

Robbie the Reindeer 24/9/98

CAMERA TRACKS UPWARDS OVER A MODEL OF THE WORLD.

VOICE OVER:

Our story begins in the north. Far north of where you live. North of Scotland.

THE CAMERA PASSES BY SCOTLAND. THE HILLS ARE CLAD IN LOUD TARTANS.

VOICE OVER:

North of where Bjork lives.

CAMERA PASSES OVER AN ISLAND COVERED IN LITTLE BOUNCING SINGING BJORKS. THE SEA WE ARE PASSING OVER NOW HAS ICEBERGS IN IT.

VOICE OVER:

North of the Cold Northlands, the Colder Northerlands and the Coldest Northestlands.

CAMERA PASSES OVER THREE GLACIAL ISLANDS. THE FIRST IS JUST AN ISLAND. THE SECOND IS AN ISLAND WITH A CLIFF THAT LOOKS A BIT LIKE TEETH. THE TEETH CHATTER AND THE WHOLE ISLAND SHIVERS A LITTLE. THE THIRD ISLAND HAS A WOOLLY BOBBLE HAT, AND MUFFLERS. IT IS SHIVERING A LOT AND MAKING THOSE SORT OF 'Oohoo. Ahahaha!' NOISES THAT PEOPLE MAKE WHEN THEY ARE COLD.

VOICE OVER:

Even norther than that.

CAMERA MOVES UP A FRACTION.

VOICE OVER:

Bit norther....

CAMERA GOES UP, AND WE GET A GLIMPSE OF THE TOWN OF THE NORTH POLE.

VOICE OVER:

Oop! Too far.

CAMERA MOVES DOWN, WE GET A GET A GOOD VIEW OF THE TOWN. WE SEE A NUMBER OF SWISS-STYLE CHALETs, PARTIALLY SNOWBOUND, A FACTORY, AND A BIG RED HOUSE, LARGER THAN THE OTHERS. THERE IS A CLOCK TOWER IN THE MIDDLE. IT IS LIT AS AT SUNSET.

VOICE OVER:

There! Coldchester. The town at the north pole.

CLOSE-UP OF A SIGN NAMING THE TOWN. THE SIGN READS: 'COLDCHESTER - TWINNED WITH HONOLULU.' THE SIGN IS COVERED IN FROST AND ICICLES.

VOICE OVER:

As you can probably tell, it's August. And at the north pole, August is when the bus comes.

A BUS DRIVES PAST THE SIGN, TOWARDS THE TOWN.

MID-SHOT OF ROBBIE THE REINDEER GETTING OFF AT A BUS STOP, WITH A SUITCASE THAT IS SLIGHTLY BIGGER THAN HE IS. ROBBIE IS A SMALL REINDEER WITH A BIG RED NOSE. HE STRETCHES HIMSELF AND LOOKS AROUND HAPPILY. BIG CAPTION SAYS THE NAME OF THE PROGRAMME.

ROBBIE PICKS UP THE SUITCASE AND TRIES TO CARRY IT FOR A FEW STEPS, MAKING PUFFING NOISES. IT IS VERY BULKY. HE WALKS PAST A BILLBOARD POSTER WITH A PICTORIAL ADVERT FOR THE REINDEER GAMES - THERE IS A STYLISTED REINDEER FIGURE AND SEVERAL DIFFERENT COLOURED RINGS. HE PUTS IT ON THE GROUND, PUTS HIS NOSE UP IN THE AIR, HIS NOSE WRIGGLES AROUND WITH A SORT OF THEREMIN NOISE, IT FINDS A DIRECTION AND GOES TWANG! IN A RIGID WAY. ROBBIE STARTS PUSHING HIS CASE IN THE DIRECTION HIS NOSE WENT IN. IT GATHERS SOME PACE, THEN ROBBIE JUMPS ON TO THE SUITCASE, IS SWALLOWED UP INSIDE. A SECOND LATER HE STICKS HIS HEAD OUT OF THE FRONT. THE SUITCASE CONTINUES TO SLIDE AT SOME SPEED.

ROBBIE:

Hehey!

ROBBIE'S NOSE TWITCHES IN A DIRECTION PERPENDICULAR TO THE DIRECTION OF THE SUITCASE'S SLIDE. 2 THE SUITCASE SWITCHES

DIRECTION. THE NOSE TWITCHES ANOTHER WAY, AND THE SUITCASE CHANGES DIRECTION A SECOND TIME.

THE FRONT DOOR OF ONE OF THE SWISS CHALET TYPE BUILDINGS. THE SILHOUETTE OF THE HEAD OF A REINDEER IS PAINTED ON THE DOOR. ROBBIE SMASHES THROUGH THE DOOR AT GREAT SPEED. THE DOOR SLAMS SHUT AS SOON AS HE PASSES THROUGH IT. HE YELPS.

INSIDE THE REINDEER LODGE. (IT IS A WELL-KEPT SPLIT LEVEL CHALET, WITH A BIG COMMUNAL ROOM DOWNSTAIRS, AND A BALCONY WITH ROOMS LEADING OFF IT UPSTAIRS. THE INHABITANTS OF THIS LODGE ARE OBVIOUSLY VERY SPORTY - WE SEE LOCKERS, GYM EQUIPMENT, BRASS AND SILVER TROPHIES, AND A BIG FRAMED HEROIC PICTURES OF REINDEER HOLDING TROPHIES)

ROBBIE, STILL INSIDE THE SUITCASE, SKIDS ACROSS THE FLOOR AND BASHES INTO A WALL HEAD-ON, WHICH STOPS HIM AND ALSO DRIVES HIS WHOLE HEAD INTO THE SUITCASE, LEAVING JUST HIS RED NOSE STICKING OUT OF THE ZIP. ALL THE OTHER REINDEER, WHO WERE RELAXING IN THE LODGE, JUMP BACKWARDS IN SURPRISE. BLITZEN, A TALL CONFIDENT-LOOKING MALE REINDEER. DONNER, A SMALL FEMALE REINDEER IN A DARK BLUE SWEAT TOP. PRANCER IS A FAT MALE REINDEER, VIXEN IS A SLENDER VAMPISH FEMALE REINDEER. THERE IS ALSO A BESPECTACLED REINDEER AND A COUPLE OF GENERIC REINDEER.

ALL:

Aaaaahhhh!!

ROBBIE:

(MUFFLED) Wwwwrrwww!

THE SUITCASE ROCKS A LITTLE, THEN ROBBIE'S FOUR HOOVES BURST THROUGH THE BOTTOM. ROBBIE NOW RESEMBLES SOME STRANGE RED-NOSED LIVING SUITCASE. HE TOTTERS AROUND THE ROOM A LITTLE.

PRANCER:

It's a, it's a thing!

DONNER:

It must be the last of some rare and endangered species.

PRANCER GRABS A BOTTLE FROM A TABLE.

PRANCER:

Cool. Let's kill it.

PRANCER CIRCLES ROUND THE ROBBIE/SUITCASE THING, STALKING IT. THE ROBBIE/SUITCASE THING BACKS OFF. PRANCER RAISES THE BOTTLE. THE SUITCASE POPS OPEN, REVEALING ROBBIE AMIDST HIS LUGGAGE - A BEACH BALL, FLIP FLOPS, A BEACH TOWEL, A GUITAR.

ROBBIE:

Call me Robbie. Cause I am.

BLITZEN STEPS FORWARD AND SHAKES ROBBIE'S HAND VIGOUROUSLY, THEN PUNCHES HIM LIGHTLY AND AFFECTIONATELY.

BLITZEN:

Of course, of course, we've been expecting you. I am Blitzen. Any problems, come and see me. If you don't have any problems, see me anyway and we'll celebrate your lack of problems. Oh, this is Prancer, this is Vixen, this is (VAGUE WAVE) the rest, and together we are -

ALL THE OTHER DEER EXCEPT DONNER JUMP INTO A COLUMN OF PAIRS FORMATION BEHIND BLITZEN. THEY ARE STANDING. THEY ARE...

THE SLEIGH TEAM:

The sleigh team!

THEY ALL CROUCH DOWN AND BOB ON THEIR HAUNCHES AS THEY DO A COUPLE OF BARS FROM THE WILLIAM TELL OVERTURE.

THE SLEIGH TEAM:

Duddle-um, duddle-um, duddle-um dum dum.

THEY STAND UP AGAIN AND CROWD ROUND ROBBIE. THEY PAT HIM AND MURMUR 'Welcome aboard.' 'Hello Robbie.'

BLITZEN:

So, come to join the team like your old dad did.

ROBBIE:

Yeah. The boss wanted a navigator.

BLITZEN:

Indeed.

ROBBIE:

I can find my way anywhere with this nose.

BLITZEN:

Splendid! Let's test it. Donner - the atlas.

DONNER GETS A BIG WORLD ATLAS OFF A SHELF AND OPENS IT.

DONNER:

Okay Robbie. Where is.... Paris.

ROBBIE'S NOSE INSTANTLY POINTS STRAIGHT IN ONE DIRECTION.

DONNER:

Egypt.

ROBBIE'S NOSE DOES THE KING TUT STRUT IN ANOTHER DIRECTION.

DONNER:

Those posh yoghurts I bought just for me.

ROBBIE'S NOSE TWANGS IN THE DIRECTION OF PRANCER'S GUT. PRANCER SHUFFLES NERVOUSLY.

DONNER:

Hey!

ROBBIE:

It's nothing. It's really nothing. Actually I'd like a clap.

BLITZEN STARTS THE CLAPPING, ALL THE OTHER REINDEER FOLLOW HIS LEAD. ROBBIE BOWS.

ROBBIE:

This is going to be a huge laugh.

BLITZEN:

Welcome to the team.

ROBBIE:

Ooh, one thing. I know what we'll be doing for one day of the year. But what do we do the other three hundred and sixty four?

BLITZEN:

Well, we -

CUT TO A COUPLE OF SECONDS OF BLITZEN, PRANCER, VIXEN AND MAYBE OTHER GENERIC REINDEER WORKING OUT HARD WITH WEIGHTS. THEY GRUNT AND STRAIN. CUT BACK TO REINDEER LODGE.

BLITZEN:

- sort of like that.

ROBBIE:

Right. I was expecting it to be more sort of -

CUT TO ROBBIE ON THE ICE, DAYTIME, IN A HAMMOCK SIPPING A FANCY COCKTAIL. SFX: BIRDSONG. TWO DEER IN THE BACKGROUND ARE HULA DANCING WITH GRASS SKIRTS. CUT BACK TO REINDEER LODGE.

ROBBIE:

Maybe a bit of -

CUT TO ROBBIE STRUMMING HIS GUITAR BY A FIRESIDE, WEARING A COSY JUMPER. TWO GENERIC REINDEER, ALSO IN JUMPERS, BOB IN TIME WITH ROBBIE'S MUSIC. CUT BACK TO REINDEER LODGE.

BLITZEN:

Sorry Robbie, but it's definitely -

CUT TO THE COUPLE OF SECONDS OF REINDEER WORKING OUT, AS BEFORE. CUT BACK TO REINDEER LODGE.

ROBBIE:

Right. When's the next bus out?

PRANCER:

April.

ROBBIE:

Training it is then.

ROBBIE PICKS UP HIS CASE AND SHUFFLES AWAY.

ROBBIE:

Hup hup hup. What's after hup? Oh yeah. Hup. Hup hup.

REINDEER LODGE, UPSTAIRS BALCONY AREA. ROBBIE AND DONNER ARE CARRYING ROBBIE'S SUITCASE, ONE AT EACH END.

ROBBIE:

So pulling the sleigh Donner. Is it a laugh?

DONNER:

I don't pull the sleigh. I'm support crew. There's a reindeer to do physio, a reindeer to cook, a reindeer to wash up - and all of those reindeer are me. Robbie, if you're not into exercise, why are you here?

ROBBIE:

My dad sent me really. Character building. Apparently I'm easily distracted but I really - bow wow wow, she is nice, isn't she.

ROBBIE PEERS OVER THE BALCONY. A SHOT OF VIXEN LEANING AGAINST A WINDOW AND LOOKING OUT OF IT.

DONNER:

Mm. Vixen.

CUT BACK TO ROBBIE AND DONNER. ROBBIE IS STILL STARING AT VIXEN.

DONNER:

This is your room. Bit small, but so are you.

DONNER OPENS A DOOR AND PUSHES IN ROBBIE AND HIS SUITCASE. THE DOOR CLOSSES. SHE SMILES TO HERSELF.

REINDEER LODGE, DOWNSTAIRS. PRANCER IS WATCHING TELLY, AND OPENING A CAN OF 'HAY-NICKEN' FROM A FOUR-PACK OF THIS DRINK. THERE IS ANOTHER REINDEER STANDING ON THE TELEVISION, WITH ITS ANTLERS WIRED UP TO THE BACK OF THE TV. VIXEN IS FLICKING THROUGH A 'HELLO' TYPE MAGAZINE IN A BORED FASHION.

TV VOICE:

Coming soon - the Reindeer Games. Sponsored by Hay. The official snack food -

THE TV PICTURE STARTS FLICKERING, THE SOUND IS OBSCURED BY WHITE NOISE.

PRANCER:

Left a bit, bit more - hold it there!

THE AERIAL REINDEER MOVES ITS HEAD INTO A VERY UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION. ENTER BLITZEN. BLITZEN TURNS THE TV OFF AND PUSHES THE AERIAL REINDEER AWAY.

BLITZEN:

Vixen. Prancer. We've got a new reindeer in the ranks today, and he might find it hard to settle in. Robbie will feel vulnerable, a little homesick, so as senior reindeer I'd like you to help me (SUDDENLY ANGRY) make it hell for him! Let's crush him! Trample him to dust! Then throw the remains of the dust to the wolves. Then blow up the wolves!

PRANCER:

You don't like him then.

BLITZEN:

Not especially, no.

VIXEN:

Aah. This is about his dad isn't it?

BLITZEN:

I've been the captain of the sleigh team for years. But Robbie's dad, he's still the famous one. Do children sing a song about me? No! Am I on magazines? No! Do I endorse carpet cleaner? No!

BLITZEN GRABS VIXEN'S MAGAZINE AND SHOWS PRANCER AND VIXEN THE COVER. THE COVER HAS A RED NOSED REINDEER, OLDER THAN ROBBIE, ON THE FRONT. IT IS LAID OUT LIKE HELLO! MAGAZINE AND IT IS CALLED 'HO!HO!' MAGAZINE. HE THEN PICKS UP A BOTTLE OF CARPET CLEANER WITH AN ENDORSEMENT FROM ROBBIE'S DAD.

BLITZEN:

No. Just because he saved the day for the boss *one time*. And now he's sent his son. (SING-SONG, WHILE PLAYING WITH HIS NOSE) Ooh-oooh, I'm Robbie, I've got a magic nose, I can find my way-ay.

VIXEN:

At least Robbie's dad got out of this frozen hole. He was a smart reindeer, that Ru-

BLITZEN'S HOOF COVERS VIXEN'S MOUTH BEFORE SHE CAN SAY ANOTHER WORD.

BLITZEN:

Oh, no, no. I will not have that name said in my presence.

DONNER PASSES BY.

DONNER:

Are you talking about Ru -

BLITZEN'S HOOF COVERS DONNER'S MOUTH. BESPECTACLED REINDEER AND PRANCER PASS BY.

BESPECTACLED REINDEER:

German name wasn't it. Ru-

BLITZEN COVERS BR'S MOUTH WITH ONE OF HIS HIND HOOVES.

PRANCER:

It is a catchy song though. A one, two, Ru -

BLITZEN COVERS PRANCER'S MOUTH WITH ANOTHER HOOF. ALL OF BLITZEN'S HOOVES ARE NOW OFF THE GROUND. BLITZEN FALLS TO THE FLOOR.

BLITZEN:

Well if I can't get him, I'll get his son. I will not sleep until I have destroyed Robbie!

DRAMATIC CHORD. FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP FROM BLACK. BLITZEN ON HIS OWN, STILL IN THE SAME POSITION ON THE FLOOR. IT IS NIGHT TIME AND HE IS ILLUMINATED BY MOONLIGHT THROUGH THE WINDOW. A PIECE OF PAPER IN FRONT OF HIM HAS THE HEADING 'EVIL PLANS', AND IT IS BLANK BELOW THAT. HE TWIDDLES PENCIL. HE PICKS UP AN LED CLOCK: THE TIME IS 4:21 AM. HE YAWNS.

BLITZEN:

Bit tired now. Maybe I'll have a little sleep. But I'll think of something when I wake up.

BLITZEN FALLS ASLEEP. A COUPLE OF SECONDS LATER, HE STOPS MID-SNORE AND ONE EYE OPENS.

BLITZEN:

Got it.

ARCTIC WASTES. THE SLEIGH REINDEER ARE ALL DOING DIFFERENT WORKOUT EXERCISES. PUFFING AND PANTING. PRANCER IS RUNNING ON A TREADMILL. NEXT TO HIM, ROBBIE KEEPS STEPPING ON TO A TREADMILL, BUT HE DOES NOT RUN ON IT AND IT KEEPS SHOOTING HIM OFF.

PRANCER:

Enjoying training Robbie?

ROBBIE:

I don't really have to do this do I?

BESPECTACLED REINDEER IS PUNCHING A BOXER'S PUNCHBALL AND IT'S GOING FLUBBIDUH FLUBBIDUH. ROBBIE IS MAKING HAYMAKER PUNCHES AT A PUNCH BAG, NONE OF WHICH HIT THE BAG.

ROBBIE:

I mean I'm just the navigator. I don't need to be fit.

ROBBIE WITH A SKIPPING ROPE, HE KEEPS SWINGING IT AT HIS FEET, BUT HE FAILS TO JUMP EACH TIME, SO THE ROPE JUST HITS HIS ANKLES.

ROBBIE:

Can't we just have the day off and slob around and eat toast in our pants?

ROBBIE IS ON AN EXERCISE BIKE, PEDALLING LABORIOUSLY.

ROBBIE:

What does this do?

ROBBIE FLICKS A SWITCH ON THE BIKE. THE WHEEL AND PEDALS SPIN ROUND VERY FAST WITHOUT HIS ASSISTANCE. HE TAKES HIS LEGS OFF.

ROBBIE:

Aah, that's better.

ENTER BLITZEN.

BLITZEN:

Robbie...

ROBBIE:

Look, I found the downhill setting. Weeeee!

BLITZEN:

Robbie. Even if you're the navigator, you still have to be fit. If you don't get fit then - ahh. Of course. Robbie, why don't you just carry on as you are. Have a paper. Have a pipe.

BLITZEN PRODUCES A NEWSPAPER AND A PIPE, GIVES THE PAPER TO ROBBIE AND JAMS THE PIPE IN ROBBIE'S MOUTH. ROBBIE RELAXES AND PUTS HIS FEET UP ON THE HANDLEBARS.

ROBBIE:

Cheers Blitzen. You're a pal.

BLITZEN:

Keep coasting.

REINDEER LODGE. PRANCER IS LAID OUT ON DONNER'S PHYSIOTHERAPY COUCH. DONNER RUBS PRANCER'S SHOULDERS.

DONNER:

I'm a bit worried about the shape you're in Prancer.

PRANCER:

Why?

DONNER:

Cause it's a circle. Next!

PRANCER GETS OFF THE TABLE, ROBBIE JUMPS ON.

ROBBIE:

I don't know about this fitness lark Donner. I've been here a month and I've decided strength isn't really my strength. Can you just loosen my neck a little?

DONNER:

Sure.

DONNER GETS OUT A ROLLING PIN, FLATTENS ROBBIE OUT TILL HE IS JUST A BIG BROWN DISC WITH ANTLERS AND A NOSE. SHE SPINS HIM IN THE AIR LIKE A PIZZA BASE, THEN ROLLS THE DISC UP INTO A BIG SAUSAGE, THEN PULLS ARMS AND LEGS OUT OF THE SAUSAGE TO REMAKE ROBBIE. SHE STARTS KNEADING HIS SHOULDERS.

ROBBIE:

I just can't concentrate on the exercise. I've met a very special reindeer. I can't stop thinking about her.

DONNER:

Robbie? I didn't know you felt that way too because, well no-one usually notices me and I've -

TURNING ON HIS SIDE TO FACE AWAY FROM DONNER.

ROBBIE:

She's so so beautiful and she's so graceful and she's called -

DONNER AND ROBBIE TOGETHER:

Vixen.

DONNER:

(ANNOYED) Yeah yeah, wonderful Vixen. Isn't she lovely.

ROBBIE:

Yeah! Can't seem to talk her though. You see I have this thing where I can't talk to girls if I love them.

DONNER:

You can talk to me though.

ROBBIE:

Course I can.

DONNER:

Right.

DONNER TIES ROBBIE IN A KNOT. WE HEAR SQUEAKING BALLOON NOISES. WHEN SHE FINISHES WITH ROBBIE, HE IS IN THE SHAPE OF A BALLOON GIRAFFE, EXCEPT HIS HEAD IS IN THE WRONG PLACE, AT THE END OF ONE OF THE LEGS. DONNER WALKS AWAY, FROWNING. ROBBIE WOBBLER A LITTLE ON THE TABLE.

ROBBIE:

Donner. Donner?

A LETTER COMES THROUGH THE DOOR.

PRANCER:

I'll open it!

PRANCER DASHES OVER AND OPENS THE LETTER. IT CONTAINS AN INVITATION - IT HAS A LINE DRAWING OF FATHER CHRISTMAS'S HEAD AND SOME SWIRLY WRITING.

PRANCER:

(STRUGGLING WITH THE FRENCH) You are all invited to a soi? soiree....chez.....soiree chez....

VIXEN STEPS UP AND GLANCES OVER HIS SHOULDER.

VIXEN:

Party at Beardy's house.

BLITZEN:

Great. The old man throws wild parties. There's always one or two surprises in store. And everyone who matters will be there.

VIXEN:

Will they?

BLITZEN:

Of course. I'm going.

INTERIOR OF SANTA'S HOUSE. MRS CHRISTMAS STANDING INSIDE THE FRONT DOOR, LOOKING THROUGH A GLASS PANEL IN THE FRONT DOOR.

MRS. CHRISTMAS:

Dearest. They're coming.

SANTA'S HEAD APPEARS FOR A SECOND AT A GLASS PANEL IN AN INTERNAL DOOR. WE CAN'T SEE HIS BODY YET.

SANTA:

I know!

MRS. CHRISTMAS TURNS ROUND AND SPEAKS LOUDLY, CLOSE TO AN INTERNAL DOOR.

MRS.CHRISTMAS:

Just choose an outfit, and -

ENTER SANTA THROUGH THE INTERNAL DOOR. HE IS THE NORMAL FAT WHITE-BEARDED SHAPE, AND HE RETAINS THE RED AND WHITE HAT, BUT HE IS DRESSED IN BLUE CAMOUFLAGE COMBAT TROUSERS AND A RED STRING T-SHIRT.

SANTA:

What about this? It's modern.

SANTA TURNS ROUND SLOWLY FOR HIS WIFE, ARMS OUTSTRETCHED.

MRS. CHRISTMAS:

I still like the old red coat.

SANTA:

I can't wear that to a party! Everyone's seen it!

DOORBELL RINGS. SANTA OPENS THE FRONT DOOR. ROBBIE STEPS IN. HE LOOKS SANTA UP AND DOWN.

SANTA:

You must be Robbie. (WITH A NAFF GESTURE) Hohoho. Found your way all right?

ROBBIE:

Oh, yeah.

ROBBIE WIGGLES HIS NOSE. OTHER REINDEER START COMING THROUGH THE DOOR BEHIND ROBBIE, AND THEY GREET MRS. CHRISTMAS.

SANTA WAGGLES ROBBIE'S CHEEK.

SANTA:

Look at you. I bet you're training dead hard. Eh, Robbie - try not to overdo it.

ROBBIE:

I promise.

SANTA CLASPS ROBBIE TO HIS CHEST.

SANTA:

Ha ha. You're a good deer. Like your dad. Not that you're in your dad's shadow. I won't keep banging on about your dad. He's terrific, your dad. Once, your dad, right, he said to me...

RE-ENTER MRS.CHRISTMAS. SHE IS HOLDING A BABY IN HER ARMS, DRESSED IN A RED ROMPER SUIT. THE BABY HAS A BEARD.

MRS. CHRISTMAS:

Put the barbecue on dear.

BACK OF SANTA'S HOUSE. SANTA WALKS OUT THROUGH THE PATIO DOORS. HE IS CARRYING A BOX OF ECONOMY HAMBURGERS. HE WALKS OVER TO A WAIST-HEIGHT BARBECUE ON METAL TRIPOD LEGS. HE PUTS THE BURGERS ON, AND LIGHTS THE BARBECUE WITH A MATCH. HE STEPS BACK. THE AIR AROUND THE BARBECUE WOBBLER WITH HEAT. THE ICE BELOW AND AROUND THE BARBECUE STARTS TO MELT. THE BARBECUE SINKS AND DISAPPEARS INTO THIS MELTED ICE HOLE, WHICH IS LIT INSIDE BY THE GLOWING ORANGE COALS. AFTER THE BARBECUE TOTALLY DISAPPEARS, A POLAR STICKS ITS HEAD OUT OF THE HOLE AND ADDRESSES SANTA.

POLAR BEAR:

Oi!

INSIDE CHRISTMAS'S HOUSE. LOW PARTY LIGHTING AND CHATTER. TWO REINDEER ARE NECKING. A SEAL IS SINGING THE VOICE OF SEAL THE SINGER. A COUPLE OF REINDEER ARE DANCING TO IT BADLY. VIXEN LOOKS AROUND DISMISSIVELY.

VIXEN:

Well, this is a room with some animals in it.

DONNER IS CHOOSING SNACKS FROM THE BUFFET TABLE. A HOOF KEEPS POPPING UP FROM UNDERNEATH THE TABLE AND NICKING CANS OF HAY-NICKEN. WE GET A VIEW UNDER THE TABLE - PRANCER IS NECKING THE CANS. CUT BACK TO DONNER. ROBBIE TAPS HER ON THE SHOULDER AND SHE TURNS ROUND. ROBBIE HAS BITS OF₁₆ CHEESE AND PINEAPPLE STUCK

ON HIS ANTLERS.

ROBBIE:

Look Donner! Look! Ooo-ooh! Oo-ooh!

DONNER GIGGLES. ROBBIE GLANCES ABOUT AND QUICKLY SNATCHES ALL THE LUMPS OF CHEESE AND PINEAPPLE OFF HIS HEAD.

ROBBIE:

(EXCITED) Vixen's coming! She's coming!

ENTER VIXEN. DONNER FOLDS HER ARMS AND FROWNS.

ROBBIE:

(TOO NERVOUS TO FORM WORDS) uh...wuu.....mma....

VIXEN:

I was sent a bunch of flowers today Robbie. And I knew they were from you. Do you know how?

ROBBIE:

(CANNOT SPEAK. HE MAKES A FEW MEEK NERVOUS CHIRPS)

VIXEN:

Because they were cheap.

EXIT VIXEN.

ROBBIE:

But it was all the money I had....

DONNER'S NEXT WORDS ARE DROWNED OUT BY SANTA TAPPING A WINE GLASS WITH A SPOON. EVERYONE STOPS TALKING AND FACES SANTA. SEAL STOPS SINGING. ROBBIE PUTS THE KNIFE DOWN. SANTA IS DRESSED IN A WHITE SAILOR SUIT WITH BIG WHITE FLARES, BUT HE STILL HAS HIS RED HAT ON.

SANTA:

Is this a bit more me? Hoho?

SANTA DOES A TURN. MRS. CHRISTMAS₁₇COVERS HER EYES.

SANTA:

Maybe not. Now, I've brought you all here because I have got something very exciting to show to you. May I present the future of present delivery..... Sleigh Mark Two!

FATHER CHRISTMAS PULLS OUT A BLACK REMOTE CONTROL WITH LOTS OF BUTTONS AND A JOYSTICK. HE OPENS AN INTERNAL DOOR, THEN MOVES THE JOYSTICK. SLEIGH MARK TWO CRASHES THROUGH A WALL NEXT TO THE DOOR, INTO THE LIVING ROOM WHERE ALL THE REINDEER ARE. THE SLEIGH GETS ADMIRING GASPS FROM THE REINDEER. IT IS A MODERN LOOKING OPEN TOP HOT ROD OF A SLEIGH. SANTA CLIMBS INTO IT.

SANTA:

I made the modifications myself. For long journeys - a stereo.

SANTA PRESSES A BUTTON ON THE REMOTE. WE GET A BURST OF 'SMACK MY BITCH UP' BY THE PRODIGY PLAYING AT A TERRIFYING VOLUME. THE ANTLERS OF ALL THE REINDEER QUIVER LIKE RIBBONS IN THE WIND. SANTA PRESSES BUTTON AGAIN; SILENCE.

SANTA:

Using the latest technology - an intelligent ashtray.

AN ASHTRAY RISES FROM THE SLEIGH ON A LONG POLE, WITH A HYDRAULIC NOISE. SANTA FLIPS THE LID OF THE ASHTRAY OPEN.

SHOUTING COMPUTERISED VOICE:

Don't smoke! You idiot!

SANTA SNAPS THE LID SHUT AND IT SINKS DOWN INTO THE SLEIGH.

SANTA:

And there's one more thing which was Blitzen's idea, so thank you Blitzen -

ROBBIE PRODS BLITZEN IN A FRIENDLY WAY. BLITZEN WINKS AT ROBBIE. SANTA PRESSES A BUTTON, AND MANY RETRACTABLE HEADLIGHTS POP OUT FROM THE SLEIGH AND DAZZLE THE REINDEER. A SATELLITE DISH APPEARS, AND A COUPLE OF RADAR SCREENS WITH ROTATING GREEN LINES.

SANTA:

An Automatic Sleigh Navigation System!

BLITZEN AND ROBBIE STAND NEXT TO EACH OTHER IN THE HEADLIGHT'S GLARE. ROBBIE IS HORRIFIED. BLITZEN SMILES.

SANTA:

So we won't be needing a navigator. Now, that doesn't necessarily mean that Robbie isn't coming.

ROBBIE PERKS UP, HOPEFULLY.

SANTA:

Blitzen came up with a very fair way of deciding who we should leave behind. It will be the reindeer who is least fit.

ROBBIE'S FACE FALLS AGAIN.

REINDEER LODGE, THE MAIN COMMUNAL ROOM. DARK. ROBBIE IS ALONE. HE LOOKS AT THE OLD PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE WALL, OF GROUPS OF REINDEER. THERE IS ONE OF ROBBIE'S DAD WITH HIS ARM ROUND A YOUNGER FATHER CHRISTMAS - THIS FATHER CHRISTMAS HAS THE NORMAL SANTA HAT, BUT WITH A RED JACKET WITH WHITE TRIM CUT IN THE STYLE OF A 1970s JACKET. HE HAS NO SHIRT IN THE PHOTO, ONLY A MEDALLION. HE HAS SHOULDER LENGTH BLACK HAIR AS WELL AS A BLACK BEARD. THIS SCENE IS PUNCTUATED BY RUMBLES OF THUNDER AND THE ODD LIGHTNING FLASH WHICH ILLUMINATES THE ROOM. ROBBIE TAKES THIS PHOTO OFF THE WALL AND WALKS A FEW STEPS WITH IT.

ROBBIE:

Well Dad, I blew it. I could have got fit, but I was cocky and I was lazy. When am I going to learn? (LOOKS AT THE PICTURE AGAIN) Better put this back. Oh, I'll do it later.

ROBBIE DROPS THE PICTURE ON THE FLOOR.

ROBBIE:

Sorry dad. I'm just not as good as you. I'll never be another Ru -

BLITZEN SPRINGS FROM NOWHERE AND CLAMPS HIS HOOF ON ROBBIE'S MOUTH.

BLITZEN:

Hush, child. No need to say such sad things.

BLITZEN SITS ROBBIE DOWN ON A SOFA AND SITS WITH ROBBIE AND PUTS HIS ARM ROUND ROBBIE.

BLITZEN:

You've got nothing to worry about. Do you know what? I think the boss is going to take you on the sleigh anyway. Because he liked your dad. So come on, give Blitzen a smile.

ROBBIE DOES A WEAK SMILE.

BLITZEN:

He'll kick off some other reindeer who's trained for it all year, but that doesn't matter. And the sleigh will be slow and late, but no-one will blame you. They'll blame your dad. For having you. And of course, there will be little children who will wake on Christmas morn and open their stockings with bright eyes....

AS BLITZEN NARRATES, HIS STORY IS ANIMATED WITH BIG WOODEN-HEADED CHILDREN, DRESSED LIKE VICTORIAN TOTS, POSSIBLY IN SEPIA TONE.

BLITZEN:

...and discover inside - nothing. Because we didn't get there in time. But their mummies will say, 'never mind; at least Robbie had a huge laugh.'

FADE BACK TO ROBBIE AND BLITZEN. ROBBIE IS NOW VERY EMOTIONAL AND CHEWS HIS LIP. HE IS VERY CLOSE TO BAWLING HIS EYES OUT. ROBBIE GETS UP, LEAVES, REAPPEARS A MOMENT LATER WITH HIS SUITCASE.

ROBBIE:

Thanks Blitzen. You've opened my eyes.

ROBBIE WALKS TOWARD THE FRONT DOOR, HEAD BOWED. BLITZEN RUNS TO THE DOOR AND OPENS IT.

BLITZEN:

(VERY UNCONVINCINGLY) Robbie! No! Don't go! Robbie!

ROBBIE:

I'm going outside. I may be some time.

ROBBIE LEAVES THROUGH THE DOOR. BLITZEN SLAMS IT SHUT AND FASTENS A WHOLE SERIES OF LOCKS, BOLTS AND CHAINS. VIXEN APPEARS ON THE BALCONY.

VIXEN:

It's a cold night Blitzen. If only someone would stoke my fire.

ARCTIC WASTES. NIGHT TIME. VERY WINDY, THUNDER, LIGHTNING. ROBBIE STRUGGLES TO THE TOP OF A BIG DRIFT OF SNOW, CARRYING HIS SUITCASE. AT THE TOP OF ONE DRIFT, HIS SUITCASE BLOWS AWAY IN THE GALE LEAVING HIM WITH NOTHING. ROBBIE WAGGLES HIS DIRECTIONAL NOSE, BUT IN A JERKY, SHIVERY WAY, AS IF IT IS TOO COLD FOR IT TO FUNCTION PROPERLY. THE THEREMIN NOISE IS DISCORDANT AND FUZZY.

ROBBIE'S THOUGHTS:

Only five thousand miles to home. (IN THE MANNER OF A MARVEL SUPER-HERO) Have to..... raise.....spirits. Try....whistling.....

ROBBIE PURSES HIS LIPS. A PLAINTIVE WHISTLE COMES OUT. AN NOTE MADE OF ICE FORMS IN THE AIR, CONNECTED TO HIS MOUTH BY AN ICICLE. THE NOTE SHATTERS AND FALLS APART. ROBBIE SHIVERS AND HIS TEETH CHATTER. HIS NOSE TURNS FROM RED TO BLUE. CROSSFADE TO BLUE-NOSED ROBBIE IN THE SAME POSITION, ENCASED IN A SQUARE BLOCK OF ICE. THE WIND SUBSIDES.

THERE IS A CRUNCHING OF TINY FOOTSTEPS. WE HEAR HIGH-PITCHED MUTTERING VOICES. THREE ELVES, TINY DUMPY CREATURES WITH LITTLE GREEN HATS, WALK INTO VIEW. THEY STOP AND LOOK AT FROZEN ROBBIE.

HEAD ELF:

Hey. Dinner.

ELF 2:

Yeah.

BIG BACK DOORS OF ELF FACTORY, LIKE A BIG LOADING BAY. ANOTHER ELF OPENS THE DOORS, AND THE THREE ELVES CARRY ROBBIE INSIDE, STILL FROZEN IN THE BLOCK.

FACTORY FLOOR. ELF MACHINERY AND PRODUCTION LINES IN THE BACKGROUND. THE THREE ELVES PUT THE BLOCK OF ICE ON A SPIT, THROW A FEW LOGS UNDERNEATH, LIGHT THE LOGS, AND ONE ELF TURNS THE SPIT. THE OTHER ELVES PRODUCE KNIVES, FORKS AND PLATES FROM THEIR POCKETS WHICH THEY LAY OUT ON THE FLOOR. ONE OF THE ELVES STARTS TOSSING A SALAD.

ELF 2:

I like the crispy bits. Do it till it's crispy.

ELF 3:

Hope there's left overs. We can make a curry.

ALL ELVES:

Mmmmm.

ON THE SPIT, THE ICE HAS NEARLY FINISHED MELTING AND ROBBIE IS COMING BACK TO LIFE. HIS NOSE IS RED AGAIN. ROBBIE JUMPS DOWN FROM THE SPIT. HE SHIVERS.

ROBBIE:

Brrrr. I knew I should have worn my mittens.

HEAD ELF:

He's alive!

ELF 3:

Can we eat him anyway?

HEAD ELF:

No. (TO ROBBIE) Off you go.

ROBBIE:

No, don't send me out there again. Can I stay? For a bit? (ROBBIE LOOKS AROUND AND SEES LOTS OF TOYS) I'll, hey, I'll help you make toys. I'm a good worker.

ROBBIE SMILES A BIT TOO WIDE.

THE FACTORY FLOOR. SOUND ATMOS OF A NATURALISTIC FACTORY. ROBBIE SITS ON A PRODUCTION LINE. HE WEARS A LITTLE GREEN HAT, LIKE THE REST OF THE ELVES. HIS HEAD RESTS ON ONE OF HIS FRONT HOOVES IN A BORED WAY. ABOUT ONCE A SECOND, A DOLL COMES PAST ROBBIE, AND HE PAINTS RED ON TO THE DOLL'S LIPS WITH A PAINT BRUSH. AFTER A COUPLE OF DOLLS, ROBBIE STARTS ALLEVIATING HIS BOREDOM BY STRIKING MORE AND MORE CONTORTED ARTISTIC POSES AS HE PUTS EACH OF THE RED DABS ON. FINALLY, HE TRIES TO TOSS THE BRUSH IN THE AIR AND CATCH IT AGAIN, BUT HE FUMBLES IT AND DROPS THE BRUSH. A COUPLE OF DOLLS PASS BY WITHOUT THEIR LIPS BEING PAINTED.

ROBBIE:

Hang on. Hang on!

ROBBIE JUMPS ON THE PRODUCTION LINE AND RUNS AFTER THE DOLL. JUST WHEN HE IS ABOUT TO PAINT ITS LIPS, A METAL CLAW POPS OUT OF A BIG MACHINE AND SNATCHES THE DOLL INSIDE. THE PRODUCTION LINE CLANKS ON ONE MORE NOTCH, AND THE CLAW SNATCHES ROBBIE.

AT THE OTHER END OF THE MACHINE, BOXED DOLLS POP OUT OF A PIPE AND STAND ON THE FACTORY FLOOR IN A LINE. THE LETTERING ON THE BOXES SAYS "TALKING DOLL". THE BOXES ALL HAVE A CELLOPHANE FRONT SO WE CAN SEE THE DOLL INSIDE. ONE OF THE BOXES CONTAINS ROBBIE, CONTORTED TO FIT INSIDE. HEAD ELF WALKS DOWN THE LINE WITH A CLIPBOARD, PRESSING THE DOLL'S CHESTS.

FIRST DOLL:

I - love - you!

HEAD ELF TICKS CLIPBOARD.

SECOND DOLL:

Be - my - friend!

HEAD ELF TICKS CLIPBOARD, THEN PRESSES ROBBIE'S BOX.

ROBBIE:

(MUFFLED) Aaaaarrgghh!

HEAD ELF JUMPS BACKWARDS.

ROBBIE:

(MUFFLED) Sorry. But you prodded me in the - Aaaarrgh!

....ROBBIE SHOUTS AS THE ELF PRODS HIM AGAIN.

HEAD ELF:

Robbie, I don't think you're production line material. You're demoted to sweeping up.

FACTORY FLOOR. HEAD ELF FIGHTING HIS WAY THROUGH HUGE MOUNDS OF RUBBISH. ROBBIE IS FIDDLING AROUND WITH TOY COMPONENTS. HEAD ELF PICKS UP THE BROOM WHICH IS LEANING ON A MACHINE BEHIND ROBBIE: THE BROOM HAS A LOT OF COBWEBS ON IT.

HEAD ELF:

Robbie. What happened.

ROBBIE:

I started sweeping but then I found these bits of toys. And I thought, I know, I'll invent new toys. Look! Sebastian Muscledhale!

ROBBIE REACHES AMONGST HIS PILES OF TOY COMPONENTS AND PULLS OUT A STRANGE HYBRID TOY. IT IS A PLASTIC KILLER WHALE WITH TWO MUSCULAR HUMAN ARMS INSTEAD OF FLIPPERS. ROBBIE MOVES THE ARMS A BIT.

HEAD ELF:

Do whales have arms?

ROBBIE:

Sebastian's got three!

ROBBIE TWISTS THE TAIL OF THE WHALE, AND A THIRD MUSCLY ARM POPS OUT ON THE WHALE'S BACK, WITH ONE OF THOSE ECHOEY TWANGS YOU GET ON SPRING-LOADED PLASTIC TOYS.

ROBBIE:

He needs them to fight his arch enemy - Octomonkey!

ROBBIE PULLS OUT A SECOND TOY WITH HIS OTHER HAND: IT IS THE HEAD OF A TOY MONKEY WITH EIGHT STUMPY OCTOPUS LEGS. ROBBIE BASHES SEBASTIAN WITH OCTOMONKEY

ROBBIE:

Grr - I'll get you Sebastian!

HEAD ELF REMOVES BOTH TOYS FROM ROBBIE'S GRASP.

HEAD ELF:

Sorry Robbie, I'll have to demote you again.

ROBBIE:

Oh, what's worse than sweeping up?

FACTORY FLOOR, CLEAR OF RUBBISH. TWO LARGE CRATES ON THE FLOOR. AN ELF WALKS INTO SHOT, BECKONING WITH ONE HAND. HE IS FOLLOWED ON BY A FORK LIFT TRUCK BEING DRIVEN BY AN ELF, BUT INTEND OF PROPER FORKS, THIS TRUCK HAS ROBBIE TIED TO ITS FRONT WITH HIS ANTLERS PROJECTING FORWARDS.

THE ELF DRIVES THE TRUCK TO ONE OF THE CRATES. ROBBIE IS LOWERED, HIS ANTLERS GO UNDERNEATH THE CRATE, THEN HE IS LIFTED AND THAT CRATE IS PLACED ON TOP OF THE OTHER.

THE FORKLIFT TRUCK IS TURNED OFF. HEAD ELF ENTERS, WITH A CLIPBOARD, FOLLOWED BY DONNER. HEAD ELF POINTS TO THE CRATES.

HEAD ELF:

These are the multigyms you wanted Miss Donner. Sign here please.

HE HANDS HER THE CLIPBOARD. AS SHE SIGNS IT, SHE LOOKS UP AND PEERS AT ROBBIE ON THE FORK LIFT TRUCK. HE PEERS BACK AT HER.

DONNER:

There's something familiar about that fork lift truck.

ROBBIE REMOVES HIS LITTLE GREEN HAT.

ROBBIE:

Hello Donner.

ROBBIE AND DONNER SITTING ON A STEP OUTSIDE THE FACTORY DOORS.
ROBBIE FIDDLES WITH HIS ELF HAT.

ROBBIE:

I was a rubbish deer. I'm even a rubbish elf. I'm worse than rubbish. If you threw me on a rubbish tip -

CUT TO A RUBBISH TIP - ROBBIE LANDS ON IT, HAVING PRESUMABLY BEEN THROWN ON BY AN UNSEEN FORCE.

ROBBIE:

(V/O) - the other rubbish would say -

A GASH IN A BIN BAG SPEAKS LIKE A MOUTH.

BIN BAG:

Cuh. There goes the neighbourhood.

CUT BACK TO ROBBIE AND DONNER ON THE STEP.

DONNER:

I still think you're good at something Robbie. I can't think what, but umm.... (SHE CLICKS HER FINGERS SEVERAL TIMES.) Ah! I know a way you could get back on the sleigh team.

ROBBIE:

How?

DONNER:

Just before Christmas there's a big sports tournament for reindeer. It's called the Reindeer Games. If you go all out to win a₂₆ medal you might just catch the boss's

eye. You might get your place back.

ROBBIE:

(DREAMILY) The Reindeer Games....

CUT TO ROBBIE'S IDEALISED FANTASY. CHARIOTS OF FIRE TYPE MUSIC. SFX: A CHEERING STADIUM. ROBBIE BOUNDING DOWN AN ATHLETICS TRACK IN SLOW MOTION WITH THE NUMERAL '1' ON HIS CHEST. CUT BACK TO ROBBIE AT THE FACTORY. HE IS PANTING.

ROBBIE:

No! I'm exhausted just thinking about it.

DONNER:

If you're going to do this Robbie, you'll have to work. Hard. But I'll help you.

ROBBIE:

Yeah. Yeah, I'll actually make a go of it. For me. For my dad. And most of all -

DONNER, ROBBIE, AND THE ELVES:

(TOGETHER) For Vixen.

DONNER:

Yeah. Beautiful Vixen.

ELF 2 MAKES A 'RABBITTING MOUTH' HAND GESTURE.

ELF 2:

Vixen, Vixen, Vixen.

ROBBIE:

She's so lovely, she's got these eyes, and she's got like these lips -

DONNER DRAGS ROBBIE OUT OF SHOT.

ARCTIC WASTES. DAY TIME. ROBBIE AND DONNER WALKING ALONG.

DONNER:

You can't train with the other reindeer. Blitzen'll do anything to stop you winning.

ROBBIE:

Oh come on. He's my best friend.

DONNER:

Have you ever been in Blitzen's room?

ROBBIE:

Well, no -

DONNER PULLS BINOCULARS, FOCUSSES THEM ON SOMETHING IN THE DISTANCE, THEN HANDS THEM TO ROBBIE, WHO LOOKS IN THE DIRECTION SHE WAS LOOKING. WE SEE ROBBIE'S POV, IN CIRCULAR BINOCULAR VISION. HE GETS A SLIGHTLY WOBBLY VIEW OF A WINDOW IN THE REINDEER LODGE. THROUGH THE WINDOW IS A WALL WITH A PHOTOGRAPH OF ROBBIE PINNED TO IT.

ROBBIE:

(V/O) There you go. He is my friend. He's got a picture of me on - oh.

A SALVO OF DARTS EMBED THEMSELVES RAPIDLY IN THE PHOTOGRAPH, FOLLOWED BY A COUPLE OF BIG KNIVES AND A MEAT CLEAVER, ALL THROWN. THE BINOCULAR POV TRACKS ACROSS TO THE SOURCE OF THE DARTS ETC: BLITZEN. BLITZEN HAS AN EFFIGY OF A RED NOSED REINDEER MADE OUT OF A TEDDY BEAR (WITH ANTLERS AND RED NOSE). HE PUTS THE EFFIGY IN A MINIATURE GUILLOTINE AND GLEEFULLY DECAPITATES IT.

ROBBIE:

(V/O) Oh dear.

CUT BACK TO ROBBIE AND DONNER. ROBBIE PUTS THE BINOCULARS DOWN.

ROBBIE:

I say we whop him good.

DONNER:

We'll need help.

DONNER GETS OUT A YELLOW PAGES, FLICKS THROUGH IT AND POINTS TO ONE ENTRY.

DONNER:

I looked in the phone book under 'Wise Old Coaches Who Can Save The Day' and there was only one in the area.

SHE PUTS THE YELLOW PAGES DOWN.

DONNER:

He's called Old Jingle.

ROBBIE:

I've heard of Old Jingle. He was old when my dad was a kid. He can't still be around.

DONNER STOPS WALKING, AND HOLDS OUT AN ARM TO STOP ROBBIE WALKING.

DONNER:

He is. And he lives somewhere.... on Pointy Mountain.

DONNER SHIELDS HER EYES AND SCANS THE HORIZON. ROBBIE'S NOSE QUIVERS AND MAKES A THEREMIN NOISE, THEN SPRINGS OUT STRAIGHT DIRECTLY AHEAD OF THEM. DONNER LOOKS IN THE DIRECTION OF ROBBIE'S NOSE.

INTERCUT DONNER AND ROBBIE LOOKING UP WITH LONG POV SWEEPS UP AN IMPOSSIBLY TALL AND NARROW ICY MOUNTAIN. EVERY TIME WE SEE ROBBIE AND DONNER, THEIR HEADS ARE FURTHER AND FURTHER BACK. EVENTUALLY THEIR HEADS ARE SO FAR BACK THEY ARE RE-EMERGING THROUGH THEIR LEGS. THAT'S HOW TALL THIS MOUNTAIN IS. FINALLY THE CAMERA COMES TO REST ON A SMALL RICKETY WOODEN SHACK WHICH TEETERS AND SPINS ON THE NEEDLE- LIKE SUMMIT OF POINTY MOUNTAIN.

CLOSE UP ON THE DOOR OF THE SHACK. A GRAPPLING HOOK SHOOTS UP FROM BELOW AND CATCHES ON THE DOOR HANDLE. ROBBIE AND DONNER CLIMB UP THE ROPE AND CLING ON TO THE HANDLE. ROBBIE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR. THE DOOR IMMEDIATELY OPENS OUTWARDS, WITH THEM STILL HANGING ON THE HANDLE. THEY BOTH YELP. IN THE DOORWAY STANDS OLD JINGLE: AN ELDERLY REINDEER₂₉ WITH A CROOKED BODY,

IRREGULAR ANTLERS AND MAD LOOK IN HIS EYE. ROBBIE PEEPS THROUGH LETTER BOX.

ROBBIE:

Is Old Jingle in?

OLD JINGLE:

Let me think.

OLD JINGLE'S HEAD MAKES LOTS OF RUSTY COG NOISES AND GOES ODD SHAPES.

OLD JINGLE:

Yes I am! Come, come in.

INTERIOR OF OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE. HIS WOODEN FURNITURE IS AS IRREGULAR IN SHAPE AS THE OUTSIDE OF THE HOUSE IS. ROBBIE AND DONNER FOLLOW OLD JINGLE. AS HE WALKS PAST THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM, THE HOUSE TEETERS OVER. ROBBIE AND DONNER SCUTTLE BACKWARDS TO COUNTERBALANCE OLD JINGLE. WOOD CREAKS. ROBBIE AND DONNER SIT ON A SOFA.

OLD JINGLE:

Stay there. I will put the kettle on.

OLD JINGLE GOES OUT OF VIEW, AND RE-ENTERS WITH AN ELECTRIC KETTLE BALANCED ON HIS HEAD. ROBBIE AND DONNER THROW EACH OTHER A 'MY GOD, WHO IS THIS?' GLANCE.

OLD JINGLE:

Well?

ROBBIE:

I want you train me Mr. Old Jingle sir. For the Reindeer Games.

OLD JINGLE:

I don't train anyone. Old Jingle is retired. So (BURBLES LIPS) blublublubu!!

OLD JINGLE TURNS AWAY. A FLY LANDS ON THE SOFA BEHIND DONNER. THE HOUSE CREAKS OFF BALANCE. DONNER MOVES A CUP ON A COFFEE TABLE AN INCH OR SO THE OTHER WAY, AND THE HOUSE RIGHTS ITSELF.

DONNER:

But you've got to take him on. Without your help he'll never beat Blitzen.

OLD JINGLE SPINS ROUND.

OLD JINGLE:

(MOUNTING ANGER) Blitzen. Blitzen you say? Is Blitzen involved in this?

DONNER:

You know Blitzen?

OLD JINGLE:

Never heard of him. But he's got to be stopped! What's your name?

ROBBIE:

Robbie.

OLD JINGLE:

Well Robbiepupil, let's get down the hill and I'll see what you're made of.

ROBBIE AND DONNER START TO GET OUT OF THEIR CHAIRS.

OLD JINGLE:

Don't get up.

ROBBIE AND DONNER FREEZE IN THEIR HALF-GOT-UP POSITIONS. OLD JINGLE WALKS TO ONE END OF THE ROOM AND STAMPS AS HARD AS HE CAN ON THE FLOOR. THE SHACK TEETERS AND CREAKS.

ROBBIE & DONNER:

(BOTH GULP)

LONG SHOT OF OLD JINGLE'S SHACK: IT TEETERS AND SWINGS AND FINALLY OVERBALANCES, SLIDING AND BOUNCING DOWN THE SIDE OF POINTY MOUNTAIN.

ARCTIC WASTES. OLD JINGLE'S SHACK SKIDS ACROSS THE ICE AND STOPS DEAD WHEN IT HITS A SMALL ROCK. ROBBIE, DONNER, AND OLD JINGLE ARE EACH THROWN OUT OF A DIFFERENT WINDOW. OLD JINGLE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO LANDS ON HIS FEET; ROBBIE LAND HEAD FIRST IN THE SNOW SO THEIR BODIES ARE STICKING OUT. IN A MARTIAL ARTS POSE. SOUND FX: JAPANESE GONG.

OLD JINGLE:

Let us begin!

OLD JINGLE IN FRONT OF DONNER AND ROBBIE. OLD JINGLE HAS A FLIP CHART WITH A LINE DRAWING OF SANTA ON A SLEIGH WITH REINDEER.

OLD JINGLE:

So Robbiepupil. You want to be on the sleigh. Then you will enter only one event - the Steeplechase. The Boss Man is always looking for fast hurdlers to dodge the rooftops.

OLD JINGLE FLICKS VERY FAST THROUGH THE FLIP CHART, MAKING A DIAGRAMMATIC ANIMATION OF REINDEER HURDLING ROOVES WITH SANTA'S SLEIGH. OLD JINGLE PRESSES HIS FACE AGAINST ROBBIE'S.

OLD JINGLE:

You must win the steeplechase!

OLD JINGLE WITH A STOPWATCH. ROBBIE IN CROUCHING POSITION, NEXT TO HEAD ELF MOUNTED ON A SNOWMOBILE. OLD JINGLE CLICKS THE STOPWATCH.

OLD JINGLE:

Go!

THE ELF TEARS OFF ON THE SNOWMOBILE. ROBBIE SPRINTS ALONGSIDE, BUT TIRES VERY QUICKLY AND SINKS TO HIS KNEES.

OLD JINGLE:

Move, Robbiefool!

ROBBIE STANDING IN FRONT OF A HURDLE. OLD JINGLE TIES HIS LEGS TOGETHER.

OLD JINGLE:

Jump the hurdle.

ROBBIE:

I can't. You tied my legs together.

OLD JINGLE:

You can. If you use your nose. Bounce with your nose.

ROBBIE JUMPS, LANDS ON HIS NOSE, KEELS OVER AND FALLS. HE LIES ON THE GROUND.

ROBBIE:

Oh, forget it.

ROBBIE GETS UP. HE LOOKS AT THE HURDLE.

ROBBIE:

Bet my dad could have done it.

OLD JINGLE:

You can be as good as your dad Robbiepupil. You think him perfect; no-one is. He did not even win at the Reindeer Games.

ROBBIE:

How do you know?

OLD JINGLE:

Because I beat him. He's just a man, like all of us.

ROBBIE:

Actually, we're all reindeer.

OLD JINGLE LOOKS AT HIMSELF AND SHAKES WITH SURPRISE.

OLD JINGLE:

That explains a lot. (TWANGING ANTLERS) These for a start. Jump it!

ROBBIE:

I can't.

OLD JINGLE PICKS UP ROBBIE, THROWS HIM AT THE GROUND NOSE FIRST, AND ROBBIE BOUNCES OVER THE HURDLE.

OLD JINGLE:

Oh yes you can.

MACHO TRAINING-TYPE MUSIC BEGINS, AND RUNS THROUGHOUT THIS MONTAGE.

ROBBIE FACE DOWN, DOING NOSE PRESS UPS. HIS FRONT LEGS ARE BEHIND HIS BACK. HE REALLY HAS TO STRAIN TO DO THESE. HIS NOSE GOES FLAT, THEN CIRCULAR, AS HE FLEXES IT AND LIFTS HIMSELF. OLD JINGLE SQUATS BY HIS SIDE, DONNA COUNTS, HOLDING A STOPWATCH.

DONNER:

Twelve...thirteen...fourteen....(etc.)

OLD JINGLE:

(WHILE DONNER IS COUNTING) Your nose is a great ally, Robbiepupil. It must be supple - yet strong. You will have bogies like springs. Trust your nose!

OLD JINGLE, ROBBIE, AND THE HEAD ELF ON THE SNOWMOBILE, ALL IN THE SAME POSITION AS BEFORE. OLD JINGLE WITH THE STOPWATCH.

OLD JINGLE:

Go!

THE ELF AND ROBBIE RACE AS BEFORE, BUT ROBBIE KEEPS LEVEL WITH THE SNOWMOBILE THIS TIME.

OLD JINGLE:

Faster! Faster! You are walking!

ROBBIE RUNS INTO THE POLAR BEAR.

POLAR BEAR:

Oi!

A CALENDAR ON THE WALL IN OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE. OLD JINGLE'S HOOF SNATCHES OFF THE DATES - WE GO THROUGH LATE OCTOBER AND EARLY NOVEMBER.

ROBBIE ON A PHYSIOTHERAPY BENCH IN OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE. DONNER SHUFFLES ROBBIE LIKE A PACK OF CARDS, SPLITTING HIM IN TWO THEM KNOTTING HIM BACK TOGETHER AGAIN. ALL THE SOUND EFFECTS ARE FROM A PACK OF CARDS.

ROBBIE DOING NOSE PRESS UPS AGAIN; ROBBIE, DONNER AND OLD JINGLE IN THE SAME POSITIONS AS BEFORE.

DONNER:

Forty nine - fifty - fifty one.....

JINGLE HOLDS A STICK IN FRONT OF HIM. ROBBIE STANDS ON HIS NOSE. ROBBIE STARTS BOUNCING BACK AND FORTH OVER THE STICK, AND ONLY HIS NOSE TOUCHES THE GROUND.

JINGLE:

Higher! Higher!

THE CALENDAR ON OLD JINGLE'S WALL. DATES ARE RIPPED OFF AGAIN - LATE NOVEMBER TO EARLY DECEMBER. THEN WE SEE OLD JINGLE'S HEAD - HE IS EATING THE LEAVES OF THE CALENDAR. THEN HE OPENS HIS MOUTH WIDE AND EATS THE ENTIRE CALENDAR.

ROBBIE, OLD JINGLE AND HEAD ELF, STARTING THE RACE ONCE MORE. OLD JINGLE CLICKS STOPWATCH.

OLD JINGLE:

Go!

ROBBIE AND THE HEAD ELF RACE AWAY. THEY ARE NECK AND NECK FOR A FEW SECONDS, THEN ROBBIE PUTS ON A PHENOMENAL BURST OF SPEED AND POWERS INTO THE LEAD.

CUT TO DONNER WITH A CHEQUERED FLAG. ROBBIE STREAKS BY, LITTLE MORE THAN A BLUR. SHE WAVES THE FLAG VIGOROUSLY. OLD JINGLE, ROBBIE, AND THE HEAD ELF ALL RUN UP TO HER; THEY ALL CELEBRATE AND PUNCH THE AIR. THE ICE RUMBLES AND CRACKS UNDERNEATH ROBBIE: THE HEAD OF A HUGE BLUE WHALE BURSTS THROUGH THE ICE AND CARRIES HIM UP ON ITS BACK, INTO THE AIR. ROBBIE'S FRIENDS KEEP CELEBRATING ON THE ICE AS ROBBIE STANDS ABOVE THEM WITH HIS ARMS ALOFT. ROBBIE IS THEN SHOT UP INTO THE AIR ON A PLUME OF WATER FROM THE WHALE'S BLOW HOLE. THE MUSIC REACHES A THUNDERING CLIMAX AND THAT IS THE END OF THE TRAINING MONTAGE.

ARCTIC WASTES, DAY. OLD JINGLE, DONNER, AND ROBBIE OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR OF OLD JINGLE'S SHACK. DONNER AND ROBBIE ARE HOLDING SPORTS HOLDALLS. THEY EACH HUG OLD JINGLE.

ROBBIE:

Thanks Old Jingle.

OLD JINGLE:

Old Jingle will watch you win tomorrow. Remember Robbiepupil, stick to good food. You are what you eat.

OLD JINGLE PULLS OUT A BAG OF PEANUTS AND EATS A FEW.

OLD JINGLE:

Mm. Nuts.

ROBBIE AND DONNER WAVE AND EXIT. OLD JINGLE LOOKS AT HIS HOUSE.

OLD JINGLE:

This is much better spot for a house. I can get in and out, I could have a garden; I'd have to be raving mad to push house back up the hill.

OLD JINGLE'S HEAD DOES SOMETHING CRAZY.

A 45° ICY SLOPE. OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE HEAVES INTO VIEW, COMING UP THE SLOPE, AND OLD JINGLE IS PUSHING BEHIND IT. HE IS CLEARLY AT THE VERY EDGE OF HIS PHYSICAL ABILITIES. HIS ARMS ARE WOBBLING ALL OVER THE PLACE WITH THE EFFORT AND THE WEIGHT OF THE HOUSE.

OLD JINGLE:

(PUFFS AND GRUNTS) One day I will be too old, too weak to do this. But that day will not come for - aarggh!

OLD JINGLE'S CREAKING, QUIVERING LIMBS CANNOT SUPPORT THE HOUSE ANY MORE, AND IT SLIDES DOWN THE SLOPE, TAKING OLD JINGLE UNDER IT.

DAYTIME. DES YETI AND ALAN SNOWMAN IN A COMMENTARY BOX, HOLDING MICROPHONES. DES YETI IS A LARGE AND MUCH HAIRIER VERSION OF DES LYNAM. ALAN SNOWMAN, DESPITE HIS CARROT NOSE AND BLACK HAT, BEARS A FACIAL RESEMBLANCE TO ALAN HANSEN.

DES YETI:

(TO CAMERA) I'm Des Yeti, and this is Alan Snowman. Welcome to the Reindeer Games.

COMPUTER GRAPHICS IDENT: SOME CLASSICAL MUSIC AND A LOGO THAT SAYS 'THE REINDEER GAMES' SHOWING A LEAPING REINDEER WITH A FLAMING TORCHES INSTEAD OF ANTLERS, AND A NUMBER OF OLYMPIAN COLOURED RINGS.

DES AND ALAN IN COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

And the opening ceremony is already under way.

CUT TO STADIUM GATES - THEY ARE ORNATE, WHITE AND CRYSTALLINE. THEY OPEN. A TINY REINDEER TROTS IN HOLDING A LIT TORCH. SFX: CROWD CLAPPING.

DES:

(V/O) A little reindeer there, symbolising hope for the future of reindeer.

THE LITTLE REINDEER TROTS OUT OF VIEW. A SINGLE REINDEER WALKS IN, WEARING A COLOSSAL CARNIVAL HEAD OF A REINDEER. THIS DEER WAVES.

DES:

(V/O) A reindeer with a big head there, symbolising, err....

ALAN:

(V/O) Things with big heads.

ENTER PRANCER HOLDING A BIG FLAG ON A FLAGPOLE.

DES:

(V/O) Prancer there.

PRANCER STOPS, LOOKS BOTH WAYS, UNSCREWS THE POLE INTO TWO SECTIONS, DROPS THE BOTTOM SECTION, WIGGLES THE TOP SECTION, AND A LONG CAN OF HAY-NICKEN DROPS INTO HIS PALM FROM INSIDE THE TOP BIT OF THE FLAGPOLE.

DES:

There have been rumours about his refuelling habits.

MRS.CHRISTMAS IN VIP BOX. SANTA APPEARS NEXT TO HER. HE IS WEARING A 1970s ROCK STAR HARLEQUIN JUMP₃₈SUIT. SANTA SHOWS IT OFF.

SANTA:

Retrochic? Not retrochic enough?

MRS.CHRISTMAS SHIELDS HER EYES.

MRS.CHRISTMAS:

I'm not with him.

CUT TO THE THREE TEN TONNERS, WHO ARE ALL HUGE WALRUSES DRESSED AS OPERA SINGERS.

DES:

(V/O) And here come the three ten tonners.

THE CROWD CHATTER GOES QUIET. THE WALRUSES GATHER ROUND A MICROPHONE AND SING OPERA FOR A FEW MOMENTS, THEN CLAP THEIR FLIPPERS AND BEG FOR FISH LIKE SEALS AT THE ZOO. FROM THE WINGS, THREE FISH COME FLYING INTO THEIR MOUTHS. THEN THEY CONTINUE TO SING.

DES AND ALAN IN THE COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

So on with the games. The question everyone's asking is, Which reindeer will be the star?

A DARK CHANGING ROOM, WITH A MIRROR AND A FEW PEGS ON THE WALL. ABOVE THE PEG IS A GOLD PLAQUE THAT SAYS 'BLITZEN.' BLITZEN STANDS IN FRONT OF A MIRROR. HE TAKES AN ATHLETE'S BIB OFF THE PEG AND PUTS IT ON. IT SAYS '1'. BLITZEN BREATHES DEEPLY. HE PULLS OUT A BOTTLE OF PILLS. HE EATS A TINY PILL. SUDDENLY HIS MUSCLES GROW AND HIS ANTLERS SPRING OUT STRAIGHT.

STADIUM. BLITZEN THROWS AN ICICLE AS A JAVELIN. HUGE ROAR OF CROWD, MASSIVE APPLAUSE. BLITZEN JUMPS IN THE AIR

STADIUM. LONG JUMP PIT WITH DISTANCES UP THE SIDE. BLITZEN LANDS BEYOND THE DISTANCE MARKINGS. CROWD ROAR, BLITZEN PUNCHES THE AIR.

BLITZEN AND VIXEN FINISHING AN ICE DANCE, BOTH WEARING SKATES, AND VIXEN WEARING SOME SILLY SKIRT. THEY BOTH SMILE HUGE SMILES. AS THE MUSIC ENDS, THEY STRIKE A POSE AND FLOWERS LAND AROUND THEM. HUGE APPLAUSE. REINDEER JUDGES HOLD UP CARDS THAT SAY '5.8' and '5.9'

REINDEER JUDGE:

(DABBING EYE WITH TISSUE) The most searingly erotic interpretation of My Old Man's A Dustman I have ever seen!

ICY WASTES. OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE. HEAD ELF WALKS PAST, WITH SUPERMARKET CARRIER BAGS WITH A COUPLE OF FRENCH STICKS POKING OUT. THE HOUSE MOVES A LITTLE, THEN LIFTS UP A FRACTION AND OLD JINGLE'S HEAD POPS OUT. THE ELF TURNS TO LOOK.

OLD JINGLE:

I seem to be on the wrong side of my floor.

DES AND ALAN IN THE COMMENTARY BOX. SFX: HUGE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE.

ALAN:

Superb.

DES:

Blitzen hasn't lost an event yet. But it's not over - the most important event is still to come. The steeplechase.

ALAN:

Aye Des. The steeplechase.

DES GLANCES SOMEWHERE ELSE.

DES:

We've got a late entrant. Seems to have some kind of a big red nose.

ALAN:

You're talking about little Robbie there. The son of Ru -

BLITZEN FLIES INTO THE COMMENTARY BOX. HE CLAMPS HIS HOOF ON ALAN'S MOUTH AND WRESTLES ALAN TO THE FLOOR, VIOLENTLY. MICROPHONES ARE KNOCKED OVER. DES BACKS AWAY.

BLITZEN:

Don't say the name.

STADIUM, TRACK SIDE. REINDEER FLING THEMSELVES OFF A DIVING BOARD AND EMBED THEMSELVES IN ICE. ROBBIE AND DONNER. ROBBIE IS WEARING A BLACK NUMBER ON A WHITE CARD, WITH FIVE AND A HALF IN NUMERALS.

ROBBIE:

I wanted a whole number. Where's Old Jingle?

DONNER:

Robbie. Focus.

CUT TO BLITZEN AND VIXEN, TRACKSIDE.

BLITZEN:

Why is he here? How come he's not dead?

VIXEN:

Oh, he's useless anyway. Everyone's here to₄₁ see you. Wave to them, go on.

BLITZEN WAVES TO THE CROWD. SFX: AUDIENCE APPLAUSE. CUT TO THE THREE TEN TONNERS CLAPPING VIGOROUSLY. ONE OF THE THREE TEN TONNERS STANDS UP, WOBBLER, OVERBALANCES, AND SMASHES THROUGH A WOODEN BALUSTRADE AT THE SIDE OF THE VIP BOX. THE WALRUS FALLS TOWARD THE GROUND. THE CROWD GASP. BENEATH THE WALRUS, A BABY SEAL WITH AN ICE CREAM CONE LOOKS UP AT THE WALRUS, WHICH IS ALREADY CASTING A SHADOW ON THE SEAL.

CUT TO ROBBIE GASPING AT THE FALLING WALRUS. ROBBIE SPRINTS OFF, LEAPS OVER ADVERTISING HOARDINGS, DIGITAL SCOREBOARDS, AND SNATCHES THE BABY SEAL TO SAFETY. A SPLIT SECOND LATER, HE DASHES BACK AND SAVES THE ICE CREAM CONE TOO. A SPLIT SECOND AFTER THAT, THE BIG WALRUS HITS THE GROUND WITH A HUGE THUD AND PANCAKES OUT. ROBBIE PUTS THE SEAL ON THE GROUND AND IT TODDLES OFF. ROBBIE BOWS TO THE CROWD. SFX: CROWD APPLAUD. CUT TO THE FALLEN WALRUS; IT'S APPLAUDING TOO. CUT TO BLITZEN AND VIXEN, WHOSE JAWS ARE SLACK WITH ASTONISHMENT.

DONNER RUNS UP TO ROBBIE AND HUGS HIM. THEY HUG FOR SLIGHTLY TOO LONG AND BOTH SPRING BACK WITH EMBARRASSMENT. CUT TO VIXEN AND BLITZEN:

BLITZEN:

(MAKES A SERIES OF ANXIOUS HIGH PITCHED NOISES WHILE POINTING AT ROBBIE)

VIXEN:

I'll handle it.

VIXEN WALKS CONFIDENTLY UP TO ROBBIE.

VIXEN:

Robbie. Let's not beat about the bush. You love me, you'll do anything to please me. I don't want you to run in the steeplechase. There, that's sorted that out. Must go.

ROBBIE:

Sorry Vixen. I'm going to run. And try to win and everything.

VIXEN:

No, no, how it works is, Blitzen wins, he gets famous, he gets me out of this dive, and - you spoke to me. Robbie, you can't speak to₄₂ me because you love me so much.

What are you up to?

ROBBIE SHRUGS.

ROBBIE:

I grew up. Now I can talk to anyone I like.

ENTER DONNER

DONNER:

Robbie, you all set?

ROBBIE LOOKS AT DONNER. FOR A SECOND, WE SEE HER HOW HE SEES HER; BEAUTIFUL, SOFT FOCUS, WREATHED IN GLORY. CU BACK TO ROBBIE - HE IS SWEATING AND UNABLE TO FORM WORDS, LIKE WHEN HE MET VIXEN AT THE PARTY.

ROBBIE:

Bw....uhhh.....err -

VIXEN:

You have no taste.

EXIT VIXEN.

DONNER:

What's the matter Robbie?

ROBBIE:

Err.....wh.....bu.....uh.....

ENTER HEAD ELF ON A SNOWMOBILE, SKIDS TO A STOP.

HEAD ELF:

Robbie! Old Jingle's trapped under his house! I can't lift it Robbie!

VOICE ON TANNOY:

All runners assemble for the steeplechase!

ROBBIE LOOKS BETWEEN THE TANNOY, THE ELF, AND DONNER.

ROBBIE:

(TO HEAD ELF) Let's go!

EXIT ROBBIE AT GREAT SPEED, FOLLOWED BY THE ELF ON THE SNOWMOBILE.

DES AND ALAN IN COMMENTARY BOX

DES:

The little reindeer's actually running out of the stadium.

ALAN:

You never win a race that way Des. That's inexperience.

ROBBIE RUNNING VERY FAST ACROSS ARCTIC WASTES. HE STOPS AT OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE, WHICH HAS OLD JINGLE'S HEAD POKING OUT FROM UNDERNEATH. ROBBIE TRIES TO LIFT THE HOUSE - WITH A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT, HE CAN RAISE IT A FRACTION.

ROBBIE:

(WHILE HE LIFTS) Old Jingle. Talk to me!

OLD JINGLE CAN ONLY GROAN WEAKLY. THE ELF ARRIVES.

ROBBIE:

Too heavy! I need something to wedge underneath.

THE ELF STARTS EMPTYING COPIOUS POCKETS. IT GETS OUT A SANDWICH, A HANKIE, THEN SEBASTIAN THE WHALE.

ROBBIE:

Sebastian!

ROBBIE HOLDS HOUSE UP WITH HIS SHOULDER. ELF HANDS SEBASTIAN TO ROBBIE. ROBBIE TWISTS THE TAIL AND SEBASTIAN'S THIRD ARM POPS OUT. ROBBIE WEDGES THE TOY UNDERNEATH SO ITS ARM/ ARMS SUPPORTS THE HOUSE. ROBBIE TRIES TO PULL OLD₄₄ JINGLE OUT. OLD JINGLE

CANNOT BE MOVED.

ROBBIE:

It's not enough -

ELF GETS OUT OCTOMONKEY

ROBBIE:

Octomonkey!

ROBBIE HOLDS SEBASTIAN, LIFTS UP SEBASTIAN AND THE HOUSE, AND WEDGES OCTOMONKEY UNDERNEATH SEBASTIAN. ROBBIE PULLS OLD JINGLE CLEAR OF THE HOUSE, AND CRADLES OLD JINGLE IN HIS ARMS.

ROBBIE:

Sebastian and Octomonkey - they joined forces for the very first time!

THE HOUSE CREAKS AND FALLS, AND SEBASTIAN AND OCTOMONKEY ARE SHATTERED UNDER ITS WEIGHT.

OLD JINGLE:

See? Kid strong. Very strong.

ROBBIE:

(CRYING) Everything's going to be all right Old Jingle.

OLD JINGLE:

(WEAK COUGH) Farewell.... Robbiefriend.

OLD JINGLE EXHALES AND HIS EYES CLOSE. THE CAMERA STARTS TO CREEP BACKWARDS, LIKE ON E.R. WHEN SOMEONE DIES. ROBBIE SOBS AS HE CLINGS ON TO OLD JINGLE. THE ELF REMOVES HIS HAT RESPECTFULLY. OLD JINGLE SNORES. THE CAMERA CRASH ZOOMS BACK IN.

ROBBIE:

Jingle!

OLD JINGLE SNORTS AND WAKES UP.

OLD JINGLE:

Can't Old Jingle have a nap? (TAPPING CHEST) He deserves one. Now when does this race start?

CUT TO STADIUM: A GUN IS FIRED AND SEVERAL REINDEER, INCLUDING BLITZEN AND PRANCER, START RUNNING ROUND THE TRACK. CUT BACK TO ROBBIE AND OLD JINGLE. THE GUNSHOT IS ECHOING ROUND THE MOUNTAINS.

OLD JINGLE:

Well? Run!

ROBBIE DARTS OFF, SPRINTING ACROSS THE ARCTIC WASTES.

STADIUM, RACETRACK. SFX THROUGHOUT THE RACE: EXCITED CROWD AND THUNDERING HOOVES. BLITZEN TAKES THE LEAD. BLITZEN LEAPS OVER A HURDLE.

CUT TO DES AND ALAN IN THE COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

Blitzen takes the early lead.

ALAN:

Superb.

DES:

And it seems that fears about Prancer's form have been realised.

CUT TO PRANCER HUFFING AND PUFFING ALONG THE TRACK BY HIMSELF. HE LAUNCHES HIMSELF AT A HURDLE, AND JUST HEADBUTTS IT.

ARCTIC WASTES. ROBBIE DASHING PAST, VERY FAST.

DES AND ALAN IN COMMENTARY BOX

DES:

Blitzen way out in front now -

CUT TO BLITZEN RUNNING AND HURDLING ON THE TRACK. A FLASH BULB GOES OFF. BLITZEN STOPS.

BLITZEN:

No pictures please.

ANOTHER FLASH BULB GOES.

BLITZEN:

Oh, all right, just a couple.

BLITZEN DOES A VARIETY OF SILLY ATHLETIC POSES, MORE FLASH BULBS GO OFF.

ELF FACTORY. ROBBIE DASHES PAST. ELVES CHEER AND THROW THEIR HATS IN THE AIR.

STADIUM. DONNER SLUMPS DEJECTED IN A SEAT. CHEERING DEER ON THEIR FEET EITHER SIDE OF HER. CUT TO THE GATES; ROBBIE CRASHES THROUGH. ROBBIE ON THE TRACK, JUMPS ONE HURDLE. CUT BACK TO DONNER. DONNER LEAPS TO HER FEET.

DONNER:

Robbie!

CUT TO DES AND ALAN IN THE COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

Number Five and a half has finally started the race!

ALAN:

The guy's a no-hoper Des. He's three laps behind.

DES:

I think you'll find it's just become two laps.

CUT TO ROBBIE ON THE TRACK, MOVING VERY FAST THROUGH THE PACK OF RUNNING REINDEER.

CUT TO BLITZEN GLANCING NERVOUSLY OVER HIS SHOULDER AND RUNNING AS HARD AS HE CAN. BLITZEN TRIES TO TAKE A HURDLE WHILE LOOKING BEHIND HIM, WHICH CAUSES HIM TO LOSE HIS FOOTING AND STUMBLE. HE RUNS ON.

DES:

Robbie now just one lap behind.

ROBBIE RUNS THROUGH PACK OF DEER AGAIN. CUT TO DONNER

DONNER:

Come on! Come on!

CUT TO ROBBIE JUMPING A HURDLE AND CATCHING UP WITH BLITZEN. THEY RUN NECK AND NECK. EXCITEMENT OF CROWD NOISE GOES UP A NOTCH. CUT TO DES AND ALAN IN THE COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

We've got a real race now! Robbie and Blitzen, neck and neck. What a marvellous sporting occasion this is turning out to be.

CUT TO BLITZEN AND ROBBIE RUNNING.

BLITZEN:

Still don't get it do you? This is for you -

BLITZEN RAMS INTO ROBBIE, BUT ROBBIE JUST ABOUT KEEPS RUNNING.

BLITZEN:

- and this is for daddy.

BLITZEN SWINGS HIS ANTLERS LOW AND TRIPS UP ALL OF ROBBIE'S LEGS AT ONCE WITH A BIG CRUNCH. CROWD SFX: OUTRAGED 'Oohs!' AND WHISTLES. ROBBIE TUMBLES OVER AND OVER. BLITZEN STREAKS OFF INTO THE LEAD. ROBBIE TAKES A COUPLE OF LIMPING STEPS, BUT ONE OF HIS LEGS IS OBVIOUSLY LAMED. HE SINKS TO HIS KNEES.

BLITZEN:

One hurdle - one to go -

OLD JINGLE AND THE HEAD ELF SITTING IN THE WRECKAGE OF OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE, WITH VARIOUS SECTIONS OF WALL AND UPRIGHTS STICKING OUT AT CRAZY ANGLES. THEY ARE WATCHING THE REINDEER GAMES ON OLD JINGLE'S TELEVISION.

OLD JINGLE:

Robbie - the nose jump. Use the nose jump!

STADIUM, TRACKSIDE. CLOSE UP OF DONNER.

DONNER:

The nose jump Robbie, the nose jump!

CUT TO ROBBIE ON THE TRACK. HE TAKES A TOTTERING STEP BACKWARDS, THEN JUMPS ON TO HIS NOSE AND BOUNCES OUT OF VIEW.

CUT TO BLITZEN, RUNNING TOWARDS THE FINAL HURDLE. AS BLITZEN TAKES THE HURDLE, ROBBIE FLIES OVER HIS HEAD.

CUT TO THE FINISHING LINE. THEY BOTH CROSS IT AT THE SAME MOMENT, ROBBIE FALLING ACROSS IT AND BLITZEN DIVING ACROSS IT SO THEY BOTH END UP PRONE. HUGE AUDIENCE GASP. ROBBIE AND BLITZEN ARE BOTH TRAMPLED BY THE REST OF THE FIELD OF REINDEER. CUT TO DES AND ALAN:

DES:

It's a photo finish.

TRACKSIDE. AN ELF WITH A POLAROID CAMERA. THE CAMERA SPITS OUT A UNDEVELOPED POLAROID. THE ELF HOLDS THE PICTURE, AND ROBBIE AND BLITZEN STAND LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER, BOTH QUIVERING WITH TENSION. ROBBIE IS HAS QUITE A FEW HOOF INDENTATIONS ON HIS BODY. THE STADIUM IS SILENT. CLOSE-UP OF THE POLAROID - THERE ARE A FEW FAINT YELLOW AREAS. CUT TO ROBBIE AND BLITZEN SWEATING. CLOSE-UP OF THE POLAROID - IT DEVELOPS, AND SHOWS BOTH THE CONTESTANT'S NOSES, WITH BLITZEN'S JUST OVER THE₄₉ LINE.

THE ELF POINTS TO BLITZEN.

ELF:

And the winner by a nose is - Blitzen!

THE CROWD MUMBLE. BLITZEN RAISES HIS ARMS.

BLITZEN:

Yeeeeeeesss!

ROBBIE COLLAPSES. THE CROWD GASPS. DONNER PUSHES HER WAY BETWEEN A COUPLE OF REINDEER, RUNS OUT AND CATCHES ROBBIE.

DONNER:

Robbie. I'm proud of you and I always want you to know that.

ROBBIE:

Uhhh - vuuu - uh...

DONNER:

I need to know something. Can you not talk to me because you love me, or because you've just been trampled by a herd of reindeer?

ROBBIE:

Uh...

DONNER:

I'm a physiotherapist, not a poet, but - when I'm near you my ventricles dilate and contract at an increased rate causing momentary giddiness and disorientation.

ROBBIE:

Wh?

DONNER:

Oh, shut up.

DONNER KISSES ROBBIE FULL ON THE LIPS. ROBBIE'S BODY SPRINGS TO LIFE AND HIS TAIL VIBRATES. SWELLING MUSIC.

STADIUM. ROBBIE BOUNDS AROUND WHOOPING FOR JOY. HE PICKS UP A HANDFUL OF JAVELINS AND THROWS THEM.

ROBBIE ZOOMS OVER THE POLE VAULT.

POLAR BEAR ON THE ICY WASTES. A JAVELIN STICKS IN ITS RUMP.

POLAR BEAR:

Oi!

DES AND ALAN IN THE COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

And incredibly, Robbie is now beating all the records for every event!

STADIUM. ROBBIE PICKS DONNER OFF HER FEET AND THROWS HER AROUND IN A SPECTACULAR ICE DANCE MOVE. THE JUDGE REINDEER HOLD UP CARDS SHOWING A CLEAN RUN OF 6.0s.

DES AND ALAN IN COMMENTARY BOX.

DES:

He's got no medals but the people love him!

ALAN:

I always said it didn't I. Little Robbie - brilliant.

DES:

Can't remember you saying that Alan. Don't make me get out the three-bar fire.

ALAN:

I always said it. Little Robbie, he is -

DES GETS OUT A 3-BAR ELECTRIC FIRE. HE FLICKS A SWITCH AND THE ELEMENTS GLOW BRIGHT ORANGE. BEADS OF WATER RUN DOWN ALAN'S FACE.

ALAN:

I never said it! I'm a big snowman liar.

TRACKSIDE. BLITZEN IS STANDING ON A PODIUM, WITH A NUMBER OF GOLD MEDALS ROUND HIS NECK. HE WAVES THEM IN THE AIR, FLUSTERED. A SUCCESSION OF DEER AND ELVES STREAK PAST, NOT PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO HIM. VIXEN LEANS AGAINST THE PODIUM, DRUMMING HER HOOVES. SHE WALKS AWAY, TALKING AS SHE GOES:

VIXEN:

Incidentally, you're chucked.

ENTER THE ELF WHO HELD THE PHOTO. HE NOW HOLDS A URINE SAMPLE JUG.

ELF:

Time to give a sample Mr.Blitzen.

BLITZEN LOOKS TERRIFIED.

TRACKSIDE. ROBBIE IS SITTING ON THE SHOULDERS OF TWO REINDEER - ONE OF THEM IS DONNER. MANY FLASH BULBS GO OFF. ROBBIE LOOKS UP - AN AIRSHIP FLIES PAST, FLYING A PENNANT OFF THE BACK THAT READS 'WELL DONE SON.' THE AIRSHIP HAS A RED LIGHT ON THE FRONT OF IT.

THE RUINS OF OLD JINGLE'S SHACK. OLD JINGLE AND THE HEAD ELF DANCE AND WHOOP.

OLD JINGLE:

Will you marry me?

HEAD ELF:

Of course I will, you crazy fool!

THEY EMBRACE.

STADIUM, ROBBIE STILL ON SHOULDERS. ENTER SANTA IN A BIG BRAZILIAN GIRL-ON-A-FLOAT MARDI GRAS COSTUME (BUT STILL WITH SANTA HAT). SANTA TURNS ROUND, ARMS OUT.

ROBBIE:

Now *that* is you.

SANTA:

Ever led a sleigh before Robbie?

ROBBIE:

No.

SANTA:

Well you'd better get some practice in. Here -

SANTA THROWS SOME CAR KEYS TO ROBBIE.

SANTA:

It's yours for the night.

MUSIC STARTS. ROBBIE PULLING THE SLEIGH THROUGH MOONLIT CLOUDS. WE SEE DONNER IN THE BACK OF THE SLEIGH. BOTH ARE VERY HAPPY. ROBBIE'S NOSE TWITCHES UPWARDS. HE GUIDES THE SLEIGH GENTLY UP, THE CLOUDS PART AND WE SEE HE IS HEADING TOWARDS THE MOON.

ROLL END TITLES. SEVERAL VIGNETTES UNDERNEATH TITLES:

- VIXEN STANDING IN ICY WASTES HITCH-HIKING WITH A SIGN THAT SAYS 'ANYWHERE'. BLURS OF TRAFFIC FLASH PAST.

- OLD JINGLE AND THE HEAD ELF USING OLD JINGLE'S HOUSE AS A SEE SAW ON TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN.

- (THERE WILL ALSO BE VIGNETTES SHOWING WHAT SANTA AND BLITZEN ARE UP TO)

THE ELF FACTORY, PRODUCTION LINE. AN ELF IS PAINTING RED NOSES ON A SEQUENCE OF ROBBIE DOLLS.

SURFACE OF THE MOON. ROBBIE LANDS THE SLEIGH GENTLY, HELPS DONNER OUT, LEADS HER UP TO A HIGH ROCK, AND THEY SIT ON IT WITH THEIR BACKS TO US, LOOKING AT THE EARTH.

(IN END CREDITS, WE INCLUDE THE MESSAGE: 'Coming soon - Sebastian Muscledhale in "*The Genesis of Octomonkey*"')

POST SIG:

DARK, THE STADIUM. PRANCER IS STILL PUFFING AND PANTING ROUND THE TRACK.

DES:

(V/O, SOUNDING TIRED) Prancer just coming up to the half way mark....