



Scene 1

(As **intro music** plays (**track 8**) the cast enters and sits down. The main stage is set up as a family living room decorated for Christmas – **see staging suggestions p24**. To the side of the main stage is a separate, smaller stage, set up to look like a call centre. A sign reading 'Customer Services' is prominently displayed. Here, six elves sit at two tables, working on laptops and each wearing a telephone headset. Three more elves, Cosmo, Ursula and Meredith, stand in front of the call centre and address the audience.)

- Cosmo** Welcome to the North Pole, the home of Santa Claus and his little helpers – one of which is me, Cosmo. Pleased to make your acquaintance!
- Ursula** And my name's Ursula, and this is Meredith – lovely to meet you all. We're here to tell you a story which might make some of you think a little differently about Christmas.
- Meredith** But before all that, let's have a quick look at our set-up here at the North Pole. I bet it's not quite what you'd imagined, eh? For starters, instead of a workshop producing traditional toys, there's now a customer services centre!
- Cosmo** These elves (*pointing at the smaller stage*) used to be skilled toymakers, churning out thousands of spinning tops, jack-in-a-boxes, dolls, and train sets every hour.....but not anymore!
- Ursula** That's because children these days want such a variety and quantity of games and toys, we've had to update and modernise! Don't worry though, some things are just how you older ones remember them. We still get letters from children (actually, it's mostly emails) and Santa still delivers their presents on Christmas Eve.
- Meredith** It's just that we don't *make* these presents anymore. So, how do we meet demand? Simple.....internet shopping!
- Cosmo** We spend hours browsing the Amazon, Argos and E-Bay websites, amongst others, to find the things that children have asked for in their emails. It's fair to say that, compared with the old days, here at the North Pole we're pretty hi-tech!

Song **Hi-Tech Christmas Time**

(tracks 1 & 9, lyrics p17)

(Led by the elves)

- Ursula** So, let's see the team in action. (*to the Customer Services team*) Show us what you do, guys.
- Elf 1** (*holding up a print-out*) Well, this is a list that just came through from a child. It's very long and very detailed! I print it out (*passing list to Elf 2*) and pass it to my colleague here.

- Elf 2** I then research whether the child has been good or bad. I do this by checking the parents’ Facebook pages. They’re always posting photos and comments about their children, so it’s easy to find out just what the little darlings have been up to! I then give the information to my colleague here.
- Elf 3** I then use a special formula that works out what percentage of ‘goodness’ the child has achieved. If, for example, it’s a 50% score, then that child will receive 50% of the presents they’ve asked for. I then give this information to my two colleagues here.
- Elf 4** And we get shopping! We have a large budget which is raised by the Santa Tax. The Santa Tax is collected from parents by another team of elves who visit homes at night, all year round, taking any loose change they find lying about. Grown-ups, if you’ve ever wondered where that £2 coin went that you left on the kitchen table...that’s the Santa Tax!
- Elf 5** With this budget we order all the presents from the Amazon, Argos and E-Bay websites. For more specialized items we tend to use smaller, independent suppliers like...(insert name of a local retailer – perhaps someone who might be in your audience.)
- Elf 6** And it’s my job to take delivery and make sure everything gets sent to the ‘wrapping’ department. From there it gets sent to the sleigh launch site for loading. Then on Christmas Eve, the dispatch team, a.k.a. Santa and his reindeer, deliver it all! Everything works like a dream!

(The elves get back to work, busying themselves at their computers.)

- Meredith** So, we’d best get on with the story we were going to tell you. Now, this is a true story which all began last year, with this Christmas list which was emailed to us.

*(Meredith holds up what looks like an A4 printed letter. However, with the help of Cosmo, she unfolds it to reveal it is ten pages long! – see **staging suggestions/props p24**)*

- Cosmo** You might think this is an unusually long list, but we’ve started to receive more and more like this. We’ve a special name for the children who send them; we call them the ‘Gimme, Gimme, Gimme’ crowd.

- Ursula** We’ll let you decide for yourselves whether they deserve everything they’ve asked for.....

(Lots of children – the ‘Gimme, Gimme, Gimme!’ crowd – each carrying a pillow case of wrapped presents, enter the main stage. They have greedy expressions!)

Song Gimme, Gimme, Gimme!

(tracks 2 & 10, lyrics p18)

(Led by the children)

*(As **intro music** plays (**track 11**), all but two children, a boy and a girl, exit.)*

Scene 2

(The two remaining children sit on the sofa – see staging suggestions/furniture p24. They face away from each other, playing on their smart phones.)

Meredith This is brother and sister, Henry and Chloe, the children who last year *(holding up the list again)* emailed us this list. This is their story.....

(Cosmo, Ursula and Meredith stand to one side to watch and narrate on the action.)

Chloe *(getting annoyed with her phone)* This phone is rubbish! It's so out-of-date. I've already had it for over three months, but mum says I've got to wait a bit longer before I can have a new one!

Henry We've got such mean parents. They've blocked me from downloading games to my phone 'cause they say it's costing them too much! If they'd got me that hover-board I asked for, then I wouldn't need so many games on my phone to keep me occupied.

Chloe Didn't you put a hover-board on your Christmas list to Santa? I put a new phone on my list, along with lots of other things of course.

Henry I did, but I'm not sure it'll do any good. Last year I didn't get half the things I put on my list. It took five tantrums before Mum and Dad finally bought me the stuff Santa had forgotten.

Chloe I've got my suspicions about Santa. Lots of my friends reckon he's not real and that it's really parents who buy all the presents.

Henry But we've both seen Santa. Remember that Christmas Eve when we sneaked downstairs just as he was putting presents round the tree?

Chloe Yes, but I'm not convinced. Santa costumes are easy to get hold of, and that beard looked a little wonky! What if it was Dad dressed up?

Cosmo We must interrupt at this point to assure you that parents dressing up, pretending to be Santa, DOES NOT HAPPEN! Well, not very often.

Ursula On a few occasions, when a child hasn't behaved well enough during the year, we contact the parents to tell them Santa won't be coming.

Meredith In such cases, to avoid disappointment and tears, the parents will usually buy the presents themselves. And yes, okay, one or two may actually do this.....

(A group of mums and dads enter, wearing Santa hats and beards.)

Song **Santa Fancy-Dress**

(tracks 3 & 12, lyrics p19)

(Led by the mums & dads)

(As intro music plays (track 13) the mums and dads exit leaving the two children.)

Scene 3

(The action moves again to the Customer Services stage, by which Cosmo, Ursula and Meredith now stand. The elves at the computers are agitated. Note – during the previous intro music, the long Christmas list has been passed to Santa, who is waiting off-stage.)

- Cosmo** Now last year, a week before Christmas Day, as Henry and Chloe were discussing their presents, the North Pole was going into meltdown!
- Elf 4** *(jumping up)* What? No! Amazon has run out of Play Station 4s!
- Elf 5** *(shaking a fist)* And I’ve just lost a bid on the last X-Box on E-Bay!
- Elf 6** Well, I don’t think the wrapping department could take any more presents anyway. They’re drowning in gadgets back there!
- Elf 1** But Christmas lists are filling my inbox! And they’re not small ones!
- Elf 2** And something’s wrong with Facebook. It appears to be blocking negative posts by parents about their children. I haven’t read a single ‘little monster’ comment for the past 24 hours! Every child is achieving 100% goodness – they’re getting every present they’ve asked for!
- Elf 3** Nothing’s wrong with Facebook! Parents know that if they complain about their children on social media at Christmas, that’ll mean fewer presents delivered by Santa and more presents *they’ll* have to buy!
- Ursula** Things were getting so overwhelming, eventually the boss had to step in!
(Santa angrily enters, holding up the very long Christmas list from the previous scene.)
- Santa** Can anyone explain this? It’s ten pages long! What’s going on?!
- Elf 1** Children these days just expect more and more for Christmas.
- Elf 2** And because they’re all being rated as 100% good, we have to deliver everything they’ve asked for!
- Santa** Well, there’s still a week to go and my sleigh is already creaking with all those sacks of presents, but there’s no end to the stuff coming from the wrapping department! That’s it, I’m going to have to.....intervene!
- Meredith** Santa had a plan. He wanted children to understand that it wasn’t lots of presents that made a Christmas happy.
- Cosmo** And he wanted them to understand that there were others in the world who had very little at Christmas, and who would be grateful for a fraction of what some of these children had.
- Santa** And I’m going to start with....*(looking at the list)*....Chloe and Henry! If someone could please sprinkle me with magic dust.....

*(Elf 2 takes some glitter from his/her pocket and, as **magical music** plays (track 14) s/he sprinkles it over Santa. The lights dim and Santa exits.)*

Scene 4

(Cosmo, Ursula and Meredith now stand to one side, in front of the main stage. Chloe and Henry sit on the sofa looking bored.)

Chloe Bored, bored, bored, bored, bored!

*(As the **magical music** plays again (**track 15**) Santa enters standing before the children, chest puffed out and hands on hips. They glance at him, then look away unimpressed!)*

Santa Ahem! *(still no reaction from the children)* AHEM!

Henry Yeah, whatever. Nice try Dad, but you're not fooling anyone. Besides, you're too early. Christmas is a week away!

Santa Which might just give me enough time before the big day to get you two to realise what Christmas is really about!

(Chloe and Henry slowly turn to look at Santa, as realisation dawns!)

Chloe S...S...Santa? Is...is.....it really y...y...you?

Santa It is indeed, *(sitting between them)* and I've got something to show you.....

.....**end of script sample**.....