

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...?

WALTER

But nothing!

SAM

Whatever you say, boss.

WALTER

(calling to DEB)

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.

MATTHEWS

(to CHADWICK)

Genius!

CHADWICK

(to MATTHEWS)

It's outside the box.

MATTHEWS

There is no box!

MICHAEL

That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard!

WALTER

Michael...

MICHAEL

You're an idiot.

GREENWAY

That's it. Hobbs, what's up with these sons of yours?

WALTER

Mr. Greenway -

MICHAEL

Oh, come on. Buddy the Christmas horse?

BUDDY

Sir, I am not a horse.

GREENWAY

I've had enough of this. I don't need to be lectured by kids on how to sell kids books to kids!

(to MICHAEL and BUDDY)

You two, take your smart aleck remarks and get out of here!

MICHAEL

Sorry.

BUDDY

Sorry.

WALTER

Wait.

(WALTER)

(to GREENWAY)

Mr. Greenway, Michael and Buddy are my sons. I'd prefer that you didn't insult them.

GREENWAY

And I'd prefer that you keep your wife and your whole weirdo family out of the office and do your job! Now you got a good idea here, Hobbs. With work, it could be a million seller, so this is what we're going to do: I'm going to cancel my flight, we're going to work all night and all day tomorrow until we—

WALTER

(interrupting him)

Tomorrow? Tomorrow's Christmas.

GREENWAY

You got a problem with that?

WALTER

Yes. Mr. Greenway? I quit.

GREENWAY

What?

WALTER

I quit.

GREENWAY

Let me get this straight. You want to spend Christmas on the unemployment line?

WALTER

No I want to spend Christmas with my family, but I'd be happy to spend it anywhere, as long as it's not with you.

WALTER gives MICHAEL and BUDDY a high five.

The Story of Buddy (4/15/13)

ELF

Walter Cut Start - Bar 51

-6-

WALTER:

51 Page three his fath-er's at work when Bud - dy walks through the

52

53

G2 Am7 D7 Am7 D7

54 door

55 His dad is sort of a jerk and

56

G6 Am9 D9 G2 Am7 D7

57 Bud - dy's banned from the floor

58

59

BUDDY:

His fath - er's not pre-pared to

57

58

59

Am7 D9 F/G Em/G F/G G C2

Swing it!

WALTER: 63

But soon,

60 61 62

be a dad to a son he nev-er knew he had,

G2/B Am7 C/D D7 G6/B B7/D# Em Bb7 Am7^{b5} A7/C#

BUDDY+MICHAEL: 65

He'll be forced to change his tune

64 65 66

he'll be forced to change his tune It's the stor-y of

C/D F/G G6

67 Bud - dy — the elf 68 It's the stor - y of 69 Bud - dy — the elf

Bud - dy — the elf It's the stor - y of Bud - dy — the elf

67 68 69 C9 G7 C9 G7

WALTER+MICHAEL:

70 It's the stor - y of 71 It's kind of bril-liant if he 72 says so him - self —

It's the stor - y of It's kind of bril-liant if he says so him - self —

70 71 72 C6 Eb9#11 G6/D E9

BUDDY, MICHAEL,
WALTER:

Walter Cut End - Bar 74

BUDDY:

73 It's the stor - y of 74 Bud - dy — the elf! 75 and

73 74 75 A9 Eb9 D9 G2 mp