

The True Identity of Santa Claus (2014 - Mushoku Tensei Christmas Short Story)
Winter.

December 25th.

In the Magic City of Shari'a, a blizzard descends.

And within such a blizzard, were the shadows of two persons.

「Reindeer #3, I will now explain our mission.」

「Oniichan, I'm cold... and sleepy...」

Dressed in a luxurious Red coat and hat, and donning a white beard attached to his face and a large white sack slung over his shoulder was none other than Rudeus. With him nearby was Aisha in what was a costume tailored from the furs of some local demons carefully crafted by hand into a peculiar form.

A section of her costume's mask was opened, and atop her head was the part of the chimera monster that most resembled a goat, with a pair of [Great Anger Horn] attached to above it on either side.

There is no mistake that any child that looks upon it will surely become faint of heart.

「The main objective of our mission tonight,... is to deliver the Christmas Present to Lucy!」

You see, the origin of this story begins about one month ago.

It began with Lucy who often pestered Rudeus to tell her a bedtime story, so he began to tell her the tale of Santa Claus.

On Midnight, December 25th.

At the homes of all the good boys and girls, Santa Claus will appear, and give

them a present for behaving.

Lucy, of course being so young, completely believed such a story.

Because of this, she began actively helping around the house, all the while beaming "Santa is Coming!" for a whole month.

A good child should get a present, right?

However, it is important to not leave them disillusioned as well.

The present must not be seen as coming from me, but in rather, from "Santa" himself!

「Next, We must also not be discovered by Eris as well.」

「Why is that ? 」

「That is... because Eris... also... somehow... believes...」

Even this Eris who isn't particularly childish anymore had also believed the story.

Despite even from a month ago, her continually saying 「It's just a story made up by Rudeus, anyways...」 she too has been helping around the house a bit more enthusiastically than usual.

A good child should get a present... right?

Furthermore, even though she is an adult, there's no reason why a good adult shouldn't have to be disillusioned as well.

Even though it's generally accepted that Adults don't necessarily receive presents from Santa.

「Futhermore, If it too can be helped, we must also not be discovered by Norn!」

「Why is that ? 」

「Because Norn is of a pure heart and could easily believe in such a thing as well.」

「No Oniichan, No matter how you try and mince words about Ane-san, she is a

fool.」

Though Aisha said that with pity in her voice, what if Norn also believed?

Though, Norn was not behaving in any way especially good, that girl also wasn't really misbehaving either....

Ah well, it's good enough as it is!

「The plan is easy! First, we will enter through the back yard from near where my bedroom is, then we will climb to the rooftop. Once there, we will climb down into the house from the chimney into the fireplace, and quietly put a present by one of Lucy's pillows while she's asleep in Sylphy's room.」

「Why exactly are you coming from the fireplace? Wouldn't it be easier to just enter from the back door like normal? I mean, we have the key to the back door you know?」

「That's because Santa is supposed to enter from the fireplace! We can't just bypass that part of the story, you know...」

「Hmm, First time I'm ever hearing any of this...」

Huh? Didn't you hear me tell you this stuff already?

Oh well.

「Now, The arrangements I made with Reindeer #1 aka "Sylphy," will be to temporarily extinguish the fire, thereby allowing us to enter the house through the fireplace. And the arrangements I made with Reindeer #2 aka "Roxy," will be to cover any gaps in home security we have to bypass, by keeping Eris distracted.」

「That's pretty vague... And what exactly should I be doing during all of this?」

「You are my support.」

「...I see.」

Aisha rubbed her tired eyes, despite also adding in a yawn to the mix.

Meh, will this become a problematic thing?

The decrease in motivation this reindeer is displaying is remarkable.

「I beg of you. I really want this to succeed, I'll make it up to you in any way.」

「Hmm~ Then, I want to sleep with Oniichan.」

「Done.」

「Yosh!~ Let's get going ! 」

After that, Aisha did a double cheek slap and immediately psyched herself up.

It's Mission Start!

We reached the rooftop without incident.

And we enter into the chimney hurriedly.

Just as planned, Sylphy had put out the fire in advance.

When I stop to think about it, I could have just put the fire out with my own magic instead... ah well!

「Ah」

While I was descending down the rope in the chimney, I heard a voice from above.

「What's the matter ? 」

「Ah, I seem to be getting stuck on the corners here」

「...Are you kidding me.」

The [Great Anger Horn] was crafted in a similar shape to that of a real reindeer's horns.

In other words, they're huge.

Our home's chimney hole is made a bit wide.

However, it is also rather narrow.

It's for this reason that Aisha is now getting stuck.

「Can't be helped then, Reindeer #3 can just wait there for me on standby until I get back.」

「I don't wanna! It's freezing.」

「If you can complain that much it's fine, Just pass me the present.」

「Ah, your coat. Make sure it's alright.」

「Right.」

I go ahead and leave her there.

I have the feeling that I just heard the cry of a Reindeer's Soul.

I must surely be having some kind of auditory hallucination.

At any rate, I successfully infiltrate my house alone.

「Hmm? 」

However it seems strange somehow, there doesn't seem to be any sign of reindeer #1 that is supposed to be my backup once i'm inside.

Strange indeed.

Did she run into some trouble, I wonder?

Nah, That might not yet be the case, so I'll continue on as planned.

I head from inside the dining room to the staircase.

「E~ Eris' back is really beautiful isn't it! Rudeus is always going on about it! How he always loves to hold you from behind.」

「I know, right. But I want him to embrace me from the front more like he does with Sylphy. Are you saying this because you want him to hug you from behind, or do you want to give the hug?」

「No matter how you look at it, if I try and hold him from behind, it somehow ends up looking like I'm getting a piggyback ride...」

On the way past the bathroom, I overheard the lamenting voices of Roxy and Eris.

Reindeer #2 appears to be executing the plan just as scheduled Alright, Alright!

「...Woof.」

From the living room, Leo and Jiro's faces poked out.

Is that the face asking "What are you doing?"

I bring a finger up to my lips and quietly offer a "Shh!"

Leo and Jiro acknowledge me, and return their faces back into the living room.

「Good Job. Next time, I'll definitely reward you with some delicious meat!」

While saying that to myself, I made it to the second floor.

I tiptoe carefully here.

I manage to move in front of Sylphy's room without so much as making a sound.

I go to place my hand on the doorknob.

「Santa-san will be coming today won't he ? Papa said he comes on the snowy day of the full moon ! 」

「Erm.. You see, Lucy, this Santa-san, I don't think he is going to come if you aren't sleeping.」

「Really ? But, Papa didn't say anything about that ? 」

「Umm... But it's only a bad child that would try and stay up late isn't it?」

「But Mama, You are always saying that 'If I am going to receive a gift, I must properly thank someone for it.' So that's why even though I'm only staying up a little later than normal, It's cause I really want properly thank him ! Isn't that what a good kid is supposed to do ? 」

「Uh.. Umm, I.. guess that's right isn't it?」

Shoot!

Lucy isn't asleep!

This is bad, this falls way outside of my calculations. She is almost always asleep by this time.

Even Aisha is falling asleep before her!

This is not going well at all, should I perhaps try again at a different time?

Maybe try again another day?

However even Eris won't likely be taking a bath then...

「Who's there ? 」

「Pya ! 」

My voice reacted involuntarily.

Without realizing it, Norn was somehow standing behind me.

Ah, What to do now.

For Norn to already be exposed to the truth of Santa already...

...she'll be heartbroken...

「Nii-san, What exactly are you do-...ah.. sorry for interrupting.」

Norn looked at my appearance, and seemed to realize something.

I bowed my head slightly.

She doesn't seem to be receiving any particular kind of shock.

If that's the case, could she possibly not believe in this kind of thing after all?

That's quite a shock in and of itself!

「Santa-san is here ! ? 」

At that moment of thought, I heard a happy voice sing out from inside the room.

「Ah, Lucy ! 」

I heard a sound in that room that sounded like a child's pitter-pattering footsteps.

I quickly spun around, and ran off.

I run down the hallway and towards the stairs as fast as I could while also trying to suppress as much sound as possible as I descend the staircase and rush to the dining room.

「What's going on ! ? 」

I already sense that Eris has now come flying out of the bathtub already as soon as her shouting is heard.

I still proceeded to the dining room.

「There ! 」

「 ! ! ! 」

I dove into the fireplace and shot up it like a bullet, and it was at exactly the same time a stark naked Eris jumped into the dining room.

「...Nobody's there. Quick, Let's check the entrance.」

Luckily, I was not spotted.

As I climbed back up the fireplace, I carefully remove as much trace of my entry as I could.

I am safe. And no one else seems to have noticed.

「Achoo ! It's so cold! The fireplace went out, did someone put it out? I guess there's no helping it for now.」

From under the fireplace, there were some muted voices heard.

I had a VERY BAD feeling.

「Divine Protection became the great flame in the place that thou demands, Become here now the great light of illumination!『Fireball』」

Eris shot a fireball into the fireplace.

The flames licked all the way up the chimney.

「..ffffff ! ! 」

My arse was ablaze.

And while I desperately fought back the urge to scream in pain, I somehow made it out of the chimney and onto the rooftop.

「W-waah ! ? Oniichan,Are you alright ! ? 」

「Oww ow ow. Ahh~ ! 」

I pressed my bottom against the snow which was piled up on the roof.

A sizzling sound is heard as my hind quarters are cooled off.

Ahh, sweet merciful --~.

Without being able to see it I don't know for sure, but I am surely badly burnt there, and will probably need to use healing magic later on.

As I finished that thought, the snow began to make a shuffling kind of sound.

「Whoa ! ? 」

The snow gave way due to my heaviness, and I slid off the roof in an avalanche of snow.

Of course, I was not the only one atop the roof, I was joined by my travelling companion.

「Oof...!」

As it is, we seemed to have fallen together into the snow covered garden area.

And happened to land right next to pile of snow and the snow shovels.

Furthermore, even more snow falls from atop the house, and almost completely buries me.

「Mffmffmff...」

Somehow, I can only manage to get my face out of the snow.

「Santa-san ! 」

At that point, the only thing my view could fall upon, was the appearance of Lucy, who just came out of the doorway.

Panicking, I hurry and cover as much of my head as I can in snow, all the while trying also to maintain some vision, so I can watch Lucy.

「Santa-san ? 」

Lucy who has come out dressed only in her pajamas, is relentlessly searching her surroundings, while the blizzard keeps pressing.

It appears I haven't been found.

If I am seen right now, the Power of Santa, and my own personal dignity would end up in question.

「Santa.....-san ? 」

Despite looking around the garden, nothing out of ordinary is noticed.

Furthermore, the small run to the doorway also confirms that there is nobody outside the gate as well.

And Lucy's face, before my very eyes, seemed to become very saddened.

「Lucy.」

「Mama~...」

Lucy runs up and clings to the late-to-arrive Sylphy with a face that seemed

about to cry.

「Is Santa-san, not going to come back ?

Is it because I was a bad girl, and stayed up late, and made Santa angry because of that ? 」

Lucy had begun break down in tears and sobbed.

Mm...

What the hell.

If it was going to end up like this, should I have just put the present in front of the room instead?

「Let's see... I think if we want him to come back, at the very least we should go back inside right ? Besides you'll catch cold out here.」

No. Even if I just put the present for her there secretly in the middle of the night, that should cure Lucy's sadness well enough.

Yeah, that should be good enough for how Christmas is supposed to go, anyway.

If what comes after she thinks it isn't does, she'll then be twice as happy!

I'll just say that all that noise in the middle of night was me moving a [Rolling Clay Doll] around.

「Ah ! 」

Suddenly, Lucy's face rapidly began to light up.

In front of the gate, the shadow of a person appeared.

The shadowy figure appeared strangely.

First off, it was wearing a crimson robe, which looked like the color of blood.

In addition to a same colored wide brimmed hat, it also had a huge, huge white backpack.

And their face was hidden by a clumsily attached black helmet.

The very figure was what you expected from a kidnapper.

「Santa...-san ? 」

「...」

I was speechless, It could only be visualized as a Santa that fell to the dark side.

Whilst inside this blizzard, he silently reached his hand inside the bag.

And what improper thing would come out from the middle of this thing's bag?

Perhaps it might be a hand-axe or a goat's head smeared in blood...

However I've only ever heard of something like that happening once.

It seems like something truly frightening is going to be taken out from there.

I guess it seems that he will not be removing his attached helmet.

「...」

What was taken out, was in fact a present box.

It didn't suit the strange one at all, the box was complete with a pretty ribbon.

He presented it to Lucy.

「Waaaah ! 」

With a joyful smile on her whole face, Lucy receives the present importantly with both hands and bows respectfully.

「Santa-san ! Thank you very much ! 」

The world's strongest Santa, protected in a cloak of Dragon Saint Touki, put a hand to the head of Lucy, and patted it kindly.

And afterwards, easily, and slowly disappeared back into the snowstorm.

The Next Morning.

I was listening to an excited Lucy brag about what happened.

「Hey~ Papa you know~ I got to meet Santa-san ! 」

「Ohh~ That sounds pretty amazing! How was he ? 」

「Umm Let's see... ufufu, he wasn't anything like you said at all ! However, It was definitely someone that Papa would know ! 」

「Hee—, That sounds pretty interesting after all—」

All's well that ends well.

Lucy became cheerful, and the existence of Santa was also proven.

It might be good that I give the present I prepared for Lucy tonight anyway.

Although it's necessary now to compensate Aisha for her hard work, everything turned out alright.

「Well then Lucy, What did you end up getting anyway ? 」

「it's... this ! 」

Lucy proudly displays it before me.

it was——。

It was a big red sock, knit out of woolen yarn that could probably fit the entirety of Lucy head-to-toe inside of it.

When next year comes, I believe I should make a more detailed explanation to President Orsted about how Christmas is supposed to go.

And all the while thinking such pleasant things, I passed this Christmas with my daughter.

✂This story is of course a fiction...

...Since Christmas does not exist in the world of Mushoku Tensei.