

**THREE'S COMPANY'S
ADVENTURE DEPARTMENT**

**Christmas Special 2020
A Cryptmas Carol
or
The Post of Christmas Last**

TRANSCRIPT

PROLOGUE

NARRATOR: 'Twas the night before Christmas and though it sounds odd
Not a creature was casting, not even a pod.
Round radio, headphones, Alexa, we waited
With stockings and mince pies and breath that was bated.
Our heroes all died at the end of last series
Which made you all worry and raised many queries
But worry not now listener, be not forlorn,
Here's a Christmassy special - in diary form...

BELLS, HAPPY CHRISTMAS MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: Michael's diary, December 23rd. Having finally wrapped up the paperwork from our last adventure, the holiday season had officially begun, and I was determined this year we would have the *perfect* Christmas. No work, no stress, no arguments over whether your own unpublished screenplays are allowed in charades. Yaz had just hung the star on top of the filing cabinet and remarked on how much he loves / getting ready for Christmas.

YAZ: / getting ready for Christmas. What is it about just decorating the office that makes you feel all glowing and fuzzy inside?

TOM: You mean other than you accidentally swallowing the decorations?

YAZ: What makes you think it was an accident Tom?

MICHAEL NARRATION: Yaz and Tom always argued at Christmas, but before they could return to their constant bickering, we were interrupted by a call on the video phone.

SKYPE RINGTONE, ZOOM DOORBELL

YAZ: Hello, your majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second!

FANFARE

QUEEN: Oh both- how do you do gallery view? Oh, Hello boys! I have a potential mission for you. I've received an anonymous tip that a malevolent foreign oligarch threatens Chris –

MICHAEL: Sorry your majesty, I'm sure Chris is a very nice man but I have to stop you there – we're on our festive break. No adventures 'til the 6th January.

YAZ: Come on Mike – I'm sure she wouldn't ask unless it was –

MICHAEL: We're on holiday! Nothing is going to spoil our perfect Christmas okay?

QUEEN: Michael dear, I do completely understand, have a wonderful Christmas. Right. Must dash, Edward's meeting someone dodgy down at Nando's in Slough and I still have my speech to write for Friday. Ciao!

TRIO: Bye!

Skype hang-up sound

TOM: Right, back to cataloguing, valuing, and recycling last year's Christmas cards – what a treat!

YAZ: Is that really how we're going to spend Christmas?

MICHAEL: Oh no no no. Tonight we're roasting chestnuts over an open fire, then we're putting out the fire and watching the first of my carefully chosen Christmas films.–

YAZ: Can't we go somewhere? It's boring here.

TOM: It's restful.

YAZ: A change is as good as a rest Tom.

TOM: Tell that to the Christmas jumper you've worn for the last eleven days straight.

YAZ: A change is as good as a rest, jumper.

MICHAEL NARRATION: Said Yaz, supping his vegan eggnog.

YAZ: Might even give me a chance to actually have fun at Christmas for once, without anyone telling me Jafar Vs Hitler: Worlds Collide is not acceptable in charades.

MICHAEL: You can't leave Yaz, it will throw out my seating plan for Christmas.

TOM: Actually Michael, I was thinking about spending Christmas Day with family.

MICHAEL: Shut up. Neither of you are going anywhere. This season is about being together okay?!

TOM & YAZ: We don't always have to do *everything* together, Michael.

YAZ: Oi, stop talking at the same time as me!

TOM: You're the one talking at the same time as me!

TOM & YAZ: God!

GENTLE MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: And an uneasy silence descended amongst us. Yaz said:

YAZ: ...

MICHAEL NARRATION: ...nothing, because we were being silent. I was just writing in my diary about how we were being silent, when Tom found something most unexpected...

TOM: That's odd, there's something in this box.

MICHAEL NARRATION: Tom said.

TOM: Michael! Stop writing in your diary and come over here!

MICHAEL NARRATION: He said to me, Michael, the writer of this diary. I wrote this in my diary then went over to Tom.

TOM: Look at this!

MICHAEL NARRATION: He exclaimed.

TOM: It's a Christmas card!

THE MUSIC TURNS SPOOKY

MICHAEL NARRATION: He explained.

YAZ: Yeah, that's your *Christmas card box!*

MICHAEL NARRATION: Yaz complained.

TOM: But it's still sealed. That's so odd.

MICHAEL NARRATION: Tom maintained.

MICHAEL: Maybe you missed it?

MICHAEL NARRATION: I entertained.

TOM: It's addressed from... Transylvania!

MICHAEL NARRATION: Tom ascertained. And he held up a sealed yellow envelope, addressed to us in a spindly hand with blood-red ink, that smelt as old as Christmas itself.

THE MUSIC COMES TO AN END

MICHAEL: I wonder who would have sent us a Christmas card from Transylvania?

TOM: Yeah.

YAZ: Yeah me too.

TOM: Oh well, I guess we'll never know. Where's the recycling?

MICHAEL: Hang on, what are you doing?

TOM: It's a 2019 Christmas card. The Post of Christmas Last. We can hardly mix it in with all the 2020 Christmas cards. We had our chance to enjoy it's message last year and frankly we missed it.

MICHAEL: The postmark's from this year – just a few days ago!

TOM: But that box has been sealed and archived since January...

YAZ: Go on Mike, give it a read.

MICHAEL NARRATION: Being a professional actor, I duly obliged.

MICHAEL: Ahem. "Dear Michael (and also your friends),
It is I, your uncle Ebenezer, the Count of Spatula..."

MICHAEL NARRATION: As I began to read aloud to my two friends it was as if I could hear the voice of the letter writer, filling my ears...

YAZ: I didn't know you had an Uncle.

MICHAEL NARRATION: – but first I heard the voice of Yaz, interrupting.

MICHAEL: Shhhh I'm reading.

EERY PIANO MUSIC

MICHAEL: *Ahem.* / “It has been a great many years...”

COUNT: It has been a great many years / since we last met and I do so wish to see you again. I wonder if yourself and your two adventuring companions would enjoy spending Christmas with me at Castle Spatula.

SMALL EVIL LAUGH

COUNT: Sorry, I just thought of something funny. Excuse me. We can eat turkey and wear Christmas-style jumpers, and do all the things, exactly like people who enjoy Christmas so very much, as I do, and I know *you* do because Christmas is very wonderful. Perhaps we could even watch the speech of your monarch on the television set...

LARGER EVIL LAUGH

COUNT: Forgive me, I just remembered that funny thing again. Do your Uncle the honour of joining me for Christmas this year, with your friends, of course – you must bring your friends. Perhaps you will enjoy it so much you won't ever leave!

HUGE EVIL LAUGH

MICHAEL: “...Mwah ha ha ha ha. PS Please bring your friends.” I wonder what he found so funny.

YAZ: Maybe he was listening to Season 1 of the podcast, which I think is still available in case anyone anyone didn't catch it.

TOM: Season 1? Where the whole planet died and became Zombies?

YAZ: Hahahaha Yeah! Hilarious. Funny how you always remember the dark times fondly isn't it?

TOM: Are we really not even going to address that?

MICHAEL: Guys this is perfect! Let's go to Transylvania for Christmas.

TOM: [*sarcastic*] Oh yeah, nothing says Christmas like some creepy part of rural Romania.

MICHAEL: Well that's settled then!

PICKS UP PHONE.

YAZ: [*Whispered*] Tom, were you being sarcastic?

TOM: [*Whispered*] I think maybe you could have worked that out from the context Yaz.

YAZ: [*Whispered*] Er, I think maybe you could work out this finger out from context Tom.

PHONE RINGING

TOM: [*Whispered*] What fing... oh very good.

MIC: (*On phone*) Hello, could you please connect me to the Castle Spatula, Transylvania.

VOICE: Erm... this is Croydon Leisure Centre?

MICHAEL: Yes I see. Still, can you connect me to the Castle Spatula, Transylvania?

VOICE: I don't have the number?

MICHAEL: You *could* look it up on the internet?

VOICE: I mean, I guess...

MICHAEL: Thanks. (TO YAZ & TOM) It's so hard making international calls. You know, Coz of Brexit.

VOICE: Alright, I'm putting you through... Please hold.

BEEPING, PHONE PICKED UP, EERY MUSIC

EYESORE: [On the phone] Yes? How can I help you?

MICHAEL: Uncle Ebenezer?

EYESORE: No sir. I'm Count Ebenezer's loyal-and-long-suffering clerk: Eyesore. You must be Michael. The Count has spoken about you.

MICHAEL: Yes that's right.

EYESORE: I'm afraid he's just having breakfast.

MICHAEL: Of course – there's a time difference isn't there. Coz of Brexit.

EYESORE: Can I take a message?

MICHAEL: We were just wondering if his invitation for a Christmas visit was still on the cards?

EYESORE: One moment.

YAZ: Yup, don't worry Mike. It's still on the card, I checked.

EYESORE: He says "Christmas is a trick for idle men, I abhor any fool who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, oh wait, wait. My nephew you say. Mwah ha ha ha, yes that's fine as long as he brings his friends."

MICHAEL: Oh wonderful, Eyesore please let my uncle know we will be on the next direct train from London to Transylvania, so we'll see you in the morning. Merry Christmas Eyesore.

EYESORE: Yes indeed sir, and a Merry Christmas to you too.

HANGS UP, MUSIC ENDS

MICHAEL: Perfect. Now we can all be happy! Christmas all together for me; a change of scenery, like Yaz wanted; and with family, for Tom!

CREDIT MUSIC BEGINS

TOM: It's your family.

MICHAEL: You should have made that clear before Tom.

TOM: I see that now.

MICHAEL: Christmas in Transylvania.

YAZ: Why do I have a bad feeling about this?

MICHAEL: Because you've just eaten a packet of Christmas decorations.

NARRATOR: In a small town called London, England, there live three men. By day a fair to middling theatre company, by night... a fair to middling theatre company with... an Adventure Department. If you have a perilous mission that requires cunning and skill; if it seems no one will answer your cry for help; if you can cover insurance costs and all reasonable expenses – there's one fair to middling theatre company you can count on. So strap yourselves in, keep arms and legs inside the carriage and remove all loose items, such as glasses, and welcome to Three's Company's Adventure Department!

Episode 6: A Cryptmas Carol

SCENE ONE

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC

TOM NARRATION: Tom's Diary, December 24th. Well we've arrived in Transylvania, but the Coach driver refused to take us all the way to the Castle! Something about not going south of the Poarta River when it's a full moon, the tide is high and the spirits walk abroad. That and the fact we didn't have enough money. Apparently it was a combination of both. Michael insisted country walks are an important part of Christmas, so we ended up traipsing through an eerily deserted village, completely lost. When an ancient woman suddenly appeared.

MUSIC ENDS

WIDOW: [*Pantomime Dame*] Hello dears!

YAZ: Argh!

TOM NARRATION: Screamed Yaz, as if she'd appeared from nowhere, when in fact she'd appeared from a bush.

WIDOW: I keep my distance, but you still catch my eye.

MICHAEL: Hello, maybe you can help us, we're a bit lost.

WIDOW: Not all who wander are lost...

YAZ: No that's true, but we are.

WIDOW: Well, where have you three come from eh?

MICHAEL: Oh we're originally from Buxton in Derbyshire but-

WIDOW: I'm sorry.

MICHAEL: I said originally from Buxton in Derby-

WIDOW: No I heard you, I'm just sorry. Ohoo! The old ones are the best aren't they!

TOM: (*Whispered*) Let's leave her alone. She's probably trying to sign us up to some charity. They're everywhere at Christmas. (*Loudly*) I don't have my direct debit details with me. Also, I'm really tight.

MICHAEL: Maybe you could give us directions, kind lady?

WIDOW: Where is it you seek?

MICHAEL: The Castle / Spatula.

WIDOW: (Interrupting) Not Castle Spatula I hope!

MICHAEL: I literally just said we're going to –

WIDOW: *Please* don't say you journey for Castle Spatula. Oh please, please no! Not the Castle Spatula.

MICHAEL: Well this is awkward now isn't it.

YAZ: What's wrong with the Castle Spatula?

WIDOW: Once bitten – and twice shy.

YAZ: Someone bit you?

WIDOW: A face on a lover with a fire in his heart. A man under cover but he'll tear you apart.

YAZ: Hang on, that's Wham – *Last Christmas*.

WIDOW: Exactly! It will *be* your last Christmas, if you go to that place.

TOM: She's not going to help us.

WIDOW: Perhaps I will. If you can help me find my daughter.

YAZ: You're daughter?

MICHAEL: No quests today kind lady. We should be sharing old stories round my uncle's fire and growing closer as friends over mulled wine and Die Hard at this point.

WIDOW: Oooooooh he's a keen one isn't he! Isn't he lovely boys and girls?

YAZ: Does she mean us?

WIDOW: Oh but I have been lonely since I lost my daughter. And my husband.

TOM: What happened to him?

WIDOW: He fell into a vat of granulated coffee. Horrible way to go, but at least it was instant.

MICHAEL: Yep, time to get going.

WIDOW: Show that joke some respect young man, it's older than your grandmother. Ooh what am I like. Ooh, now, now, before I go. You look like a charming young man.

TOM: Thanks.

WIDOW: Take this. It's very important. Read it carefully. And the very next day you must give it away.

TOM: Okay?

THUNDER

WIDOW: This year, save me from tears... give it to someone special...

THUNDER. SPLASH.

YAZ: Wow! She vanished, she must be a witch or something.

TOM: I think she fell in this moat.

MICHAEL: We should have said its behind you.

TOM: Is it just me or did anyone else have an overwhelming sensation of Panto?

YAZ: It is Christmas.

MICHAEL: Sad isn't it. All those Christmas shows cancelled.

YAZ: Because of the Zombie Crisis.

MICHAEL: So many family's missing out on that special time at the theatre, so many people out of work. It's devastating.

YAZ: Yeah.

TOM: God I hope those theatres can reopen.

MICHAEL: Me too

YAZ: Me too.

PAUSE

TOM: If only so we can keep talking about theatre in our podcast.

MICHAEL: Tom!

YAZ: Hang on, did you just say, she fell in this moat? But what is it moated around!

MICHAEL: A castle! Yes! This must be the place. Come on.

MICHAEL RUNNING OFF, TOM SIGHS

YAZ: Tom, what did that weird lady give you?

TOM: A piece of paper... with a set of numbers on it...?

YAZ: She gave you her phone number.

TOM: Oh, I thought it was something important.

YAZ: Are you going to call her?

TOM: Are you kidding? Not with these roaming charges.

YAZ: That one genuinely is to do with Brexit isn't it?

MICHAEL: Here we are.

TOM: Massive scary looking fortress, yup. Mysterious mist hanging heavily over the turrets, series of open coffins in the garden, doorknocker that looks like the face of a dead banker with a timely message from the grave. Yeah the perfect place for a Christmas holiday really.

YAZ: It's got four stars on TripAdvisor.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK, LARGE CREAKING SOUND AS THE DOOR OPENS

YAZ: Oh my god did that door just opening all by itself?!

EYESORE: No sir.

ALL3: Argh!

SPOOKY, TENSE MUSIC

TOM NARRATION: In front of us and a little below stood a most horrifying fellow, with a physical form I would describe as indescribable. Exactly the sort of person you could imagine opening the door to a castle you really don't want to spend Christmas in.

EYESORE: You must be the Three's Company boys. I am the Count's loyal clerk Eyesore. The gladdest tidings of the season to you all. The Master is in the Dining Room. You must be hungry after your long trip. I know he is.

MICHAEL: I can't wait to meet my uncle.

TOM: You've never met him?

EYESORE: This way. On your left you will see the Drawing Room.

THUNDER

And this leads to the Library.

THUNDER

Down those stairs to the Dungeons.

THUNDER

Here is the downstairs toilet.

TOM: Hang on did you say Dungeons?

EYESORE: Ah here we are. Go on, in you go.

DOOR

SCENE TWO

MELODRAMATIC MUSIC

YAZ NARRATION: Dear Yaz's Diary, December twenty third, no fourth? I am not really sure, I cannot read my writing.

TOM NARRATION: Give it here, bloody hell, is this your writing?! It looks like a seismometer developed sentence. "December 24th, I think it says... We went into the... Dining Room? – Dining? Dining Room – and there we finally saw the man himself – an absolutely massive c – Yaz, I can't say that! Oh sorry, – an absolutely massive Count, he rose from his chair and said Welcome/ my friends

COUNT: /Welcome, my friends, to the Castle Spatula! Please, eat. Eyesore has prepared a great feast – he gets so excited this time of year. I mean, as, as do !!

MICHAEL: Look someone's taking Christmas seriously.

YAZ: Mr Count, aren't you going to eat with us?

COUNT: Wasteful extravagance!

THUNDER

COUNT: I mean, what I mean is, er... though I am a huge fan of Christmas, the traditional fare doesn't sit so well with me. I prefer something a little... fresher!

TOM: Oh are you vegetarian? Yeah, yeah, me too! I'm so glad that / even out here –

COUNT: Mwa ha ha ha a vegetarian, Eyesore, he thinks that I'm a vegetarian, Mwa ha ha ha ha ha.

YAZ: He must be a vegan. Oh, like me!

COUNT: Mwa ha ha ha ha. A vegan, yes that's it, I'm a vegan. Hahahahaha. Yes that's it. Mwahahahaha.

YAZ: Told you!

TOM: Oh did you recently turn vegan Yaz? You haven't mentioned it twenty times each day ever since.

YAZ: Alright, egg-murderer.

MICHAEL: [*gritted teeth*] This is not the place to be at each other throats, it's a pain the neck! For goodness sake, this evening is for 'bonding merrily with new family'.

YAZ: Okay, er, Mr Count Ebenezer sir, would you like some of my eggnog? I brought a flask of it with me.

MICHAEL NARRATION: At that, Yaz reached into his bag and whipped out his flask of Eggnog.

DRIP

TOM NARRATION: A small drop of Yaz's Christmas drink flew in the air. Yaz had forgotten to tighten the top of the flask as usual.

THE COUNT'S CHAIR CLATTERS TO THE GROUND

COUNT: NOOO!

YAZ NARRATION: The Count let out a squeeze, a school, I, no, I'm sorry, I have no idea what I've written there.

COUNT: Keep that cursed stuff away from me!

MICHAEL NARRATION: He shouted in an out-of-character, un-Christmassy type way.

YAZ: Don't worry everybody, it's *vegan* eggnog, because I am vegan.

COUNT: I cannot tolerate Eggnog in any of its forms, I have a rare allergy – one splash causes a terrible reaction.

TOM: Most people have a bad reaction to Yaz's recipes.

YAZ: But still, better than the reaction to Tom's jokes.

MICHAEL: Oh gosh I'm so sorry...

COUNT: Not to worry. However, although I do enjoy Christmas in all of its forms and had a wonderful night of games planned, unfortunately our evening must draw to a close.

MICHAEL: Oh uncle no!

COUNT: Even the smell of that confounded liquid has weakened me. Please excuse me gentlemen, I must take some sustenance in private. Ha-ha.

YAZ: No worries, we'll just finish without you and –

COUNT: No no! You must to bed at once. After all, it is Christmas tomorrow!

CHAIRS SCRAPING

COUNT: Sleep tight. Don't let the bed bugs bite. Hahaha.

TOM: Okay so I see the Count's allowed to laugh at his own jokes, but I'm not.

EYESORE: Michael, you shall sleep in the Oldman Suite, Yaz you may have the Suite d'Lugosi, and Tom you're in the Suite Transvestite.

MICHAEL: *[moving away]* Oh, sounds lovely.

FOOTSTEPS AWAY, DOOR CLOSES, SPOOKY MUSIC

EYESORE: They've gone.

COUNT: Good. My plan is coming to fruition. You know Eyesore, a strange figure appeared to me last night and told me I would soon be visited by three terrible creatures.

EYESORE: I know sir, it was me. And they've come to spend Christmas.

COUNT: Oh yes indeed. They shall spend more Christmas than they have ever spent before. But first a snack to recover my strength.

EYESORE: The lawyer or the systems analyst?

COUNT: Oooh the lawyer I think.

FOOTSTEPS

WOMAN: Hiya.

COUNT: Hello dear.

SQUELCH

WOMAN: Oh, No wait, what are you doing to my neck...!? Oh, Uh, I can feel all the festive cheer pulsing out of my veins... noooooo.... Araraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagggggghhhh-gurgle-gurlgee-ach.

SOUND OF EATING UNDER-

COUNT: Fine work Eyesore, she was very pleasant. Strong Christmas spirit, quite nutty...

EYESORE: Thank-you master. There was one other thing master?

COUNT: Mmmhmm.

EYESORE: As you're not going to be in the castle for Christmas this year. I wanted to ask a favour.

COUNT: Mmm.

EYESORE: Well, Mrs Eyesore has managed to scrape together enough savings to buy a turkey and the whole family will be there and we think that it might be the last Christmas Massive Matt will see, he's just getting so massive you see, and as I haven't had a day off in 17 years, I wondered if I might have Christmas with the family, oh Dark Lord of Evil.

COUNT: I allowed you to attend the Annual Evil Clerk and Sidekick Convention in September.

EYESORE: Yes sir, September 1967.

COUNT: Oh all right then. But if you ask me Christmas is a poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every December 25th.

EERY MUSIC

EYESORE NARRATION: Said the Count. That's right diary, the reason this bit can be told and fit in to the story structure is because since the Three's Company lads left it switched to my diary entry. Clever eh? Now, I shall go and find out what those Three's Company boys are really made of... Nighty night Diary.

SCENE THREE

MYSTICAL MUSIC

YAZ NARRATION: Dear Diary. I am away in a far land, on a strange journey. I therefore do not require any milk for the next week. Or indeed ever again, as I am vegan now. Yours sincerely- Oh no, hang on, that says "Dear Dairy". Yeah, I don't think I've got anything for this bit.

TOM NARRATION: Well I have. Ahem. We gathered in my room after dinner to discuss what we'd seen. Michael insisted we stay for the evening "He's just an eccentric old man...", he said. / "They have different customs over here..."

MICHAEL: They have different customs over here.

GENTLE KNOCKING, QUIETLY AT FIRST UNDER-

TOM: Well I don't trust him.

YAZ: Guys...

MICHAEL: But you trust me right?

TOM: I guess.

YAZ: Guys...!

MICHAEL: Look, it's one night, what's the worst that can happen?

YAZ: Guys!

TOM: What is it?

YAZ: What's that knocking sound?

MICHAEL: Oh god... it sounds like it's coming from... *the door*

TOM: Open it!

MICHAEL: No you open it!

YAZ: I'll open it. After three... FOUR!

DOOR OPENS, MUSICAL BOOM

TRIO: Aaaaah!

TOM NARRATION: We were greeted by the most blood-curdling, horrific sight! It was Eyesore.

EYESORE: Quick, let me in, before anyone sees me,

DOOR CLOSES

TOM: Was it you making that strange sound outside our room?

EYESORE: I was knocking at your door, isn't that how normal people do it?

YAZ: Definitely not.

MICHAEL: Is everything okay?

EYESORE: Your uncle is not what he seems.

TOM: You mean he's not a creepy, terrifying old man who's obviously hiding a murderous secret and teetering on the edge of evil insanity?

EYESORE: Well, okay, he's exactly what he seems.

MICHAEL: Do you have any proof of this?

EYESORE: I am not, in fact, a loyal servant to the Count. I have been working with a faction opposed to him for years.

YAZ: Why?

MUSICAL BOOM, HAUNTING MUSIC

EYESORE: He is evil incarnate. His hatred for Christmas festered and consumed him so much that he can never die. Instead he wanders this decaying land, luring in victims and drinking the Christmas Spirit right out of their bodies.

GASP

MICHAEL: When you drain the Christmas Spirit out of a person, do they die?

EYESORE: The body cannot survive without Christmas Spirit, Michael.

YAZ: Does that mean yes?

EYESORE: Yes.

GASP, SPOOKY MUSIC

EYESORE: He has developed a terrible obsession with London – origin of the first Christmas tree, the first Christmas card. My master has devised a terrible plot to cancel Christmas, and consume the entire Christmas Spirit of the whole United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland!

MICHAEL: Just hold your reindeer one moment. *That* is *definitely* a mission. What part of being on holiday, spending quality time together do none of you understand?

YAZ: I think this is important Mike.

TOM: Where do we start?

EYESORE: We need to get you to Helsinki

YAZ: Who's Helsinki?

MICHAEL: Helsinki is not a person Yaz.

YAZ: Oh.

MICHAEL: It's a brand of vodka.

TOM: It's not a brand of Vodka, Michael.

MICHAEL: Oh.

TOM: It's the capital of Finland.

EYESORE: No, it's a person.

TOM: Oh.

EYESORE: Dr Van Helsinki, the greatest mind in the resistance.

YAZ: Told you.

MICHAEL: And we're just meant to believe you are we? That my Christmas-loving uncle is somehow secretly evil.

TOM: It does sort of check out.

YAZ: We should do something.

MICHAEL: Quite right. Eyesore, I'm going to call the police.

EYESORE: I am afraid they're not open now until Boxing Day.

MICHAEL: Alright. I hereby place you under citizen's arrest for crimes against Christmas-lovers. You do not have to say anything... and so I'm going to knock you unconscious.

EYESORE: But - mmmmmph ggggfgol!

THUD

YAZ: Mike – what if he's telling the truth?

TOM: Yeah, Yaz is right... this feels wrong.

MICHAEL: So the first thing you agree on is that we should attack my dear uncle, and ruin my Christmas?

TOM: It's not about that.

YAZ: Tom's right.

MICHAEL: Oh I see. Gang up on Michael day is it?

YAZ: Is it?

MICHAEL: I just wanted one Christmas where everything was perfect. I guess it's true, three really is a crowd.

MUSICAL BOOM

TOM: How dare you.

YAZ: You take that back Michael Peter Grady!

MICHAEL: *[Tearful]* I'm going to bed. You leave my uncle alone and I expect to see you for hot chocolate and stockings at 7am sharp.

STOMPING FOOTSTEPS. DOOR SLAM.

TOM NARRATION: And with that, he stormed off.

YAZ: Isn't that your en-suite?

SHORT PAUSE. DOOR OPENS.

MICHAEL: Excuse me.

STOMPING FOOTSTEPS, DIFFERENT DOOR SLAM, MYSTERIOUS MUSIC.

TOM NARRATION: And with *that*, he stormed off correctly, leaving Yaz and I confounded and alone, with an unconscious handyman bound on my bedroom floor. I knew that operating as a duo, without Michael, would leave us at great risk, yet I felt compelled to act. I looked at Yaz. We knew what we had to do...

SCENE FOUR

GENTLE MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: Michael's Diary, December 24th. As I sat doing my crossword in the enormous four poster bed I felt a shiver go up my spine. I looked to my left and right but, nothing. It was only when I lay back I noticed that three pale women, dressed in floaty nightgowns and sporting astonishing bouffant hair were looking down at me from the roof of the bed. I put my crossword down and said "Terribly sorry ladies, am I/in the wrong room? Eyesore..."

MICHAEL: /in the wrong room? Eyesore put me in here you see, if...

HYPNOTIC MUSIC

ESMIE: [*Cod-Romanian*] No Michael you are exactly where you are supposed to be.

MICHAEL: It's fine, I'll take couch in the dungeon.

GWYN: [*Also Cod-Romanian*] You look so stressed Michael, relax.

MICHAEL: No, no, I'm actually perfectly relaxed.

MARGO: [*Also Cod-Romanian*] Why are you so buttoned up?

MICHAEL: I always sleep wearing my adventure onesie.

GWYN: You'll have all the adventure you need here with us.

MICHAEL: I'm sorry, where are you three from?

GWYN: We are... from a time and a place you cannot comprehend.

MICHAEL: Fair enough.

GWYN: Lie back.

MICHAEL: Gosh, your eyes have gone all funny, sort of hypnotic, Ooooh, goodness, I'm feeling...

MUSIC CUTS OUT

MICHAEL: Sorry, where are my manners, you all look rather pale perhaps I should call you a cab home?

MUSIC STARTS AGAIN

GWYN: We are home, and so are you. This is your home now. You wouldn't want to miss out on all the fun.

MICHAEL: Fun? Oh did you want to do the crossword with me?

MARGO: Look into my eyes.

MICHAEL: Is that a yes or a no? Oh I'm feeling dizzy. I can't seem to focus. But...

MUSIC CUTS OUT AGAIN, NEWSPAPER

MICHAEL: ...I know I haven't got six down yet, if you want to try that one. The clue is "Postman, heavy bag".

GWYN: How many letters?

MICHAEL: Oh, lots.

MARGO: Oh for goodness sake let's have a look.

ESMIE: Margo, what are you doing. We have our instructions.

MARGO: I'm good at these. Well, 9 across isn't right,

SCRIBBLING

MARGO: Butane isn't an inert gas so that means 10 down can't be Nepal, Gwyn, what other countries border China?

GWYN: Mongolia, Vietnam, India.

MARGO: Must be India then. Oh Michael, that's definitely not right, nope neither's that one.

MICHAEL: Oh come on – it fits!

MARGO: You can't just put in any word that fits.

MICHAEL: It is Christmas!

ESMIE: Go on then, let's have a clue?

MARGO: Here you go. 12 across, HIJKLMNO. 5 letters.

MICHAEL: Oh that's a really tough one, it took me most of the journey here to get that one.

ESMIE: Water. 'H' to 'O'?

MICHAEL: Alright, do you mind.

ESMIE: What's next?

MICHAEL: Can we just leave the crossword, I would like to do it myself.

MARGO: That ones wrong.

GWYN: How many letters?

MICHAEL: You can go back to doing that weird hypnotic thing with your eyes if you like?

GWYN: Just give us a moment and we'll be right with you.

MICHAEL: Right then I'll...

MARGO: That's not a real word!

MICHAEL: I'll just sit here then and finish my diary entry.

THE THREE WOMEN CONTINUE TO FIGHT OVER THE CROSSWORD UNDER-

MICHAEL NARRATION: I said, and that's where you find me now. Esmie, Margo and Gwynn have now finished the quick crossword and moved on to the cryptic, they do seem to have forgotten that I'm here.

HIGH PITCHED SCREAM

MICHAEL NARRATION: Oh actually I must go, I've just heard a blood curdling, ghostly shriek.

SCENE FIVE

BOUNCY CHELLO MUSIC

NARRATOR: Narrator's Diary. Today I received the most remarkable letter. It was sent by one "Michael's mother" and read as thus:
This is Michael's Mother,

VIOLIN MUSIC

MICHAEL'S MUM: ...this is Michael's mother. I write to you today with unbelievable and devastating news. I was watching a compilation of videos about cats and printers on YouTube when I received a phone call from my son. "Mum", he began, "I need you to tell me all you can about my uncle". "But Michael," I protested, "...you don't have an uncle".

HIGH NOTE

He howled and shook and berated his misfortune, and exclaimed "Now I know what a fool I've been!", "What's happened?", I enquired, reluctantly pausing my cat compilation. "Oh mum", he said, weeping profusely, / "Yaz and Tom... are dead"

MICHAEL: / ...Yaz and Tom... are dead!

MUSIC ENDS

MICHAEL'S MUM: Sorry love, say that again, I can't seem to pause this video properly.

SAD MUSIC

MICHAEL: I heard a shrill, ghostly wail that I instantly recognised as Tom and I ran to his room. They were both on the floor, slowly dying, lying next to their diaries. I couldn't think straight, what do I do, what do I do I thought, and then I did what any good friend would and read their diaries immediately. Wherein I uncovered a horrifying tale that read as follows "Dear Yaz's Diary, I'm sad to say..."

YAZ NARRATION: Dear Yaz's Diary, I'm sad to say, Tom and I are currently in the process of dying. As Michael refused to help us, forced to take on the Count alone nonewithirregardlessly. we snucked into his secret chamber, and therewithin we found an ancient book, and hertoforeafter unfolded a most mortifying story, which read as follows: "Count Ebenezer's secret journal of misdeeds.-

COUNT NARRATION: December 24th. Today, my plan reaches fruition. I have long longed to make the long trip to England that I may terrorise that green and pleasant land erelong. However, there was one threat that stood in my way, now I have tempted that trio to the castle. Here, my brides will trap them for eternity and I shall be free to suck the Christmas spirit out of their whole country. No more tinsel, no more turkey, no more sweets – bar humbugs, I like humbugs, we can still have those. Why have I written down my evil plan you ask? As a distraction technique. If you're reading this, then I am in fact standing/ behind you Ha Ha Ha Ha"

YAZ: "...in fact standing behind you. Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha."

TOM: Do you think he means that, or is it like an unreliable narrator thing?

THE COUNT LAUGHS, TOM SCREAMS, EATING UNDER-

YAZ NARRATION: The Count was at my neck. I could feel the Christmas spirit fading away-

TOM: Get off him!

COUNT: Oh, impatient are we?

COUNT EATING

YAZ NARRATION: As he fed on Tom, I summoned the last of my waning strength and threw the last of my remaining vegan eggnog at our adversary.

BURNING SOUND, THE COUNT HISSES

YAZ NARRATION: He hissed and screamed and shrank away, burnt by the cheerful Christmas drink.

SAD PIANO MUSIC

YAZ NARRATION: Tom and I limped back to Tom's room, knowing we have mere moments left to live... Ugh.

TOM NARRATION: Dear Yaz's Diary, I'm afraid Yaz has just died so I will complete his last entry as a sombre but neater tribute, and in the hope that Michael will read it and know what an evil man his uncle truly is. Michael if you are reading this, please know what an evil man your uncle truly is! Oh god, I'm fading fast, just enough time to switch over to...

Tom's Diary, just after midnight. It's now Christmas Day. Looks like this is the end, goodbye diary. Tom if you do manage to survive this don't forget to ask that coach driver for a proper tax receipt on the way back. Oh, it looks like Michael has just burst into the room crying "My god, what's/ happened here..."

MICHAEL: /happened here! Don't worry lads I will/ avenge...

TOM NARRATION: /avenge you. But Michael I'm not dead yet. Look, I still have enough strength to write these words. Wait why am I writing this down when I could just be telling Michael. Oh god, still writing, faculties failing, I see Michael start to read our diaries as the darkness closes in...

MUSIC ENDS

MICHAEL: "start to read our diaries as the darkness closes in..." And that was the end of the diary, mum.

MICHAEL'S MUM NARRATION: said Michael, finally coming to the end of his lengthy story. / "Yaz and Tom are dead..."

MICHAEL: [*on phone*] Yaz and Tom are dead, / the evil Count is on his way to London and my perfect Christmas is ruined.

BEEP BEEP BEEP.

MICHAEL'S MUM NARRATION: - and with that, his phone credit was gone. Damn those roaming charges.

VIOLIN MUSIC

MICHAEL'S MUM NARRATION: I stood in astonishment for a moment. And then I immediately set about writing this rather lengthy letter to you, dear Narrator, for this seemed a perfect cliff-hanger for you to do that thing where you ask dramatic questions before the interlude.

/Yours festively,
Michael's Mum

NARRATOR: /“...Yours festively, Michael's Mum”. And there the letter ended. I re-read it hastily, in astonishment. Surely this could not be? Could Yaz and Tom really be dead? Would the villain win? Would Michael get his perfect Christmas? Would I be forced to ask the same old questions??

I decided not to, and instead returned to watching a Christmas Ad for a popular department store on the telly.

SPOOF CHRISTMAS AD. TINKLY UPLIFTING MUSIC.

EMOTIONAL VOICEOVER: Remember that time you watched a whimsical quasi-fantasy tale that was actually filmed in August with a young woman singing a heartfelt cover of a nineties rock song? You watched it twice. It reminded you of something. You cried. You posted about it on twitter. [*Very heartfelt*] Please buy things from us.

SCENE SIX

SWOOSH INTO SOMBRE MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: Michael's Diary, Christmas Day. I stood over the two bodies of my dead friends, lost, distraught... When a third figure started to twitch. It was the wretched body of Eyesore, my uncle's mutinous clerk, only now regaining consciousness.

EYESORE: Ah, now you see the true cruelty of my master for yourself, young Michael.

MICHAEL: *[Crying]* Oh god. We should be sharing a mimosa and opening presents right now.

EYESORE: Actually, in this house we don't *usually* open the presents until the Count has sucked the life out of four virgins.

MICHAEL: If only I'd trusted you! It's too late now... too late for anything but revenge Eyesore, I... But without Yaz's mad schemes and terrible cookery and Tom's genius and exceptional tidiness, I am just a brave, overly sincere have-a-go hero, there is no way I can defeat that wicked man without them.

MUSICAL BOOM, MYSTERIOUS MUSIC

EYESORE: How strong is your grief, young man? How powerful is your thirst for revenge? How many ounces to a pound? And how dearly do you wish to reanimate your friends?

MICHAEL: Very strong, quite powerful, sixteen I think, and most dearly indeed!

EYESORE: There may be a way – a person who can help them, and perhaps help us take down the evil Count once and for all.

MICHAEL: What must I do?

MICHAEL NARRATION: I asked, trying to be heroic, but sounding like a bagpipe with a cold.

EYESORE: It is time for you to meet the doctor.

MUSICAL BOOM INTO

SCENE SEVEN

AT SEA, SHIP MUSIC

CAPTAIN: Captain Log's Diary, Christmas Morning. It's been a strange journey on the HMS Dramatic Irony. We set sail from the Romanian coast with our usual cargo of vehicle parts, insulated wire, and several mysterious boxes from Transylvania. We headed due west towards London, where I must admit I was rather concerned about the new agriculture product import tariffs on what appeared to be 2 tonnes of Transylvanian earth we were carrying. But all seemed well, until we started to find many of our passengers dead, completely drained of Christmas Spirit. We thought maybe this was normal but then the crew started to turn up with a great lack of life also and we started to get worried. Now it seems I'm the only one left on board, except of course for the Count Ebenezer of Castle Spatula who now I come to think of it was discovered sporting a wicked smile next to each corpse, and who I can see is leaning over me now as I write in my Diary on this beautiful... Urgh.

SCENE EIGHT

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: Michael's Diary, Late Christmas Morning. Where to start? After a perilous journey, too exciting to detail in these pages, which I shall instead save for my un-abridged, un-cut, tell all diary, Eyesore, and I carried the corpses of my two dead friends into a forest.

WALKING

MICHAEL: Ohhhhh.

EYESORE: What's wrong Mr Michael?

MICHAEL NARRATION: I was quite upset at the time.

MICHAEL: Ohhhhh. Where are we Eyesore?

EYESORE: We're *here* sir.

MICHAEL: I can see that for fu-

MICHAEL NARRATION: Really quite upset.

MICHAEL: ...sake. But where is here?

CLATTER

FRANKIE: Visitors! Fantastic!

MICHAEL NARRATION: An excited voice suddenly shouted from the shadows.

FRANKIE: Come in, come in. Shut the door behind you.

MICHAEL: What door?

FRANKIE: Oh, where've I put the bloomin' door now? Well, that saves shutting it. I'm Doctor Frankie Van Helsinki. Welcome Mikey love, to my humble abode.

MYSTERY MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: And that was no cliché, it really was unbelievably humble, in that it was just a clearing in the forest with a small caravan (sans door) and what looked like a science lab growing from the trees.

FRANKIE: I'm the last in a long line of Van Helsinki's an old family of mad-but-brilliant scientists, each madder-and-more-brilliant than the last, we've dedicated our lives to stopping the evil Count once and for all!

MICHAEL NARRATION: Eyesore explained he had in fact been working for the Doctor's family all along as had his father before him, and his/ father before

EYESORE: /father before him, and his father before him and his father before him, not his father before him actually as he had a small business doing children's parties, but his father before him and his father before him-

FRANKIE: Right, where's that teapot, do you want tea?

CRASHING

My mad-great-granddaddy discovered a weapon that could defeat the Count. A weapon they say, conceived by Santa himself.

MUSICAL BEAT

MICHAEL: Santa?!

MUSICAL BEAT

FRANKIE: That's right Mikey-cakes. Santa.

MUSICAL BEAT

Part prophecy, part nature, part machine.

CHRISTMASSY MUSIC

A stake of holly right through the heart. But not just any holly – the length, width, number of leaves and spikes and berries must conform to the perfect divine formula. Over the years every member of my family has had a hand in it, took a while to get Great Aunt Helga's out actually. My mum, Santa bless her, went so doolally, working out the holly algorithm that one day she left and never returned. Some say my mum discovered the perfect formula but never got to share it

CRASHING

Right, ah, one of these teapots has tea in it, the other has sulphuric acid. I can never remember which one. Shall we skip the tea?

MICHAEL: Eyesore said you might be able to help my friends.

FRANKIE: Well, I did wonder why you'd brought two corpses here with you.

MICHAEL: Help them, doctor.

FRANKIE: It's a mad task Mikey mate, never been done, but... I can't be a mad scientist without having a few mad ideas. Ha! I'm sure I could reconfigure some of my lab to... Yes, this is going to be fun.

MICHAEL: It's a Christmas miracle. But how will you do it?

FRANKIE: I'll use a special element only recently discovered, the element... of... Surprise, Boo! Ha, no only joking, science love. Obviously.

MICHAEL: If you bring my friends back, I'll do whatever it takes to help you defeat Count Ebenezer.

CRASH

FRANKIE: Okay, Mikeybunny, I've got bad news and good news. Which order would you like it in?

MICHAEL: Um.

FRANKIE: I have enough resources to bring *one* of your friends back to life!

MICHAEL: You can only save one?!

FRANKIE: Afraid so Mikey-pet.

TENSE MUSIC

MICHAEL: Oh god, what a terrible decision to have to make. This is like Hobson's Choice. Wait no, it's *Sophie's Choice* isn't it? Or *is* it Hobson's Choice? Oh god, I can't decide – it's either like Hobson's Choice or Sophie's Choice but I don't know which!

FRANKIE: You must choose one of them.

MICHAEL: Sophie's Choice.

FRANKIE: One of your friends!

MICHAEL: No I can't – I'm sorry I can't do it.

FRANKIE: Then I shall choose. And if I can only save one life... the choice is clear...

MICHAEL: It's Tom isn't it?

FRANKIE: Just you wait and see! Hahaha!

COMIC MUSIC, CLATTER

[Muttering, not really heard] How do you make Chemistry. Plant a Chemist. Ha. Good one Frankie.

EYESORE: In order to concentrate Miss Van Helsinki likes to make bad chemistry puns.

FRANKIE: Only periodically Eyesore. Haha. And they have to be bad, all the good ones Argon!
Ha.

MICHAEL NARRATION: And so Frankie disappeared and began preparing for the experiment,

THUNDER

MICHAEL NARRATION: Thunder started to rumble and we heard Frankie cry Mikey, Eyesore come/ quick it's

FRANKIE: /quick it's starting! I need your help.

MAD SCIENCE MUSIC

Eyesore pass me that clamp. Thanks. Mikey, get your hand in there

SQUELCH

FRANKIE: Don't look at me like that Mikey mate, it's just a spleen. Must concentrate. Mikey when I say, pull that lever. Wait for it, wait for it...

LOUD CRACK OF THUNDER

FRANKIE: Now!

TAZ: Urghup!

FRANKIE: He's moving! It worked.

MICHAEL NARRATION: I steeled myself to discover which of my two theatrical collaborators had be deigned a second chance at life, and which would be consigned to the dustbins of forgotten podcasters.

TAZ: Urgh!

FRANKIE: He's alive! Hahahahaha! He's alive!

TAZ: Urgh!

MICHAEL NARRATION: The newly revived figure stared me straight in the eye, blinking, confused, vulnerable... hideous yet familiar, and I recognised the terrible reality before me.

TAZ: Urgh!

MICHAEL: What have you done!

FRANKIE: I knew you couldn't choose, so I stitched parts of each one together into a single person.

TAZ: Uuuuuurgpfhf.

MICHAEL: What!?

THUNDER

FRANKIE: Sorry love, did you prefer them separate but dead?

MICHAEL: I... um... I'm honestly very confused right now.

TAZ: Urghuph... what's happened to me?
Hey, this is weird.

MICHAEL: Um.. Tom, Yaz don't worry. This is Doctor Frankie and she has brought you back from the dead.

TAZ: I was dead?
Yes of course you were dead.
Oh, hello Tom, I can hear myself thinking.
Oh God this is going to get annoying I can hear everything Yaz is thinking... Yes, that was me Yaz.

FRANKIE: You may encounter some dizziness or confusion – try not to operate any heavy machinery for 48 hours.

TAZ: I'll do my best.

MICHAEL: Tom, Yaz. Tom-Yaz...Taz. I'm so sorry I fell for that evil Count's trick and didn't listen to you both - But we will stop him. Frankie, I am at your disposal.

FRANKIE: Great – could you pop this spare spleen in there.

MICHAEL: Oh, sure.

BIN OPENING

FRANKIE: Glad to have you on board, but without knowing the exact numbers that determine the right form of holly, we are powerless against the Count.

EYESORE: And if your mother did know the number, she disappeared with it.

TAZ: Hey, is that your mother?

FRANKIE: That portrait? Yup. Using her favourite electrodes to experiment on a little rabbit, in her bleeding prime.

TAZ: I don't think that was a phone number that old woman gave us?

MICHAEL: The old woman from the village with all those rubbish panto jokes! That's her!

FRANKIE: You've seen her? How is she?

TAZ: We quite liked her,
no we didn't,
well she was quite fun.

FRANKIE: And did she give you a number? Do you still have it??

TAZ: Yes, we filed it alphabetically in my notebook.

NOTEBOOK

FRANKIE: These numbers. Yes!

CLATTER

Mum bloody cracked it.

TINKLING MUSIC

The holy sprig. We plunge this stake of holly into the Count's heart, it will vanquish even the most evil Christmas-hater.

EYESORE: The er... prophecy miss.

FRANKIE: Santa's prophecy states it must be wielded by one who knows the true meaning of Christmas in their heart.

MICHAEL: That's me! Everyone knows I love Christmas more than anyone.

TAZ: *We'll* say.

MICHAEL: This is it. I can redeem my failure! I am Mikey the Vampire Slayer. I am Santa's Slayer.

TAZ: Haha.

MICHAEL: What?

TAZ: *[Snorts]* Santa's Sleigh-er.
Hahaha.

MICHAEL: Yes.

TAZ: Santa's sleigh...er.

MICHAEL: Yes. What?

TAZ: Ha doesn't hear it does he?
Nope.

EYESORE: You must be quick – the Count has already set sail for London.

FRANKIE: How is he going to cancel Christmas for the whole UK? He wanted you out of the country. But who did he think you were going to protect?

TAZ: Uh Oh.

MICHAEL: You don't think...

TAZ: Oh dear

MICHAEL: No, he wouldn't...

TAZ: Oh god!

MICHAEL: He's going to use... Her.

SCENE NINE

SAD, EPIC, ROYAL MUSIC

QUEEN: Christmas Day, about lunchtime. The Diary of my majesty the Queen. I am preparing to go before the nation to give the most upsetting speech of my Royal career. I did all I could but the Count prorogued parliament, knocked out all the Beefeaters and tied up my corgis. And the Three's Company boys well, they're on holiday. The Count has asked me to read the evil speech he's written and there's nothing I can do. Oh... and Phillip has just asked me to state for the record that he tried to stop the Count but was over powered and has been locked in the airing cupboard.

So here I go. Time to cancel Christmas.

SCENE TEN

MOODY MUSIC

FRANKIE: The Diary of Francesca Van Helsinki, the 25th day of December. Having arrived on the express from Transylvania, my new comrades against evil and I broke into Buckingham Palace. As we dashed through the corridors we could hear the Queen beginning her Christmas Speech. "My fellow Britons", she began, / "it is with great sadness..."

QUEEN: /it is with great sadness and a heavy heart that I have to announce a change to the way we will live our lives in the years to come. I can officially say that Christmas is now and forever more...The same and you can all continue to go about your Christmas Day as normal.

COUNT: What the deuce is going on? That's not what I wrote. Somebody is meddling with the autocue.

CLOAK SWOOP, GENTLE ROYAL MUSIC

QUEEN: I find a perfectly normal family occasion is what I most enjoy about this time of year. Phillip and I can get on with the everyday Christmas jollities that any modern, liberal, forward thinking, not stuck in the past family gets on with. Oh God, it's the Count. No don't type that. The Queen is saying everything you type. Just type what I say. Don't type that either. Get off the bloody autocue you meddling adventurers, no you get off, stop trying to stop me from stopping Christmas. Taz, you definitely don't need to type that! This year, Christmas is candle lit. No! Christmas is officially cancell- anything you want to in the shops. Christmas is over... Rated but still going on. Now, that's it, that's all I have to say. Love each other and enjoy Christmas. Goodbye.

MUSICAL BOOM

COUNT: Nooooo.

QUEEN: What on earth is going on? Oh boys, just in the nick of time!

MICHAEL: Hello Your Majesty!

COUNT: I don't understand. My brides have never let anyone escape before! And y- what the bloody hell happened to those two?

TAZ: I've got a bone to pick with you
and so have I.

MICHAEL: Look here, Not Uncle, if you thought you could cancel Christmas, you didn't reckon with how much I want my turkey with 24 different types of vegetables and six types of stuffing and 4 types of elf-themed napkin! That's right, no one loves Christmas more than me!

COUNT: And how exactly are *you* going to stop me?

FRANKIE: Here Mikey, catch.

WOOSH NOISE, CATCH, SPARKLY SOUNDS, HERO MUSIC

MICHAEL: The perfect stake of holly, wielded by one who knows the true meaning of Christmas in their heart.

COUNT: Who told you about that?

MICHAEL: Your reign of evil is over! How'd you like your steak?! Ha!

STABBING.

COUNT: Argh!

ALL: Hooray!

COUNT: That really hurt.

BOOM, HERO MUSIC ENDS

COUNT: Ow.

FRANKIE: It didn't work?!

MICHAEL: What? Oh god.

EVIL LAUGH

EYESORE: Santa's prophecy must have been wrong.

COUNT: You, Queenie, contact your Broadcasting Corporation and cancel Christmas now.

DIALING

TAZ: What do we do,
I don't think there is anything we can do, he's won.

RINGING, PHONE PICK-UP, SQUEAKY TELEPHONE VOICE

QUEEN: BBC?

SQUEAKY TELEPHONE VOICE

I'm afraid I need to ask you to amend my speech.

SQUEAKY TELEPHONE VOICE

Please announce, Christmas *IS* Cancelled,

SQUEAKY TELEPHONE VOICE

I'm afraid so, yes, for real this time.

SQUEAKY TELEPHONE VOICE

Uh, oh, yes... They say they'll have to interrupt Songs of Praise.

COUNT: Do it!

QUEEN: Very well. Ehem. I hereby cancel Christmas.

MUSICAL BOOM

It's done.

TELEPHONE DOWN

MICHAEL: Christmas is over I've failed.

FRANKIE: The last ever Christmas.

EYESORE: The last ever anything miss.

FRANKIE: I wish I could see my mum again. Just one last time.

EYESORE: This is not how I'm meant to spend my last Christmas. Oh my wife, my babies, I know you cannot hear me, but, I love you.

TAZ: At least we're together at the end.
Yeah, I'm glad I'm sharing this with you.
Weird,
but good weird.
Bye Tom,
Bye Yaz.
Love you...
I yes, I love you too.

TINKLY MUSIC

MICHAEL: Love. Family. Together. Sharing. Good weird. Haha. Hahahahaha.

EYESORE: Um, is he alright?

COUNT: What's going on

TAZ: You ok?

MICHAEL: No wonder I couldn't defeat the Count.

FRANKIE: What do you mean Mikey?

BUILDING REVELATORY MUSIC

MICHAEL I've been obsessed this whole time with having the perfect Christmas. Making everyone do exactly what I want. But that's not what Christmas really is. Seeing your love for your family Eyesore, your love for your mother Frankie. Your strange togetherness Taz! I realise how wrong I've been this whole time. I'm so sorry my dear friends. All this *is* my fault – because I was too fixated on my perfect Christmas that I couldn't listen to those I care for most. But I see the truth now, so go ahead Count Ebenezer, it doesn't matter one bit. You can't cancel Christmas. Because Christmas is within us all. It's not the things we do, it's the people we love.

COUNT: Argh! No!

TAZ: What's happening?

EYESORE: I think Mr Michael may have just found the true meaning of Christmas in his heart.

FRANKIE: Mikey now!

COUNT: Oh please, no!

MICHAEL: Hey! What's a vampires least favourite boy band eh? Stake that!

STABBY SQUELCHY SOUND.

COUNT: Argh! What's happening, Noo!

MICHAEL: Yes! I am Santa's Slayer! Ah, no, I've just heard it.

COUNT: My head is spinning with thoughts of Christmas's past, present and future... Argh! My time at little vampire school...

TINKLY MUSIC

MUPPET BOY VAMPIRE: Look there he is, it's Ebenezer.

ANOTHER MUPPET BOY VAMPIRE: He can't drink blood only Christmas spirit!

MUPPET BOY VAMPIRE: Hahaha!

LAUGHING BOYS

BOY COUNT: Stop it! Stop it! I hate Christmas, but really it's because I hate myself.

TINKLY MUSIC

COUNT: Argh! All the Christmas-hating I have done in the present!

TINKLY MUSIC

COUNT: I allowed you go to the Annual Evil Clerk and Sidekick Convention in September.

EYESORE: Yes sir, September 1967.

TINKLY MUSIC

COUNT: Argh! And all the potential evil Christmas's to come!

MUSIC, THUNDER

COUNT: Mwahahahah! I have destroyed Christmas! Mwahahahah! Everyone is miserable!
Mwahahahah! I hate Christmas! Argh! But really it is because I hate myself! Oh no, what have I done?!

TING, CRASHING

COUNT: Argh!

TAZ: He seems to just be running around, screaming and crashing into things.
Is that meant to happen?

FRANKIE: Well we haven't completed double-blind trails on the holly stake yet, I sort of rushed it out due to political pressure.

CRASHING

COUNT: Oh gosh, Oh goodness, Oh, Oh, I feel, I feel... Wonderful. Well, goodness me, Oh, hello there, how are you all?

TAZ: What's going on?

FRANKIE: The evil is vanquished.

TAZ: Oh, I thought it was meant to kill him.

EYESORE: Master you are cured.

ALL: Hurray!

MICHAEL: But... shouldn't we arrest him!?

COUNT: No, but I have changed!

TAZ: It's like I always say, a change is as good as arrest!
HAHA, good one us!

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

FRANKIE NARRATOR: At that moment the Count flung open the window and stuck his head out calling you boy what/ day is it?

COUNT: / day is it? Yes you there, what day is it?

BOY: What day is it? Why are you asking me you burke, Look at a calendar, or your phone. Who flings open a window and shouts to a stranger on the street. You're in Buckingham Palace, is there really no one in the whole building you can ask? Idiot.

COUNT: Boy, go to the butchers on the corner of the street and buy the biggest Turkey they have, there's a shilling in it for you!

BOY: Fuck off you cheeky git, buy it yourself!

WINDOW CLOSES

COUNT: Well it seems I have much to learn

BUZZER BEEP

BUTLER: Ma'am, excuse me.

QUEEN: Yes, what is it?

BUTLER: A strange looking family are calling on the video phone.

QUEEN: Thank you Cashdosh, patch them through.

SKYPE DOORBELL

MRS EYESORE: Hi love.

EYESORE: My darling wife! My family! You're all here.

FRANKIE: Hi Mrs Eyesore!

EYESORE: Look, the Count's all better now. I told you it would work.

MRS EYESORE: Alright, I stand corrected.

MASSIVE MATT: *[Little boys voice]* Yeah, that leg surgery really did you some good mum.

COUNT: Massive Matt, is that you.

MASSIVE MATT: Hello Mr Count!

COUNT: Oh my dear boy, I do so wish I could give you a hug.

FRANKIE: Yeah, well who's faults that?!

COUNT: Yep, sorry about that.

MRS EYESORE: Miss, there's someone here to see you.

NEW PERSON COMPUTER NOISE

WIDOW: Tell me baby, do you recognise me?

REUNION MUSIC

FRANKIE: Mum, is that you? You found me, after all these years?

WIDOW: Oh do stop dear, you're making me sound old.

MICHAEL: This might not be the Christmas I expected but everything is just perfect.

TAZ: Sorry, but is anyone actually going to fix us?

MICHAEL: We'll do it in the new year. It is Christmas after all.

TAZ: Alright then, no it's not.

MICHAEL: Ha. Do you know what we've forgotten to do?

TAZ: What?

MICHAEL: Record the podcast.

TAZ: Oh, we could always record our diary entries instead, that is a ridiculous idea, ok you're right.

FRANKIE NARRATION: Said Taz. And with that Michael finally got to organise his sing song. As he did, Taz let out an enormous sneeze covering the Queen who said...

QUEEN: Ewww... God.

TAZ: Bless Us.

MICHAEL: Everyone...

ALL: God rest ye merry gentlemen...

CHRISTMAS MUSIC TAKES OVER

NARRATOR: And podcast listeners, so ends today's entry in the diary of your humble Narrator. That's right it's been my Diary all along. Goodnight.

GENTLE CHRISTMAS MUSIC

NEW NARRATOR: Said the Narrator. And so ends the diary of your humble Narrator's Narrator. Merry Christmas.

MYSTERIOUS CHRISTMAS MUSIC

NEW NEW NARRATOR: And with a faint smile the Narrator's Narrator, switched off her microphone, flicked the light switch and stepped out into the snowy night.

CHRISTMAS ADVERT MUSIC

AD VOICE: The Narrator of the Narrator's Narrator, closed the book. It was finally time to hang up his stocking. Buy things from us.

SPOOKY CHRISTMAS MUSIC

VOICE: Said the person from the department store advert. All this has actually been *my* diary. Thanks for listening.

PAUSE, SWOOP

NARRATOR: Said the woman from Croydon Leisure Centre, because it really *was* the Narrator's diary after all... and here it ends. Goodnight Diary. Sleep tight.

SFX

NARRATOR: Coming Soon in Series 2 of Three's Company's Adventure Department

SFX WHISTLED ADVENTURE DEPARTMENT THEME

GRUFF COWBOY: This town ain't big enough for the both of us kid.

MICHAEL: Have you thought about getting planning permission?

SFX

TOM: So have we stopped the zombie apocalypse from series 1?

FUTURE TOM: Well, Past Tom, you have in our past, which is to say WE have, but for you it's still your future, though you do it in the past, so you're going to have done so, and we need to convince you to ensure that you do do what you've already done ... if that makes sense?"

MICHAEL: That makes no sense.

FUTURE TOM: Ok, I'll go back in time and explain it again

SFX

TOM: I'm Smarticus.

MICHAEL: *[Whispered]* Tom, I thought I was meant to be Smarticus.

TOM: *[Whispered]* Oh god yeah. *[Proudly]* He's Smarticus.

SFX

YAZ: Oh my goodness, Captain Super is here to save us, in his amazing Mechanical Magpie.

TOM: Woah! Is it a bird? Is it a plane?

YAZ: Yes.

SFX

MICHAEL: Wait, this doesn't make sense, how could we possibly be advertising season 2, we haven't even finished writing it yet!?

TOM: Oh don't get meta in the Next Time bit.

MICHAEL: Sorry.

YAZ: You were a bit meta yourself there.

TOM: Sorry.

YAZ: Wait, oh god so was I! It's catching!

SFX

NARRATOR: It's time for Three's Company's Adventure Department.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

YAZ: You have been listening to Three's Company's Adventure Department, Episode 6: A Cryptmas Carol, or The Post of Christmas Last.

Visit AdventureDepartment.uk for more information.

Adventure Department was written, performed and created by Three's Company.

Guests this episode where Mariam Bell, Joanna Bending, Alice de Cent, Ethan El-Shater, Leah Harvey, Paul Dodds, Ashlea Kaye, Danny Millar, Rosie Jones and Greg Snowden. With Jodie McNee as Frankie and Paul Chahidi as Eyesore. And Michael's Mum as Michael's Mum.

It was edited by me and mixed by the always wonderful Chris Sharland.

Special thanks also to Tom 'Griff' Griffiths and James 'Percy' Percival.

The stunning artwork for this episode was by Nina Jay, check that out on our website if you've not seen that already.

Full credits, music listings, transcripts and more in the show notes or at AdventureDepartment.uk

Now it's a sad fact of life, but the truth is that there is simply no way for people to discover charming-comedy-spoof-theatre-adventure-podcasts apart from people who currently listen spreading the word, so if you know anyone that might enjoy this this Christmas, please tell them about Adventure Department, it would be a lovely Christmas present for us... And also for them.

On Twitter you can find us @ThreesCompany, we are ThreesCompanyUK on Instagram, Facebook we are ThreesCo and the website is AdventureDepartment.uk

Make sure you subscribe or follow us so you don't miss Season 2 which is coming in 2021.

Three's Company are Tom Crawshaw, Michael Grady-Hall and me Yaz Al-Shaater.

And now I've got through that, it's time for me to open my 17th box of Quality Street, Merry Christmas... Um... Vegan Quality Street- damn.