

CHRISTMAS WITH THE COPPOLAS

A One-Act Play

By Nathan Walsh

JOHN COPPOLA, an averagely handsome man in an averagely handsome suit, is standing with his averagely attractive wife, MARY, who is dressed in a nice (but not ostentatious) sparkly holiday dress, outside of a doorway on center stage. Their arms are laden with presents; they both look nervous.

JOHN: (anxiously running down his last last-minute mental checklist) All right, do we have everything? Are we ready? All the presents there? Kids safely at home, away from all of this? Presentable, but not noticeable? (looks MARY up and down) Yes, good, good. You look nice, but not too flashy. (notices something about MARY, freezes) Wait, is that WINE? Jesus, Mary! Hide that in the bushes or something!

MARY: Are you serious?

JOHN: We don't need to give them any excuse to get started! It's a war zone enough as it is – no need to lob a grenade into the thing!

MARY: (worried for her husband, slowly hides the bottle of the wine behind the bushes) All right, John, I guess you know best about this... situation... We don't *have* to go, though. We can still just turn around and leave...

JOHN: (steeling himself) No, we – we need to do this. It's ... *family*, after all.

The lights dim, except for a spotlight on JOHN. MARY freezes.

JOHN: (speaking directly to audience) And what a family it is. I'm John – John Coppola – and this is my wife Mary. You've probably heard of my family. Or, at the very least, my dad. Frank. Francis Ford to you. He made *The Godfather*, he made *Apocalypse Now*, he made a number of famous offspring (myself not included). But he's only one branch of a family tree that spreads out across entertainment – art and music and film. A family well-known for its success in every endeavor it puts its mind to. The Coppolas.

A long line of various BACKGROUND COPPOLAS, arms linked, begins to slowly snake in from offstage, winding its way through the background shadows. Among them we see a king, an Old World explorer, a wizard, a tuxedo-clad playboy, a leprechaun, a femme fatale in an evening gown, a Loch Ness monster, Teen Wolf, a doctor, Van Helsing, a Shakespearean-era playwright, a 80's rock god, our main cast, and some randos wearing ugly holiday sweaters.

JOHN: You won't have heard of me. That's all right. There was a time when that used to eat away at me, drove me to therapy, pills, drink, and drugs in turn.

But I've made my peace. Every family needs a black sheep, and that comes with its own compensations.

The family continues to snake around closer in behind him, so that we can see more of them as they pass near his spotlight.

JOHN: See, the Coppolas come from a long line of excellence, a streak of success following us in whatever we deign to try. Within our ranks, you'll find artists, explorers, composers, playwrights, producers, doctors, inventors, magicians, vampire hunters, and plenty more besides. All of whom are tinged by a combination of two unique attributes: unusual, unparalleled accomplishment in their chosen field, and a degree of madness and instability that makes it impossible for them to enjoy that success without a constant compulsion to compete, to be the best, to achieve that next success, to push that standard of achievement ever higher.

For better or worse, I was born without that all-important Coppola gene. My ambitions, while not altogether lacking, were never as lofty as those of my family. I wanted a decent job, a stable income, and a happy home life. And I've managed to get them. But I never had any desire to stand out, to make my mark on the world, in Coppola blood. And so, I've always been seen as a bit of a failure. I've got a lovely, loyal, inspiring wife and two amazing kids who are as sweet and bright as you ever could hope for. It's only in *this* family that that doesn't count for a whole lot, because I don't have that unholy need to esteem myself – not in the eyes of my peers, and more importantly, not in the eyes of the family.

For you see, in their minds, there is nothing better than being a Coppola ... unless it is being the *best* Coppola. Within the family, there is a never-ending battle for power and esteem. Nepotism and competition. Alliances and favoritism. Petty arguments and backstabbing.

When a Coppola produces a film, they'll find another Coppola to act in, direct, and score it. When a Coppola starts a band, they'll draw from the same gene pool for songwriters, directors, even beverage suppliers. But, they'll never stop pushing and conniving to be seen as the one on top. Seen by whom? By the other Coppolas, of course. And they'll drag everyone else into it, along the way. Spouses, kids, pets, the waitstaff at the Benihana – you name it.

I stay out of it as much as I can. I'm not on the gossip sites, I'm not on the Coppola family tree Wikipedia page (Yeah, there is one, go check). I love them, and I'm as awed by them as anyone else. But this is their scene, and one I mostly avoid. Except... for this one time of year. Which I am steeling myself for at the moment.

The door (and MARY) shifts to the left side of the stage, as the various BACKGROUND COPPOLAS align themselves into various groupings throughout the living room, chatting, drinking eggnog, getting into small background arguments and scuffles, etc.

JOHN walks back to the outside of the door with MARY, takes another moment to steady himself, and knocks.

ELEANOR COPPOLA answers the door. She looks like a pretty stereotypical mom, I'll be honest. I'm not typecasting here. I was hoping she'd be all wiry and tan or some shit.

ELEANOR: Ah, honey! So glad you could make it! Come in, come in!

JOHN and MARY come forth, drop their presents, and receive pretentious cheek kisses from ELEANOR.

ELEANOR: Come say hello to your father.

JOHN, MARY, and ELEANOR walk up to FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA. He is a little beard monster.

ELEANOR: (with mommish passive-aggression) Frank, look who it is! John and Mary showed up after all!

JOHN and FRANCIS do that awkward thing where they kind of shake hands, but kind of also mean to hug, but don't have the wherewithal to actually follow through with the hug, so they just end up pawing at each other uncomfortably.

JOHN: Hey, Dad. Merry Christmas.

FRANCIS: Hello, John. How have you been? Is your... juice store...? still going well?

The lights dim again but for the spotlight on JOHN. Everyone else freezes as he steps forward.

JOHN: I work as the Director of Marketing for a national frozen juice brand. No one's idea of a world-changer, I know, but it keeps food on the table, and I'm good enough at it. My father remains under the impression, however, that I manage a Jamba Juice location in the Lower Valley. After years of trying to correct this misapprehension – which I am not 100% sure isn't deliberate on his part – I just go with it these days.

JOHN steps back into the scene, the lights go up, and the action resumes.

JOHN: Yeah, Dad, it's going great. Sales are really up these days, what with the new focus on... paleo diets? (shrugs apologetically at the audience) We're actually the top-selling branch in the Valley this quarter.

FRANCIS: (only half-listening) Ah, excellent, excellent! And do they hand out an award for being best at juice managing? Is there some sort of ... juice academy?

JOHN: No, Dad. Not everyone demands constant validation through awards from their peers. I am just pretty OK at selling juice, OK?

FRANCIS: (distracted, searching around for better children) Wonderful, wonderful. (spotting someone) Ah! Did you see that your sister made it here with her new husband, the Frenchman! God bless those French, they do make some fine wine! But! Not as fine as some of us here do, ho ho, now do they?

Again, the action freezes, as JOHN steps forward into the spotlight. This time, however, SOFIA COPPOLA and THOMAS MARS OF PHOENIX step forward as well, then freeze, as spotlights appear on them as well. SOFIA is a pretty, slender brunette. Ideally, THOMAS MARS OF PHOENIX is actor Jerry O'Connell with long hair, doing his best attempt at a French accent.

JOHN: This is my sister Sofia. You've probably heard of her as well. She acted in a number of my father's movies before she came into her own as a director, making such critical darlings as *The Virgin Suicides* and *Lost in Translation*. On her own, she's a perfectly enjoyable person, but the second she gets around Dad, she becomes determined to prove her own legitimacy as a director by showing him up. And of course Dad can't let *that* stand. Her husband is Thomas Mars of the band Phoenix. I don't really know much about him beyond that. I'm not sure anyone does.

ALL THREE step back into place as the lights raise and the action resumes.

SOFIA: (kissing her father's cheek) Hello, Daddy.

FRANCIS: Ah, Sofie! How has your year been? Working on anything interesting?

SOFIA: Oh yes, I'm working on a film about the real-life story of those girls who robbed a number of celebrities back in –

FRANCIS: (interrupting) Yes, yes, very good. I see you're sticking with your theme of "women trapped in gilded cages." (chortles) Where'd you get *that* theme from, Sofia?

SOFIA: Yeah, because oranges are such a good theme, Dad. (grabs an orange off a nearby table – feigns fear) Oh no, do you think someone's going to die?

FRANCIS: (ignoring her) You know, we spent a lot of money on therapy to try and help you with those "feminist" issues, but if this little *moviemaking hobby* works better for you, then the money wasn't truly a waste. Think you'll finally get the Oscar this time?

SOFIA: (trying to maintain her composure) I don't need to prove anything to anyone. My work stands on its own, and I am proud of it... (unable to resist) And besides, I don't think being the 3rd woman in history to be nominated for a Best Director Oscar is anything to sniff at.

FRANCIS: Unless you're the first woman to actually *win*. How is Kathryn Bigelow these days, I wonder? I hear *Zero Dark Thirty* is practically a lock for Best Picture. She really is a pioneer in her field, you know.

SOFIA: Yes. Well. We can't ALL direct *Captain EO*, Dad. Or *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, DAD. Or *Jack* with Robin Williams, DAD. I mean, way to rest on your laurels.

FRANCIS: Hey! *TWIXTO* or whatever is a thing, OK?

ROMAN: (butting in) WAIT, DID SOMEONE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT DIRECTING? BECAUSE I DIRECTED ALL OF THE MUSIC VIDEOS FOR EARLY 2000'S SENSATIONS, THE STROKES.

CHRISTOPHER: (sneaking his way in as well) And I directed... uh... *Van Darkholme's Deep Dark Dungeon*. Which is definitely a movie. That is inarguable. I printed out the IMDb page for it. (holds the page aloft)

JOHN steps forward into the spotlight, as everyone freezes.
CHRISTOPHER COPPOLA and ROMAN COPPOLA are spotlighted as well.
ROMAN looks like a bloated user car salesman from 1994.
CHRISTOPHER looks like *Biker Mice From Mars*; he is very do-rag intensive.

JOHN: Heading further down the sliding scale of Coppola directing talent, we have my brother Roman, who makes music videos, and my cousin Christopher, who definitely makes *something*. They are just as desperate for legitimacy as Sofia, but have far less ground to stand on in that respect. Sometimes I think Roman is just shouting facts about himself from his Wikipedia article.

JOHN returns to position as the action resumes.

ROMAN: I CO-WROTE THE OSCAR-NOMINATED INDIE HIT *MOONRISE KINGDOM*!

SOFIA: Neat. I wrote *Lost in Translation*. It won.

ROMAN: UM. (thinks for a moment) I CO-WROTE THE OTHER INDIE HIT *THE DARJEELING LIMITED*.

JASON SCHWARTZMAN bursts in the front door, to the sounds of Phantom Planet's "California (Tchad Blake Mix)." He is a late-stage hipster with an unflattering haircut. I imagine a tan corduroy blazer is involved in his wardrobe.

JASON: Hey, I was in that!

JOHN steps forward again, a matching spotlight on JASON, as the action freezes.

JOHN: Ah, good. The *actors* have started arriving. This is Cousin Jason. Not Coppola, Schwartzman, but trust me – he’s still part of the family. Again, he is usually a pretty nice guy, beyond the fact that I hate his haircut. Also, he has exactly two facial expressions: Smarmy smirks and sad puppy dog faces.

JOHN recedes, and the action resumes.

SOFIA: Sorry, Jason, but we’re talking about *writing*, not *acting*, right now.

JASON: (smirking) I write songs for my cool band, Coconut Records. *C’mon, everybody!* (puts arms out expectantly, assuming everyone will join in to sing the bridge to Coconut Records’ “West Coast”)

THOMAS MARS OF PHOENIX: (butting in) I’m in the band Phoenix.

JASON: (does a sad puppy dog face for being interrupted)

FRANCIS: Now, do you *really* want to talk about writing, Sofie? *The Godfather. Apocalypse Now. Patton.*

JASON: (smirking) *Captain EO.*

FRANCIS: (shouting indignantly) Everyone stop bringing that up! *Captain EO* is banned from this house!

SOFIA: (stealing a page out of JASON’S smirk book) Wasn’t it banned from the Disney Theme Parks, too, for a while, Dad?

FRANCIS: Not *banned!* Just... (flustered) It’s in the middle of a revival, all right? Because that mulatto pedophile died.

Awkward silence ALL AROUND.

CHRISTOPHER: (piping up) Hey, I wrote *Deadfall!*

JASON: (sad puppy dog face) Oh no!

MARY: You mentioned one of *his* films.

ROMAN: OH JESUS YOU’VE SUMMONED HIM

SOFIA: Everyone brace yourself!

ELEANOR: Hide all of the alcohol!

JASON: (worried smirk) *C’mon, everybody!*

NICOLAS CAGE bursts in the door with FOUR WOMEN. He is wearing a beige snakeskin suit with a crimson silk shirt, and has ridiculous wispy

hair and a terrible goatee. He is shaky and twitchy and talks too fast, emphasizing words at random by yelling them. His laughter is crazed and forced.

NICOLAS CAGE: Now, you KNOW it's not CHRISTMAS without Saint NICOLAS, HA HA HA HA HA HA. (tone shifts wildly, to a rapid staccato) Now, did someone MENTION one of my FILMS?

JOHN steps forward into the spotlight again, as action freezes. The spotlight shines on NICOLAS CAGE, but he is too manic to freeze entirely and twitches and jerks constantly throughout.

JOHN: OK, *now* we're getting into it. Say hello to Cousin Nicolas. Nicolas Cage (née Coppola), whom I am sure you all have heard of as well. At the start of his career, Nicolas decided to deliberately drop the Coppola name, such that any success he achieved would be on his own merit, thereby making him – in his mind – the greatest Coppola of them all.

Nicolas has been in a lot of films. Some with explosions, some with women. His hair is a great source of gossip among the cousins.

NICOLAS CAGE manages to shake free of the spotlight freeze-frame and begins frantically yelling vague approximations of lines from his movies.

NICOLAS CAGE: I'm BANGKOK DANGEROUS, baby! I want to take his FACE... OFF. I am going to FUCKING STEAL the FUCKING DECLARATION of FUCKING INDEPENDENCE. HOW'D IT GET BURNED, HOW'D IT GET BURNED?!

JOHN: Hey! You pipe down over there!

NICOLAS: (getting one last word in) KNOWING.

NICOLAS resumes his twitchy stillness.

JOHN: Nicolas discovered at an early age that, the weirder he acted, the more attention he could get. From the drama kids at school, from the acting community at large, from the tabloids and the gossip columns. He tries to do the same on us, of course, but we aggressively ignore him, which only forces him to try even harder. It's honestly a pretty vicious cycle.

JOHN and NICOLAS CAGE return to position, and the action resumes.

ELEANOR: (clearly trying to hold things together) Oh, good, Nicolas! You made it.

SOFIA: Yes. And he brought his wives.

JASON: (smirking) All of them.

(NICOLAS CAGES' WIVES fawn over and paw at him constantly. CHRISTINA FULTON is like a blonde 80's goth mummy. PATRICIA ARQUETTE has kind of a bland, emotionless mom face but also a weirdly good rack that is on prominent display. ALICE KIM is a 7-foot-tall Filipina transvestite prostitute with horrible fake tits. LISA MARIE PRESLEY is drugged out of her mind but hides it by looking permanently constipated.)

CHRISTINA FULTON (shrieks): I'm not his wife!! I just made a child with him!

MARY: Cool. Much better.

ELEANOR: (delicately) So, what made you decide to bring... everybody?

NICOLAS CAGE: Well, you know what they say, heh-heh-heh-heh. The holidays are a tiiiiime for family, and I couldn't help but get re-FAMILIAR with some of my lost LADY loves. (licks up PATRICIA ARQUETTE'S neck; she looks disgusted/turned-on/it's-hard-to-tell-with-her-face)

EVERYONE winces.

NICOLAS: And you can't really blaaaaame all of THEM for wanting to get BACK into the CAGE. (grab's ALICE'S ass – she grunts appreciatively)

CHRISTOPHER: What does that even mean, man?

JOHN steps forward, as everyone else freezes.

JOHN: And so, all of the pieces are in place...

MARC "THE COPE" COPPOLA scurries forward, sitting behind a radio DJ board on wheels. He looks like down-market Nic Cage, which is saying something. A spotlight follows him as he approaches.

MARC: Don't forget about me, man! Marc Coppola! The Cooooope! (plays falling bomb sound effect) America's! (bottle rocket sound) Favorite! (cheering and applause sound) Drive-time! (honking sound) Radio! (radio tuning sound) DJ! (fart sound)

JOHN: Yes, I –

MARC: (interrupting) Getting ready to rock! (80's guitar chord sound) You! (sheep sound) All! (cheering sound) Night! (cricket sound) Long! (female orgasm, then boner spring sounds) Sound effect sound effect sound effect.

JOHN: (incredibly dismissive) Yes. How could I forget you, Marc. (indicating him) Marc Coppola, everybody. A.K.A. "The Cope."

MARC: That's *better!*

MARC rolls back off-screen, to an “A-WOOGA” horn sound effect.

JOHN: *As I was saying*, you can’t really appreciate a Coppola family Christmas until all of the players are in place, and the true competition can begin. It’s like a constantly shifting series of Venn diagrams, as roving packs of multihyphenates group and disperse and regroup to argue about their merits in their respective fields.

JOHN moves off the side, as a group consisting of JASON, THOMAS MARS OF PHOENIX, ROBERT SCHWARTZMAN, and NICOLAS CAGE forms up front. ROBERT looks like a teen heartthrob with long, unkempt hair and a tiny little bundled-up body. Ladies, how could you not want to make out with that adorable little man?

JOHN: They argue about music...

Action resumes.

JASON: (smirking superiorly) Do you *really* want to do this? I was in Phantom Planet when I *FOURTEEN*. And now I have my own cool band, Coconut Records! (angry smirk) *C’mon, everybody!*

ROBERT: I AM IN ROONEY I AM ALSO IMPORTANT

THOMAS MARS OF PHOENIX: I’m in the band Phoenix.

ROMAN: (scrambles up, shouting) MY VIDEO FOR PHOENIX’S “FUNKY SQUAREDANCE” WAS INVITED INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION OF THE NEW YORK MUSEUM OF MODERN ART.

JASON: All right, Battle of the Bands, right now!

MARC rolls up in his mobile DJ booth, blasting a “Charge” sound effect as he does.

MARC: Listen. None of you would even *EXIST* without “The Cope” playing you on his airwaves. (plays a clip of Montell Jordan’s “This Is How We Do It,” which everyone very briefly busts a move to)

ANTON COPPOLA shouts up from the orchestra pit, where he’s been conducting the music throughout the entire play.

ANTON: Hey, you wanna talk-a the music, Uncle Anton has a-been conducting this-a thing the whole time!

NICOLAS: (pulls a mandolin out from behind a table) Oh, you wanna do-a the accents, huh? I’m-a Captain Corelli! I-a play you the-a fascist mandolinaya. (jams a pretty sweet mandolin solo)

CARMINE COPPOLA, the deceased patriarch of the family, slowly drops down from the rafters as a sheet ghost, playing “*The Godfather Theme*” on a flute.

JOHN freezes the action again.

JOHN: Ladies and gentlemen, Anton and Carmine Coppola. (they both wave)

The group reshifts such that JASON, SOFIA, TALIA SHIRE, and NICOLAS CAGE are up front. TALIA SHIRE was Adrienne from *Rocky*. The WIVES are on-hand as well.

JOHN: And then, once they’ve talked music to death, they’ll start bickering about acting.

Action resumes.

JASON: (smirking) Yeah, well, good job on *The Godfather III*, Sof.

NICOLAS CAGE: (laughs maniacally/condescendingly, shaking his head to-and-fro)

SOFIA: (glaring at NICOLAS CAGE) Do you *really* want to compare Razzie nominations, Nicolas?

NICOLAS CAGE: (frantically) Hey, an award is an award. At least I’m being recognized. Who else here has an Oscar?

No less than five Coppolas raise their hands, including CARMINE (the ghost), FRANCIS FORD, SOFIA, one of the male background randos (representing DAVID SHIRE), and the LOCH NESS MONSTER. CHRISTOPHER tries to raise his hand, but everyone glares at him, and he sheepishly lowers it.

NICOLAS CAGE: (trying a new tact, points at Sofia) YOU WERE IN A BLACK CROWES VIDEO.

JASON: (ganging up on Sofia) Yeah, way to be in *Episode 1!*

NICOLAS CAGE: Way to not be *Kathryn Bigelow!*

SOFIA: You fucker! I never wanted to act anyway!

JASON: Oh, says the star of *Frankenweenie!*

SOFIA: (mocking) Oh, says the star of *Slackers!*

JASON: (sad puppy dog face)

TALIA SHIRE: (meekly raising her hand) I was Adrienne in *Rocky*.

NICOLAS CAGE: (screaming in TALIA'S ear) YO ADRIANNE!

TALIA collapses.

NICOLAS CAGE: (ignoring TALIA, turns back to SOFIA) Your acting career is based on nepotism!

SOFIA: Yours is based on screaming!

NICOLAS CAGE: (completely losing it) I WILL DIE IN HONOR. Who will stand by me? Where's my Kal? Where's Kal-El? Where's my son?

ALICE: You sold him to Harvey Weinstein so you could buy a crystal globe of the solar system.

LISA MARIE PRESLEY: (lightly pukes on herself)

NICOLAS CAGE: All right, where's Weston? FIRST WIFE, where is my son Weston of the black metal band Eyes of Noctum. I DREW A COMIC WITH HIM.

CHRISTINA: (shrieking) I'M NOT YOUR WIFE!

NICOLAS CAGE: WHERE IS WESTON

WESTON COPPOLA CAGE, a bloated goth troll nightmare, comes scuttling up.

WESTON: Here I am, father.

NICOLAS CAGE: Weston, fetch me THE CURSED SCIMITARS OF BRIGADOON!!

WESTON: You mean those souvenir swords Disney gave you instead of paying you for doing *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*?

NICOLAS CAGE: Yes, whatever. Fetch them!

WESTON scurries offstage. JOHN steps forward and everyone freezes.

JOHN: And soon, the arguments devolve even further, into the most petty of things.

The group reshuffles to focus on FRANCIS, SOFIA, NICOLAS CAGE, and his WIVES. The action resumes.

SOFIA: (holds up a 4-pack of Sofia canned wine) Well, my *wine* is better than yours at least!

FRANCIS: (enraged beyond all belief) You know nothing of the Francis Ford Coppola lifestyle brand!

NICOLAS CAGE: Canned wine? BULLSHIT! I just came out with my own line of Nicolas Cage BOX WINE. (hauls out a box of wine with his face on it, from behind a table or something) It's fortified with ABSINTHE, for that extra kick in the CAGE!

SOFIA: What does that *mean*?

NICOLAS CAGE begins chugging box wine down ALICE'S enormous fake rack. She writhes in apparent ecstasy.

JOHN steps forward, and the action freezes again.

JOHN: And eventually, it all inevitably expands into one massive argument about who among them is the best Coppola.

The action resumes, only now every Coppola is yelling and fighting with one another, all at the same time:

- SOFIA is screaming at FRANCIS FORD and starts pulling on his beard.
- THOMAS MARS OF PHOENIX keeps yelling again and again that he is in the band Phoenix.
- ROMAN pulls off CHRISTOPHER'S do-rag, revealing horns and the Mark of the Beast; CHRISTOPHER gasps in horror and begins running around the stage, screaming and knocking shit over.
- ELEANOR is standing on a table, shouting, trying to get the group to calm itself.
- MARY is cowering by the fireplace, crying.
- WESTON runs back in and gives two golden scimitars to NICOLAS CAGE, who begins wildly swinging them around in an elaborate choreographed fight-dance, as WESTON looks on in awe.
- NICOLAS' WIVES all begin making out with each other at the same time.
- JASON and ROBERT begin choking one another while spinning around like some sort of hipster dervish.
- TALIA screams, runs over, and takes a huge bite out of ROMAN'S shoulder; a consummate professional, he begins blaring "Once Bitten, Twice Shy."
- CARMINE (the ghost) starts chasing ANTON (the opera conductor) around the orchestral pit, scaring the shit out of him; the music becomes increasingly rapid and jarring as a result.
- The FEMME FATALE begins slapping everyone within reach, while the TUXEDO-CLAD PLAYBOY tries to worm his way into the WIVES' makeout session. The WIVES push him over and begin kick-stomping him to death.
- The EXPLORER bashes in the LEPRECHAUN'S head with his telescope.

- TEEN WOLF jumps on top of the piano and begins howling dolefully.
- VAN HELSING stabs one of the sweater-clad RANDOS in the heart with a wooden stake.
- The WIZARD sends a spell flying from his wand, exploding the ROCK GOD; the LOCH NESS MONSTER weeps over his ashes.
- The DOCTOR chokes the KING with his stethoscope.
- The PLAYWRIGHT stabs himself in the eye with his pen and lurches about, spraying ink and blood everywhere.

At the height of all of this action, NICOLAS CAGE suddenly breathes a huge plume of flame back and forth across the stage, cackling maniacally.

Suddenly, a hunchbacked humanoid, mutated and slimy, gives an unearthly scream and jumps down from the rafters; it is TURBO COPPOLA.

TURBO: (with difficulty) NO FIRE. WHYYYYY.

TURBO'S distress seems to bring the group back to its senses. EVERYONE pauses, mid-struggle, and looks towards TURBO, still frozen in their positions. JOHN steps forward.

JOHN: Oh, did I forget to mention Turbo Coppola, the mutant troll cousin who lives in the rafters? Yeah, he's pretty much the most stable person in the entire family.

JOHN steps back as FRANCIS FORD and ELEANOR come forth to comfort the quivering, sobbing TURBO.

ELEANOR: Aw, Turbo. It's OK! Don't cry!

FRANCIS: Yeah, buck up, little guy!

TURBO: (still shuddering with sobs) WHY FIRE. WHY FIGHT. FAM-A-LEE. CRISS-MASS.

EVERYONE: Aw! Turbo!

EVERYONE begins to untangle themselves from their battle positions. They move in to comfort TURBO as well, looking embarrassed.

CHRISTOPHER: Turbo's right! We should all be ashamed of ourselves, fighting like this!

JASON: (sad puppy dog face) C'mon, everybody!

SOFIA: It's Christmas, and we're family! Why can't we all just remember the spirit of the season, like Turbo?

TURBO: KISS-ES.

ELEANOR: He's right, we *should* be doing kisses, instead of all of this bickering.

MARC: Come on, guys! Let's make this the best Christmas ever! For Turbo!

EVERYONE: For Turbo!

FRANCIS: And let's not forget poor, poor Gian-Carlo.

EVERYONE: Who?

FRANCIS: The dead one.

EVERYONE: Ohhh. Right. Him.

FRANCIS: So, what do you say, Jason? (pats him on the back) Do you think you have one more in you?

JASON: (reluctantly) C'mon, everybody?

EVERYONE cheers as JASON sits at the piano, and they all gather around him to sing the bridge to Coconut Records' "West Coast" again and again. TEEN WOLF howls harmony from atop the piano.

MARY: Funny how we were all ready for such a spontaneous musical moment!

Cans of Sofia wine are passed out to each family member, as FRANCIS FORD stands on a chair to make a toast. The singing continues in the background.

FRANCIS: Merry Christmas, Coppolas! You are all wonderful, each in your own special way.

EVERYONE: Hear, hear!

FRANCIS: Like you, Leonard Schwartzman!

The DOCTOR kicks the KING he murdered out of the way and stands on a stool, while the group sings on.

LEONARD: I am a retired physician who writes on the nature of life and death!

FRANCIS: Damn right you are!

ROMAN clammers to the top of the Christmas tree and waves his arms.

ROMAN: I AM *IMPORTANT*, DAMN IT. I DO THINGS, TOO!

FRANCIS: You sure do, Roman!

NICOLAS CAGE runs up to TURBO.

NICOLAS CAGE: Hey Turbo, what do you have to say about your old Uncle CAGE?

TURBO: (happily gurgling) HACK.

NICOLAS: He's trying to say "actor!" He gets me!

FRANCIS: This time of year, it's important to remember the gifts we've been given. And truly, we have, each and every one of us, received the greatest gift of all: Being born into this magnificent family! Cheers to us all, and to all of our successes.

Even to you, John, and your ... juice medal.

JOHN: (smiling) Good enough.

JOHN puts an arm around MARY and they join the group, EVERYONE singing on, arm in arm, as the curtain drops.

CURTAIN

CURTAIN CALL

Throughout the curtain call, NICOLAS CAGE will stand off to the side and recite true facts about himself, to give the audience context for his behavior.

NICOLAS: These are all true facts about me, Nicolas Cage. You can go look them up, if you'd like:

I claim to have created a new method of acting I calls "Nouveau Shamanic," which I say I have used throughout my career. I plan to write a book about it.

The day I met Patricia Arquette, I told her I loved her and that I would marry her. Terrified, she set to me a series of Herculean challenges to prove my worth, such as finding a nonexistent black orchid and getting J.D. Salinger's autograph. I did. We were married soon after. And divorced soon after that.

I have taken hallucinogenic mushrooms with my cat Lewis on at least one occasion. When I was high, I "had no doubt that he was my brother."

I was appointed a goodwill ambassador for the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime in 2009.

I have a tattoo of a lizard wearing a top hat on my back. Also Woody Woodpecker.

My middle name is Kim. Just like my wife's last name!

I own a dinosaur skull that I won in a frenzied auction against Leonardo DiCaprio. It cost \$276,000.

I choose the food I eat according to the way the animals have sex. I think fish are very dignified with sex. So are birds. But pigs, not so much. So I only eat fish and fowl.

One time I was bailed out of jail by Dog the Bounty Hunter.

I firmly believe I was stalked by a mime on the set of Scorsese's *Bringing Out the Dead*.

I bought myself a pyramid in New Orleans that I plan to be buried in. Of course, the problem there is... I WILL NEVER DIE.

NICOLAS laughs manically and explodes into a plume of smoke. A sharp-eyed falcon flies from the plume and soars around the theater, divebombing at the audience.

FALCON-CAGE: SCAW!

THE END