

SANTA'S COMIN'

Written by

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**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT**

Christmas Eve.

Up and down the block colorful lights and animated blow up characters string together a cheerful, bright atmosphere.

Except for one HOUSE.

Dark as coal in a tattered stocking.

**EXT. DARK HOUSE - NIGHT**

The neon glow of the houses around make this look like a black hole in space, sucking in all the holiday joy and cheer.

SCREECH!

A beat up PICKUP barrels onto the front lawn.

**EXT. FRONT PORCH PICTURE WINDOW - SAME**

TWO CHILDREN, a GIRL, DIAMOND(5) and a BOY, CASPER JR.(10) peel back the curtains.

The multi-colored glow visiting their yard kiss their hope filled faces.

**INT. PICK UP**

The DRIVER, CASPER(30's), shoves open his door. Beer cans scatter out.

He fumbles to get his keys out of the ignition then loses them onto a green and red gown laying on the floor of the passenger side.

Casper stares down at the keys for a moment before reaching for them. As he snatches them off the gown he allows his hand to fall back on it and caress it.

Casper sighs, grips the keys and turns towards the open door.

**EXT. FRONT LAWN/PICTURE WINDOW**

Diamond and Junior press against the window. Their eyes twinkle with anticipation.

After a few agonizing moments, Casper struggles out.

His first step crunches a can. He takes a staggered next step past the door, then falls back against it.

The door slams shut and he collapses to the ground in his bed of aluminum fun.

The children's faces drop. They let the curtains fall.

**EXT. FRONT LAWN - MOMENTS LATER**

Diamond and Junior kneel down next to Casper.

JUNIOR  
Told you he don't care nothin'  
'bout Christmas.

Junior takes the keys from Casper and tosses them into the back of the pickup.

JUNIOR  
Or us.

DIAMOND  
Daddy.

Diamond pats her father's arm. Casper stirs, groans.

DIAMOND  
Daddy.

JUNIOR  
C'mon Dad we got to go in.

Diamond looks to the sky.

DIAMOND  
Yeah. Santa's comin'.

Casper grunts out a laugh.

CASPER  
Santa.

They drag Casper up. He leans on them, pushes off the truck and staggers forward.

They fight to keep him up as they head towards the house. Beer cans scatter under their feet.

CASPER (SINGS)  
Better watch out. Better not pout.

He stops and looks groggily at Diamond.

CASPER  
Better not cry. Telling you why.

JUNIOR  
C'mon, Dad.

Junior moves them onward. Casper halts. Tries to focus on Junior.

CASPER  
Hey. Hey.

Junior turns away from his foul breath. Casper catches it, forces Junior to look at him.

CASPER  
Hey. Don't turn your face from me  
boy. Better show some respect.

Junior yanks away, stomps off.

JUNIOR  
Show yourself some respect.

Casper almost tumbles. Diamond does her best to keep him up but they collapse together.

DIAMOND  
Daddy!

She gets back up and pulls on her Dad.

DIAMOND  
Junior help.

Junior turns around. He slow burns. Doesn't budge.

Casper rolls up on his hands and knees. Buries his head in the grass.

CASPER (SINGS)  
Santa *ain't* comin' to town.

DIAMOND  
Don't say that, Daddy. He'll hear  
you.

CASPER (SINGS LOUDER)  
Santa *ain't* comin' to town!

Diamond begins to cry. Junior bolts to them.

JUNIOR  
Dad. Stop it! You're makin' her  
cry.

Junior puts his arm around Diamond and guides her back  
towards the house as she sobs.

JUNIOR  
He don't know what he's sayin',  
Dee. Forget him.

DIAMOND  
No!

Diamond spins and runs back, puts her arm around her Daddy.

DIAMOND  
C'mon Daddy. It's Christmas.  
Santa's comin'.

After a long silent moment Casper's voice cracks in a  
whisper.

CASPER  
Santa killed her.

Casper begins to sob.

CASPER  
Santa killed her.

DIAMOND  
No, Daddy! Santa don't kill.

CASPER  
Santa killed your mother.

DIAMOND  
No, Daddy!

Diamond wraps her arms around him and cries.

Casper pounds the ground. Shoves his head harder into the  
grass.

CASPER  
Yes I did!

Junior runs back to him.

CASPER  
Yes I did! I killed her. Oh God, I  
killed her.

Junior throws his arms around his crying father in a bear hug.

JUNIOR  
Stop saying that. It was an accident.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. TWISTING ROAD (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT**

CHRISTMAS MUSIC plays from a radio.

A CAR swerves a couple of times almost running off the road.

FIONA (O.S.)  
You better stop texting. Wind up in a ditch.

**INT. CAR**

Casper, dressed as SANTA, has his cell propped up on the steering wheel.

The Christmas song continues to play.

Fiona(30's), his WIFE, dressed in the same green and red gown that was on Casper's passenger floor. An ELF costume.

CASPER  
Ho ho ho. Let's take an *elfie*, Fiona.

He chuckles and leans towards her. She pushes him back.

FIONA  
No. Eyes on the road, Santa.

He leans over again to kiss her while he points the phone at them.

CASPER  
Look. A Dasher Cam.

Casper laughs.

HOOONNNKKKK!!!!

A HORN screams. BRIGHT LIGHTS blare through the windshield.

Fiona shrieks.

Horror freezes Casper's face as he loses his cell and control of the steering wheel.

BACK TO:

**EXT. FRONT LAWN - NIGHT**

The three are huddled together sobbing.

JUNIOR

It's not your fault, Dad. Stop blaming yourself.

Casper looks into his son's eyes.

CASPER

I'm so sorry, Junior. So sorry. Please forgive me.

Casper looks into Diamonds teary eyes.

CASPER

Please forgive me, Diamond.

Diamond ekes out.

DIAMOND

Santa didn't kill mommy.

CASPER

I need you guys forgiveness.

Junior wraps his arms around his dad's neck. Diamond follows.

The SONG "Silent Night, Holy Night" drifts into the yard.

JUNIOR

We forgive you, Daddy. We forgive you. We just want you back.

A large group of CAROLERS with candles and Christmas light NECKLACES make their way around Casper's truck.

Their song washes over Casper, Junior, and Diamond, then dies out.

The large group stand staring at them.

MARJORIE (40'S)

Casper?

No one moves.

MARJORIE  
Casper. It's Marjorie.

Casper looks up with tears streaming down his face.

LORNE (60'S)  
Everything alright, Casper?

Casper barely nods, wipes his tears.

MARJORIE  
The neighbors know this year has  
been awful hard on you all, and we  
decided to get together and share  
our Christmas with you.

Casper looks at Junior, then Diamond.

DIAMOND  
See, Daddy. Told you Santa's comin'  
to town.

Casper smiles.

CASPER  
You were right, honey.

He kisses Diamond and wipes away her tears. Casper looks over  
at Junior who he has wrapped in a neck embrace.

CASPER (WHISPERS)  
Daddy's back, son. I promise.

Casper kisses him on the top of his head.

Junior bear hugs him like he's never going to let go.

Casper looks up at his neighbors.

CASPER  
We'd be honored to share Christmas  
with you all.

Then Casper looks back at his depressing dark house.

CASPER  
Didn't exactly get fixed up for  
folks.

The Neighbors suddenly break towards the house. Some with  
wrapped gifts. One with a Christmas tree. Others with ladders  
and Christmas lights and lawn decorations. More with loads of  
food.

Marjorie comes up to him.

MARJORIE

Now you don't worry about that.  
Told you, we're the ones doing the  
sharing.

Singing comes up. "Santa Claus is Coming to Town"

**EXT. FRONT LAWN - LATER**

The house has joined the rest of the neighborhood in festive Christmas lights and blow up lawn ornaments. The beer cans have been cleaned up and the truck is parked in the driveway.

**INT. TRUCK**

Swept clean. The tattered dress hangs from the passenger side hook.

**INT. HOUSE**

A Christmas Party is in full swing as the neighbors surround the Christmas tree, sip eggnog, sing arm in arm and watch as Casper lifts Diamond to place the STAR on top.

The Santa Claus Song continues as Diamond smiles, and gives her Daddy a big hug. Junior joins them, and everybody applauds.

FADE OUT.