



## PRESS RELEASE

### **New Children's picture book, 'Santa's Secret Agents' released in time for Christmas**

- *This year-round tale will be the perfect kids stocking filler*

**Bristol, UK, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021** – Two Bristol-born authors, Steve Gunning and Chris Wheeler are today celebrating the publication of their new Children's picture book, '**Santa's Secret Agents**' aimed at kids aged 5 to 10. According to its publisher **Carraway**, the charming wit, delightful verse and captivating illustrations will be popular with children and parents who are excited to explore the hidden and magical world of Santa Claus (a.k.a Double Ho 7) and his all-seeing elves.

What *if* "Santa can see through the sunroof" was the initial idea that started Chris Wheeler and his friend Steve Gunning on a journey to co-write their debut festive Children's tale. The book that makes an ideal Christmas gift invites children and grown-ups alike to go on the (sleigh) ride of their lives as they follow Santa's highly trained crack(er) team of elves and discover all of their gadgets and gizmos.

Steve Gunning, joint writer and also illustrator of the book, (pictured left) commented, "We really wanted the story's rhymes and pictures to be something children (and adults) would want to come back to over and over again, first because you would find something new and then because you just liked them. We hope that it will inspire kids'

imaginations and become something that they can share with future generations. We are really proud that it will be on sale in bookshops, it's still a bit difficult to believe!"

### **What inspired the book?**

A long car journey and two bored, misbehaving children caused an exasperated father to warn that Father Christmas would know that they were being naughty because, "Santa can see through the sunroof." Co-author Chris Wheeler (pictured right) explains, "I spent most of the rest of that fateful car journey ignoring the children entirely as my head began to fill with ideas and rhymes and puns. When I first brought the concept to Steve it was just a simple idea and a few verses. Together, with the support of our patient and loving families, through the twists and turns of life, at least one narrative reboot and a global pandemic we were able to turn it into a fleshed-out story and then, with Steve's wonderful illustrations, a complete book. The finished product has far-exceeded our expectations and we are indebted to Carraway in helping us to share it with the book-buying public."

### **Year-round appeal with a comical spy theme**

Jane Shergold, Founder at Carraway Publishing said, "The early feedback from children, parents and booksellers has been really positive. They adore the humorous tongue-in-cheek verse and of course the in-jokes for all Bond fans, young and old, that are vividly brought to life through the detailed and inventive illustrations. Although it can be a tough challenge for new authors to break through and join the canon of established Christmas favourites such as The Snowman or The Jolly Christmas Postman, thanks to the power of today's word-of-mouth marketing available through

social media, new writers have the opportunity to reach out and quickly grow a large following. What also sets Santa's Secret Agents apart is that it is not just for Christmas, the story features scenes from every season from Springtime in the garden to Halloween on the high street, so can be enjoyed all year round."

Priced at £9.99 the hardback version of Santa's Secret Agents (ISBN: 9781916095021) is published by Carraway Publishing and is available from 6<sup>th</sup> October on-line from **Waterstones ([www.waterstones.com](http://www.waterstones.com))** as well as in-store at all good bookshops. The authors will be doing book-signings and readings at many bookshops and schools in the run up to Christmas. For more information on events, a preview of sample pages as well as downloadable colouring sheets, games and other reading resources for both younger and older children visit [www.santassecretagents.co.uk](http://www.santassecretagents.co.uk)

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#### **Editor's notes:**

#### **About the authors:**

Steve Gunning was taught to draw by his father when quite young he would become known to friends, family and colleagues for his beautiful hand-drawn greetings cards. His creative talents have also found an outlet in writing, directing and acting in school and amateur dramatics.

Chris Wheeler found that he had a way with words when he won his first poetry competition aged 6. Gradually he moved from poetry to songwriting and ended up performing all over the UK and Europe. Unfortunately that didn't pay the bills so he was forced to get a "proper" job and it was there that he met Steve.

Two artists trapped in day jobs bonded (no pun intended) over their shared love of loud rock music, writing, drawing and their questionable sense of humour.

Both writers were born in Bristol, England, where Chris still lives with his wife and two children who thanks to Santa and his elves are (usually) well behaved. Steve now lives with his wife in nearby Clevedon. His behaviour is being checked!

For more information visit:

[www.santassecretagents.co.uk](http://www.santassecretagents.co.uk)

### **About Carraway**

Carraway is an independent British publisher based in the West Country, between Bristol and Bath.

Named and inspired by the character Nick Carraway in F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, Carraway was established to make it easy and affordable for talented writers to get their books into print.

Specialising primarily in books covering adult and children's fiction, travel, business, wellbeing, music, philosophy and biography, Carraway is an ideal starting point for new writers and established authors who are looking for a publisher that offers a more personalised level of attention and support.

For more information visit:

[www.carrawaypublishing.co.uk](http://www.carrawaypublishing.co.uk)

### **PHOTOGRAPHY:-**

A range of high resolution author and book cover and book character photos are available on request from the publisher.

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