

EMERGENCY SANTA

Written by

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Address
Phone Number

We open on a small, bare room, furnished with a worn sofa and a microwave and kettle atop a table. A few mugs and teaspoons are set out beside them. MARTIN (24), wearing a shirt and a green apron, sits on the sofa and browses social media on his phone. His manager, SARAH (32), enters through the door, looking stressed.

SARAH

He still hasn't turned up.

Martin looks up.

MARTIN

Who hasn't?

SARAH

The blimmin' Father Christmas.

MARTIN

What, the one the kids are meant to meet?

Sarah pauses and stares at Martin.

SARAH

What do you think, Martin?

MARTIN

(Sheepishly)

Got you. Sorry.

Sarah angrily puts the kettle on and fishes for a teabag in her pocket.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It might just be that he's stuck in traffic or something.

SARAH

Let's hope.

The kettle hisses. Sarah deposits her teabag into a mug and pours in the water from the kettle. She gives it a stir and sips it.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Otherwise, I don't know *what* we're gonna do.

Sarah's phone starts ringing; she places her tea down and checks it.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Speak of the devil.
(On the phone)
Alright, Keith? Yep-

Sarah exits the room to take the call privately. Martin is left sitting on the sofa and resumes swiping on his phone. There are a few moments of silence before Sarah bursts back inside.

SARAH (CONT'D)
He's fucked us, Martin.

MARTIN
Sorry?

SARAH
He's not coming in; he's cancelled.
Says he has diarrhoea.

MARTIN
Oh no... what do we do, do we tell
the kids?

SARAH
Yeah, Martin: "Oh, sorry kids,
Father Christmas can't be with us
today, he's having bowel problems."

MARTIN
Okay, well, I didn't mean say it
like that.

SARAH
There are about fifty kids on the
way, Martin, expecting to meet the
most magical man in the world. At
this rate, there's gonna be nothing
here for them except a load of
plants; how do you think they're
gonna feel?

Martin hesitates.

MARTIN
Sad?

SARAH
It's gonna bloody well ruin their
Christmas.

Sarah sighs and puts her hands on her hips.

SARAH (CONT'D)
I'm not letting us disappoint those families; we're gonna have to find another Santa.

Martin silently stares at his phone with the hope that Sarah will forget about him. Sarah looks at him. Martin ignores it.

SARAH (CONT'D)
We're probably gonna have to have a member of staff do it, Martin.

MARTIN
(Still on his phone)
Are we?

SARAH
Yeah, Martin, and it'll have to be a man as well.

MARTIN
Hmm...

SARAH
And you're the only one on shift today.

MARTIN
Oh, really?

SARAH
Yep.

There is a long silence. Sarah stares at Martin pointedly. Martin tries to look thoughtful but instead just looks scared.

MARTIN
(Mumbling)
Am I not a bit young to be Santa?

SARAH
What was that?

MARTIN
(Reluctantly louder)
Won't I look a bit young... to be Santa?

SARAH
Not when you've got the beard on.

MARTIN
(Deflated)
Right.

SARAH
(Angrily)
Sorry, do you want to ruin
Christmas for the children?

MARTIN
No, I don't want to ruin
Christmas...

SARAH
Then let's get you into the suit.