Holiday Gift Guide

Daily Nexus Guide to the Winter Season

December Eighth, Nineteen Ninety Four
It was my 21st birthday on Dec. 6 and, because of my Dutch heritage, another cause for celebration: St. Nicholas Day. As I was going about the regular 21st birthday routine of getting ready to hit State Street in a couple of hours, I had no idea what was in store for me on this double holiday.

After I got ready, I hopped in my car and went to pick up my boyfriend Paul from work. On our way back home, we got a craving for Arby's, so we made a pit stop. Since our friend Jeb worked next door at the liquor store, we decided to stop in and say "Hi." We walked in and Jeb was on the phone with a mutual friend so he handed me the phone and told me to talk to her. While she wished me a happy birthday on the phone, an old man scurried into the store. He had snow-white hair and a beard to match, a big belly and (no, I'm not kidding) red cheeks. He immediately approached my boyfriend and said something to him while pointing in my direction. Puzzled and still trying to hold a conversation on the phone, I mentioned it to my friend. She told me to get off of the phone and find out what was going on, so I did. After I handed the phone back to Jeb, Paul turned to me and said that the strange man had something to tell me. He looked at me, smiled and took my hand. "I just had to tell you that you are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. I saw you walking by while I was on the phone and I almost lost my breath. I just had to come in here and tell you how beautiful you are." Completely embarrassed and completely red, I thanked him and tried to change the subject. I had no idea where this man had come from, but before I knew it, he was hugging me. Meanwhile,
Searching the Wrong Pole

By Bunyan Tom

Preparing to disembark and humming "Holy Night" to himself, Turner Levy is slowly coming to the realization that the eggnog was stronger than he thought. He should've known. Mixing it in the cabin of a pitching—what is this?—some kind of yawl, he was bound not to get equal parts egg and nog, ha ha.

"Hey cap'n, why*nt you have a parasol or something, one of those Cinnzano umbrellas maybe," he calls out to Milton "Skip" Hammermill, who has ostensibly hired out his services to Turner for a modest sum, just enough to cover most expenses, always glad to get the odd assignment, you know, with a good partner for a client.

They're both sweating in the sunlight of 24-hour days, Turner wearing $5 sunglasses with the plastic tag still attached to the bridge, and headed for royal places, to judge from the names. The Princess Astrid Coast, at the edge of Queen Maud Land—it seems the best place to land in Antarctica, at least from the maps Turner has stuffed in his pocket.

"Very funny," comes Hammermill's voice from the stern. Turner is making his way to the bow, hand on the roof of the cabin as he progresses forward, calls back, "Hey, can I borrow your hair?"

Now turning to look astern—a bit daring, really, since it requires his head and body to face in two different directions—there's Hammermill, clearly smirking, even posing, turning his chin up and toward the sun, pulling down on the wide brim of a baby blue woman's sun hat that must have been quite the look in 1966. Its Christmases must've all been spent in boxes, on high shelves of walk-in closets, musty with disuse, never a hope of seeing such a sun as this so close to the year's end.

They've struck up a wild friendship, these two unlikely mates whose gruffness, real and pretend, shows most obviously in their practice of using only the other's last name. They first met in Brisbane, went See POLE, p.8A
The Season's Sounds

By Gringolet Rafalo

Music has never played a great role in my life. If I pick up any musical instrument, I can't do anything with it. My collection of tapes is rather meager. I'm struggling in Music 15. But there is one aspect of music knowledge I pride myself on. Every year around this time, I head to my closet and dig out my collection of Christmas music. If I kept it with my normal tapes, I'd be tempted to play them all year, which would spoil them for the actual season. This is one possession I have that I treasure — my yuletide classics ranging from Elvis Presley to Johnny Mathis to Alvin and the Chipmunks.

When I listen to classical music, I can't tell the difference between the songs. When I listen to rock, it gets repetitive after awhile. Jazz, country and rap don't really do anything for me. However, every Christmas song has a bright, exciting edge to it. When I listen to them, I feel incredible memories rush into my consciousness, lifting me higher into a state of euphoria and anticipation. Christmas is coming! My favorite time of the year.

Trees are erected in living rooms, downtown stores become busy and lively with decorations and special holiday uniforms for the employees. Santa Claus can be spotted on every corner. Winds are blowing colder, spirits rise with a potent cup of eggnog.

These feelings can be felt when listening to Nat King Cole's swing of chestnuts roasting, Bing Crosby croon of white Christmases, just like the ones he used to know. Nothing can top the feeling of excitement of hearing Brian Wilson and his Beach Boys achieve perfect harmony in "Little Saint Nick." Chuck Berry, advising Rudolph to run, rocks harder than many of his other works. It's a phenomenon.

The whole month of December has a feeling to it like no other month can. It's as if some weird nerve gas gets released in the air and everybody suddenly feels caring, and inspired enough to go out and buy gifts for each other. Perhaps it is an aspect of music knowledge I pride myself on.

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See MUSIC, p.5A

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Continued from p.2A
Paul and Jeb were laugh­ing in the background. Thinking the incident was over, I picked up my purse, but before I could move the stranger told me that Paul told him I was Dutch. What comes next...

"I'm Dutch too,
Happy St. Nicholas Day!"

"Good-bye to Jeb. He
told me that you are a beau­ti­ful woman.
"

"I know I probably
never see you again, that's
why I had to come and tell
you that you are a beauti­ful
woman."

Flattered, I thanked him
again and turned to say
good-bye to Jeb. He wished me a happy birth­day and then the old man lost it.

"It's your birthday?
How old are you?"

Paul told him I was 21.
Getting all jumpy and smil­ing, the man took his wal­let out of his pocket.

MUSIC
Continued from p.4A
discouraged by the thought of the Sirens' song forced
me into swimming to them... people hear these

holiday tunes and must enter this wonderful
feeling.

So this year, make sure to listen to your fair share of holiday music. If you don't have any, and your
parents haven't got any you can borrow, you might want to consider buying some tapes or CDs with
your favorite performers belting out the "Navidad" hits. Merry Christmas!

Rudolph the Red-Nosed
Reindeer - Have a Holly Jolly
Christmas - I'm Dreaming of a
White Christmas - Jingle Bells
Bingle Bells - It's -
Beginning to Feel a lot Like
Christmas - The Three King
The Little Drummer Boy - The
Joker Laid an Egg - Frosty
the Snowman - Rudolph the
the events that had just taken
place, I came to a con­clusion. This had def­i­nitely been the weirdest thing that has ever hap­pened to me, but it was also very special. How many times in my life will a Dutchman that looks like (I hate to say it) good ol' St. Nick come up to me on St. Nicholas day, my birth­day, and hand me $21? Maybe it's a sign of some
sort, maybe it is a freak coincidence, but no matter
what it is, I will never forget that moment be­cause that 20 and that one will remain with me as long as I live.

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POLE

Continued from p.3A
down to Sydney, where
Hammermill's boat was
docked, and now are com-
ing close to the shore of
Antarctica. Such a rela-
tionship is not to be under-
stood when the last days
of December are ap-
proaching frigidly, and
in a foreign country no
less. They're both expatri-
ate Americans, vise good
through the next two half-
day seasons, just sort of
looking around — Turner
in a painfully obvious
post-collegiate slump
(“might as well stamp it on
your forehead,” Hammer-
mill has said before, and
most likely will again) and
Hammermill doing just
what he's always done,
feeling secure because
there's a boat in the har-
bor, never more than two
days away and because
there's no FAA on the
ocean.

A journey is best de-
vised, these days, in un-
clear, poorly lit places,
preferably a tavern, but a
café will do, by two wan-
derers who have enough
to base their relation-
ship on besides pure
friendship (in this case, a
fee-for-services) and who
don't really have any rea-
son to stay where they are.
Reasons to leave are even
better — seasonal loneli-
seness, a reputation for idle-
ness, a claim that seems to proceed
vomically, but just for the
enchantment of the childhood
dream, the inversion, per-
haps, or maybe just in mir-
ror image. “Let’s get that
old boat of yours, the one
that you claim you can
skipper,” and go to the
South Pole,” proposing a
toast to the affair. A clink
of glasses, Hammermill
shaking his head, “he’s
crazy,” but ever-so-slightly
nodding “what the hell,”
and it is done. It has the
feeling of a transaction, and
the seams like it that
way.

By the time Turner
makes it to the bow, Ham-
mermill has found a suit-
able cave, and the anchor
is dropped ceremoniously
by the former while the lat-
ter reads a tiny rowboat.
Thirty strokes later they're
ashore, finding a suitable
place to spend the night.
They've cleared out a spot
for a fire, set up a two-man
tent, and Hammermill's
wondering whether the
business aspect of this re-
relationship should be
stressed a little more, the
two of them visiting in there,
why the bell is he out here
anyway, should be sung in
the fold-up bed of his
boat's cabin, not getting
ready to trek for neither-
of-them-knows-how-long
to the South Pole, of all
places to spend Christmas,
with the daylight still
strong at midnight. It’d be
real hard for Santa to make
his sneaky visit here, real
hard.
But Turner’s still giddy,
from the eggnog or the

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POLE

Continued from p.8A

long day's journey into still
time, it's not clear
which, and rambling at ab­
out a mile a minute. "A
journey to the South Pole
for Christmas, just think of
it, what we could find
there," sounding quite
drunk by the metaphorical
possibilities, whispering
like any fireside chatterer
who's just getting to the
good part. "No Grinch —
too simple, that's just a
good heart gone bad —
we're in the mirror here,
and who's gonna have a
factory at the pole on this
side of the equator? The
Anti-Claus that's who," he
collapses in a fit a of
laughter.

"Or maybe," teary-eyed,
he's really rolling now, "the anti-Klaus, a big, tan
German — Germany,
that's where we got the
whole Santa Claus thing
from, right?"

"The Netherlands."

"Same thing, northern
Europeans, whatever, I see
him now, bright red swim­
suit, lawn chair, lots of
suntan oil, calling out
'Alio strangers, I have
been a long time without
seeing other men. What
ees it that breengs you here
now, when all de Creest-
mass parties are in de
North?"

At this point, Hammer­
mill is fed up to the point
of smiling, especially at
Turner's lilting imperso­
nation of a German ac­
tent. He can't help him­
self, "Or else it's the anti­
claus, C-L-A-U-S-E,
there's just a big 'No' writ­
ten right there on the
ground."

Lifting a beer they've
brought from the boat,
Turner proposes another
toast, "To file anti-Claus,
the anti-Klaus and the
anti-clause," — he's smil­
ing again —r "or whatever
the hell it is one finds out
here."

"To Christmas," says
Hammermill, lifting a
glass, then follows a clink
that carries far in this crisp
air. He pulls out a com­
pass, figures out due
dowath, then points off in
the distance. "Well, right
tover there's where we'll
find him," with just a
touch of wanderlust in his
voice, which trails off fun­
nily. Turner's eyebrow
jumps a little, "What?"

"Do we want to go to
the magnetic south pole or
the South Pole?"

"Oh."  

"I mean, we can find the
magnetic south pole, but
that's not really...."

A silence and then: "Oh,
who cares. One's as good
as the other, for our
purposes."

"Merry Christmas."
What tops your Christmas wish list?

A ring from my boyfriend ... just a ring. I'm not that pushy — yet.

I wish I could find the ninjas — they're all gone, someone took them. But they're around here somewhere.

Brad Pitt in a daisy field.

Acing my P-STAT final and celebrating after.

A new transmission for my '65 Dodge Dart.

A pack of cigarettes and a bag of dope. ... It'll probably come true, too.

Sandra Goede
senior psychology

Tom Jenkins
drifter

Heather Holmes
freshman environmental studies

Teena Deocales
sophomore communications

Sam "The Man"
Granat
junior psychology

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