

As they approach he is even more Santa like and tries to disguise his voice.

Tess, Mindy's daughter steps up the stairs to Santa.

COLIN

Ho,ho,ho. Hello, little girl. And what's your name?

TESS

(Before sitting)

I'm actually in a debate with myself this year on whether or not to believe in the Santa myth. I wonder how detrimental it may be in my adult life if I let the dillusion of a fairytale affect my cognitive functions now.

Colin laughs out loud as Santa at this comment.

MINDY

I'm sorry. Her name is Tess. Don't be rude. I blame it on the books.

COLIN

Ho,ho,ho. Well, Tess, right now, let's focus on what you want for Christmas.

Tess hops on his lap as Mindy takes pictures with her phone.

TESS

After world peace, and no starving kids.... I guess I would want my mom to be happier.

MINDY

Honey, let's not air our dirty laundry in public, sweetie.

COLIN

It's okay. Ho,ho,ho. Those are pretty remarkable gifts to want for such a young person.

TESS

I know. It's like, my brain never stops working.

COLIN

You make a lot of good points.

Tess studies Santa hard then speaks.

TESS

So, what's your real job.

COLIN

This is my real job. Listening to children tell me what they want for Christmas.

TESS

How do you get all those gifts down the chimney in one night all across the world?

COLIN

Good question.... but if I told you, there wouldn't be any magic in what I do. That's up to your imagination to decide.

TESS

Wow. That's pretty deep, Santa.

Mindy is looking hard at Santa, studying his face.

COLIN

So, Tess. Is there anything you want that I can bring you for Christmas?

Tess thinks for a moment.

TESS

I guess it would be the Bill Nye science guy chemistry set. But it's pretty expensive. My mom says it'll break the bank.

Colin looks quickly toward Mindy. He glances back to Tess.

COLIN

Ho,ho,ho. I'll get my elves on that order right away! There are no banks at the North Pole and the only thing that breaks there are toys.

TESS

I won't hold my breath. But it would be a nice surprise.

MINDY

Look this way, Tess.

Tess and Colin look to her mom and Mindy snaps a picture.

Colin places Tess onto the ground.

COLIN

Merry Christmas, Tess. I'll be sure to put your gift at the top of my list.

TESS

Your myth depends on it. But it was nice to meet you, guy.

Tess runs back to her mom as Mindy gives a sorry look to Santa for her child's bluntness and they go walking off as the next kid pops up on Santas lap.

CUT TO:

41 INT. MALL HALLWAY - HOURS LATER - AFTERNOON

Colin is on break and is sitting in the hallway in a chair. Hatless and beardless, he dozes off.

When he wakes up, he is staring at the front page of the newspaper that has his picture plastered on it.

He looks up to see Mindy standing there.