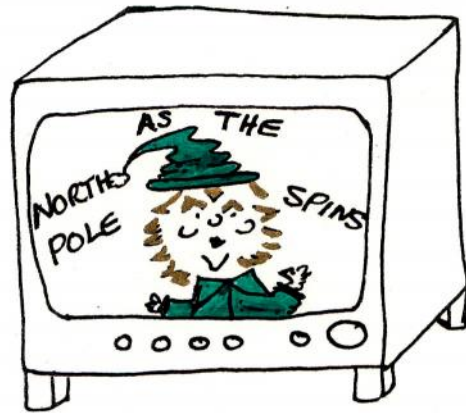
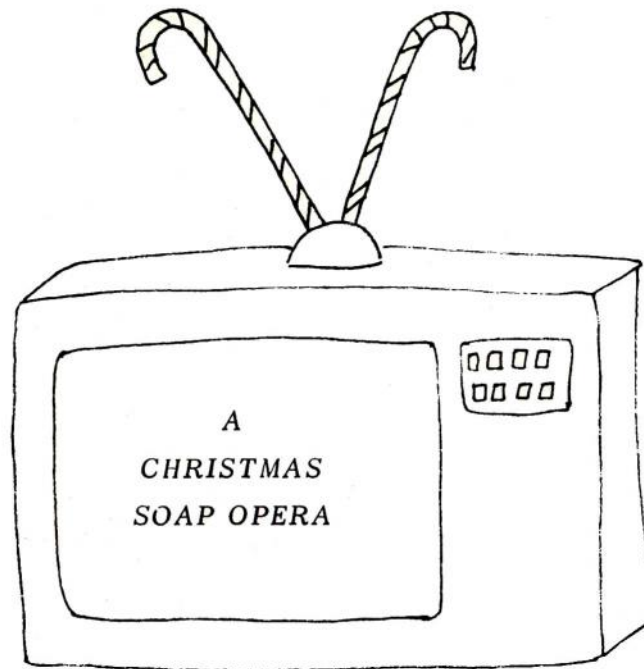




A CHRISTMAS SOAP OPERA



S. KIRBY



Welcome to the glorious, strange and wonderful world of continuing holidaytime drama. You will meet chimerical Christmas characters and malevolent villains. You will feast your eyes (if you're bold) on amorous adventures. You will witness dastardly deeds, fabulous and fearless feats of daring-do, evil exploits, and such other excitements as never before imagined.

We are about to begin Episode 9. Since many of you are tuning in for the first time, the sponsor would like to introduce you to the cast and bring you up to date.

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In the more remote reaches of the world, somewhat east of Hollywood and north of Broadway, there is a land inhabited by Christmas Monsters. Into this land was born--of Maraschino and Spruce Monster--a female offspring, Purple Monster, nicknamed PM. Since Christmas Monsterland at that time was inhabited only by red and green Christmas Monsters, PM had to overcome awesome obstacles to audition for and win the contest to become Santa's lead sleigh puller. In succeeding stories, she has become Ambassador to the North Pole--aiding Santa, Mrs. Santa, and the North Pole crew in their never-ending battle against SEGWAC (the Society for the Elimination of Good Will and Christmas).

PM is now married to Alabaster Eggshell. He is a white Christmas Monster, another oddity in Christmas Monsterland, who years ago was kidnapped and left to live out his life as an Alpaca in the San Diego Zoo until met and rescued by PM.

Our company also includes Clyde Elf, Peppermint Paunch (PM's detective cousin), Relicta (an Extra Terrestrial Intergalactic Traveler), Rudolph, and Elvira Fernhat.

In our last episode, PM and Alabaster were preparing for Christmas Day's Super Snerkle--which is, to put it as delicately as possible, the way two married Christmas Monsters create new little Monsters. After weeks of PM's preparations--including the consumption of vast quantities of chocolate and champagne--the couple was ready for the grand day, keened for the inevitable consequences. However, while the Christmas characters were preparing for a benefit in which their band--Peppermint Paunch and the Detectives--was scheduled to perform, one of the Paunchettes--Rosette, daughter of Cerise, PM's sister--was kidnapped, beaten, and left to die until rescued by Vulture Carrion, son of Viper Carrion, the U.S. head of SEGWAC. Our drama ended with Vulture asking to join the North Pole team, and Santa advising the good SEGWACian to return to his home to talk to his father.

(If you think this brief explanation is complicated, you ought to check out the competition!)

We now join our surreal serial, already in progress.



## AS THE NORTH POLE SPINS

*The PM Saga*

*Episode IX*

*Written by Susan Kirby*

*Produced by Christmas Monsterland Television Productions*

### Act 1 - New York City

We open in the subterranean office of Viper Carrion, in the U.S. headquarters of SEGWAC. It is dark and dirty. Eerie shadows and strange creaking noises permeate the background.

Vulture approaches his father with great trepidation. "Pop," Vulture ventures, "I must--I'm anxious--to talk to you."

"Don't call me Pop, you whelp," Viper vituperates viciously. "I demand an explanation. Why did you sabotage last year's effort to rid the world of Christmas cheer?"

Vulture continues cautiously. "Father, I have something to tell you. I am resigning from SEGWAC, effective immediately. I have sold my condo, donated my Dolphins tickets, raffled off my rental properties, and given all proceeds to charity."

Viper lunges forward lividly. "You've what? My son, you are sick! I'm sure a week in Libya with Omar and another



week watching videotape reruns of 'Dynasty, I and II,' 'Dallas,' and 'Falcon Crest' will cure you."

"No, Dad, I don't want to change. I like me for the first time in my life." He hesitates hesitantly. "I have something else to tell you."

"S-s-s-s," Vulture hisses with extraordinary menace.

"I've changed my name. I am no longer Vulture, but Dove Carrion."

"Sharper than a serpent's tooth," quotes Viper, quivering. "Haven't I stolen everything for you? Kidnapped the finest tutors? Purloined the best textbooks? Obtained the best education? Taught you to tap all information systems? You were awarded the Medal of Dishonor from the most insidious terrorist school! I helped you cheat your way through Machiavelli U. for your MBA in business mismanagement. Your mother and I have lied, wheeled, dealed, cajoled, and done every miserable misanthropic deed imaginable to groom you to take over as the U.S. head of our organization. And these are the thanks"—the word barely escapes his throat—"I get!"

"But Dad," cowers Dove, "I met Santa ..."

Viper's eyes bead bright red. "Oh, I get it. You are my son after all! You've infiltrated the North Pole! You're a spy! I'm proud of you!"

"No, sire of mine. I like Santa and the Christmas Crew."

A bellicose belch from Viper.

"And, Dad, something else—I'm in love!"

Viper shakes with rage, smoke and steam seething from his scalp. "That word! Profanity! That is a non-word in my presence. You have besmirched the bad name of Carrion!"

"Pop, she's an ET. Her name is Relicta. She's a refugee from a destroyed planet. She's taught me that your way can only destroy us—that if you prevail, all of humanity will be doomed." Dove's eyes glow as only one in love's can.

"You are no longer my son. They have un-corrupted you. Vulture—I will not call you D-D-D, I can't even say it—you must make the choice—me or them." Viper pulls out a roll of money to entice the correct decision.

"Father," declares Dove with determination, "I am now on the side of Good Will and Christmas—I will do everything I

can to counter your acts of violence and hate with my charity, peace, and love."

Viper's fingers snake their way toward his son's neck. "You're now my enemy. I blame that red-garbed fat man and that lavender lunatic, PM, for leading you from the path of evil. They have pulled you up from the mire. I'll never forgive them for it. Never!"

"If that is your last word, then I must say farewell. I love you, Pop, just the same," Dove sobs as he exits rapidly. Close-up: antique machete hurled by Viper smashing against closing door.

Viper is heard as interior monologue: "I am next in line to lead SEGWAC's World headquarters. That pansy son of mine will not stop me--I'll have my revenge. PM has a bun in the oven, and I have a plan. Christmas will not be merry and bright this year, not if I have my way."

Fade to BLACK with appropriate heavy metal music from Twisted Sisters or Black Sabbath.

### **Act 2a - Christmas Monsterland**

It is two weeks before Christmas, and all through her abode, PM lumbers about 'cause she carries a load. The past Christmas ritual obeyed natural laws, and PM now looks like an eggplant with paws.

The cave dwelling of the expectant mama and papa is brimmin' with Christmas trimmin'. The stockings are hung--perhaps with less care than usual--and the tree is fully decorated, courtesy of Peppermint Paunch and Clyde Elf, who, as we open this scene, are precariously placing the star on top.

Alabaster helps his wife descend into the rocking chair. It squeaks under her increased weight.

"The first six months of potential parenthood," expounds PM expositionally, "were okay. I glowed as I carried out my Ambassadorial duties throughout the world, spreading good will and the spirit of Christmas. But this last six months of gestation--a bummer! I have been alternately depressed, dejected, despondent, dispirited, disheartened, dour, downcast, droopy, down in the dumps, or just plain glum," she recapitulates redundantly.





"You," PM continues, "have been touring with the band, playing concerts to end hunger and promote peace. At first I could join you—but with my expanding girth came diminished teletransportation powers, and an end to my world romplings. I haven't left Christmas Monsterland at all for five months, and for the past two months I've barely left this cave."

Alabaster pats PM's paw sympathetically. "My poor purple pouting princess," he says, "it hasn't been all bad. Your mother has been here while I've been away. Even your sister Cerise has been nice."

"True," PM concedes, "the bonds of motherhood and potential motherhood are strong, I suppose."

"And Mrs. Claus has visited, bringing news from the North Pole," Al speaks again, "and even Santa has jingled his sleigh over to deliver an elf-crafted crib. Everyone has been so nice, what with the rigors of musical touring and workshop working. You just have to accept the limitations of your anatomic predicament."

"But I'm bored, bored, bored!" bewails PM. "I want to go back to work!"

"Tough, tough, tough!" counters Al, with a twinkle. "You can't. At least not yet. I want you to be able to do other things, too—and I'm being patient," he adds lecherously.

"Fooey. Besides, I don't know how you could possibly desire me. Ykkk," she ykkked. "My fur is so splotchy. I've gone from mulberry to burgundy to grape. Now I look like a two-ton plum with puce freckles. Yuck." (One sad "yuck" is worth three mournful "ykkks.")

Maraschino enters from the kitchen, bearing eggnog. "I just got off the phone with Holly. She says there's a pool as to what color your little one's going to be. Odds are 10 to 1 for yellow with orange polka dots, but there's a long shot for apricot."

PM ignores this attempt to cheer her up. "What I'm most upset about is that I can't be lead sleigh puller this year. Santa says I'll be too tired, so he's holding auditions for a replacement. At first I was happier about the upcoming birth than the loss of my role for one brief year. I even held those classes for aspiring Christmas Monsters eager to replace me. But as the day nears, I've had second thoughts about someone else stepping into my harness."

Alabaster nuzzles her neck, giving her goosebumps that glow magenta. "My beloved mauvette mate, let's go down to the arcade and play some pinball and Pac Man. Maybe we can win some tickets and get a stuffed animal."

"Yippee!" Clyde chimes.

"Yeah!" Peppermint pipes.

"No, my dears," answers PM with a slight whine, "I can't go. With this tummy I can't even reach the levers. Besides, you guys have to practice for the Night before Christmas Eve Concert. You've an obligation. I'll just sit here and do nothing, mentally atrophying away in my bulky agony of ennui."







"If you don't stop feeling sorry for yourself," frowns Alabaster facetiously at the sight of PM's pitiable countenance, "our kid will never want to come out and face you Christmas Eve."

PM rocks forward to punch him, but the forward momentum quickly switches to

backward momentum, and she almost falls off the chair.

"Okay, okay, but see if Rosette can drop by after rehearsal. I want to coach her on her audition piece. She's going to string lights on Elvira Fernhat and sing O Tannenbaum."

"Sounds like a winner," Alabaster smiles sardonically as he picks up his drumsticks and exits, with Peppermint Paunch and Clyde.

"Well, time for our daily dose of dramatic drivel," Maraschino suggests happily as she flips on the Sony. FADE OUT as we see mother and mother-to-be glued to the set.

#### Act 2b - Outside Cave

Immediately following. Peppermint, Clyde, Rudolph, and Elvira wait for Alabaster, who's gone back in to give PM one last gushy, gooey goodbye.

"Peppermint," Clyde complains, "you promised you'd explain why PM got so fat this past year."

Rudolph's nose blinks in suppressed merriment. "Oh Clyde, you're too much. She's going to have a little baby Monster."

"But--couldn't she get the stork to deliver it from Sears? Or order a used one from The Times classifieds?"

Peppermint sniggers. "Elvira, you're going to have to fill Clyde in on the facts of life someday--or do elves have a different procedure?"

Elvira blushes, then stutters, "C-C-Clyde will find out on his own, or Mr. Claus can tell him."

By this time Clyde has forgotten the matter (he has a very short attention span, you know). "Gerald Giraffe and Penelope Pigeon have asked us to meet them in Jackman, Maine after rehearsal today. They say it should be cold enough for us there, and the Enchanted's got a new video trivia game. Wanna go?"

"I'll join you, if you want me to," Elvira offers.

Peppermint bows out, apologizing, "Nah, I've got to work on that new arrangement."

"I'll go," suggests Elvira again. Clyde ignores her and turns to Rudolph.

"Nope," the red-nosed reindeer renders regrets, "Santa needs me in the darkroom later."

"I'll go," repeats Elvira, a little louder this time.

"Well, I guess if no one wants to go, I'll skip it too," Clyde shrugs. "I need to spend more time tinkling my new piano anyway."



Take: frustrated Elvira, her pigtails drooping.

### Act 3 - New York City

It is one week later. We open on Relicta, the ET, and her beloved Dove, in Salvation Army uniforms. Relicta speaks. "I'm sorry your father's still so angry with you. But it was nice of you to send him a Christmas present anyway."

"He took it as an insult. He's enraged that I'm working here at a shelter for the homeless. He said I should be practicing supply-snide economy—taking from the poor to give to the rich. Dad's motto is, 'Take what you can from life, everything you can get, as long as you can get it.' I think he's waiting to see if I have some satanic secret scenario to unfurl that will make him proud of me once again. He hopes I'll rebound into recidivism." Dove spoons some mashed potatoes on a plate and hands it to Relicta, who tosses turkey on it and hands it to the gentleman in line in front of the table.

"You've been very brave through all of this," Relicta nods, adjusting her cap to uncrimp her antenna. "I love you

more and more every day. Are you going to tell him we were married by Santa yesterday?"

"I don't think the timing's right. Too close to the hated holiday. Besides, he's not speaking to me. I'm getting my information from my brother." He ruminates a moment. "I wonder why he's being so friendly. Para's always hated me. A paradox."

Relicta shrugs, then remembers something. "Dove, I didn't tell you--after the concert Christmas Eve Eve, you and I are supposed to join PM in Christmas Monsterland for the Glorious Event. We must get a gift."

"Yes, my love," Dove coos. "Maybe next year they'll be joining us for a similar happening."

WE CUT TO:

#### Act 4 - New York City

The day before the Night before Christmas Eve.

Viper Carrion talks on phone. Two odious and degenerate hirelings--Knave and Anaconda Adder--are behind him.

"Well, Parasite," he snarls sibilantly, "what do you have to tell me?" He listens. "Very good, my paradigm, very good. When I am made World leader of SEGWAC, you'll be my left-hand man." He hangs up, and turns to his first stooge. "Report, Knave."

"Sir, our toy manufacturers say the new Cabbage Patch Devils are perfect--their eyes fall out and poison kids who eat them, and the horns are anatomically correct. Instead of adoption papers, they come complete with blank but signed coroner's reports. The only present for the potential little heathens of this world."

Anaconda Adder adds: "We're in production for our special program now. It should be perfect for PM's viewing."





"Yes, this Christmas will be her last," chortles Viper with a cockatrician sneer. "No longer will I be satisfied with kidnapping or generally incapacitating that Christmas wimpette. I intend to rid Christmas--and the world--of her forever!"

Funeral March as we CUT TO:

#### **Act 5a - Christmas Monsterland**

The Night before Christmas Eve, PM's and Alabaster's Cave. PM is rocking back and forth, back and forth, cross-eyedly viewing the television. Santa and Mrs. Claus are snuggling nearby on the love seat. Rock music is heard.

"They're on next!" gurgles PM.  
We see on television a satellite transmission of the concert for world hunger.

CUT TO:

#### **Act 5b - New York City**

Live shot as lights go up on Peppermint Paunch and the Detectives performing "We Wish You A Merry Christmas." Pan crowd, screaming and yelling ecstatically.

CUT TO:



#### **Act 5c - Unknown Location**

An evil figure stands next to a phone booth, awaiting call. Telephone jingles. He answers.

"Yep, I'm here, waiting for the end of the concert. I know what to do. Everything's set."

CUT TO:

#### **Act 5d - Christmas Monsterland**

Cave. A commercial is blaring. PM turns to Santa.

"So, have you picked my replacement?" she asks sad-eyed.

"Yup," replies SC. "Rosette. You coached her well. I haven't told her yet--I'll wait until she gets here with the band for the pre-birth-day party."

"How much is she getting?" inquires PM tentatively.

"Ten candy canes," responds Mrs. C., smiling as only she can.

"That's as much as I earn," bemoans PM, "and I've been working for you longer!"

"PM, I do you no wrong. Did not you agree with me for ten candy canes? Take what belongs to you; I will give unto this last, even as unto you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" says Santa scripturally.

PM groans. "That sounds suspiciously like a quote."

"'Tis," affirms Mrs. C. "Matthew 20: 1-16, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Check it out."

Close-up of PM, chastised. "I'm sorry."

"It's okay," soothes Santa. "Remember, you'll be back in lead position next year—maybe with a raise, who knows? You'll have more mouths to feed, after all."

CUT TO:

#### **Act 5d - New York City**

Back to concert. Alabaster, at microphone, thumps a drumroll on his conga for attention.

"We've earned a lot of money tonight for the poor and needy, but it's not enough. Remember, as long as there is one hungry human, one person with no shelter, one person who seeks help, there's more to do. Before our last number," he shouts to the audience, "I'd like to say hello to my wife, PM"—sounds of crowd cheering madly—"who's at home in Christmas Monsterland watching us, and to Mr. and Mrs. C., who are with her for a brief break before returning to the North Pole for tomorrow night's ride." Cheering up. "PM, darling, we'll be with you shortly. Relicta left the motor running on her spaceship, so as soon as we're through, we're hopping aboard to join you. I love you!" More crowd noise, as band whips into Silent Night.

CUT TO:





### **Act 5e - Christmas Monsterland**

Cave, immediately following. A heart-shaped tear flows down PM's cheek.

### **Act 6 - Christmas Monsterland**

PM's cave, near midnight. Santa and Mrs. Santa are chatting with Maraschino and Spruce. PM rocks and rocks and rocks and rocks.

"Almost time," observes Spruce sparingly. "I like births. They're fun."

PM sputters. "Harrumph. For you—you're not having this little package." Pregnant pause. "I'm scared, Mommy."

Maraschino smiles knowingly. "It's not that bad, dear. Unlike people, we're not cursed with painful labor. It's almost as easy as eating truffles."

"I'm bored again, then," exhales PM, relieved. "Turn on the VCR. I want to watch the episodes of 'The Guiding Star' and 'Santa's Hope' I missed today while napping." Mrs. Claus turns on the videotape. "I do so like romance," purrs PM placidly, pawing her protruding belly counterclockwise.

We see the TV screen. But instead of the expected "Monsterland Productions" logo, we see "SEGWAC presents" superimposed over a shot of a denizen stealing stealthily towards the entrance to what looks, unfortunately, like PM's cave. He's carrying a gift-wrapped box.

"What is this?" PM cries, trying to stop the rocker. "That's not my soap."

"No, it's not!" agrees Santa. He goes to TV. "It's not the videotape—it's not even running." He tries pushing buttons. "We're getting something from the satellite dish."





Return to TV screen. A voiceover is heard. "Live from Christmas Monsterland, we bring you 'One Death to Die,' or 'PM, This Was Your Life.'" Close-up of hooded figure. He pulls back the hood.

"That's Dove!" shouts PM. "What's going on here?"

"Dove?" says Spruce, surprised. "Wait a minute--it can't be." We pull in closer to reveal thumb on doorbell. Close-up of package. Sound of ticking.

"You're right," acknowledges Mr. Claus, contemplating the screen closely. "This guy's got a hairy wart on his hooked nose, and his eyes are vile and vicious, unlike Dove's--which have become gentle and sparkling since he saw the light."

The TV set goes off. Doorbell rings.

"Who is it?" screams PM, terrified.

"It's me--Dove," replies a voice from outside the door. The door opens, and the cape-clad Carrion son enters. Close-up of band-aid on his nose, slightly askew.

Reaction shots: Santa, Mrs. C., Maraschino, Spruce, and finally PM, all staring at his nose.

"Dove! Where's Relicta and the rest of the band?"

"They're parking the spaceship and unloading the instruments. I came ahead to let you know we're here."

"What happened to your nose?" inquires Maraschino skeptically.

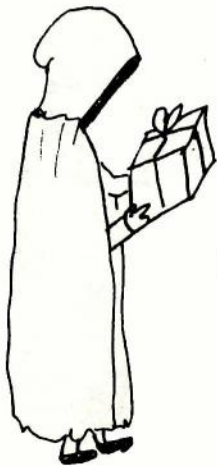
"That? Um, I had a pimple removed."

"Oh yes," commiserates Mrs. Santa.  
"I hear it's a very popular operation.  
Hope it was benign."

"B-B-B ...? Yeah, no problem.  
Here's something for you, PM. Relicta  
said it's a tradition for expectant  
Christmas Monsters to get presents just  
before the birth."

"What's that sound it's making?"  
wonders PM, juggling the box gingerly.

"It's a doll's house, that's all. That  
noise, uhm, must be the furniture rattling."



Close-up: PM untying the ribbon.

Take: Christmas Crew looking on.

Shot of cape-clad figuring running from cave.

Loud KA-BOOM!!! Flames.

BLACK OUT



#### **Act 6 - Outside Cave**

Peppermint Paunch and the Detectives are running from just-arrived spaceship toward cave. Cape-clad Dove is with them. Smoke is pouring out of cave entrance.

"PM! PM! PM!" Alabaster wails worriedly as he lopes ahead of the rest, fear emanating from his eyes.

#### **Act 6A - Inside Cave**

The Christmas Crew rushes into cave. Santa and Mrs. C. are lying near cave entrance. Maraschino and Spruce have been thrown on top of the waterbed, which has sprung a leak.

We see Alabaster groping through the foggy fumes, searching for his beloved. "PM! PM! PM!" he cries again and again.

Clyde crawls under the smoke (apparently he alone listened to Smoky the Bear). He spots a fuchsia form near

the fireplace next to the chair, which still rocks and rocks and rocks, then rolls over. "Here she is!" he screeches.

"PM! Is she hurt?" asks Alabaster anxiously, inching to her side.

We see stunned Mr. and Mrs. Claus being helped up by Peppermint and Elvira. The Paunchettes—Rosette, Flame, and Alizarin—run to their grandparents' side and lift them, rather soggy, from the flooding bed. As all regain their senses and the smoke begins to clear, they move slowly to surround PM, who is motionless.

"What happened here?" queries Alabaster, as he holds PM.

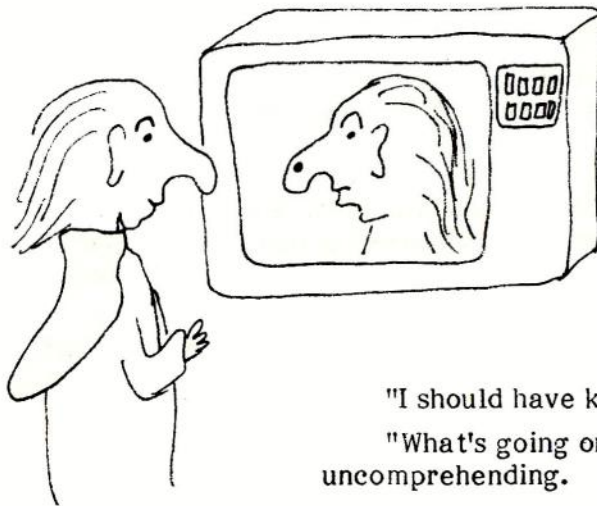
"Dove brought PM a bomb!" accuses Spruce, as he glances around to spot Relicta and Dove standing near the doorway.

"What? I didn't, I swear," denies Dove, disbelieving.

"I told you we couldn't trust him," chirps Clyde. Rudolph pins Dove to the wall again with his antlers, just as he did in Episode 8.

"He couldn't have," cries Relicta, trying to remove Rudolph from her newly-wed husband's shoulders. "He was with us on the spaceship when we saw the explosion. He's been with us the whole time!"

Santa questions, amazed, "Then how?!?!?"



Click of television set going on. Dark-clad figure appears on screen. We see the face of Vulture Carrion close up, with bandage on his nose. He is sneering maliciously.

"I should have known!" gasps Dove.

"What's going on?" questions Clyde, uncomprehending.



"Brother, you should have known--never trust a Carrion," the TV is saying, as we see the figure on the screen remove the bandage to reveal the wart we saw on this character before.

Dove explains. "It's my twin brother--Parasite Carrion. Why didn't I suspect?"

"You wanted to believe I had changed too, you sniveling pathetic poltroon," pronounces Parasite from the screen. "What you are watching now is a live shot of me on my way back to Dad. I'm sorry I didn't get all of the Christmas folk--but at least PM is dead! Christmas is destroyed this year for all--it will be a day of mourning, not rejoicing. Father will be proud of me!" The picture fades as lewd laughter is heard. TV screen goes to snowy fuzz.

Reaction shot: incredulous Christmas Crew. CUT TO: Shot of PM cradled in Alabaster's paws, as he strokes her mane.

SLOW FADE.



### Act 7 - Christmas Monsterland

Cave. Immediately following. Shot of PM as before. Sombre music. Crushed, crying Christmas folk.

Close-up of PM. Her eyes flicker open. "What happened?"

Reaction: dazed, but delirious group surrounding her.

"My little squirrel, you're alive!" Al is awed, stares at her in wonder.

"Of course I'm alive--unless Santa didn't renew my contract because I asked for a raise," grins the purple parent-to-be.

"Of course your contract's renewed," Santa says, with joy. "You know we'd have no Christmas show without you."

"How are you feeling?" Mrs. Claus inquires.

"A little woozy. What happened?"

"You were bombed."

"Now come on, my performance wasn't that bad."

"No, you were bombed, not you bombed. Dove's twin brother Parasite Carrion brought you an explosive device. Don't you remember?"

"It's coming back to me. Oh no! My baby!" gasps PM.

Alabaster shakes her concernedly. "Is something wrong with the baby? Did the bomb hurt the baby?"

"No, but it's on its way! I feel it!"

"We'd better leave this to Mrs. Santa and Maraschino," Spruce whispers to Alabaster, and leads him to the other side of the cave to join the rest of the unnecessary participants in this universal miracle.

Shot of Alabaster pacing. Shot of Peppermint Paunch and Clyde pacing. Shot of Mr. C. sitting calmly.

Rudolph asks Santa, "How come you weren't hurt by the big kaboom?"

"SEGWAC never learns," explicates jolly St. Nick. "This is a fairy tale, and their evil can't hurt us here on our own turf."

"So you were jostled and jolted, but unharmed," deduces Dove. "I'm so relieved. But I'll never forgive myself for trusting my brother enough to tell him about the plans for the pre-birth-day party. I'm glad everyone's all right."

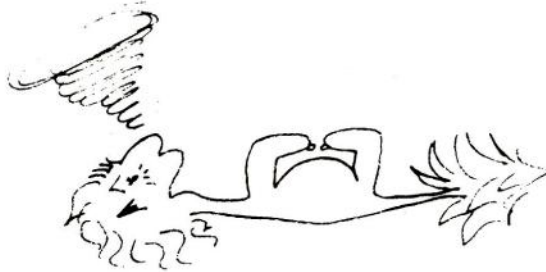
Shot of Alabaster, pale, as an "Oops" is heard from the other side of the room.

Close-up: grinning Mrs. C. "It's a girl!"

Shot of Alabaster, paler, as another "Oops" is heard from the other side of the room.

Close-up: grinning Maraschino. "It's a boy!"

Shot of Alabaster, lying in a fainted heap on cave floor.  
CUT TO:



### Act 7 - North Pole

Christmas Eve Night. Santa is strapping Rosette into the lead sleigh puller position. Clyde Elf is dragging the sack to the sleigh, as Rudolph stomps his hooves in anticipation. Mrs. Claus is giving last minute instructions to Peppermint Paunch on this year's itinerary.

PM stands with Alabaster, staring wistfully at the sled. "I'm going to miss this year's ride," she says with a slight sigh. "But it's worth it."

"Ho, ho, no, you're not," chuckles Santa, joining Maraschino who is walking toward the charmed couple with two small bundles. "You, Alabaster, and your new little Monsters are coming along. We've swaddled the tiny tots real good. It's only fitting that they spend their first day as Christmas creatures on our trip."

CUT TO:

Santa reigns at the reins. Mrs. Santa tucks a blanket around PM and Alabaster in the back, and places the two babes tenderly in her paws. We see the new arrivals: The little girl Monster is lavender, with a red mane. The little boy Monster is white, with a blue mane.

"The odds-makers are having a fit," says Maraschino with a tiny tee-hee. "They had to pay off on this one!"

"Ho, ho, ho, little Lapis Snowflake and Geranium Amethyst, off we go on your first Christmas ride!" bellows Santa Claus, as he clicks the reins together. And the sleigh pulls out of sight.

\* \* \*





*Will Viper and Parasite Carrion come up with another heinous plan, or will we next see them scrubbing floors in SEGWAC's Albanian headquarters?*

*Will little Lapis and Geranium grow up to be good little Monsters?*

*Will PM and Alabaster continue in wedded bliss, or will the proud progenitors find their new offspring too much for them?*

*Will Elvira Fernhat ever convince Clyde that she's more than just another pretty elf? Will Clyde ever grow up? Will SEGWAC succeed in having this soap cancelled due to lack of interest? (To prevent this--send a holiday hello to the head writer, to let her know you're watching.) Tune in next year!*

*Until our next episode, have a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.*