

## 64 SUNDAY JOURNAL - FRONT PAGE - SECONDS LATER

The front page is a picture of Colin dressed up as Santa with the headline, "Freed Freidberg finds job as mall Santa".

CUT TO:

## 65 INT. MALL - PHILLIPS OFFICE - HOUR LATER

Phil is on the phone talking to local residents who are flooding the phone lines with complaints.

Colin walks in and Phil continues appeasing the irate person on the other end as he signals Colin to not get dressed and to sit down in the chair.

He finishes up with the call and hangs up. Immediately, the phone rings again.

PHILLIP

Oh, for the love of....

He takes the phone off the receiver and then hangs up immediately. He disconnects the main line from the back of the phone.

PHILLIP

This has been going on all morning. Colin, what happened? Thought we were keeping quiet on this.

COLIN

I didn't say anything. But this photographer has been following me since my release. I bet it has something to do with him.

PHILLIP

I've got a protest group already chanting and causing trouble at santaland. It's complete chaos down there. I think we're going to have to shut down the operation for the day.

COLIN

You mean, no Santa clause today?  
But what about the kids?

PHILLIP

The kids aren't spending money,  
Colin. And this is a very  
conservative town. There before the  
grace of god, this type of news  
will bury our sales forecast.

COLIN

This is just a hyped up story for a  
local newspaper to sell more  
papers. I'm not a murderer or a  
child rapist, Phil. This is  
ridiculous.

PHILLIP

Oh. So, what do you want me to do?  
Try to go down there right now and  
reason with these people? They're  
out for blood, the merciless  
heathens. And I was just trying to  
be a nice guy. Help out a childhood  
friend who was in a bind. Well,  
going to have to put out the call  
to fill your spot.

COLIN

What? You're firing me?

PHILLIP

What else can I do? I don't need  
this headache the week before  
Christmas. And I don't want a  
boycott of the mall by a jump to  
conclusions community that is the  
bread and butter of these vendors.

COLIN

What about your commitment to my  
rehabilitation? Isn't Jesus going  
to be pretty pissed at you for not  
saving a lost soul?

PHILLIP

Oh, boy, Coll. Don't go there.  
Don't bring my Jesus into it.

COLIN

Why? You started it.

PHILLIP

Come on, man. You gotta understand the situation here. I have to go down there now and tell a crowd of children who have no idea what's going on that Santa had an emergency at the North Pole and won't be back till tomorrow. That's a heavy cross to bear.

COLIN

You could go down there and plead my case. I mean, the absurdity of my proven innocence bears no weight in this? I'm a free man.

PHILLIP

That doesn't matter if your reputation has been questioned. People jump to conclusions and get emotional a lot easier today without thinking things through. I blame it on the interweb. I know you're a good guy, but the cats out of the bag. I'm going to have to let you go.

COLIN

I understand. But I'm not at all happy about it.

Phil gets up and starts to exit the room holding Colin by the arm.

CUT TO: