

THE SEASONS GIFT
By Richard Tornello © 3D+T

I had to present the report to the Directors of BoGaS. This was not going to be fun. I introduced myself.

“To all of you who have not met me previously, I am Artie, a fully functional, AI and cyber-war styled humanoid. To those of you who know me I say hello. As you should all be aware, it is through my CW technology I have been in monitoring our situation for some time. I stand before you today and present my report on that situation. You may not like or believe what I have to say. I am sorry about that. These are the facts as I have seen and or analyzed them. Your decision on the proper action is yours to make. As always, the report is in available on the holographic screens.”

So I began:

”Everyone knows about the North Pole. It is *The* point of origin for the gift factory known as SANTA CLAUS and main office of The Claus Industries LLC. CLI is a horizontally structured enterprise the main aim being psychological control of a large segment of the planet’s population and the accumulation of wealth. The present manager is called St. Nic. This is not news to much of the connected world. Unknown to all, there is another workshop for the ubiquitous Claus Industries, LLC. It is located in the region of the South Pole. It is at this location that most of the actual work is conducted.

“The Northern facility is the administration and Command and Control Center. PR and only “good face” people are its employees. The associated Potemkin Claus Castle Facilities, aka and hyped as SANTA’S WORK SHOP are housed in the complex. This castle is believed by most people on the planet, to be the manufacturing and distribution center. If you look closely, the castle facility resembles another well known commercial enterprise.

“As I discovered, those two enterprises are connected through interlocking boards of directors. CLI, LLC owns the controlling stake and dictates the decisions. They reinforce each others existence through joint commercial ventures that do not always have subtle messages. Their combined finances, are guessed at being, unlimited. If you ever truly want to know just how unlimited, mess with one of their copyrighted materials.

“Back to the historical point. The basis for the stories and myth that are associated with this region, the just mentioned people and facilities are in fact true and exist while at the same time the whole operation is facade. They have an excellent PR firm as one can attest. Simply look at the mass media output regarding this subject following the summer solstice and even more so around the time of the fall equinox. They do produce and they are exclusive.

“The production centers in the southern region are totally unknown outside the immediate upper elite and command center managers. The facilities are hidden under 100 meters of ice or more. Heat and energy is supplied by harnessed thermal volcanic action. They have been “green” for ever. The workers, given the cute name of elves, are broken up into different classes based upon skill, longevity and as in any bureaucracy, brown nosing.

“You might want to play with the spelling of the word elves. Just a thought.

“CLI, LLC owns the means of production, all accesses to resources, distribution and media as well as, to be blunt, what is in reality, a slave labor force. They can compete with any industrial country today and in the future including China and the US prison labor force.

“One of the characters of this story in particular, an elf named Ja-pas is the key player. Without his actions we would never have understood the extent of these enterprises even though they fall under our auspice, Ja-pas has ADD and dyslexia. Like days of old, the worst engineer was assigned to writing technical manuals. You remember those poorly written documents don’t you? Ja-pas was assigned the writing duty with a proofreader who was not as incompetent. Ja-pas took his job seriously. He was and is a screw-up.

“He did have one other critical flaw. He liked eggnog, very, very strong eggnog sometimes followed by shots. His writing could be worse than mine in this report. But he and his “fortunate” actions and his flaws are the reasons we now know the full extent of this other world governmental organization.”

I looked around at the assembled group. Disbelief was the most outstanding facial expression. Others were hiding smirks. Only one or two took this with any seriousness. They of course had been to some of the sites mentioned.

I continued, “*Most times* Ja-pas indulged and in a responsible manner, after the heavy work load was completed, and definitely after the sleds were charged up and loaded as usual in the December of this planets calendar. Then he would binge.

“A note on the charging systems is in order here too. They are unlike anything we have ever seen. The charging system, the power systems and the delivery systems ran on a subset of the uncertainty laws. It took us while to reverse engineer the one system we did manage to salvage from the disaster. How else do you thing any being can make all those deliveries in the given time allocated? Think about it. We never even considered it an issue being beneath our interests. Imagine if the power and delivery system fell into the wrong hands.”

That got their attention!

“I’m getting off track. Back to Ja-pas. As I mentioned he would indulge his pleasure for drink after completing his work, in that fashion, most times.

“However here’s how the episode went down...”

Ja-pas, the elf in charge of writing the assembly instructions for the toys, was in a very good mood. A few too many eggnogs only added to his dyslexic and ADD based bliss. “Ah, the giving of spirit, I mean spirit of giving,” he thought. “What might I do to make some one special human feel the true warm spirit of the winter solstice?” For an unexplained reason he ignored the internal warning his elf brain was giving him regarding the eggnog and his tasks.

“I have an idea.” He map Googled the intended recipient. Yep, there he was and as easy as pi to find using the obvious search strings, and geolocations. He procured a power source from one of the delivery vehicles and the elements necessary for the gift and sealed them in a dense metal box when he completed his “joke”. He also included detailed instructions but for a few important specifics, just like a cook giving out his favorite recipe. “He’ll have to look these particular technical issues up. And that might just have some interesting results.” He wrote furiously, drinking more eggnog as the night wore on. Usually he had a proof-reader to correct his twisted mistakes, but not tonight.

Finally his work completed, he sealed the gift in only a manner an elf can. “If he can open this,” Ja-pas laughed, “it will make a believer out of him.” Ja-pas used his invisibility- teleportation elphzpass to deliver the gift.

The Gift was magically left on the cave threshold, wrapped in a solid gold ribbon. The recipient, our hero, looked at it. He looked around. He was wary of anything new, as he should be. With the telescopic infrared scope attached to his AK-47 our hero scanned the surrounding hills. Nothing but a few goats.

Nothing unusual other than the gold wrapped box. He wondered “How did this get here? What might it be? A golden gift from my god?” The thought made him laugh. I’m beginning to believe in false prophets and gods. Next it will be Santa Claus. Let’s see what we have here.

It was extremely heavy and dense. He had a number of his minions lug it to his inner cave laboratory. The gift was sealed and except for a microscopic indentation there was no appearance of an opening. He had it x-rayed, ct-scanned and MRied . Nothing penetrated the metal container. It didn’t blow up either.

Welding torches were brought. “No that’s not a good idea at this time. I would guess that this has to be opened in some subtle manner, unlike some of our operations.” He smiled.

“You have a point,” his number two opinioned.

Our hero sat before it and meditated. “Maybe there might be something to this god stuff after all.” He offered that opinion to his number two who just nodded and thought his boss’s rhetoric was beginning to seep into his brain and take hold in the darkest recesses. “It can be dangerous when one starts to believe ones own stories,” he mumbles.

“What did you just utter?”

“Oh nothing. Just an opinion that I think better left alone.”

“Yes that is a good philosophy to follow,” commanded our hero drawing his AK 47 closer. He thought that John Lennon might have been closer to the truth regarding warm guns than he had been aware, or maybe he had the gift of foresight limited as it might have been?”

For forty days and nights our hero meditated. He moved it out doors and placed it underneath his favorite tree. He sat again, this time for forty nine days and nights. Nothing happened.

He remembered the huge ancient Buddhist statue his sycophants destroyed. It gave him an idea. He then decided to just put it in his lap sitting in the lotus position and prayed over it. It opened in eighteen days. He looked inside. The technology within was astounding. He reached and located the assembly instruction sheet written by Ja-pas in every language. This was just like his electric tooth brush. “My god, anyone can assemble this! A gift, and what a gift.” He bowed toward Mecca and as a joke; he bowed toward the North Pole.

He commanded everyone to leave save his number two and a few trusted technicians. There they assembled the device. “Oh joy of joys the gift I have been waiting for all my life. The Great Ships of Desert Pilot be praised.” The funny thing is he was beginning to believe in miracles. “I must be a fool, but here it is in front of me. My wildest wishes have been answered, they have come true!”

Those around him said nothing. They couldn’t begin to fathom the workings of their leaders mind except to admit he had been right up until the present, for the most part.

In the mean time Ja-pas had recovered from his drunken stupor. He wondered if it had been a dream or had he actually done what he thought he had done. He said to himself, his head still splitting, “Shit, this is a really big one. Nah, gotta be a dream. I wouldn’t, couldn’t do something as insane as that.” He looked around. He looked in every

conceivable location. One of the energy sources for the sleds was missing. So it wasn't a dream. He was in deep. Now what?

A few weeks later:

As Ja-pas was again recovering from another preholiday celebration and still working on a cover for his extreme mistake. If discovered, the mistake, if you could even call it that, major fuck-up would be more like it, would cause him to be turned to a human as punishment by the former patron saint of sailors St. Nic, who himself was now demoted, due in part to a delicate indiscretion, discovered by a jealous elf, while inflagranti delecto with a daughter of Zeus. For punishment, Nic was charged with schlepping cheap lead painted Chinese made products to children and was loading up the "sky barge" as he so named it. He was going through the preflight check list. Low and behold, no fuel!

"JA-PAS why the hell isn't there fuel in the sled? The gauge for the power source reads *Not Connected!*"

Ja-pas held his head. The loud voice hurt. "Ah, not sure boss. Seems we never got a reorder from the Russians as per usual. I think it was diverted." Quick thinking he thought.

"What do you mean, I personally signed for it." Nick shouted. "I'm late already damn it."

"Well, it's missing then." He shrugged his elf like shoulders. And gave his best hung-over innocent face as possible.

St. Nic was in no mood to cross examine the hung-over little elf in what he obviously knew was a lie, and had no time to beat the living shit out of him to elicit a true confession. They were late for the annual obligatory toy and gift deployment.

Nic, a former maritime type god was used to "on the spot situations" which required instant solutions, thought quickly and said, "You know that weird former soviet reindeer, the one that glows red, the one we keep in the leaded paddock? You know the one that worked near Chernobyl? He might be an answer."

The boss commanded, "Let's hook him up. Attach one power line to his antlers and plug the other into his butt. Here's a big cork. Run the lines to the propulsion system. That will give us a complete circuit. We'll use him as a power source for the propulsion systems. But when I get back you had better have an explanation and the missing material or it's off to the toy manufacturing gulag in Mongolia."

"Yes boss." What the hell am I going to do now? He wondered. He knew it was the *salt mines*. "Yes boss," was all he repeated.

Ja-pas wondered, "What the hell am I going to do? I still have no idea who I gave.... It... oh shit!" The besotted memory kicked in. He remembers his bright idea. No way, that's

the stupidest thing I've done in centuries. No fucking way! This is worse than the boss getting caught with that bimbo daughter of Zeus'

Meanwhile, our hero, the recipient of the Gift had most all the technical issues worked out. The final detailed instructions he required were available from the Princeton University library. He remembered an article some years back where some college or high school science majors found the details for this type of device in a library. *Amazing*, he thought. *It's all still there. WHAT FOOLS. And The Great Camel Pilot gave me the tools. How grateful can I be?*

He explained his plan to the locally assembled group, "I will wire this up. On their great religious holiday season, at the turn of their new year I will have it delivered to their Holy Land. Oh Nameless Blameless One be praised. One thing though I'm not sure of the nature of this power source. It generates electrical power on its own contrary, to the 2nd law. It's like some sort of perpetual energy device. The technology is beyond me or any of the scientists I've contracted. It works and that's what counts."

In December of that year, the Gift recipient, our hero, had managed to travel through no man's land of Afghanistan without discovery along with his device. He arrived in the country of centrifuges, caves and stoning deaths for prophet and gain. He sat with his hosts. They were amazed at the level of sophistication he demonstrated. They were astounded by his plans.

Our Hero explained, "Look here, the instructions are in every language of this planet." And then he says in a most boastful tone, "*But I am the chosen one.*"

"Well how will it, your plan work," they inquired?

"Simple, very simple. He explained the situation and concluded, "We get a remote flying vehicle which you have just built and tested, if I am not mistaken. The gift is embedded within a timer is set with an altimeter. As the vehicle descends, Happy New Year."

Meanwhile, Christmas Eve, St. Nic was having trouble keeping up teleport speed no less airspeed with the nuclear reindeer as an energy source. The power line kept popping out of his butt. One of the smaller elves who acted as crew had to work hand over hand on the reins to reach the line and plug it back in. He then returned to the toy laden sled in the same fashion. "This is the shittiest job I've ever had," he bitched. Nic gave him a dirty look. "It a job. We have to do it and you're the lightest one on board. Lucky you. Go clean up. Open one of the diaper wipe presents."

The plans had been made. Everything had been made ready. There was one last celebration. The hosts of our hero, all flush with joy, wonderment, and forbidden drink, asked him again to illustrate the method of wiring for the final solution. They had never seen such a complex device. They were completely overjoyed. The excitement was infectious.

All are in wonder. How he of all, receive this gift? We thought he was a kook. The gods must think differently. We stand corrected.

Our hero looked around. One thing you have to admit he has a knack for acting. He had his audience breathless, in the palm of his hand with anticipation. Our hero began the well rehearsed act again.

Mean while, Ja-pas is still looking for the power source he misplaced. He comes across the original wiring instructions. Pretty funny he says to himself. When wired properly to the like designed propulsion systems the system would allow for the necessary timed released of energy. Boy if anyone got the circuits confused there would be an energy jolt that would certainly leave a few heads singed, to say the least. He laughed, *what idiot would do that?* He thought about and considered his dyslexia along with some of the assembly instructions he had written in the past. "Nah not possible," he said.

Off in a distant underground facility, our hero read the instructions, and for some liquid mind sloshed based reason, got the procedures in reverse. He put the hoziewhatsit into the thingamajig and inadvertently completed the circuit setting off the ultracaps and the detonators.

A giant mushroom cloud appeared over the desert of Iran in the vicinity of the weapons labs.

St. Nic had just delivered a new true sniper barreled fully loaded Chinese replica AR-15 with telescopic night vision scope and an Uzi to a young girl who always wanted one like her brother's. *The toys these kids want today. I don't understand it.* He looked up at the sky and noticed the glow to the East. He looked at his Russian reindeer and back up at the increasing glowing nighttime sky. "This EMP is going to muck up the uncertainty teleporter. Just wait until I get back. His ass is grass." He uttered some other oaths and swore by a number of forgotten deities.

The End.

EPILOG

After Arties report, it was the decision of the *Board of Gods and Spirits* of the multiuniverses to terminate this planet solstice holidays at their current social, political, and technological development. Quantum level commands were transmitted telepathically to all the planets inhabitants and into their subconscious. The commands directed them to begin conducting self-destructive behaviors. In this manner the societies of this given planet would consume themselves and retreat to a less technological level of existence, while, and this is important, while continuing to maintain the love and respect towards the Gods and spirits that created them.

The fact that the Gods and Spirits required a following to maintain their own existence is The unwritten fundamental law of Nature. Gods without followers are no god at all, are they? They're ghosts.

Oh and by the way, regarding St. Nic, he would be either cashiered or transferred to an aqueous world depending upon the final decision by Zeus. The North Pole factory would continue, however the decision was pending further discussion with his newest grandson on a replacement.

Disclaimer: All characters are real as are the events, just not in this universe.