

TIS THE SEASON
(MICRO SHORT)

J.E. Clarke

Address
Phone Number

INT. BAR

Three costumed characters walk into a bar (yeah, we all know that classic joke.)

* A MAN in the Scream Mask. In his hand, a bloody knife.

* A shopping mall SANTA. Thread bare suit and beard.

* A big DUDE in cartoonish PJs - pacifier in his mouth.

They settle on stools. The BARTENDER wanders over, curious.

BARTENDER

Ain't youse a colorful sight! What can I get you seasonal er... gentlemen?

(eyes Santa Claus)

Lemme guess - milk n' cookies?

(to Screamer)

Sorry - all outta cheerleaders.

(to PJ guy)

But a cigar for your - uh - oral fixation? That, mebbe I c'n do.

In unison, the trio shake their heads "no."

SCREAMER

Three fingers bourbon.

SANTA CLAUS

Whiskey, neat.

PJ DUDE

You got Cubans?

BARTENDER

You think I stock glam stuff like that in THIS joint?

PJ guy sucks harder on his pacifier, squirms. The bartender grabs bottles, pours.

BARTENDER

I get it. Youse the holidays. But ya supposed to act festive. What's with the life-sucks mood?

SANTA CLAUS

The economy makes bringing gifts to little children so hard! Insurance on the sleigh's killing me.

SCREAMER

"Slaying" you? Ha! Get the joke?

SANTA CLAUS

Not funny! These days I have to rent out the elves just to guarantee my reindeer three square meals! What's got you in the not-so-jollies? Isn't suffering what... brings you joy?

SCREAMER

I don't get candy no more. That Artie the Clown schmuck poached my die-hard fans.

SANTA CLAUS

"Die hard". THERE's a pun. Ho-Ho!

The bartender slips Pajama Dude the side eye.

BARTENDER

I guess you're Baby New Year.

PJ DUDE

Guilty as charged. Speaking of charging: Sock me with some Cristal Champagne. Now!

BARTENDER

Don't have that, either.

PJ DUDE

Fuck. Moet will do.

The bartender finds a bottle, pours.

BARTENDER

You think YOU'D be happy. I mean, youth renewed eternally?

(mutters)

Wish I had that gig.

PJ DUDE

Getting born every year's no peach. All those fluids, squeezing and screaming-

SCREAMER

Dunno. Sounds delish to me.

BARTENDER

Depending on your Mom? Me too.

He starts to hand over the champagne... stops.

BARTENDER
Wait. How old are you?

PJ DUDE
Almost one. DUH.

The bartender pulls the glass away.

BARTENDER
Can't risk my license. Denied!

PJ Dude pouts. Santa pats his shoulder.

SANTA CLAUS
Buck up, little fella. Maybe 2026
will see your lot improve?

PJ Dude squirms in his seat.

BARTENDER
Aw, look! He's anxious!

PJ DUDE
Naw, it's my diaper. I'm not potty
trained. Gotta sit in this every
year!

The Bartender, Screamer and Santa all make faces, inch away.

SANTA CLAUS
On, um, second thought let's toast
to old Lang Syne. Nice toasty, *safe*
nostalgia.

SCREAMER
I'll call my wingman Jason!

BARTENDER
A round for Rudolph - on the house!

All three cheer. New Years Baby pulls out his pacifier.
BURPS.