

ACT ONE
SCENE 3

BUDDY runs outside. He's clearly upset.

#1b - Not Happy All The Time

BUDDY

(singing sadly)

MY LIPS AREN'T HAPPY
MY THUMBS AREN'T HAPPY
MY HIPS AREN'T HAPPY
MY GUMS AREN'T HAPPY

SANTA arrives, accompanied by panicky elves.

SANTA

Buddy...

BUDDY

Santa? Is it true what they said? Am I human.

SANTA

Good question.

SANTA walks BUDDY over to a snow drift.

Here. Sit on Santa's lap.

#1c - Sit on Santa's Lap

~~Have to tell you a story~~

(reacting to his weight)

~~Oh. You're a big boy.~~ Once upon a time there was this young woman, Susan Welles she had a baby, but she passed away soon after he was born. That baby was put in an orphanage and one Christmas night he crawled into my toy sack and I brought him back here by mistake. The Elves took him in, raised him as one of their own.

BUDDY

Really? Where is he? Is it Charlie?

SANTA

Buddy, it's you! It's your story!

BUDDY

I'm not an elf; I'm a human. And I'm an orphan. Just like Annie!

SANTA

Not exactly. You have a human father, but he never knew that you were born. He lives in a far-away land called New York City.

SANTA takes out a New York city snow globe and hands it to BUDDY.

And he works...

(points to the globe)

...right there, in the Empire State Building.

BUDDY

In there? He must be teeny-tiny!

SANTA

Trust me, it's actually a very tall building.

BUDDY tries to give the snow globe back but SANTA stops him.

Keep it. It's a gift from me.

BUDDY

Thank you, Santa.

ELVES

~~www~~

SANTA turns to the gathered elves.

SANTA

~~All right, break it up. Nothing to see here. Back to work.~~

BUDDY

What's my dad like?

SANTA

Oh. Well, he's a very successful man. An executive. He publishes children's books.

BUDDY

Oh!

SANTA

But I should tell you, he, uh...well, he's on the Naughty List.

BUDDY

No! What did he do? Did he wet the bed?

SANTA

No, he didn't wet the—look, he just doesn't believe in me anymore.

BUDDY

Doesn't believe in you? Is he insane?

SANTA

No, like a lot of human beings these days, he's just lost the Christmas Spirit.

BUDDY

But Christmas Spirit is what makes your sleigh fly!

SANTA

I know. It's becoming a problem.

He looks into the snow globe.

Buddy, it's time you went there to meet him. I'm going to miss you, that's for sure, but you're like a bird; a big hairy bird and it's time that you left the nest.

BUDDY

But I don't want to go to New York. I'm scared.

SANTA

There's nothing to be scared of. New York's a great place. But there's one thing that should know. And it's very important.

BUDDY

What?

SANTA

There are like thirty Ray's pizzas and they all say they are the original, but the real one's on Sixth Avenue and Eleventh Street.

BUDDY

Okay. Which direction is New York?

SANTA walks BUDDY upstage to an iceberg.

SANTA

It's south. We're at the North Pole, Buddy; everything is South. Just head south until you find yourself in a big, smelly, industrial wasteland.

BUDDY

And that's New York?

SANTA

No, that's New Jersey. Then you just go through the Lincoln Tunnel and you're there.

(JOVIE)

GO ASK A HUNDRED SINGLE GIRLS
 FROM HERE TO PHILADELPH (IA)
 THEY'LL SAY IT'S CLEAR AS DAY
 YOU'RE IN FOR SLEEPLESS NIGHTS
 IF YOU DATE A GUY
 WHO HAS A THING FOR TIGHTS

OH, NEVER FALL IN LOVE
 NEVER FALL IN LOVE
 NEVER FALL IN LOVE WITH AN ELF

IT'S AS CLEAR AS A JINGLE BELL
 IF YOU ARE SINGLE, WELL, DON'T FALL IN LOVE WITH AN ELF

At the end of the song, on the applause, BUDDY enters and runs up to JOVIE.


BUDDY

Jovie! I know you are super mad right now.

(noticing her dress)

Wow. You look more miraculous than ever.

JOVIE

And you look....seasonally appropriate.

BUDDY

Thanks!

JOVIE

You are two and a half hours late.

BUDDY

I have a really good explanation.

JOVIE

Go ahead.

BUDDY

I forgot about our date.

JOVIE

That's your explanation? You forgot?

BUDDY

I remembered it eventually, but for a long time I forgot, which is why I'm late. Oh!
 Is this Tavern on the Green? With all the lights? Pretty.

JOVIE

Yes, I'm sure some lucky couple had a wonderful evening sitting at our table.

BUDDY

No they didn't.

JOVIE

Why not?

BUDDY

Because we didn't have a table. I was going to ask my Dad to get us one -

JOVIE

But you forgot.

BUDDY

No. I remembered, but he got really mad at me for making it snow in his office -

JOVIE

Stop. Just. Stop. I can't take any more of your crazy stories.

BUDDY

But it's true! And, oh, Jovie, I am so, so sorry I ruined your Christmas dream.

JOVIE

Forget it. It's my fault. I knew you couldn't get a table. But still, I got all dressed up and came here. And then an hour went by, then another hour and I waited. I didn't leave. Why? Because our date on Thursday was the only good time I've had in the last year and a half. How sad is that?

BUDDY

That *is* sad. But it's nice, too.

JOVIE

I just thought that if anyone could give me a real Christmas it would be you. "Lower your expectations, so you don't get disappointed". I should have that tattooed on my butt.

BUDDY

Jovie I feel so bad about this, sick in my stomach, like I swallowed a zillion sticks of Juicy Fruit. The last thing in the whole wide world I wanted to do was hurt you.

JOVIE

I don't want to talk about it anymore. I'm cold, and my feet are killing me in these heels...

BUDDY

Can I just give you a Christmas present?

JOVIE

This is the worst possible time –

(BUDDY takes out the snow globe)

BUDDY

Here. This is what New York city looks like when it snows.

(he hands it to her)

Shake it.

(as SHE takes the globe and shakes it)

Pretty, huh? Real snowflakes are smaller than buildings.

JOVIE tries to hand it back to him.

Keep it, and look at it later when you're not furious. It's real special. I mean, I know you're not going to believe me, but Santa Claus gave it to me when I left the North Pole.

JOVIE

Oh, Buddy. I so, so wish that were true. Goodbye.

#10a – Goodbye

JOVIE leaves. BUDDY stands alone on stage. MUSIC of "I'll Believe In You" plays under as we transition to scene 3.

ACT ONE**SCENE 5**

The Greenway Press offices on an upper floor of the Empire State Building. Later the same day, shortly after noon. A sign in a reception area, stage right, indicates that we are in the offices of Greenway Press, "Children's Books Your Child Can Trust." A secretary, DEB, is seated at a reception desk. There is a large office area with EMPLOYEES working in cubicles. Stage center there's a door to a private office which opens as the scene begins. WALTER HOBBS appears in the door, he has a children's book in hand and a sheaf of papers.

**SAM**

We got a problem, Mr. Hobbs. "Jingles The Jolly Christmas Puppy" is tanking in every bookstore in the country.

WALTER

Why?

SAM

Because two whole pages are missing from the last chapter.

WALTER

What?

SAM

Without them the end of the book makes no sense.

WALTER

How did that happen?

SAM

I don't know but you yourself okayed the final proofs. We'll have to recall all copies and reprint.

WALTER

No, we won't. Kids don't read the books, anyway, they just look at the pictures. No recall!

SAM

You really want to do that?

WALTER

No, I want to go to Greenway and say we're taking a fifty-thousand dollar bath so some stupid five-year-old can find out what happened to Jingles the friggin' Puppy on Christmas Eve.

SAM

But...?

But nothing!

WALTER

Whatever you say, boss.

SAM

(calling to DEB)

WALTER

Deb!

DEB

Yes, Mr. Hobbs.

WALTER

Coffee! Now!

DEB

Right away.

EMILY and 12-year-old MICHAEL enter.

EMILY

Hi, darling.

MICHAEL

Hi, Dad.

EMILY

Ready to go?

WALTER

Go where?

EMILY

I don't believe it. Christmas shopping, remember?

WALTER

Emily, you always do this to me.

EMILY

We planned this weeks ago! I took the day off –

WALTER

Well, I can't. I'm swamped. This is my busiest time of the year!

MICHAEL

Dad, it is well documented that the children of workaholics are prone to self-esteem issues.

WALTER stares at EMILY, baffled.

ACT TWO
SCENE 3

The living room in the Hobbs' apartment, as in Act One, Scene 8. MICHAEL and EMILY are reading BUDDY'S note on the Etch-a-sketch.

EMILY

(reading the note)

"...I don't belong at the North Pole, either. Nobody wants me, Nobody needs me."
Poor thing, wandering the streets in that dorky elf suit.

MICHAEL

Why did he do it?

EMILY

He had a fight with your father.

(examining the Etch-a-sketch more closely)

This really is amazing. I can barely draw a straight line on one of these things.

MICHAEL

We have to find him! We have to bring him home!

EMILY

We will find him, but after that I think we need to get him some help.

MICHAEL

What do you mean "help"?

EMILY

Professional help. Honey, Buddy is crazy.

MICHAEL

Mom.

EMILY

No, he is. We have to accept that.

MICHAEL

He's my brother.

EMILY

I know. You have a crazy brother. Lot's of people do.

MICHAEL

Just because somebody believes in Santa Claus, doesn't mean they're crazy.

EMILY

Yes, it does.

MICHAEL

No, it doesn't.

EMILY

Yes, it does.

MICHAEL

What about little kids? Are they crazy too?

EMILY

It's different. If a little kid believes in a talking purple dinosaur, it's delightful. If he still believes when he's thirty, it's profoundly disturbing. Look, just because Buddy is crazy, doesn't mean we should love him any less. I have a friend who's a psychiatrist. You remember Barry? With the Ferrari? I'm going to give him a call right now. Maybe he can tell us where we should look for Buddy.

EMILY leaves the room.

MICHAEL wanders over to an upstage window. He stares out forlornly.

MICHAEL

(to himself)

Buddy. Where did you go?

#11 – *There Is A Santa Claus*

SUDDENLY a bright flash of light appears outside. MICHAEL stares in disbelief.

Mom! Mom!

EMILY runs back into the room.

EMILY

What?

MICHAEL

I SAW A TINY SLEIGH
MAKE ITS TINY WAY
RIGHT ACROSS THE SKY

THERE WASN'T TIME TO THINK
THERE WASN'T TIME TO BLINK
BEFORE IT ZOOMED RIGHT BY

ACT ONE
SCENE 9

WALTER HOBBS' office in the Empire State Building, as in Scene 5. DEB is at her desk, talking on the phone. Other EMPLOYEES are bustling about the office.
MUSIC of "In The Way" under.

DEB*(into phone)*

Anyway....it seems that he had this secret love affair when he was in college... I know! Walter "the-ice-man" Hobbs! And, get this, there were "consequences"! Yep. He's six foot two, he's incredibly sweet which is bizarre considering the bloodline, but here's the kicker, he thinks he's an...

WALTER and BUDDY enter together wearing matching overcoats, over matching business suits.

(into the phone)

Uh-oh! The ice man cometh.

#6b - Buddy and Walter

SAM

Morning, Walter.

WALTER

Morning, Sam.

BUDDY

Morning, Sam!

WALTER

(continuing to walk toward his office)

Sara.

SARA

Oh, good morning, Mr. Hobbs.

BUDDY

Good morning, Sara. That's a nice purple dress. Very purple.

DEB

(getting up from her desk)

Buddy! Congratulations! I hear it turns out you really are Mr. Hobbs' son.

BUDDY

Oh, I won't be buying anything. I only have chocolate money. And most of it melted when I—

SALESWOMAN

That's fabulous!

(holding up a perfume spray bottle)

Jungle Passion fruit spray?

BUDDY

Fruit spray? Sure.

BUDDY takes the bottle from her and sprays it into his mouth. HE instantly goes into a child-like fit, loudly whining and jumping all over the place. The SALESWOMAN takes the bottle away from him, gives a look and hurries off. The toy department MANAGER, a heavy-set black man comes up to BUDDY. MUSIC out.

MANAGER

Hey you! Get back to work! What section I assign you to?

BUDDY

I don't know.

MANAGER

You don't know? All right, you work right over here, the North Pole.

The sliders part to reveal Macy's, the toy department. Minimally decorated for Christmas, with a large sign saying, "The North Pole." A large, sparsely decorated Christmas tree stands nearby. CUSTOMERS, including a number of children with parents, and sales clerks dressed as STORE ELVES are on stage as the scene begins. Christmas MUSIC and ringing bells under.

BUDDY

That's not the North Pole.

MANAGER

Yes, it is.

BUDDY

No, it's not.

MANAGER

Yes, it is.

BUDDY

No, it's not.



MANAGER

Yes, it is.

BUDDY

No, it isn't.

MANAGER

Yes, it is.

BUDDY

No, it isn't.

MANAGER

Yes, it is.

BUDDY

No it's not. Where's the snow?!

(BUDDY grins happily and the MANAGER scowls)

MANAGER

Why you smilin' like that?

BUDDY

I just like to smile. Smiling's my favorite.

MANAGER

Make work your favorite, that's your new favorite, okay? Work is your new favorite.

BUDDY

Yay! I love to work.

MANAGER

Good.

BUDDY

Nothing makes the big guy happier than to see all his little people working hard.

MANAGER

Wait a minute. The big guy?

BUDDY

Yeah.

MANAGER

The big guy from up north?

BUDDY

That's the one.

MANAGER

Did he send you down here?

BUDDY

He sure did!

MANAGER

Corporate! Always checking up on me. Okay. Fine. We'll work together, me and you, be good pals, okay?

BUDDY

Okay!

MANAGER

Okay. Now, I have to make a little announcement, if that's alright with you?

BUDDY

Of course!

MANAGER

Thanks.

(loudly to ALL)

Attention Macy's shoppers! We'll be closing in five minutes, but tomorrow mornin', ten a.m., Santa Claus is comin' to town!

BUDDY

Santa!!! Oh, my gosh! Santa here? I know him! I know him!

MANAGER

He'll be here to take pictures with all the children. Ten a.m. tomorrow...

BUDDY

Ten a.m. tomorrow!

MANAGER

Santa Claus is comin' to town!

BUDDY

Santa Claus is comin' to town!

MANAGER

You. If you don't mind, could you go help that girl over there decorate that tree?

BUDDY

Yay! Santa always likes it when I help decorate the tree at the North Pole!

(seeing JOVIE for the first time)

Oh! She's beautiful!

BUDDY

Why is the sky blue?

WALTER

I don't know. It has something to do with the sun, and ultraviolet...I don't know.

More silence.

BUDDY

Dad?

WALTER

What?

BUDDY

What does a rainbow feel like?

WALTER

I don't know. Soft...

BUDDY

Dad?

WALTER

Buddy!

BUDDY

What was my mom like? Susan Welles?

WALTER

That was a long time ago, Buddy.

BUDDY looks dejected. WALTER softens.

What I mean is, we were just kids in college. We drifted apart. She never told me about....Susan was fun, full of life. You would have liked her.

DEB enters, leading in MR. GREENWAY, a gruff elderly businessman carrying a bulky briefcase.

DEB

Mr. Greenway, sir.

GREENWAY

Hobbs! My phone has been ringing off the hook. Angry mothers, kids crying, "What happened to Jingles, the Jolly Christmas Puppy"? "Did he make it to the North Pole?" "Did he ever get his magic bone?"



WALTER

It was an unfortunate oversight, Mr. Greenway. I'm fully prepared to blame my staff -

GREENWAY

(opening his brief case and slapping some papers on the desk)

Don't try to pass the buck. It's your name on these proofs. And I'll tell you something else; even if those two missing pages were in there, the book still would have sucked! You're hanging by a thread Hobbs!

BUDDY

Hi, Mr. Greenway, I'm Buddy the Elf!

GREENWAY

What? Who the devil is that?

WALTER

Well, he's, uh, he's my, son.

GREENWAY

I thought your son was twelve years old?

BUDDY

I'm thirty. That's this many.

(indicating 30 with his fingers)

GREENWAY

What?!

WALTER

(shouting to DEB)

Deb! Buddy needs a break, take him downstairs for some hot chocolate.

BUDDY

Oh! Can I have a Chocolate Monster?

DEB

A Chocolate Monster?

BUDDY

It's hot chocolate with a chocolate bar on top. That way, when the chocolate bar melts it makes it more chocolatey.

DEB

(leading BUDDY off)

Works for me. Screw you Jenny Craig!



~~BUDDY~~

~~Screw you!~~

~~(exits with DEB)~~

GREENWAY

Hobbs, you're out of a job unless you can come up with a blockbuster idea for a new Christmas book. I mean a through-the-roof national best-seller!

WALTER

Well, sir, that's easier said than done—

GREENWAY

Yes, it is. So you better get your top writers on it, because I will be back in New York on the evening of December twenty-fourth. At that time, you will present to me, in exact detail, your plans for the book! Happy Holidays, Hobbs.

GREENWAY exits. WALTER is in despair.

~~WALTER~~

~~God? I'm a good guy. Basically. Could you....could you throw me a bone?~~

~~Suddenly, BUDDY runs back in and throws shredded paper in Walter's face.~~

~~BUDDY~~

~~Snow!~~

~~DEB rushes in after him, carrying a cup of hot chocolate. BUDDY rushes past her. DEB stares at WALTER, who sits at his desk covered in shredded paper looking miserable.~~

~~DEB~~

~~(to WALTER, awkwardly)~~

~~Chocolate Monster?~~

MRS. CLAUS

(off stage)

I don't know, dear.

SANTA

I watched one show on Global Warming six months ago and now it thinks I'm Al Gore.

He turns off the TV.

MRS. CLAUS

Hey. They'll be here at six.

SANTA

(to audience)

In-laws. They come every year on Christmas day. I finish my rounds, just start to unwind, then the door bursts open and the kids run in, start dancing with the elves and the elves get into the eggnog and start riding the reindeer. Now, don't get me wrong; I'm a big fan of Christmas. It's just, well, I had fifty bucks on Boise. What am I complaining about? It's Christmas! Let's read a Christmas story.

(He picks up a large book)

Ah. Here's one. The story of Buddy the Elf—

#1 – *Happy All The Time**

—well, he *thought* he was an elf—we'll get to that part. Oh! You know what? Before we start I'm going to turn off my cell phone. It's pretty irritating when one of these things goes off in the middle of a story. Gonna unwrap my candies now too. Okay. It begins once upon a time, in a little village here at the North Pole called Christmas Town. Now this town is unique for two reasons: One, there's no Starbucks; and two: everyone who lives here is a elf.

**Please note: if you wish to use the original opening number ("Christmastown") as an alternative substitute for "Happy All The Time," you may do so. See APPENDIX, p.116*

BOY ELF

You're the best Basketball player in the whole North Pole!

ELF #1

Even better than Santa!

ELF #2

And you're the only baritone in the Jinglesingers! You bring us down a whole octave.

ELF #3

In a good way!

CHARLIE

See, Buddy? You're not a Cotton-Headed-Ninny-Muggins. You're just....special.

THE ELVES

Yes, special!

CHARLIE

Hey, these elves are getting pretty thirsty. Would you mind doing a round with the cocoa cart?

BUDDY

Yay! Cocoa cart! Cocoa cart!

BUDDY leaves. CHARLIE motions to SHAWANDA to join him.



CHARLIE

Hey, Shawanda.

SHAWANDA

Yeah, Charlie?

CHARLIE

I hate to do this to you but do you think you could pick up the slack with those Etch-A-Sketches?

BUDDY returns immediately with the cocoa cart. He listens, unnoticed by CHARLIE and SHAWANDA.

SHAWANDA

No problem.

CHARLIE

I appreciate it. Buddy's killing me.

SHAWANDA

Hey, that was quick thinking with that 'special talents' thing.

CHARLIE

I feel bad for the big guy. I just hope he doesn't get wise.

SHAWANDA

Well, if he hasn't figured out by now that he's a human I don't think he ever will.

BUDDY

Human?!? I'm human?

CHARLIE

Oh no.

(to another elf)

Get Santa!

BUDDY

You said I'm human!

CHARLIE

No. No.

SHAWANDA

No, not you Buddy. We we're talking about some other Buddy. Some Buddy....else.

BUDDY

(not believing them)

No you weren't! I'm not happy!

BUDDY exits. SHAWANDA and CHARLIE are left alone on stage.

CHARLIE

Way to go, Shawanda. You broke his heart.

SHAWANDA

What, you think I meant to do that?

CHARLIE

Well, it is kind of a hobby of yours, isn't it?

CHARLIE storms off, obviously upset.

SHAWANDA

(following him)

Charlie! Do *not* make this about us!

ACT ONE
SCENE 11

WALTER's office. WALTER confers with CHADWICK. It's obvious that the meeting has been going on for hours. MATTHEWS is conspicuously absent.

CHADWICK

Okay. How about this: a town populated only by tomatoes—

WALTER

Tomatoes.

CHADWICK

Little tomato people. They are busily preparing for Christmas, but little do they know, the mean tomato who lives on top of the mountain is planning to steal Christmas this year.

WALTER

You are describing the Grinch.

CHADWICK

But with tomatoes!

WALTER

You're an idiot, Chadwick. Greenway is going to fire us all if we don't come up with something good, you understand that? Can you grasp the seriousness of this situation? Where the hell is Matthews?

CHADWICK

He's working a lead.

WALTER

He's what?

MATTHEWS bursts in carrying a small manuscript.

MATTHEWS

I got it!

CHADWICK

You got it?

WALTER

An original idea I hope?

MATTHEWS

We got something better than an idea.

CHADWICK

We got a book.

MATTHEWS

You are familiar, of course, with Christopher Smith.

WALTER

Are you kidding? Christopher Smith was the greatest writer of Christmas stories who ever lived. When you think of Christmas you think of Chris Smith.

CHADWICK

So, you would be happy if we brought him in?

WALTER

He's dead, you morons.

MATTHEWS

Mr. Hobbs, I met this guy who deals in used furniture; high end stuff, from the homes of prominent dead writers. So, he recently acquired a desk once owned by one Christopher Smith.

CHADWICK

And in this desk he finds a secret drawer –

MATTHEWS

– and in this secret drawer he finds a manuscript.

CHADWICK

A lost Chris Smith Christmas story!

WALTER

A lost Chris Smith Christmas story?

MATTHEWS

It's a Chris Smith Christmas for Walter Hobbs!

MATTHEWS hands WALTER a small, yellowing manuscript.

WALTER

My God. It's beautiful!

MATTHEWS

Isn't it? The illustrations –

CHADWICK

And the story will make you cry.

WALTER

I can't believe I'm actually holding an original Christopher Smith in my hands.

MATTHEWS

Careful. It's the only copy.

CHADWICK

Are you nuts? What if someone spills coffee on it? Make a copy!

MATTHEWS

Relax. The machine's out of toner. Deb's changing it now. Just be careful with it, Mr. Hobbs.

WALTER

(handling it gingerly)

This could be huge!

Suddenly BUDDY, in his business suit, bursts into the conference room, having just come from his date.

BUDDY

I'm in love! I'm in love! And I don't care who knows it!

WALTER

Buddy, please. We're very busy.

BUDDY

Dad, I need a table for two at Tavern on The Green, seven o'clock, Christmas Eve. And four hundred dollars.

MATTHEWS

The guy's waiting in the lobby, Mr. Hobbs.

WALTER

(to BUDDY)

Buddy. We'll talk about this in a minute. Just, do me a favour and sit there in that chair. Amuse yourself.

BUDDY

Oh, okay, dad.

WALTER

(to MATTHEWS)

Well, bring the guy up here. I want to thank him personally.

MATTHEWS

He's not waiting for a thank you. He's waiting for \$300,000.

WALTER

What?