

EXMASCALIBUR INTERVIEW

With Santa Claus



Hailing from the North Pole Santa Claus is perhaps the world's most famous gosh-giver. With the biggest Christmas list on the planet, Claus has been goodie to the children of the world for centuries.

A recluse, Claus has not granted an interview in 200 years but he consented to speak with Excalibur after we gave him five dollars and a glass of beer.

Claus discusses the CN Tower, apartment buildings and his sex life among other things.

By MICHAEL HOLLETT

EXCALIBUR: How did you get into the Santa Claus business?

CLAUS: Originally I applied to be Robin Hood but they said I was too fat. They wanted me to be Friar Tuck so I said forget it. Anyway, the idea of running around in the woods with a bunch of merry men didn't really appeal to me.

After that I spent some time in sales, you know, encyclopaedias, brushes, lingerie, but that wasn't too fulfilling. You see, I'm not too crazy about adults. They are kind of a pain, they've always got a complaint. I decided to look around for a sort of public service job with kids. Anyway, I finally went down to a Manpower office, saw the job and signed up. There was a group of people willing to front me the initial capital to set-up shop at the Pole and the rest is history.

EXCALIBUR: When I visited your plant at the Pole there was quite a lot of rumbling from the elves about their wages, what do you pay them?

CLAUS: Who complained, what were their names?

EXCALIBUR: I can't say, but what are your salaries?

CLAUS: I pay the elves \$20 a day.

EXCALIBUR: That's not bad.

CLAUS: Of course, the days are six months long up there.

EXCALIBUR: I also noticed that the elves lived in crowded, old wooden dormitories. Many seemed to be in poor health and they didn't seem that happy. They didn't look like the elves I see in all the pictures.

CLAUS: Listen, I'm starting to get sick of all this insinuation that I mistreat my elves. Hell, there was even some talk of forming a union up there but I chased the troublemaker off the plant. I treat those little guys fair. You have to remember, the North Pole is an impoverished area. It has limited industrial potential. I'm providing a lot of jobs

up there. Before I set up shop there was nothing up there but snow drifts and ice bergs. Now its a thriving industrial centre. Everyone shares in the benefits.

EXCALIBUR: What are some of the major problems you face?

CLAUS: Apartment buildings, that's the biggie. In the old days it was easy. I'd pull up on the roof of a house, pop down the chimney, dump my gifts and then I would be off. The whole operation took from two to five minutes depending on what goodies were left out for me.

You can imagine the problems with apartment buildings. It's easy enough to land the sleigh on the damn things but the chimneys are no bloody good. You go down an apartment building chimney and you've had it. You drop 20 floors and then bam, you're in the incinerator.

I still haven't worked this problem out. Sometimes I just sneak through the halls and pick the locks on the doors. But this also creates problems, I've had to run from the cops a number of times because they thought I was trying to pull off a breaking and entry job. I'm a big man so you can imagine what it's like for me to have to run with a bag of toys over my shoulder. I'm not exactly the cat burglar type.

EXCALIBUR: Do you worry about Toronto's CN Tower?

CLAUS: What the hell is that thing anyway? I still can't figure out what it's for. Rudolph was really upset when he first heard about it. Between us, he's quite vain and he hates the idea of the beacon outshining his nose.

EXCALIBUR: By the way, how is Mrs. Claus?

CLAUS: That's a rather touchy subject for me right now.

EXCALIBUR: Why?

CLAUS: She's suing for divorce. She says she doesn't like me being away every Christmas. She says I never give her any good presents. She also mentioned something about an unnatural relationship with my reindeer.

But I'm not going to lose any sleep over this.

EXCALIBUR: No?

CLAUS: Hell no. Listen, I've got dames if I want them. This is one of those jobs you know.

EXCALIBUR: What do you mean?

CLAUS: Groupies lad, groupies. That's what I really think is bugging my wife.



Bryon Johnson photo

I'm starting to get sick of all this talk that I mistreat my elves

Wherever I go I get beautiful women throwing themselves at me. You know, the aura of a famous celebrity and all that.

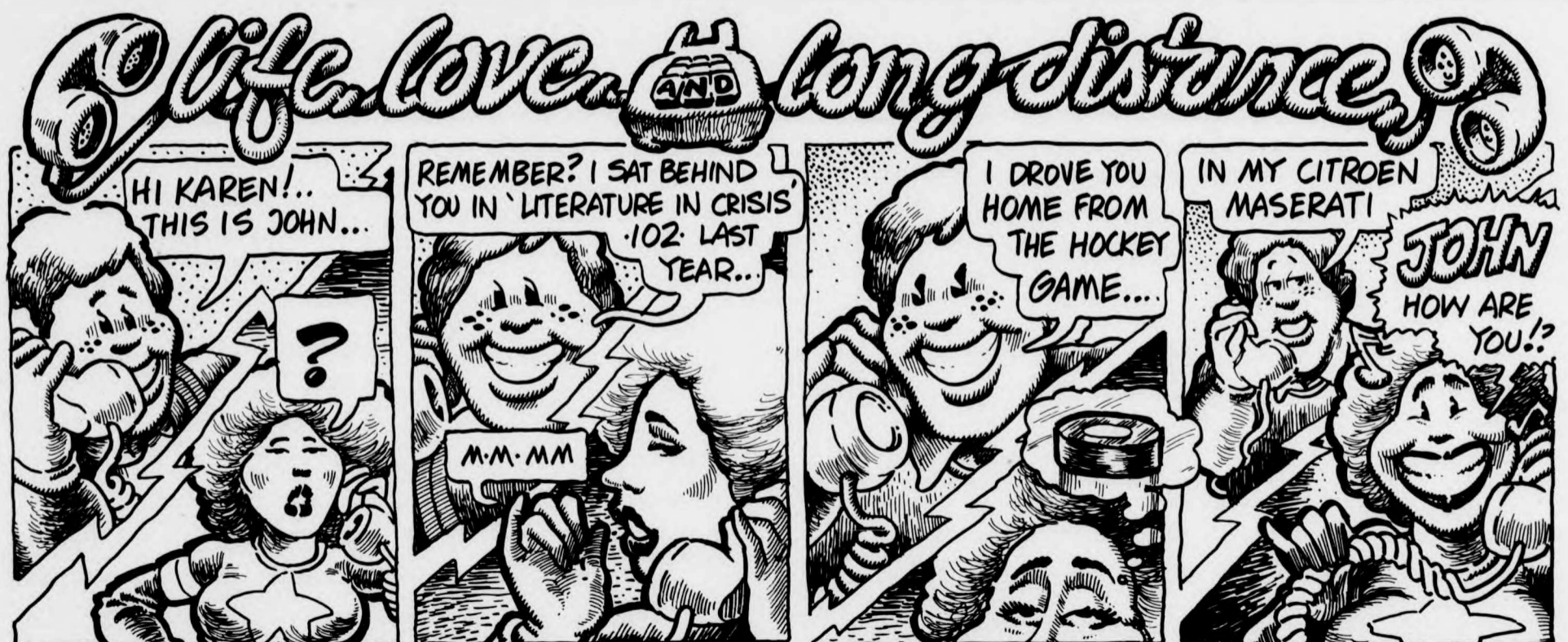
EXCALIBUR: Tell me about the use of reindeer?

CLAUS: As you can imagine, there are a number of problems inherent in their use. Let's face it, reindeer are big animals. They are not like birds. Sometimes the buggers, well, they're not too discreet.

EXCALIBUR: Why are there so many other Santa Clauses at Christmas time? Don't you think this cheapens you in some way?

CLAUS: Not really. I find that around Christmas time each year the demand for me to make personal appearances, hit the lecture circuit and so on, is overwhelming. The demand was just too great for one man to handle, especially when you consider that Christmas is my busiest time of year up at the Pole what with last minute production and the like. So I decided long ago that rather than disappoint all my fans I had to find some way to satisfy them without totally exhausting myself. As a result, I went for what we know call the 'multi-Santa' clause or option if you will.

Speaking of exhaustion, I've had enough of this, how about another glass of beer?



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