I continue to sneak these correspondences out in the barrage of mail that the North Pole receives at this time of year. It’s such a small window of time every year to attempt to break the story wide, but somehow this tale must be told. Perhaps it will find its way into the hands of a journalist or someone else equally qualified to investigate further into the matter, regardless of how long ago it was.

I was a young cobbler-in-training at the time, I was still studying the ways of the wood and I hadn’t yet received my workshop tools when the tragedy occurred. They would later *create shows and sing songs of this evening*, all of it just propaganda to twist the narrative and glorify that monster. He’s been elevated to nearly the same god-like status of Santa, repulsive when you know the truth.

The reality of this story is that it’s about the simplicity of shame, the desire for recognition, the patience and calculation of revenge, and finally the cover up that reaches the highest ranks of the North Pole.

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, the animated television special, was originally created in 1964. But you’d have to go back further to 1939 when Robert Lewis May wrote the original story masquerading as fiction to find it’s first iteration. And for the most part it is fiction, because it is a bold faced lie where truth has been lost to time and repackaged as an allegory for the American Dream.

The entire beginning of that disgusting television special, introduced to children at a young age and still watched adoringly by their adults, was all mostly true. Rudy was born unlike any of the other reindeer and was tormented for it.

Rudy’s parents, part of a proud lineage of Santa’s reindeer, were deeply embarrassed by that red, illuminated nose. At first they tried to hide the shame of their child, he was a misfit and not suited to the “royalty” of Donner’s bloodline. I wouldn’t say that Rudolph’s parents were physically abusive. I, nor any other elf, had ever recalled seeing Donner physically harm that child (but what went on behind closed doors in the dark of the North Pole is a whole other matter).

However, *we all heard* the verbal abuse from both of Red’s parents. “Neon-nose” “Mistake” “We should have let the tundra take you” All truly horrific stuff to say to a child with a deformity, made worse when it was coming from his parents. Later, the children would be even crueler, choosing to ignore him and exclude him from everything.

With no solace, even at home with his own flesh and blood, he was rejected. Rudolph withdrew into himself and waited.

Now, I *do not write this letter to besmirch the Big Jolly Man,* he is generally a loving, patient, jovial and timeless creature. But even saints have their dark moments and behind closed doors Santa *hated* anyone who didn’t fit into the North Pole program properly. And while ol’ Chris Kringle wouldn’t join the others in the public mistreatment of Rudy, he *would* turn a blind eye to the behavior directed toward the outsider.

In the elven canteens, during the off season, occasionally a gray beard elf, deep into his cups, would let slip some details of that fateful night.

It was purported to be exceptionally foggy that Christmas eve. And while Santa and the reindeer are imbued with some degree of supernatural powers, none of them can see in the dark. It’s for that express purpose that Santa, reluctantly, asked Rudolph to guide that sleigh that night.

Santa should have sensed *something* was off the instant Rudy agreed to the task.

Think about it for a moment...that red nosed reindeer had nothing. No family, no friends, he was an interloper at the North Pole. And yet the moment Santa asked Rudy to help, he excitedly accepted. Perhaps Santa assumed Rudolph was eager to help, that he wanted to fit in, and to belong.

I often wonder if Claus is simply incapable of seeing the bad in creatures. For all the talk of Santa gifting coal to bad little boys and girls, I’ve never seen a single lump loaded onto the sled. Children who *do* get a lump of coal in their stocking should know it came from their parents and not from Papa Noel. Perhaps this is just another lie of the North Pole that got disseminated over the decades....anyway.

It was the last Christmas Eve that *any* reindeer pulled Santa’s sleigh.

Rudy was placed at the front of the pulling team, the other deer rebuffed, and ordered to follow their new, smirking, leader. The sleigh was packed heavy by the elves with Santa boarding after a last minute safety check.

I should point out in the story here that *no elf ever flies with Santa*, at least not on Christmas Eve. There are instances when Santa may take an elf or two out for a spin during the off season to check out an upgrade or new feature to the sled, but never on the “Big Night”. Santa flew those alone, and for that reason no elf really knows what happened after the sleigh left the ground and was out of sight from the North Pole village. Santa returned but he never spoke of that night aloud again.

I imagine it happened something like this…

The sled leaves the ground with Rudolph in the lead. It ascends quickly into the atmosphere, obscured by low clouds and the fog. Once aloft it would have been impossible to see, except by the red glow from Rudy’s nose. Rudy begins to slow his lead, understandable in the reduced visibility, but it was because he wanted to be heard over the rushing wind.

Rudy turned back to the reindeer behind him along with Santa Claus, “Now you’ll all get to experience the cold, dark loneliness of the Arctic Circle”

And with that, he cut himself free of the sleigh, veered away from the pack, and his nose swiftly went dark.

It was rumored that Rudy could *control it*, he could have stopped his shining nose at any time. He could have made it easier to fit in, he could have hidden his light under a bushel. Instead he tolerated it all, planned and waited.

With no light to guide them, the team flew blindly through the night. Santa bellowing Rudolph’s name into the black abyss, growing concern and rising panic in voice as he begged him to return. In the absence of any visual reference the reindeer sped up, directionless but moving together.

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night and without turning on any lights attempted to get a glass of water? And while fumbling in the dark maybe ran head first into something? This is what happened to the entire sleigh.

Moving at a high speed and with no way to see what was happening, the sled smashed into the rapidly rising ground.

Santa, being a supernatural being, cannot be killed. He is indeed timeless, kept alive by the simple belief that he *does* exist.

Coming back to consciousness after the impact Santa would have been barely able to make out the foggy scene before him. Crashed sleigh, scattered gifts, and the dead and dying bodies of the reindeer (who *are not* immortal creatures who enjoy the same power as Father Christmas).

And then, out of the dark, a single red ember ignites and begins to brighten as it nears. Finally getting close enough to illuminate (in red) the entire bloody scene to Sata’s horror.

I’m not sure what would have been said after that, maybe nothing needed to be said. Years of trauma had taken its toll on that misguided reindeer and he had enacted his revenge.

Rudolph returned Santa to the North Pole without the sled, the gifts or the remains of the other reindeer. Santa said nothing and no presents were delivered that year. The following Christmas, the sleigh was upgraded to fly without reindeer, and of course was also outfitted with appropriate running lights and navigation systems.

Rudy promptly left the North Pole, and over the decades the story of that night had morphed into the lie that is still shared every Christmas. I think the lie comes from Santa Claus. He could not stand to see a reputation of joy, harmony, love, and the Christmas spirit that has lasted for millennia tarnished by the vengeful act of one twisted reindeer.

Please, tell this story...not to your children, but to those who seek the truth about that deadly red night.