



Buddy the ELF (Everyone's Lovable Friend)

By Kris Foglia

When it comes to Christmas traditions, watching your favorite holiday movie is tops on most people's list. It is something that people have looked forward to from years passed; and favorites keep getting passed down from GENERATION to generation. The movie ELF was released on NOVEMBER 7, 2003 by NEW LINE CINEMA. The makers of the movie strived to give a nostalgic feel from favorite Christmas movies of the past. They researched movies like *Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer* and other CLAYMATION favorites of the 70's so different generations could relate to it. *Elf* became an instant hit and now is enjoyed year after year by families of all ages.

SPELL: TRADITIONS, FAVORITE, MOVIE

What holiday tradition are we talking about? WATCHING A HOLIDAY

MOVIE.

What is the name of the movie? ELF

What production company released the movie? NEW LINE CINEMA

What type of animation was popular and used in holiday movies in the 70's?
CLAYMATION

Give me another word for malleable? SOFT, PLIABLE, WORKABLE

Name another holiday movie? THE YEAR WITHOUT A SANTA CLAUS, IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE, MIRACLE OF 34TH STREET, HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS, RUDOLF, A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS, THE SANTA CLAUS, HOME ALONE, FROSTY, LOVE ACTUALLY, THE CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES

What year was the film released? 2003

The movie centers around BUDDY HOBBS, a baby in an ORPHANAGE (place where children without parents are cared for), who stowed away in Santa's sack and

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ended up at the NORTH POLE. He was raised by Santa’s elves. At the age of 30 he discovers that he is human and EMBARKS (begin, venture or launch) on a journey to NEW YORK CITY in search of his real father, whom Buddy discovers is on the “Naughty List.” His father, Walter, is played by JAMES CAAN. Walter Hobbs doesn’t know Buddy exists and is in desperate need of some CHRISTMAS spirit.

SPELL: CHILDREN, SPIRIT, DISCOVER

What is the name of a place where children without parents are cared for?

ORPHANAGE

Who stowed away in Santa’s sack? BUDDY

Where did Buddy live for the first 30 years of his life? NORTH POLE Where does Buddy go to look for his father? NEW YORK CITY

Who plays Walter Hobbs? JAMES CAAN

What does Walter Hobbs in desperate need of? CHRISTMAS SPIRIT What is another word for embark? BEGIN, VENTURE, LAUNCH What coast is NYC located on? EAST



Few movies have been able to secure for themselves a place in the holiday film GENRE (category, class, group) as quickly and as successfully as the 2003 family comedy *Elf*. Starring WILL FERRELL as Buddy. The movie has all the necessary heart and warmth that make a Christmas movie a truly comfy, cozy seasonal treat.

SPELL: HOLIDAY, COMEDY, SEASONAL

What actor plays Buddy? WILL FERRELL

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What is another word for genre? CATEGORY, CLASS or GROUP

What does the author say the Elf has to make it a good holiday movie?

HEART and WARMTH

How many years ago did Elf debut? 2021 - 2003 = 18 YEARS AGO

It's also, at the end of the day, just a downright silly film, filled with EPISODES of childlike humor and wonder that even parents can't help but snicker (laugh, smirk, giggle) at despite themselves. *Elf* may not be everyone's cup of tea -- or, as Buddy may prefer to say, plate of spaghetti with maple syrup -- but a lot of heart and joy went into the making of this movie, which has since gone on to secure for itself the reputation of a BELOVED Christmas ICON.

SPELL: EPISODES, DESPITE, REPUTATION

Elf is a _____ film. SILLY

Elf has a reputation of a _____ Christmas icon. BELOVED

A lot of _____ was put into this film. HEART and JOY

The film depicts episodes filled with what? CHILDLIKE HUMOR and WONDER

What is another word for snicker? LAUGH, SMIRK, GIGGLE

What does not everyone's cup of tea mean? THEY ARE NOT THE KIND OF PERSON OR THING THAT YOU LIKE.

What is something that makes you snicker?

Tell me something or someone that you consider to be an icon?

Of course, with as many talented and unpredictable actors in one cast as this film boasted (brag, gloat, show off) it offers an endless supply of sentimental holiday NOSTALGIA (longing for or thinking fondly of a past time). There's also an endless supply of HILARIOUS and heartwarming stories of what went on behind the scenes of this Christmas hit.

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SPELL: UNPREDICTABLE, FONDLY, ACTORS

What term means longing for or thinking fondly of a past time?

NOSTALGIA

This movie had an endless supply of _____ holiday nostalgia.

SENTIMENTAL

What does boast mean? BRAG, GLOAT or SHOW OFF

What kind of stories went on behind the scenes? HILARIOUS and

HEARTWARMING

Name an adjective to describe the actors. TALENTED and UNPREDICTABLE

It took 10 years for the movie to make it to the big screen. It was originally written to possibly have JIM CARREY play Buddy the ELF. Jim Carrey ended up DECLINING this role but earned the starring role in another holiday CLASSIC, *The GRINCH That Stole Christmas*.



SPELL: SCREEN, DECLINING, CLASSIC

Who did the executives originally have in mind to star in the movie? JIM CARREY

What is another holiday classic that Jim Carrey stars in? THE GRINCH THAT STOLE CHRISTMAS.

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Can you name another Jim Carrey movie? THE MASK, DUMB & DUMBER, ACE VENTURA, THE TRUMAN SHOW, BRUCE ALMIGHTY, LIAR LIAR, YES MAN

How many years did it take for the movie to get to the screen? 10 YEARS

Do you think that Jim Carrey would have been a good lead in ELF? Why or why not?

The *Elf* costumes were MODELLED after the characters from the beloved *RUDOLF the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. The director, JON FAVREAU relied on his love of his childhood favorites holiday movies for INSPIRATION when directing and rewriting this movie.

Who directed Elf? JON FAVREAU

What movie did he get his inspiration from? RUDOLF THE RED-NOSED

REINDEER

Favreau is said to rely on his love of his own childhood holidays movies when doing _____ and _____. DIRECTING, REWRITING

If you were writing a holiday movie, where would you find inspiration?



VAKT: Find Rudolf's red-nose in the picture.

When Favreau casted ZOOEY DESCHANEL in the role of JOVIE, the department store, Elf, the direction of the movie took on a musical side. The first scene that Buddy and Jovie meet, she is singing "Baby It's Cold Outside" in the employee

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shower at work. Jovie has another huge VOCALIZING moment when she starts the crowd singing, "Santa Claus is Coming to Town " in the park at the end of the movie. Their singing provides enough Christmas Spirit to help Santa's SLEIGH fly again.

Spell: EMPLOYEE, DEPARTMENT, CHEER

Who did Favreau cast as Jovie? ZOEY DESCHANEL

When he casted Zoey the movie took a more _____ side. MUSICAL

Name one of the songs Deschanel sings in the movie? BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE and SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

Who is Zoey's famous sister? Emily Deschanel

VAKT: Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkbnBVe5bJ8> What does Will Ferrell do in this clip?

Candy, candy canes, candy corn and syrup are the four main elf food groups according to Buddy the Elf. During the PRODUCTION of the



movie, Will Ferrell ate lots of sugar filled foods. There is a scene where Buddy is eating SPAGHETTI with maple syrup and candy. Unfortunately for Ferrell, that was real method acting. Ferrell said all of the sugar during the filming kept him up late at night.

During the course of production Ferrell ate lots of _____. SUGAR FILLED FOODS

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Buddy puts maple syrup and candy on his _____. SPAGHETTI

Name one of the four main food groups according to Buddy? CANDY,

CANDY CANES, CANDY CORN and SYRUP

Why did Will Ferrell have a hard time sleeping at night during the filming?

The outdoor scenes were shot in New York City featuring real people with live reactions to the ANTICS (pranks, capers, escapades) of Buddy the Elf. In the movie, Buddy worked as a Toy Tester. He was subjected to popping open an endless stream of menacing jack-in-the-boxes. The anxiety ETCHED on Ferrell's face in these scenes is REAL. Favareau had the boxes connected to a remote control and was able to control them when they jumped out of the boxes to get a priceless reaction from his LEAD.

In the movie the outdoor scenes caught _____ reactions from real people. LIVE

What job did Buddy have? TOY TESTER



What emotion was etched on Ferrell's face when he was toy testing?

ANXIETY

Who was controlling "the jack" and when it jumped out of the box?

FAVAREAU

What is another word for antics? PRANKS, CAPERS, ESCAPADES Would you enjoy

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being a Toy Tester? Why?

Watch this clip and give me a word that describes it to you.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQryS6G_6sA

While the North Pole shots were filmed at an ice rink in CANADA, the New York interior shots were filmed in an even more UNEXPECTED place. A creepy closed-down mental INSTITUTION served as the crew's filming location for many of the indoor New York shots. These included the police station, Buddy's orphanage, Greenway Press, and the Hobbs' apartment, all of which were transformed to look unrecognizable.

SPELL: CREEPY, CREW, NORTH POLE

Where were the North Pole shots filmed? CANADA

Where were the New York interior shots filmed? MENTAL INSTITUTION

Name one of the indoor shots mentioned. POLICE STATION, BUDDY'S ORPHANAGE, GREENWAY PRESS, HOBBS' APARTMENT

Why do you think production companies film scenes on location opposed to live in the streets?

When it comes to Christmas movies, they can all be a bit cheesy. In Elf, Buddy learns about his family, finding love and ACCEPTANCE. Buddy's innocence CAPTURES the magic and joy of Christmas. Buddy represents the kid inside all of us that gets really excited about candy, presents and making funny sounds and that is what makes Elf a BELOVED, classic, holiday movie.

SPELL: FAMILY, MOVIES, MAGIC

Christmas movies can all be a bit _____. CHEESY

Buddy's _____ captures the magic and joy of Christmas. INNOCENCE



What lessons does Buddy learn about in Elf? FAMILY, FINDING LOVE and ACCEPTANCE

Creative writing:

Buddy's character captures the magic of Christmas. What kind of traditions or memories bring you joy during the holidays?

Write a letter to Buddy telling him which aspects of his kid-like character that you enjoyed.



Kris Foglia, S2C Practitioner in Training in South Jersey. "There's room for everyone on the Nice List!" Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

Sources:

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