



A September Visit by James Seidler

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INT. JONES HOUSE (BEDROOM) – 3 A.M.

John Jones (43), with brown hair and a little flab, is sleeping with his wife, Anne (37), an attractive brunette, when a rattling noise downstairs wakes him. He sits up groggily to focus on the noise, and realizes someone is trying to force open the window to his living room. John quickly slides out of bed and rummages through his closet, where he settles on a heavy wooden hanger as his weapon. Slyly, he walks out of the bedroom and moves down to investigate the noise.

INT. JONES HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) – 3 A.M.

As John sneaks into the living room, he sees a man closing the window behind him. The thief (60) is a large, disheveled man, with a grey, dirty beard. He is dressed in a dirty wool suit, with a large black belt and white fringe along the cuffs. In his hand is a plastic grocery store bag, which appears to be full. Unseen, John sets his hanger down, and rushes forth to tackle the thief. They roll on the ground, and John appears to have the upper hand in the struggle.

THIEF

Ow, ow, what do you think you're doing?!

JOHN

Kicking your ass, buddy.

(to upstairs)

Anne, Anne, someone broke into the house! Call the police!

THIEF

Wait, wait, John, it's me. I can explain everything.

JOHN

(to upstairs) Anne, quick, he's a stalker! He knows my name!

THIEF

John, look at me! I've known you for years.

John pauses and looks down at the thief. He does a double take as he realizes who it is.

JOHN

Santa?

The thief nods, and sure enough, it's Santa Claus. His beard is dingy and his suit is worn, but his kind eyes and rosy cheeks would be recognized anywhere. As John stares, dumfounded, Anne rushes into the room, a cordless phone in one hand and the tennis racket John was trying to find in the other. She charges Santa and hits him with the racket.

ANNE

Take that, you bastard! The cops are on the way, and you're
going to be in big fucking trouble, you?

Anne looks at Santa's face and pauses the racket mid-swing.

ANNE

Santa?

(beat)

John, why did Santa Claus break into our house?

JOHN

I don't know.

SANTA

(shaking his head)

Oh, this never would have happened in the old days? John, if
you could get off of me, and if Anne there could maybe get me
a cup of coffee, I think I can explain everything.

INT. JONES HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) – TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Santa is sitting in an easy chair, drinking a cup of coffee and holding an ice pack to his side where Anne hit him. Beside him on the floor is the plastic grocery bag, which contains a Barbie doll without a head, an old tv antenna, and a half-full bottle of Mad Dog 20/20. In the doorway John smiles and shakes hands with two policeman, who then walk back to their cruiser. On the couch across from Santa, Anne sits with her daughter, Lisa (16), who is wearing pajamas and looking at Santa suspiciously.

LISA

(whispering)

I think he's drunk.

ANNE

Shh.

John walks across the room and sits next to his wife on the couch. A pained expression comes across his face as he tries to think of what to say.

SANTA

Well? I suppose you're wondering why I'm here.

ANNE

(nodding)

It is a little confusing, Santa. I mean, it's September.

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SANTA

(slowly)

This is embarrassing to admit, but I had a bit too much to drink tonight, and as I was wandering down the alley, looking for a place to sleep, I thought, "Hey, wouldn't it be fun to go give some presents again, like I used to."

(beat)

I saw your house, and I remembered how much Lisa used to like dolls, and, well, without the reindeer I can't really make it up onto the roof, so I tried to come in the window, and that's when John tackled me.

JOHN

Santa, what do you mean "used to?" What happened to your reindeer? What's going on?

SANTA

So the news hasn't gotten out yet, has it?

JOHN

What news?

SANTA

I've been canceled.

JOHN/ANNE/LISA

What?

SANTA

Evidently the consumer surveys after this past Christmas weren't that hot, and my bosses at the N.P. decided it was time for a change. They said they wanted someone more dynamic. I guess they're waiting for the beginning of the holiday season to make the announcement.

ANNE

But Santa, who could replace you? I mean, you're the face of Christmas.

SANTA

Oh, they've hired some blonde bimbo with big ta-tas and a tight red leather suit. Sadie Claus. Evidently the N.P.'s signed an agreement with Maxim to try to increase market share with the 18-34 demographic.

ANNE

Market share? Santa, what are you talking about?

SANTA

Oh, everything I've ever done is market share. The N.P., North Pole industries, is one of the biggest marketing firms in the world—they've been handling Christmas on behalf of manufacturers worldwide since the First World War. In the past they've gone the wholesome route, using myself and the elves, but research has shown a steady decline in Christmas spending in young men, so I'm out on the street.

JOHN

Santa, that's terrible.

(beat)

What's Sadie Claus going to do on Christmas?

Anne shoots John a dirty look.

SANTA

Oh, she's going to drive around in a red Porsche and give out Girls Gone Wild videos and body wash. Naughty, nice, it's all out the window these days!

Santa hangs his head, and looks as if he's about to cry. John and Anne share a knowing look, and John nods before Anne begins to speak.

ANNE

Santa, there has to be something we can do. Nobody wants Christmas to be turned into a soft-porn fest.

SANTA

I'm just not sure if that's true anymore.

(beat)

Thank you for your hospitality, but I think it's time for me to be going. I don't want you to waste any more of your time talking to an old has-been.

Santa stands to leave, and, reaching down, grabs his bottle from the bag on the floor, leaving the rest. He starts to move towards the door, but John leaps up and intercepts him.

JOHN

Santa, there's no way we can let you go sleep on the street.

Everybody hits hard times, and I'll be damned if I turn my
back on Santa Claus when he has his. You can stay here
with us.

SANTA
Really? Do you mean it?

JOHN
Damn right I mean it. You stay here tonight, and tomorrow
we'll look at the want ads.

SANTA
Oh ho ho. That sounds wonderful.