

# Santa's Last Stand

As a young boy growing up in the tumultuous late '80s, I was often filled with an overwhelming sense of hatred. I despised being forced to attend the first grade, I loathed eating my vegetables, and I detested the pedantic morality of Mr. Rodgers and his so-called "neighborhood." But I saved the overwhelming share of the vitriol packed into my six-year-old frame for one man: Santa Claus.

You see, Gentle Reader, I was not like all the other little boys and girls on my block, who lay down on Christmas Eve nestled all snug in their beds while visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads. No, when I dreamt of ambulatory foods, it was more likely to be of *gefilte* fish and *matzah brei* doing the *hora* at my cousin Moshe's bar mitzvah. I was a Jew, and Christmas was not for me.

From the day after Halloween until New Years, Old Saint Nick is inescapable. He's in the mall, listening to the whispered wishes of mucous-filled little Christians. He's on TV, pimping everything from Coca-Cola to Julio's Chicken Shack down on 8<sup>th</sup> Street. He's on the street corner, ringing an insufferable bell and collecting spare change for shadowy "charitable" organizations that "help" the "needy." This was all incredibly damaging to the developing psyche of a precocious youth who recognized his clear exclusion from the orgiastic world-wide celebration of all things merry. Every Christmas-light-bedecked house galled me. Every candy cane mocked me. Finally, in my ninth year, I reached the boiling point, and accepted the burden that destiny had placed on my shoulders. I knew what I

had to do: I was going to kill Santa Claus.

You needn't worry about how I survived to voyage the North Pole. That part of my tale is inconsequential—reindeer meat is surprisingly filling, let's just leave it at that. After neutralizing his elite team of Swiss Guards, I entered Santa's sinister fortress. Even Upton Sinclair could not accurately recount the horrors that I witnessed there. In an effort to cut costs, Santa had downsized much of his elf contingent, replacing them with Taiwanese street children. Disturbingly, these former runaways were forced to wear prosthetic ears and curly shoes, presumably so that Santa could continue to nourish his insatiable elf lust. I quietly made my way through the workshop, avoiding the numerous mangled "elf" carcasses that littered the floor. Finally, I found myself in front of a large door emblazoned with "K. Kringle" in gilt lettering. Gently opening it, I entered Santa's inner sanctum. The big man sat in front of me.

"Well, little boy, what would you like for Christmas this year?" he asked, lifting me onto his surely-diseased lap.

"Well," I stammered, in my best Gentile accent. "I really want some Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. And a new bike. But most of all, I'd like...*this!*" I swiftly pulled out a razor-tipped *menorah*, and drove it into Santa's massive belly.

"Ho ho ho!" Santa bellowed in dismay, as nine separate streams of blood gushed from his corpulent body.

"I did it! Santa's gone, and Christmas along with him!" I cried, finishing the job with a few whacks to the head with an oversized *dreidel*.

Arriving back home, and already formulating plans to eliminate the Easter Bunny, I found the following note sitting next to my fireplace, beside a glass of milk and a plate of cookies:

*Well played, Cohen-Wade. Well played. But I cannot be done away with quite so easily. What you've failed to understand is that Santa isn't so much a person as an idea—a symbol for all that's good and pure in this world. Trying to kill me is like trying to kill hope, charity, or love. Until you realize that, you'll never know the true meaning of Christmas.*

*Happy Holidays,  
S.C.*

"What a fucker," I thought. Grabbing some Throwing Stars of David, I ran out the door, heading northwards to finish the job.

*Cohen-Wade*

