NOT A CREATURE WAS STIRRING...

...**Not Even a Moose**

by
Pat Cook

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CAST OF CHARACTERS
(4M, 5W)

J. J. GARNES: Editor and Chief of the *HERALD TRIBUNE*, he is a feisty forty-year-old man who lives, eats and breathes headlines.

DELILAH HOPKINS: Wise-cracking secretary and typesetter at the newspaper, she is almost more cynical than Garnes.

SARAH TARKOFFER: Garnes' assistant, she is the news -paper photographer who worries more than most and believes in Christmas.

WINONA PERSHING: Thirty-five year old editor of the *Times* Courier, she is Garnes' competition but has a soft spot for him.

BARNEY: Old janitor at the Trib, he holds the place together. There is magic about him.

MAYOR FOSDICK: Bombastic and arrogant politician, in his mid-fifties.

BUZZY: A carefree lady who makes her living with her crop dusting biplane.

FIONA JEFFERS: Head of the Civic Association, a kind woman with a giving nature.

SERGEANT SLATTERY: A no-nonsense policeman.

Time: The present, a few days before Christmas.
Place: The *Tribune* outer office.

PROPS

Old typewriter, 2 telephones, coffee pot and cups; $5.00 bill, camera, 2 negatives for SARAH; tear sheet, small cardboard box, a small toy moose, pitch pipe, petty cash box and cash for DELILAH; newspaper for FOSDICK; newspaper, envelope with check, watch, pad of paper for WINONA; broom and dust pan, letter, small package, sack, Santa suit for BARNEY; old clothes, thick glasses, false mustache, Santa suit for GARNES; gloves, undecorated tree with wooden stand, sack of primitive ornaments including a cardboard star covered in aluminum foil and pine cone covered in glitter for BUZZY; large canvas bag of presents for FIONA; pad of paper for SLATTERY.

SOUND EFFECTS

Telephone rings, loud knock on door, knock on front door; loud, rough sounding airplane flying over, rickety sounding airplane with sleigh bells.

SETTING

The setting for this Yuletide yarn is the office of the *Herald Tribune*, a rather small town newspaper. Around the walls are various framed news articles and photos, all from greater days. There are four doors utilized in the floor plan. The first, or front door, is located SR and leads to the outside. The second door, located on the back wall, leads into the “morgue” or storage room. Further down the back wall is the third door which leads to the typesetting and print room. The fourth door, which is located on the SL wall, leads to a meeting room (where most of the press conferences or parties are held) and back door.

The furniture in the room is a motley assortment of past and present business supplies and paraphernalia. Near the center of the room is a large couch for waiting visitors. A pair of non-matching chairs sit near it. A large work desk is located SL and faces out. On it rests an old typewriter among the clutter and a telephone. There is also another desk against the back wall between the two doors on which rests even more clutter and another telephone. The rest of the room is rounded out by various file cabinets, small tables and chairs. On one table, near the front door, rests an ever-warm coffee pot and cups.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A solitary LIGHT comes up on J. J. GARNES who is seated at the work desk. He speaks in somber, reverent tones as if addressing a church fund raiser.)

GARNES: *(A fatherly figure.)* In our present hurly burly world of the easy way out, instant feedback and microwave manners, has Christmas, with all it's cherished decorations and warm memories, fallen victim to the ravages of time? Has that wonderful and revered holiday been shoved and condensed and mass produced and packaged into nothing more than just so many reasons for a day off and over eating? Have we forgotten the true feelings of the Yuletide season or simply replaced them with avarice for the biggest, the most, the gaudiest and the brand name? And when you discuss a jolly fat man who only comes around once a year, are you referring to that delinquent uncle that nobody wants to feed? After all, the Bah Humbug is contagious and it's bite seems to infect more and more with each passing and unused sprig of mistletoe. Maybe it's time we took a breath, put up our feet and sang a few carols. Maybe we should review a few pictures of Norman Rockwell and pay more attention to "It's A Wonderful Life." Yes, Virginia, that knock at the door is Santa Claus, but only if we let him in. Maybe, if we quit looking into store windows and into our own hearts, we can truly quote the diminutive Timothy - "God bless us, everyone."

(LIGHTS come up in the rest of the office. DELILAH and SARAH are standing nearby.)

SARAH: That's lovely!

(GARNES yanks it out of the typewriter.)

GARNES: *(Rapid-fire.)* That baloney ought to sell an extra hundred issues. *(HE hands it to DELILAH.)* Box it in the holly border on the front page, title in Gothic. *(HE envisions it.)* "Let's Take Santa Off the Shelf." Use the graphic from last July's "Santa Has a Used Tire Sale" from the Christmas in July ad we ran for the Gas N' Gab. I want to tear their hearts out with this one.

DELILAH: *(To SARAH.)* I told you he didn't believe a word of it. You owe me five dollars. *(SARAH hands a bill to DELILAH at the same time as she speaks to GARNES.)*

SARAH: How can you write such moving feelings like that and not mean a word?

GARNES: *(Rises.)* What do you mean, not mean a word? I want you to know... *(HE points a finger to the sky at the same time as SARAH and DELILAH, as they've heard this all before.)* ...the *Herald Tribune* stands behind every word it prints!

SARAH: Maybe somebody ought to carve that somewhere.

DELILAH: How about on my heart?

SARAH: How about on HIS heart?

GARNES: Now, what's on the front page?

DELILAH: *(Holds up a tear sheet.)* Photo of Santa Claus kissing children at the post office and pointing to the most wanted list. That's next to a photo of Santa Claus opening the new discount center, proclaiming Santa's Sleigh Sale...

SARAH: *(Jumping in.)* Which is not easy to say.

DELILAH: Anybody shows up in a sleigh gets twenty percent off.

SARAH: I'd hate to be the street sweeper.

GARNES: Where's the Mayor's yearly tirade?

DELILAH: Further down, in bold faced Cheltenham, in which he thanks the public for its support for the year and hints at higher taxes in their stockings. Another philanthropist.

End of Freeview

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