

NAKAW

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Genre: Fantasy, Animation

The setting is in an alternate Philippines where Santa Claus, a big white man in his magical flying kalesa, actually exists. Most Filipino parents have been dependent on the naughty-list culture to discipline their child.

The story revolves around two brothers, 7-year-old Abel and 10-year-old Jolimar. Both are street-dwellers who have never received a gift from Santa due to their ways of survival.

The film begins in a busy market during Christmas Eve; the perfect place and opportunity for pickpocketing. Abel and Jolimar stole as much as they could for their noche buena. They worked hard to accumulate enough money to taste fried chicken for just once a year.

Minutes before midnight, the two went to the rooftop of an abandoned building in G. Tuazon. Going to this place was like a tradition for them; every year they would sit there in an old double-deck bed frame to get a full view of the city. By midnight, they see the iconic flying kalesa up in the sky, dropping gifts mostly in the nearby subdivisions.

Abel had always hoped that he would soon get a present from Santa, that he could somehow recognize their impoverished condition and see the good in them. He would always leave a piece of his fried chicken at the corner of the bed. He never gave up, even now.

Yet the light from the magical kalesa flew across them. It was no surprise they received nothing again this year. They didn't have homes, and pickpockets have always been in the naughty-list. Jolimar had quite accepted this reality. In fact, he hated Santa for being unfair with his criteria. It wasn't easy to be 'good' or 'generous' under their circumstances, even if they wanted to.

Jolimar noticed Abel's disappointment, so he came up with an idea on how they could acquire Santa's gifts; by stealing gifts from other children. Abel was reluctant at first, but due to his extreme longing to have one, he agreed.

With Abel carrying a sack, Jolimar climbed up to every house of the nice kids they had seen from that rooftop and grabbed their presents. Sneaking in was Jolimar's expertise and it was a usual thing to hear small noises during Christmas Eve since everyone was aware of the existence of Santa.

Until they reached a certain house without a present. Jolimar almost left thinking they made a mistake—until he heard heavy footsteps. He followed the sound, up to the roof, and he saw the flying kalesa about to take off. He clung onto it. Jolimar realizes he had left Abel alone. He tried to gesture to him but he couldn't see him.

Abel started panicking. Even if it wasn't his expertise, he attempted to climb the gate and made some obvious noises. Abel saw a room lit up which signaled that someone was awake. He ran away after this sight.

Jolimar arrives at the factory and sneaks in secretly. To his surprise, he sees locked up carabaos being tortured, Santa's workers lying due to exhaustion. He discovers a lot more about Santa's cruelty. Unfortunately, Jolimar gets caught by Santa's police force and is locked up in the cage of damaged carabaos and injured workers.

Jolimar finds out about the real *Paskong Pilipino* in the past Santa Claus had stolen this culture. An old worker shows him the magical flying carabao cart which was used before. The gifts before weren't as materialistic as now. With his wit and for being locked up for a year, Jolimar secretly ignites Santa's workers to rebel and plans an escape.

Simultaneously, after losing his brother, Abel challenged himself to form a streak of never resorting to pickpocketing or any form of deed that went against the nice-criteria again, even if it meant he had to starve himself. The only thing he could ask for was to see Jolimar again. He suffered from hunger and got sick in the process, but he was persistent for his wish to be granted.

It was the next Christmas Eve after the incident. Jolimar and Santa's workers had successfully taken down the cruel Santa and escaped the factory. They rode the flying carabao cart and replaced red hats with a salakot. This year, things had changed.

At the same time, Abel went to the traditional rooftop alone, placing the fried chicken meant for his brother at the corner of the bed. He was sure Santa would come this time.

And he did, but not exactly. His brother lands from the flying carabao cart. Their reunion was the best present he could ever receive, but he was already too weak to see it happen. Abel dies in the arms of his brother.

This Christmas Eve, and the next, every Filipino child would receive a gift specially made for them to improve their environment and make them a better person. Jolimar, together with the workers, had committed their lives to this cause, replacing the western ideals and the shallow concept of naughty and nice of Santa Claus.