast mingles in character, guests are encouraged to read their Fun Fact aloud, exchange cards with other tables, and meet the suspects before the mystery officially begins.

### **The Evening's Format**

A typical performance follows this sequence:

1. **Guest Arrival & Character Mingling** — Characters circulate, meet the audience, and establish relationships before the scripted action begins.
2. **Act One** — Uncle Santa and his niece Noel welcome Christmastown to the Christmas Eve festivities before Evil Incorporated announces plans to level the town at midnight.
3. **Dinner / Intermission** — Characters may remain available for informal interaction as appropriate.
4. **Act Two** — Sexton Hardcastle III returns home as grand marshal, romance blooms between Sexton and Noel, and news breaks that Simon Bar Sinister of Evil Corp has been killed by a runaway bulldozer.
5. **Question & Answer Period** — Audience members question the suspects directly.
6. **Guessing Break** — Guests complete Detective Cards identifying the killer and explaining their deductions.
7. **Act Three** — The killer is revealed, Christmastown is saved, and Santa Claus turns out to be more real than anyone expected.

## **Audience Participants**

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A Very Hellmark Christmas Special draws its audience participants into several scripted bits, selected and coached in the moment by the cast member running that scene. No advance preparation or theatrical experience is required.

The audience roles are:

- Audience Member — a pre-selected guest coached by Noel for an unwrapped-Christmas-presents bit
- The Mayor — a pre-selected guest who presents Sexton with the key to the city
- Evil Corp Guy — a pre-selected guest who plays Simon Bar Sinister, Noel's corporate antagonist, and later turns out to be the murder victim

- Snow Globe Seller — a pre-selected guest recruited by Noel and Sexton for a haggling pantomime bit
- A pre-selected table — recruited to point and laugh at Sexton

The entire audience also participates throughout the evening — additional volunteers are pulled in by Noel during her “Nutcracker” interpretive dance, and everyone questions the suspects after Act Two and completes Detective Cards before the solution is revealed.

## Characters

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The cast consists of five principal characters.

### **Uncle Santa**

A boozy, disheveled fixture of Christmastown who insists he's not really Santa Claus — right up until he turns out to be exactly that, and the accidental killer of Simon Bar Sinister.

### **Noel Kringle**

Uncle Santa's tirelessly perky niece, proprietor of Tinsel Town and inventor of questionable holiday merchandise, determined to save Christmastown from Evil Incorporated.

### **Sexton Hardcastle III**

A vain Hollywood star returning to his hometown as parade grand marshal for the first time in 40 years, and rediscovering it — and Noel — along the way.

### **Loren Lipschitz**

Sexton's high-strung, endlessly abused publicist, whose loyalty to his employer is matched only by his flair for melodrama.

### **Lulu Lemieux**

An ambitious, breaking-news-obsessed reporter for Eye Nitwit's News, always first with the scoop — wanted or not.

## Character Fun Facts

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Before the performance begins, each guest table receives one Character Fun Fact Card. The cards introduce the suspects, encourage conversation among guests, and give performers natural material for the pre-show mingle. Cast members should be familiar with every Fun Fact.

- Noel Kringle's best friend is a reindeer named Gimp.
- Uncle Santa's favorite part of the Christmas season is the Salvation Army bell ringers because they're easy to beat up.
- Sexton Hardcastle III's latest feature film was the box-office flop, "Fast & Furious 20: Whoosh!"
- Loren Lipschitz was a child actor on the TV series *The Facts of Lunch*.
- Lulu Lemieux's first scoop was about Beyonce's near-fatal pimple.

## Key Props and Sound Needs

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- A flask
- An industrial-strength "Santa bra" with mistletoe tassels
- A candy-cane-shaped ceremonial key to the city
- A news microphone with a station logo flag
- A handkerchief
- A snow globe
- A Christmas tree
- A Santa hat and beard, for the Act Three costume change
- Detective Cards
- Playback for the show's musical numbers and supporting sound effects

## A VERY HELLMARK CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

## Act 1

*UNCLE SANTA enters. He is dressed like Santa Claus, but wears his beard loosely dangling below his chin. He is disheveled and carries a flask.*

## UNCLE SANTA

Hello and welcome to this Hellmark Christmas Special – sure to deliver you enough predictably sugary sweet sentimentality to ensure everybody here will fall into a diabetic coma.

*[Aside.]*

There's insulin available in the lobby.

*[At large.]*

Tonight's show features some faded stars from old sitcoms you vaguely remember, acted with all the realism of soap operas and all the integrity of reality TV.

You like my outfit? Now, I'm not really Santa Claus. I'm just the guy who could fit into the costume. But I'm the official symbol of Christmastown, East Dakota – where it is Christmas 365 days a year. So, for those of you who never take down your Christmas lights – welcome home!

Since it's Christmastime, things are especially busy here in Christmastown. Everybody's shopping and decorating, wrapping presents, and wishing everyone well.

*[A beat.]*

It makes me sick. It's insincere. Worse than that, it's unsincere. Why the hell are people nice to each other at Christmas, when the day after, they'd curse you out for returning your stupid Christmas presents? I mean, who needs a rooster clock? And I don't want another damned tie. I'm Santa. I don't wear ties; I wear fur collars. Take that, P.E.T.A!

Ah, who needs all the pressure? Sending out Christmas cards, caroling, and worst of all, fruitcakes! Hmm. I think I see some fruitcakes in the audience.

*NOEL enters. She is dressed like a cute elf, with bells on her elf shoe toes. She broadly dances a sort of conga as she sings.*

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NOEL

Fa-la-la-la-la-**la**! Fa-la-la-la-la-**la**! Fa-la-la-la-la-**la**! Fa-la-la-la-la-**la**!

UNCLE SANTA

I think you've got the wrong holiday, there, Noel. This isn't Cinco de Mayo.

NOEL

No, it's Santa de Mayo!

*[To an audience member.]*

Have you wrapped your Christmas presents yet?

AUDIENCE MEMBER

*[A pre-selected guest]*

No. I usually wait until Christmas Eve and put them in a garbage bag.

NOEL

No! No! That's not the Christmas spirit! Presents need ribbons and bows!

AUDIENCE MEMBER

Do twist ties count as bows?

NOEL

Oh, hello Uncle Antonio!

UNCLE SANTA

Hey! I'm Santa. Didn't you see my round little belly that shakes when I laugh like a bowlful of Jello?

NOEL

Oh, hello Uncle Santa! I see you are already greeting our guests. Have you ho-ho-ho'd yet?

UNCLE SANTA

Yeah, but I'm still looking for the right ho.

*[To audience.]*

This is my niece, Noel. She runs a store here in Christmastown – Tinsel & Crap.

NOEL

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It's Tinsel Town! For all your tinsel needs! And I don't just run the store! I'm also an inventor. Want to see my latest invention?

UNCLE SANTA

I hope it's better than the wreath you made out of steel wool. That thing really rubbed me the wrong way.

NOEL

My new invention is less abrasive.

*She produces a very large, industrial-strength brassiere with red and green tassels on it.*

It's the Santa bra! Haven't you ever felt like you needed a little extra support?

UNCLE SANTA

*[Holding flask.]*

I got all the support I need right here.

NOEL

It lifts! It separates!

*[Twirling tassels.]*

And it's got mistletoe tassels.

UNCLE SANTA

*[To audience.]*

Believe it or not, this is the woman in charge of Christmastown's holiday celebration.

*[To Noel.]*

I was just warning these folks about the high fructose saga they're about to ingest.

NOEL

Oh, Uncle Santa! You can't die from a sugar high!

**SFX: Music – “The Most Wonderful Time of the Year”**

*[Singing.]*

It's the most wonderful time of the year

UNCLE SANTA

*[Singing, pointing to Noel.]*

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Ding! Dong! Ding! Dong!

NOEL

*[Singing.]*

With the kids jingle belling –  
And everyone telling you be of good cheer  
It's the most wonderful time of the year!

UNCLE SANTA

*[Singing.]*

It's the crap-crappiest season of all  
With those holiday greetings – and gay happy meetings  
When friends come to call  
It's the crap-crappiest season of all

NOEL

*[Singing.]*

There'll be parties for hosting –

UNCLE SANTA

*[Singing.]*

My brain will be toasting –  
And drunk passing out in the snow

NOEL

*[Singing.]*

There'll be gooey love stories –  
And tales of the glories of  
Christmases long, long ago

It's the most wonderful time of the year –  
There'll be much mistltoeing

UNCLE SANTA

*[Singing.]*

With that bra you are showing –  
Just give me a beer

NOEL

*[Singing.]*

It's the most wonderful time

UNCLE SANTA

*[Singing.]*

Yes, the most crappiest time

NOEL & UNCLE SANTA

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*[Singing.]*

Oh, the most wonderful time – of the year!

**SFX: Song ends**

NOEL

*[Speaking.]*

Oh, Uncle Santa! I'm so excited for the Christmas Eve pageant tonight! I hope our special guest, Sexton Hardcastle III, gets here on time.

UNCLE SANTA

Harden Sexcastle? Who's that?

NOEL

Sexton Hardcastle III! He's a big star!

UNCLE SANTA

He is?

NOEL

Well, he's tall. Oh, come on, Uncle Santa! He's a famous Hollywood star! He was born right here in Christmastown. And he hasn't been home in 40 years!

UNCLE SANTA

I bet his parents are worried.

NOEL

But I still have so much to do! I have to organize the parade and the pageant, and I have to make sure the toilet paper rolls are installed properly.

*[To audience.]*

It's back to front, you heathens!

*[Generally.]*

Nothing can possibly spoil this Christmas!

EVIL CORP

*[An audience member.]*

Guess again, Tinkle Toes.

NOEL

Who are you, evil corporate guy?

EVIL CORP

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I'm Simon Bar Sinister of Evil Incorporated. Remember, we own Christmastown. You're just squatting. And by the way, please quit squatting. It looks unseemly.

NOEL

Well, merry Christmas to you! I hope you can come to the pageant tonight!

EVIL CORP

I have other plans. Evil Incorporated is going to shut down Christmastown tonight – at the stroke of midnight. That will be right after dessert.

UNCLE SANTA

That's outrageous!

*[To audience.]*

We're not serving any dessert!

NOEL

But you can't shut down Christmastown! Where will people get their tinsel and crap?

EVIL CORP

Oh, yes, we can close Christmastown. By New Year's Eve, this town will be a landfill!

NOEL

How are we supposed to live with deadly trash here?

EVIL CORP

Asbestos you can.

UNCLE SANTA

They can't turn Christmastown into a hazardous trash site! It's already full of enough wholesome goody-goodness to kill a kindergarten class at Hershey Park.

NOEL

Thanks, Uncle Santa, but why are you suddenly supporting me?

UNCLE SANTA

I found someone else to hate. *[Exit.]*

*LULU LEMIEUX enters. She holds a microphone with a logo flag.*

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LULU

Lulu Lemieux of Eye Nitwit's News reporting live from Christmastown, East Dakota, where Simon Bar Sinister of Evil Incorporated has announced the demolition of Christmastown.

*[Going to Noel.]*

Here with me is a strangely-dressed resident of the town, Ms. Noel Kringle.

*[To Noel.]*

What is your response to this tragic news?

NOEL

It's not tragic news – it's magic news!

*[Grandstanding.]*

That's right! In the face of destruction, the citizens of the small town will rally to save the day!

*[Aside, to Lulu.]*

Haven't you ever seen these movies before?

LULU

How do you respond to the news that Evil Corp has already contracted the Property Brothers to build Christmastown's replacement – Satan's Luxury Spa and Toxic Waste Dump?

NOEL

Well, I'm not worried, Lulu, because we have the Spirit of Christmas on our side! Just wait until everyone enjoys our Christmas pageant! We have life-sized gingerbread houses! We have elves doing –

*[Pause]*

– elf things! We have cats doing the macarena!

LULU

How are you going to fight Evil Corp, a conglomerate bigger than Walmart, Amazon, and [this venue] combined?

NOEL

I just know we'll find a way! And when our celebrity guest, Sexton Hardcastle III, gets here – he will help us save Christmastown!

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LULU

You're counting on the kindness of Sexton Hardcastle III to save Christmastown?

NOEL

It's our best hope.

***SFX: Music sting.***

LULU

*[As if to a camera.]*

You heard it here first, folks. Christmastown is doomed.

*[With building intensity.]*

Doomed! Doomed, I say!

NOEL

Uh oh! I gotta go! It sounds like the dancing cats are hacking up hairballs. *[Exit.]*

LULU

*[As if to a camera.]*

The plot sickens.

*LOREN enters. He is highly organized, fastidious and a little effeminate.*

LOREN

All right! Clear the way, all you paparazzi. Sexton Hardcastle III is about to arrive and he does not like to be crowded. Or touched. Or tickled.

*[Aside.]*

I found that one out the hard way.

LULU

Lulu Lemieux, Eye Nitwit's News. Will Sexton be taking questions?

LOREN

No! He is here in Christmastown to appear in the parade, perform in the pageant, and bring a little –

*[Making the "Z" snap]*

– pizazz to your provincial celebration. If you have questions for Sexton, you can ask me. I'm his personal assistant, and I

## A VERY HELLMARK CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

know everything about him. But don't ask me about his "Hello Kitty" collection. I'm saving that for the tell-all book.

LULU

Is it true that Sexton dated Halle Berry?

LOREN

Barely.

LULU

Did he date January Jones?

LOREN

Not even in February.

LULU

How about Danny DeVito?

LOREN

No comment.

LULU

Is it true that the studio is pressuring Sexton to give up his playboy lifestyle, settle down and get married?

LOREN

Look, I don't know why you reporters are so obsessed with his love life! It's not that interesting. Sexton is so vanilla he makes Nick Jonas look like Ozzy Osborne. This pressure is really starting to get to me! Sexton yells at me; the studio yells at me; my mother yells at me. Of course, Mom has a good reason to yell at me. I'm not a member of the "Clean Plate Club."

*[Wiping his forehead with a handkerchief.]*

I'm breaking out in a cold sweat.

*[Scratching itches.]*

I'm developing a rash.

*[Taking a fainting lady pose.]*

I'm having palpitations. No one even cares that I've given up my entire life for this man!

LULU

*[As if to a camera.]*

## A VERY HELLMARK CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

You heard it here first, folks. Sexton Hardcastle III is a monster... and a really boring lover.

LOREN

*[Sobbing]*

Abuse, neglect – you name it. He once locked me in a closet because I forgot to put little marshmallows in his hot cocoa.

LULU

*[As if to a camera.]*

Another scoop: Sexton Hardcastle III has come out of the closet!

LOREN

He has? What? Oh!

*[Snapping out of it.]*

Ladies and Gentlemen – May I have your attention please? It is my honor to present Hollywood’s most beloved star, *Person* magazine’s sexiest man of the year – in the ‘90s –

*[Under his breath]*

1890s –

*[Full volume]*

– and a native son of Christmastown, East Dakota –

*[Leading applause]*

Sexton Hardcastle III!

*SEXTON HARDCASTLE III enters.*

SEXTON

Thank you – all of you – for the love I truly deserve – and thank you, Loren, for an introduction that was – adequate.

*[Aside.]*

You forgot to mention my “Hello Kitty” collection.

MAYOR

*[An audience member.]*

Welcome home, Mr. Hardcastle.

SEXTON

Thanks, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR

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How did you know I was the mayor?

SEXTON

I got a hint from the top hat and the sash that says “Mayor.”

MAYOR

It is my privilege to present you with the Key to the City of Christmastown. If it sticks in the lock, just lick it.

*Mayor hands Sexton a large key, shaped and colored like a candy cane.*

SEXTON

Just what I need: Tooth decay.

LULU

This is Lulu Lemieux, Eye Nitwit’s News, with breaking news! Sexton Hardcastle III has tooth decay! Details in a moment. *[Exit.]*

SEXTON

*[Speaking at large.]*

I am so honored to be the grand duke of the Christmastown parade. Do I get a throne?

LOREN

*[Whispering loudly to Sexton.]*

You’re not grand duke! You’re the grand marshal.

SEXTON

*[Speaking at large.]*

I can’t wait to perform my starring role in the Christmas pageant –

LOREN

*[Whispering loudly to Sexton.]*

You only have three lines.

SEXTON

*[Speaking at large.]*

– where I will portray the lost Wise Man, Murray!

LOREN

*[Whispering loudly to Sexton.]*

No! You’re carrying myrrh!

SEXTON

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*[Speaking at large.]*

– and tomorrow – I will share my recipe for the Christmas potluck – at St. Reuben’s Church of Perpetual Sauerkraut.

LOREN

Oh my! I hope his recipe is not the hashbrowns with real hashish!

SEXTON

*[Speaking at large.]*

You know, it’s been 40 years since I’ve been back to my old hometown, and – Wait a minute, I’m only 39 – It’s been 20 years since I’ve been back to my old hometown, and I’ve got to say, it hasn’t changed a bit. Which is exactly why I got out of this one-reindeer town.

LOREN

*[Embarrassed.]*

Yes, to find new opportunities to make his hometown proud!

SEXTON

...And to leave behind this inbred mentality –

LOREN

...And shine a light on the common-sense wisdom of everyday people...

SEXTON

...People who are too stupid to escape the brutal cold of East Dakota winters –

LOREN

*[Cutting Sexton off finally.]*

...And to bring the warmth of quality entertainment to the world!

*[Ushering Sexton away from the limelight.]*

Thank you all for attending! You will be seeing more of Mr. Hardcastle at the pageant!

SEXTON

*[To Loren.]*

They’re not seeing any more of me for free! I get paid extra to take off my shirt.

LOREN

*[To Sexton.]*

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Will you try to contain yourself? Don't you realize that you have to act gracious? You know... acting?

SEXTON

All right, all right. It's just that seeing this Podunk hamlet reminds me of what a stifling little armpit it is.

LOREN

Just keep that to yourself. For the next 24 hours, you're going to play a part you've never had to do before! You will play the role of a decent human being.

SEXTON

Well, that's a stretch! I mean, I wouldn't be here in the first place if it weren't for that stupid judge sentencing me to community service!

LOREN

Maybe you'll consider your actions next time before racing your yacht through a public swimming pool.

SEXTON

How was I to know it would be full of those Senior Aqua Ladies?

LOREN

Play your cards right and this will make up for everything! Your hometown is about to be demolished!

SEXTON

Really? Good. This place is an eyesore. Wait a minute! They're not tearing down the Dairy Queen, are they?

LOREN

Yes, they are. No more Blizzards. No more hot fudge sundaes. No more Dilly Bars! But you could be the hero – you come in and save – the day!

*[Posing like a superhero.]*

Ta-da!

SEXTON

What do you mean “be the hero?” All I want to do is get this sentence – I mean – this visit – out of the way and get home to Margaritaville.

LOREN

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Just play nice! Pretend to care about the fate of your hometown. It will make everyone feel better. And it's Christmas!

SEXTON

*[Unimpressed.]*

...Yeah? So, what's in it for me?

LOREN

Time off for good behavior! Do you want to keep doing good deeds for no money, no glory, no girls?

SEXTON

No girls? That's your territory. Okay, I can do this. It's just like playing a role. I'll portray... a nice guy.

LOREN

And if you save the town along the way, that's a bonus. *[A beat.]* Actually, that would be a Christmas miracle.

NOEL

*[Enter.]*

Oh, my goodness! Mr. Hardcastle! I had no idea you were here!

*She stumbles awkwardly as she approaches him, and falls into his arms.*

Oops!

SEXTON

*[Holding her, but irritated.]*

What do you think you're –

LOREN

*[Reminding Sexton.]*

Gracious.

SEXTON

*[Adjusting.]*

That's all right. I know you're star-stuck. It's my burden.

NOEL

*[Still in his arms.]*

No, I'm just clumsy.

***SFX: Romantic music swelling.***

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LOREN

No! No! It's too early in the show for romantic music.

***SFX: Music stops.***

NOEL

*[Breaking off the embrace with Sexton.]*

Thank you so much for attending our little celebration.

LOREN

*[Moving her away from Sexton.]*

Mr. Hardcastle is very busy, miss. And he does not like to be crowded. Or touched. Or tickled.

NOEL

Oh, dear. I'm the Christmastown Festival Coordinator –Noel Kringle.

LOREN

*[Turning her suddenly back toward Sexton.]*

Oh, well, in that case, Mr. Hardcastle is very pleased to meet you.

SEXTON

*[Struggling.]*

That's a very... lovely... smock you have on.

NOEL

Oh, Mr. Hardcastle, I have a special song I wrote just for you. I thought maybe we could sing it together at the pageant.

SEXTON

You want me to perform with an amateur? I can't do that. I'm in the union.

NOEL

But I have experience! In the second grade, I played the donkey at the nativity!

SEXTON

Well, I'm not making an ass out of myself. At least, not on purpose.

LULU

*[Enter.]*

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Lulu Lemieux, Eye Nitwit's News with breaking news!  
Christmastown is about to get snow for the first time this season!

SEXTON

*[Indicating Noel.]*

I've already seen the first flake fly.

NOEL

Snow? Oh, boy! That will help us get into the Christmas spirit.

LULU

Blinding blizzard conditions, sub-zero temperatures, high winds, and about 12 feet of snow are expected late this evening.

NOEL

Maybe that's a little too much Christmas spirit!

LULU

Also, tornado conditions are expected. With a 30 percent chance of a tsunami.

NOEL

Oh no! How could things possibly get worse?

LULU

... and the town volcano is about to erupt.

NOEL

And I just cancelled my fire insurance policy.

LOREN

*[Panicked.]*

Just stay calm, everyone! Nobody freak out! We are all going to get through this just fine!

*Loren strikes the fainting lady pose.*

SEXTON

*[To Loren.]*

Maybe we can sneak away while no one is looking. Meet me at the helicopter.

LULU

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Here with me now is Noel Kringle, Christmastown's leading Yuletide fanatic.

*[To Noel.]*

How do you respond to the impending disasters about to befall your little village?

NOEL

Lulu, the Christmas spirit will save us all. I just know it!

*[Dancing the conga.]*

Fa-la-la-la-la-**la**! Fa-la-la-la-la-**la**!

LULU

*[As if to camera.]*

So, there you have it. Deep delusion in Christmastown! Standing by is semi-famous movie star Sexton Hardcastle III.

*[To Sexton.]*

How do you think your hometown will survive with all the catastrophes mounting up?

SEXTON

Well, Lulu, so far, I've made it through the "Me, too" movement without being cancelled, so I think I can get through anything.

*Uncle Santa enters.*

NOEL

Uncle Santa! Sexton Hardcastle III is here!

UNCLE SANTA

Who? Oh, yeah, the has-been.

LOREN

*[To Sexton.]*

Remember, play nice with the Village People.

SEXTON

*[Very broadly, playing along with the Santa façade.]*

Oh, why, look who's here! It's Santa Claus! The jolly old elf!

*[Aside.]* More like the belly old elf.

*[To Uncle Santa.]*

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You must be very busy this time of year!

UNCLE SANTA

*[Taking a drink from the flask.]*

Yeah, being busy interferes with my drinking.

SEXTON

Have you been making a list, checking it twice – trying to find out who's – uh – sugar and spice?

UNCLE SANTA

I hate to break it to you, but at your age, I think you're ready for this. There isn't really a Santa Claus.

SEXTON

Then who's been putting coal in my stocking every year?

UNCLE SANTA

*[Loudly.]*

Hey everybody! This big, rich Hollywood celebrity guy still believes in Santa Claus!

*A pre-selected table in the audience looks at Sexton, points and laughs at him.*

SEXTON

Hey! Stop pointing at me!

*[To Loren.]*

You told me to be gracious. Embrace the spirit. You didn't tell me there would be pointing and laughing.

NOEL

Wait!

*Everyone goes silent and looks at Noel.*

I believe in Santa Claus.

***SFX: Sappy Christmas music.***

*[Acting out everything very dramatically.]*

...Because I believe in the spirit of Christmas! The spirit of giving and sharing. The spirit of kindness and love toward fellow man. After all, the spirit of Christmas isn't something you can see.

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*[Shutting her eyes and feeling around until she reaches Loren's face.]*

You have to feel it!

LULU

This is Lulu Lemieux, Eye Nitwit's News, with breaking news! Horney elf gets handsy with hired help!

NOEL

And now, more than ever – we need to believe in more than what we can see! We all need to believe in Santa Claus. We all need to believe in the spirit of Christmas. We need to believe in giving gifts out of obligation. We need to believe in those creepy Elf on a Shelf dolls. We need to believe in the power of appliqued Christmas sweaters!

*After a beat, Uncle Santa hugs her while Loren and Sexton applaud her.*

LOREN

*[Tearing up.]*

Bravo! That was so inspirational!

UNCLE SANTA

*[Confidentially, to Loren, after hugging Noel.]*

She's mentally ill, you know.