CU: A MODERN-LOOKING CHRISTMAS BOOK ENTITLED: ELF

A Christmas book entitled "ELF" sits on a table, a drawing of 62" BUDDY THE ELF (the guy we've seen from all the trailers and posters) is on the cover.

We push in on the book and it magically flips open to the first page: a drawing of small Papa Elf in his wonderful work shop.

INT. PAPA ELE'S WORKSHOP - NORTH POLE - DAY

PULL OUT FROM THE BOOK TO REVEAL

The real life Elf and Workshop of the drawing we have just seen. PAPA ELF, 540 years old or roughly 55 in human years, is surrounded by scores of strange and specific tools and some scattered half-built toys.

PAPA ELF

So you're here for the story? Okay. Just let me wet my whistle.

He pours himself a shot of milk in a snow-flake shot glass and downs it.

PAPA ELE

(like it's liquor)

Whoo! That's strong! Must be two percent! Elves love to tell stories, you probably didn't know that, did you? Well, there's a lot of things about us that people don't know. For instance, we can't tell a lie. It's physiologically impossible. Here's another interesting Elf-ism: There are three jobs available to an Elf. You can make shoes at night while an old cobbler sleeps...but it's not exactly the most rewarding work.

QUICK CUT AWAY TO

Two ELVES hammering away at a pile of shoes as a fat shoemaker sleeps with a copy of "Hot Cobbler" magazine on his chest, a busty cobbler lady on the cover.

DISGRUNTLED COBBLER ELF

Lazy bastard couldn't even make a flip-flop...

EXT. ELF TREE - DAY

The exterior of a tree, we hear cooking going on inside.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

...you can bake cookies in a tree. But it's dangerous having an oven in an oak during dry season...

We hear a yelp and now a siren rings and then the TREE BURSTS INTO FLAMES, ELVES SCURRYING OUT.

INT. PAPA ELE'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

PAPA ELF

But the third job. Well, the third job makes being an Elf worthwhile. Some call it "the show" or the "big dance". It's the profession every Elf aspires to. And that's to build toys in Santa's workshop.

CUT TO:

A TRACKING SHOT OF SANTA'S WORKSHOP

The CAMERA whips by a crowd of bustling elves building dolls, toy horses, action figures, squirt guns...everything. There's even a row of X-boxes being assembled.

PAPA FIF

It's a job only an Elf can do. Our nimble fingers, natural cheer and active minds are perfect for toy building. They've tried using Gnomes or Trolls but the Gnomes drank too much and the Trolls weren't toilet trained.

CUI AWAY:

1) A drunk GNOME, stein in hand, vomiting below the table. 2) A TROLL wearing a diaper is chewed out by an Elf cleaning up the floor.

PAPA ELE

And no human could ever do this work. Their hands are too big and they tend to get testy when over worked. In fact, no human has ever set foot in Santa's workshop. That is until about thirty years ago. And in case you haven't guessed it, that's our story. It was back in 1968. A particularly successful Christmas...

INT. ORPHANAGE - NIGHT

A Christmas tree flickers. A nurse changes a giggling ten month-old BABY's diaper.

NURSE

You're quite a giggler, aren't you?

(lying him down)

Well, it's time for night-night.

She tucks the baby in and exits. NURSE (as she leaves) Merry Christmas, my angel. CLOSE ON The Rocking Crib. The BABY rises, giggling. His eyes light up as he stands, holding the gate of the crib. Santa's black boots drop in from the chimney. The baby shakes the gate. Quickly, Santa moves to the Christmas tree, where he lays out presents. There is an OFF-SCREEN CLANG! Santa LOOKS UP and sees the empty crib. The gate is down: BABY'S POV He gleefully skitters across the floor towards a large, fuzzy teddy bear in SANIA'S BIG RED BAG. FADE TO: INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP A bevy of ELVES with slightly larger 60's Elf collars and sideburns celebrate another successful Christmas. Several elves start CHANTING for a speech. SANTA, seated in his rocker, stands to applause. Merrily, he gestures for quiet. SANTA Alright, alright...Well, we've had another successful year. Prancer was able to control his bladder over Baltimore, and we didn't forget Delaware...

A party HORN blows. LAUGHTER. Santa cheerfully pats down with his hands for quiet.

SANTA

And now after a lot of hard work it's time for a vacation, starting now!

Santa looks at his watch as five seconds click off. The elves all rest their heads on their elbows.

SANTA

Alright! Vacation's over! Back to work! Time to start preparations for next Christmas.

The elves cheer and get back to work. When an OFF-SCREEN COOING is heard.

SANTA

What in the name of Sam Hill...?

More COOING. Perplexed, Santa looks down to his bag just as a human baby, dressed only in a diaper, crawls out and smiles.

Silence. The elves stare in awe at the strange visitor. An ELF looks on the back of his diaper and sees the brand name "Little Buddy Diapers".

ELF TWIN #2

It's name is Buddy. He must've...

ELF TWIN #1

... snuck into your sack at the orphanage. What do we do, Santa?

Santa looks befuddled.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

Santa had a decision to make. But fortunately when it comes to babies, Santa's a push over. So Buddy would stay with an older Elf who had always wanted a child, but had been so committed to building toys, he had forgotten to settle down. Yes, Buddy was raised by me, his adopted father. My, how I love that boy.

MONTAGE: BUDDY GROWING UP AS AN ELF

A giant baby is wedged into an extra-tiny crib.

Super 8 home movie of Papa Elf holding a two-year old baby that is almost as big as he is.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

Tough Buddy grew twice as fast, he wasn't any different from the other little elves. I mean, not really...

Video Footage: of 7-year old Buddy riding a really small tricycle around in circles at a birthday party with a laughing Elf child on his back and another Elf under his arm.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

And though it is against the Code of Elves to lie, all agreed that until Buddy asked us, no one was going to bring up the fact that he was actually a human being.

A series of Polaroid photos showing Buddy, 12, dunking a basketball over three elves.

Buddy in Elf school, wedged in a tipy desk. The ELF TEACHER is pointing to the black board where "THE CODE OF ELVES" is written.

ELF TEACHER

And before we learn how to build the latest in extreme graphic chipset processors, let's recite the Code of the Elves, shall we? Number one?

ELF STUDENTS

TREAT EVERY DAY LIKE CHRISTMAS!

ELF TEACHER

Number two?

ELF STUDENTS

THERE'S ROOM FOR EVERYONE ON THE NICE LIST!

ELF TEACHER

Number three?

We push in on Buddy as he recites...

BUDDY & EVERYONE

THE BEST WAY TO SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER IS SINGING LOUD FOR ALL TO HEAR!

EXT. ELF HOCKEY POND - CURRENT DAY - DAY

An ANNOUNCER ELF is on a megahorn, doing play by play of an elf hockey team...

ANNOUNCER

(on megaphone)

Lum Lum across the line, feeds it to Foom Foom, behind the net, looking, feeds Blinky...Wait! Rimpo-correction, Wombo. I think...and - uh-oh! - here comes BUDDY!

QUICK CUIS

A smiling Buddy pounds tiny elves into the boards with brute force. The elves are helpless. Buddy finishes this off with a wicked slap-shot.

ANNOUNCER

(like an elf Pat Foley)

He SCOOOOOOOOOOOOOOORES! And it's 14-zero with eleven minutes left in the first period.

INT. ELF LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Post game, Buddy's in the locker room. Elves congratulate him and occasionally reach up to slap him on the butt.

POM POM

Good game, Buddy.

BUDDY

Thanks! Sorry about your shoulder, Pom Pom!

POM POM

No sweat. It's just a collar bone!

They're all tossing their jock straps in the bin. Little Elf jocks land, and then a HUGE ONE, proportionately the size of a large serving tray. It's Buddy's.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

But as much as Buddy was accepted by his friends and family, there were drawbacks to being a human in an elves' world.

RAPID FIRE:

A dozen shots of Buddy slamming his face into doorways, beams, cabinets. These shots look shockingly painful.

BUDDY

Ow..jeez...yikes...golly...charles dickens! Sone of a nutcracker!

INT. PAPA ELE'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The FINALE: Buddy attempts to put a star on top of the semi-tall Elf Christmas tree.

But Buddy's pointy Elf slipper gets hung up in an ornament.

The elves step back, preparing for the inevitable: Buddy panics, wiggles his leg and pulls the tree over on top of him, falling into the fire place and engulfing in flames.

Pom Pom sprays him with a mini-fire extinguisher.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

And no where were Buddy's differences more obvious than in Santa's toy shop.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - NORTH POLE - DAY

We see an assembly line of elves making Etch-a-sketches with wooden hammers. We pan finally to Buddy as an ELF SUPERVISOR APPROACHES.

BUDDY

Gee, I'm sorry, Ming-Ming. I'm gonne come in a little short on my quote today.

ELF SUPERVISOR

It's okay, Buddy. How many Etcha-Sketches did you get finished?

Buddy is about to answer. But then his face winces up. FIGHTING BACK TEARS.

ELF SUPERVISOR

How many, Buddy? It's okay, you can tell me.

Clearly tearing up now, Buddy sets his tiny wooden hammer to the side and reveals a box of his toys.

BUDDY

I only made...

(crying)

Eighty-five.

Eighty-five? He might as well have said zero. The elves all look at each other.

ELF SUPERVISOR

Oh, don't worry about it Buddy. This is a great start! You're only 915 off pace. BUDDY Oh, why don't you just say it Ming?! I'm the worst toy maker in the whole world! I'm a cotton-head ninny-muggins! ELF SUPERVISOR Oh, you're not a cotton-head ninny muggins! We all have different talents, that's all. BUDDY Actually, it seems like everyone has the same talents. Except for me. ELF SUPERVISOR That's not true, you have lots of talents. Special talents. Like, uh... Supervisor Elf looks around to the other Elves for back up. They try to chime in. ELF #1 You changed the batteries in the fire alarm! ELF #2 (absurdly positive) You sure did! Triple H's! And in six months, you'll need to check 'em again! Won't he! (everyone agrees) ELF #3 And you're the only beritone in the Elf choir. Without you, we'd sound like a bunch of ... I mean, you bring us down a whole octave! FJ.F #1

In a good way!

ELF SUPERVISOR

See? You're not a cotton-head ninny muggins. You're Ex-traordinary!

BUDDY

Well, you know what? I'm sick of being extraordinary!

Upset, Buddy struggles to get his thighs out from under his desk, and now runs off, tagging his head on the door frame.

INT. PAPA'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Buddy storms into his tiny house. Papa Elf looks up from his work, surprised. Buddy can't speak. He runs over and locks himself in the bathroom.

INT. ELF BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

This bathroom is ABSURDLY SMALL, Buddy squeezes in like Harry Houdini. The toilet is the size of a Big Gulp cup. Buddy sits on it and starts to sob. Washing his face in the tipy sink.

KNOCK KNOCK.

We INTERCUT with Papa Elf at the door.

PAPA ELF

Son? Are you okay?

BUDDY

Go away!

PAPA ELF

(shocked)

Buddy!

BUDDY

I'm sorry, papa. May I please have some Buddy time?

PAPA ELF

Open up, son. I think we need to talk.

The door finally creeks open, revealing a funny wide shot of him squeezed into this box of a room. He wiggles out. Still wiggling.

PAPA ELF Come sit with your papa. Papa sits on the couch, Buddy sits on Papa Elfs knee. Papa winces. PAPA ELF Alright, let's hear it. BUDDY Well, everyone knows you're Santa's Master Tinker. And Grandpapa was Master Tinker before you. And great Grandpapa before ye. I'm supposed to follow in your footsteps...but I'm always letting everyone down. PAPA ELF Well, there's something I should probably tell you, Buddy. And it's long over due... (intense beat) You see...um... BUDDY What is it, Papa? Papa Elf looks into Buddy's beautifully innocent eyes. He can't bring himself to do it. PAPA ELF (changing the subject) I need your help on something. (adjusting Buddy's weight) Up up now, nice and -- ow, OW!... There we are. Papa Elf leads Buddy through a door to reveal the most amazing sight Buddy has ever beheld. SANTA'S SLEIGH A GLOW emphates from the hand-rubbed, red-lacquered wood chassis, illuminating the entire room.



There's a rumor floating around that parents are putting them there.

BUDDY

That's ridiculous! There's no way parents could do that all in one night! And what about Santa's cookies!? I suppose parents eat them too?

PAPA ELF

I know...but every year less and less people are believing in Santa, and today we've got a real energy crisis on our hands. See how low the Claus-o-meter is?

We see a gauge on the instrument panel of the sleigh with CHRISTMAS SPIRIT LEVELS written and a needle resting in the DANGEROUSLY LOW red section.

PAPA ELF

That's why I installed this little baby back in the sixties.

Papa pushes a RED BUTTON, causing a JET ENGINE to shudder with a high-pitched whir. Buddy is amazed.

BUDDY

Oh my Gosh!

PAPA ELE

Watch the language son.

BUDDY

Forgive me, Papa. What's that?

PAPA ELE

A Viper turbojet with 358 cubic meters of displacement, high volume air intake and customized spark timing.

(off Buddy's look)

I know, it's a little less magical, but everyone's still getting their wish, that's the important thing, right?

(around him)

Listen, the motor mounts are giving me some wiggle. Do you want to give the ol' man a hand?

BUDDY
(coming ground)
Do I?!
And just like that, father and son hunker down and tinker together.
DISSOLVE TO:
INI. SANIA'S WORKSHOP - TOY TESTING - THE NEXT DAY
We push past a tiny door marked TESTING. Elves everywhere are testing toys. Buddy stands in front of a conveyor belt pushing Jack in the Boxes past him. He turns the crank producing the 'POP GOES THE WEASEL' tune and a puppet pops out scaring him every time. POP!
BUDDY
Ahh!
Another one: POP!
BODDY
OHHHH!
This one doesn't pop for a beat and then: POP!
BUDDY
(biggest one yet)
AHHHH!!!
(to supervisor)
I'm going to take five, okay Krumpet?
KROMPET
Okay!

We follow Buddy as he approaches an Elf kitchenette. But before he enters, he stops, over-hearing a few Elves drinking cider and talking behind his back.

FOOM FOOM

... and that EX-traordinary bit! That was quick thinking.

ELF SUPERVISOR

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

FOOM FOOM

Hey, he's believed he was a real Elf for this long, hasn't he?

WE SLAM INTO A CLOSE UP OF BUDDY'S SHOCKED FACE

QUICK SERIES OF ELASHBACKS FROM BUDDY'S PAST flash before his eyes not unlike 'the sixth sense'.

AT THE SHOEMAKER: Buddy is painfully squeezing into new shoes.

IN BED: Buddy tosses and turns - three beds have been pushed together to make a human twin-sized bed.

IN THE ELF SHOWERS: Buddy is struggling to wash under a three-foot high shower head.

THE ELF CHOIR PHOTO: Only Buddy's wrist is visible, he's cropped out.

An exact replay of those rapid-fire shots of Buddy slamming his head into doorways, beams, cabinets.

BUDDY

Ow..jeez...yikes...golly...charles...Dickens! Sone of a Nutcracker!

IN THE EACTORY: tinkering with a Ken Doll, Buddy moves the arms like his arms.

BACK ON BUDDY, quessy. His head spins as the CAMERA CIRCLES HIM. The room spins. Buddy's knees go weak.

Pom Pom hurries over, concerned.

POM POM

You don't look so good, Buddy. Are you okay?

Buddy tries to speak, but instead COLLAPSES RIGHT ON TOP OF POM POM, crushing him beneath his weight.

POM POM

(muffled under Buddy)
I'm okay, Buddy. Don't worry about a thing. I'm warm.
INT. PAPA'S WORKSHOP - TEN MINUTES LATER
Buddy wakes up from his sleep to find himself in Papa's workshop. FOCUS RACKS to Papa tending to his son.
BUDDY
Ooooooh. I had a terrible nightmare.
PAPA ELF
What is it, Buddy?
BUDDY
I dreamt I wasn't an Elf at all. I was a human. Oh, it was awful. I'm not a human, am I Papa?
PAPA ELF
I knew this day would come. You see, Buddy, I love you and nothing can ever change that. But the fact is, it wasn't a dream. You're not like the rest of us.
BUDDY
You mean I'm not an Elf?
PAPA ELF
No, son, you're a human being.
BUDDY
No wonder I'm always freezing!
PAPA ELF
We decided it was best to let you think you were one of us.
BUDDY
But I thought elves can't lie.

PAPA ELF
We can't. But Buddy, you never asked! I thought for sure when you cracked six feet it would come up.
BUDDY
(getting upset)
I thought I had a glandular problem.
PAPA ELF
Your glands are fine.
BUDDY
(emotional)
So, you're not my Papa?
PAPA ELF
Oh, I'll always be your Papa. It's just you have another Papa, too. A biological Papa.
Papa Elf opens a drawer and shows Buddy a photo: a young couple are in love
PAPA ELF (V.O.)
I then proceeded to tell Buddy of how his father had fallen in love when he was very young with a beautiful girl named Susan Welles, and how Buddy was born and put up for adoption by his mother. And how she had later passed away. I told him his father had never even known Buddy was born. And most importantly, I told him where his Dad was: in a magical land called New York City.
Papa Elf puts a snow globe in front of Buddy showing the Empire State Building with a sign NEW YORK CITY.
BUDDY
Ohh! I feel confused and sweaty! I need some Buddy time!
Buddy rups off.
PAPA ELF
Buddy?! Buddy?!!

EXT. NORTH POLE - MINUTES LATER Buddy runs and runs. He passes some ANIMATED ANIMALS, a RABBIT, a RACCOON and a SQUIRREL. RACCOON Hey, Buddy! Want to sing and pick snow berries? BUDDY Not now Pipsy!! He passes by an ANIMATED SNOWMAN in the front yard of a toasty little cottage. JIM THE SNOWMAN (a faint whisper) Oooohhh! Buddy... BUDDY Hi, Jim. What's wrong? JIM THE SNOWMAN (very quietly) Uh, ow. Sorry...my back's out of line again. Do you mind cracking it for me again? BUDDY Sure, Jim. Buddy comes from behind him, squeezes and then we hear a CRACK. JIM THE SNOWMAN (speaking at full volume) Ohlh, thank you, Buddy. That's soooo good. It's from all the standing, They never build me sitting down. Hey? Why the long face?

BUDDY

Well, Jim. It seems I'm...I'm not an Elf.

JIM THE SNOWMAN

Of course you're not. You're six-three and had a beard when you were fifteen.

BUDDY

Papa says my real father is living in a magical place for away.

JIM THE SNOWMAN

At least you have a father. I was just rolled up one day. I never had anyone to play catch with. And even if I did. I only have sticks for arms.

BUDDY

I guess I am pretty lucky after all.

JIM THE SNOWMAN

I bet your dad would be so happy to see you, he'd hug you and never let go. I wish I had a dad to hug. And even if I did, I only have sticks for arms.

BUDDY

I understand about your arms, Jim.

JIM THE SNOWMAN

Well, you should do all the things I can't. Go see him. Hug him. And play catch. And scratch your ass.

BUDDY

I will. I'm gonna go find my dad!

INT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - THE NEXT DAY

A triumphant swell of music as Buddy walks through the workshop for the last time. Each Elf he passes says goodbye.

3000X

Bye Choo-choo! Bye Sunshine! Bye Tinkle Winkle! By Puffy! Bye Flade! Bye Gayle!

Santa steps into frame and puts his arm around Buddy. SANTA So I hear you're going on a little journey to the big city? BUDDY Yesh, but I'm kind of nervous. Jim told me New York is really different. SANTA Don't listen to Jim. He's never been anywhere. He doesn't even have any feet. I've been to New York thousands of times. BUDDY Wow. What's it like? SANTA Well there's some things you should know: first off, if you see gum on the street, leave it there. It's not free candy. Second, there are like thirty Ray's Pizzas and they all say they're the original, but the real one's on eleventh. And if you see a sign for a Peep show, it doesn't mean they're letting you look at presents before Christmas. BUDDY So much to remember... SANTA Don't worry, something tells me this trip is going to be good for you. (patting him on the back) It's time for my Buddy here to spread his wings. BUDDY I can't wait! Me and Dad are gonna go ice-skating and eat sugarplums! SANTA

That's the other thing I wanted to talk to you about. You see, Buddy, your father... Well he's on the naughty list.



(crying and skipping)

Bye guys. I'll miss you. I really will.

EXT. NORTH POLE - NIGHT

Animals wave as Buddy heads off into the unknown.

ANIMALS

Bye, Buddy.

BUDDY

Bye lovable woodland animals!

EXT. NORTH POLE - NIGHT

Buddy sits on an ice flow. He drifts along the cold sea through a haze, transitioning from the MAGIC LAND of the north pole to the REAL WORLD.

EXT. SNOW FIELD - DAY

Buddy trudges through a massive snow field. Each step he takes goes down five feet deep, we DISSOLVE to a series of scenes showing this epic struggle. He wears a beard of ice.

Exhausted, Buddy considers leaving himself for dead, but uses his last ounce of strength to pull out the old PHOTO of his father, WALTER HOBBS.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREENWAY PRESS - EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - MEANWHILE

A large children's storybook publishing company. LARGE-SIZED book covers line the wall. "Max the Big Blue Cat", "The Adventures of Rabbit Gang & Pop", etc. This place runs like a well-oiled machine.

A huge corner office says WALTER HOBBS, EDITOR.

INT. WALTER HOBBS' OFFICE - DAY

Walter is the guy from Buddy's picture, only he looks a little older and a little meaner.

A NUN stands in front of Walter's large desk.

NUN

You're taking the books back?

WALTER

Hey, you're the one who's behind on the payments, don't try to make me out to be the bad guy here.

NUN

We're trying to get yo the money, but it's been difficult to raise the funding...the children are sponsoring another bake sale next month. That should help.

WALTER

See, there's your problem. You can't expect a bake sale to make solid cash these days. Places like Dunkin' Donuts and Cinnibon are expanding their product base with alternative breakfast and desert items. Even Starbucks carries baked goods. You guys really need to start thinking out of the box.

(out window; to NYC)

It's called capitalism, Miss Peters. If you can't stand the heat, move to Canada.

NUN

(begging)

The kids really love the books.

WALTER

You don't need to tell me that, I made them. I'm the one who ran the focus groups.

DEB, the secretary, pokes her head in.

DEB

Mr. Hobbs, your two o'clock is here.

WALTER

Would you please use the intercom? We talked about this.

DEB

Do you want me to use it now? I mean, I already told you.



BUDDY Sounds like someone needs a hug! He lunges forward. Like lightning, the raccoon BITES Buddy in the face. BUDDY NUT CRACKERS!!! EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY Buddy walks along the Highway, looks up, then stops in his tracks. REVEAL: A sign that says NEW YORK CITY/LINCOLN TUNNEL. His eyes light up. EXT. MANHATTAN - MORNING We see Buddy timidly inch his way through the Lincoln Tunnel along the walkway, pressed up against the wall while traffic roars by. Like a stray cat, Buddy dodges through traffic. His feelings of wonder are starting to be replaced with fear. He exits to the sight of the towering skyline of New York City with the sun breaking over it. He sees the Empire State Building, then looks at his snow globe. BUDDY Who?... EXT. MID-TOWN MANHATTAN - LATER Buddy is caught up in the rhythms of the street and begins noticing the mundane details of this new world with amazement: traffic lights. Steam. Scaffolding. WIDE SHOT EXT. TIMES SQUARE - CONTINUOUS Buddy attempts to greet a sea of people, but New Yorkers ignore the guy in the Elf suit. BUDDY Hi.

(no response; next person)

Happy afternoon!

(no response; next person)

Salutations!

- A woman tries to hail A cab. Buddy waves back.
- -- Buddy looks up at awe at the animated billboard on the Lehman Building. A guy bumps into him.

WALKER

Why don't you watch your ass, buddy!

Buddy nods, then sticks his butt out and looks at it.

- -- Buddy runs round and round A revolving door and loving every moment.
- -- A sign at a crappy diner "World's Best Cup of Coffee!" Buddy is excited and enters. The jaded BANGLADESHI STAFF stares at him blankly.

BUDDY

Wow! The world's best cup of coffee! You did it! Congretulations! To all of you!

- -- Gum on the ground. Yum! Buddy picks it up, plays with it, then pops it in his mouth and chews with A smile. Now his face suddenly changes.
- -- Two guys are handing out different flyers. Buddy is given one. HE looks at it, then, in Marx Brothers-like fashion, hands it to flyer guy #2. Flyer guy #2 takes it, then gives Buddy one of his own flyers. This delights Buddy, who now repeats the ri
- -- A dog walker picks up some dog crap with newspaper. Buddy sees some other crap on the sidewalk, grabs some newspaper and picks it up. Buddy walks right behind the man and offers it to him to be helpful.

REVEAL: Empire State Building!

Buddy holds up his Empire State Building SNOW GLOBE and compares the skyscraper to his toy one.

BUDDY

Dad...

INT. WALTER HOBBS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ECU: The PUPPY AND THE PIGEON book is in Walter's hands. A PRINTER faces him.

WALTER A re-print? Do you know how much that's gonna cost? PRINTER Two whole pages are missing. The story makes no sense. WALTER You think a kid is going to notice two pages? All they do is look at the pictures. INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS Buddy gets in the elevator with a bunch of Republican-looking PEOPLE. He's whistling really loud and happy, confusing them. Another passenger gets on. ACCOUNTANT Can you press 67 please? Unsure of what may happen, he pushes 67. The number LIGHTS UP. BUDDY Hey, that's pretty. Like lightning, he presses ALL 75 BUTTONS. BUDDY Look at that! QUICK CUTS The elevator doors open and close, floor by floor. No one is smiling, except for Buddy. INT. WALTER HOBBS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS Walter and the printer continue.

WALTER
How the hell did this happen, anyway?
PRINTER
Well, you signed off on all the final plates and
WALTER
You know what? I don't need to know. Let's just get this solved.
IN'I. DEB'S DESK - CONTINUOUS
Deb stares dead pan at the Elf in front of her desk.
BUDDY
Buddy the Elf, here for a Mr. Walter Hobbs, please.
DEB
You look hilarious. Who sent you?
BUDDY
Papa Elf, from the North Pole.
DEB
Papa Elf? That's rich.
INT. WALTER HOBBS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
Walter and the printer continue.
PRINTER
You really think we should ship them?
WALTER
(sarcastic)







You guys are strong! SECURITY GUARD #1 Yezh, get lost. BUDDY I already am lost! They throw Buddy's JINGLED hat at him and walk back inside. BUDDY Bye, Glenn. Bye Chris! Buddy picks up his hat, dusts it off, then looks across the street and sees New York's version of ELF MECCA REVEAL EXT. GIMBELS DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUOUS It's huge. Full of lights and music, Christmas at its grandest. BUDDY (face aglow) Wow! Buddy starts skipping across the street toward Gimbels when --BAM! Buddy's hit by a CAB! He flies off-screen. This is totally shocking. Traffic stops. And now Buddy comes skipping back into frame. BUDDY I'm okay! Thank you! EXT. GIMBELS - CONTINUOUS The halls are decked. This is epic. Buddy walks through happy in his Elf suit. A PERFOME CLERK approaches. PERFUME CLERK



BUDDY
Have you seen this toilet!? It's GI-NORMOUS!!!
(to another guy)
Look at this toilet!
STORE
Buddy grabs 3,000 candy canes and starts eating them with great intensity.
ELEVATOR
Buddy faces the wrong way in the elevator, face to face with a man.
ANGRY MAN
(about to punch him)
You think you're pretty smart, huh?
BUDDY
I'm not that smart, but thanks.
LINGERIE SECTION
Buddy sees a display of sexy nighties with a sign over it: For that special someone!
BUDDY
For that special someone? Hummm
A HARD-ASS ELF MANAGER walks over.
ELF MANAGER
Man, what in the hell are you doing fartin' around on the first floor?
BUDDY
Looking at shiny things.
ELF MANAGER

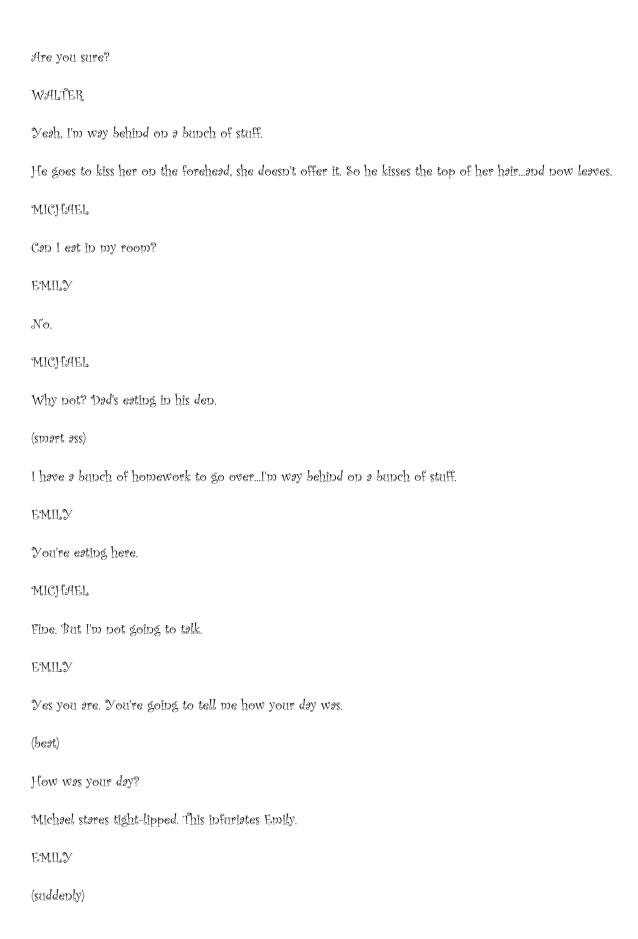
Shiny things?? Get your butt back up to the ninth floor before I put my foot up your green ass.
BUDDY
Okay.
IN 1. GIMBELS - 91H FLOOR SAN 1A LAND - LAIER
We PAN a LAME SANTA LAND. It's not very impressive. Buddy is doing a thorough inspection.
BUDDY
This snow looks fake.
ELF MANAGER
It's white, ain't it?
BUDDY
Snow doesn't just pile up unless it's moved through the use of a tool, such as a shovel. I would give this some natural erosion, a slight wind drift look.
ELF MANAGER
What the hell are you talkin' about? EROSION?! Don't touch the damp snow. What are you smiling at? You think I'm a joke?
BUDDY
Oh, no, I'm just smiling. Smiling is my favorite.
ELF MANAGER
Well take it down a notch.
Buddy tries to frown for a second, but his lips quiver and hurt and now he's smiling again, making the exact same face.
ELF MANAGER
Alright, smiley, sweep the tin foil off this path. Santa's going to be here tomorrow.
\$UDDY



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BUDDY
I'm not messing with you. It's nice to meet a human who shares my affinity for the Elf culture.
JOVIE
I wouldn't call it an affinity. I'm just trying to get through the holidays.
BUDDY
Get through? Christmas is the greatest day in the whole wide world!
JOVIE.
Well someone's been drinking the Kool Aid.
(Buddy doesn't get it)
Believe me, after a few years of this, you'll learn to tune it all out.
BUDDY
Uh-oh. It sounds like someone needs to sing a Christmas Carol!
JOVIE
(confused)
Are you serious?
BUDDY
The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear.
JOVIE
Well, thanks, but I don't sing.
BUDDY
Oh, it's easy! It's just like talking, only louder and longer and you move it up and down.
JOVIE
Well, I can sing. I just don't sing. Especially in front of other people. I could never do that.
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BUDDY
Never? If you can sing by yourself, you can sing anytime, there's no difference.
JOVIE
Actually, there's a big difference.
BUDDY
No there isn't. Watch.
(suddenly singing loudly)
I'M IN A STORE AND I'M SINGING! PEOPLE ARE HERE AND I'M IN A STORE!!
Everyone looks at him like he's...well, Elf. Jovie seems a little uncomfortable.
BUDDY
THE STORE IS ALL SHINY AND I'M IN A STORE!!
(then back to normal)
See?
JOVIE
(bewildered)
Wow.
MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(over loudspeaker)
Attention, Gimbels will be closing in ten minutes. Please make your final purchases.
All the elves look relieved. Their day is over.
J
OVIE
Dismissed.
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BUDDY
You're leaving? But Santa's coming.
JOVIE
(she laughs at his joke')
Yeah, I'll see you toporrow, up, what's your name?
BUDDY
Buddy.
JOVIE
Jovie. See ya.
With that, Jovie walks off. Buddy looks around as the half-baked Santa Land empties out.
QUICK SERIES OF CUTS
The doors being locked, employees exiting, lights flickering off.
A SECURITY GUARD WALKS DOWN AN AISLE
Behind him, Buddy does a commando roll through the aisle. Then pops up next to some toys.
Buddy starts pulling all sorts of things off the shelves: paint, robots, a fire truck...he looks at a logo.
BUDDY
They have Elves in Taiwan?
INT. HOBBS' APARTMENT - NIGHT
EMILY has prepared a beautiful dinner. She is an attractive, upper East-side woman.
Walter fills a plate. Their son, MICHAEL, 10, eats without enthusiasm, detached.
WALTER
I'm gonne go eet in my den, okey? I've got a bunch of stuff to go over.
EMILY
```



HOW WAS YOUR DAY?!
MICHAEL.
It was fine! Okay? Good.
INT. WALTER'S DEN - LATER
Walter is looking at an OLD YEAR BOOK. He studies a picture of a young, beautiful 'Susan Welles.'
EMILY
What're you looking at?
Walter hides the book.
WALTER
Nothing. It's for work.
EMIL?
You know, it'd be nice if we ate together as a family once in a while.
WALTER
I'm sorry. I've gotta work. How do you think I feel? You think I like to work?
EMILY
Actually, I do.
(best)
I'm really worried about Michael. He's getting detached and cynical. They're not supposed to do that until they're teenagers.
WALTER
Well he is thirteen years old.
EMILY
He's ten.

(exasperated)

I don't know what's going on with you, but I've just about had it.

WALTER

Had it with what?

That was the wrong answer.

WALTER

Emily. Wait. I'm sorry. I've been under a lot of stress at work.

EMILY

If you say the word WORK one more time, you're sleeping at the Marriot.

WALTER

(a tiny ounce of charm)

The chicken thing was delicious.

EMILY

It wasn't a chicken thing. It was salmon, zucchini, string beans, carrots, cherry tomatoes, asparagus, mushrooms and olives.

WALTER

Well it was good.

INT. GIMBELS - SANTA LAND - 7 AM

Buddy is finishing his decorating. We pull out wide: No Santa Land has ever looked more beautiful. The most expensive merchandise has been used as bricks and mortar. A huge glitter sign says "WELCOME SANTA! LOVE, BUDDY!!!"

Now, off in the distance, WE HEAR THE EAINT SOUND OF AN ANGEL SINGING.

Buddy perks up, training his ear, he slowly rises to his feet, as if following a butterfly, he meanders through the deserted aisles, more and more hypnotized as the angelic singing gets louder and louder and clearer and more beautiful.

Buddy pushes through the bethroom door, totally consumed by the greatest voice in the world.

REVEAL

Jovie is in the shower stall. Singing half of the classic duet, "BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE". Buddy stands, hypnotized, outside the shower curtain, quietly joins in and sings the accompanying duet to himself. Eventually he can't help himself and belts out the chorus.

Jovie is silent and quickly twists off the shower and opens the curtain, wearing only a towel.

JOVIE

АННННННН!!!

BUDDY

*А*ННННННН!!!

Jovie KICKS BUDDY in the NUTS and escapes. Buddy holds his crotch, confused and frightened.

EXT. GIMBELS - MORNING

A busy Manhattan morning. People are going back to work.

PAN TO

Behind the glass, an idyllic Christmas scene. Buddy is curled up in the faux snow, asleep -- mouth open and drooling, sweaty from the sun.

A MAN SQUINTS

At him through the window amazed at how life-like Buddy is. Buddy itches his crotch, then awakens to the staring man.

BUDDY

Ah! Holy fudge!

Buddy yawns and stretches ridiculously.

BUDDY

Good morning, everyone!

(looking off)

POV
Walter is walking along the sidewalk with his brief case.
BUDDY
Dad!!!
Walter thinks he hears something, but continues. Buddy pounds hard on the window, trapped like a tiger. His voice echoes. Muffled like Dustin Hoffman in THE GRADUATE.
BUDDY
(muted)
PARARARARARARARARARARARARARARARARARARAR
Walter glances over, then stops in his tracks. It's Buddy. He runs.
INI. LOBBY - LATER
Buddy skips past the security guards with a box. Caught off guard, they have to lunge to grab him.
SECURITY GUARD #1
Hey!
BUDDY
(yelling back; fun)
Hey!!
(beat)
Hi, Glenn. Hi Chris! I just want to give my dad this present. I think he's mad at mebut he won't be after IHIS.
SECURITY GUARD #1
You better leave that with us.
SECURITY GUARD #2
Yezh, he's real busy.

BUDDY

Oh, okay. Well, please tell him it's from me, and that I love him so much and that he's the greatest Dad in the world and that I love him. Okay?

SECURITY GUARD #1

Okay.

INT. GIMBELS - SANTA LAND - DAY

Buddy re-enters his new, transformed Santa Land. His face glows with satisfaction.

REVEAL

It's a smash hit. The visitors are ecstatic. Look at that! 'Can you believe it?' etc. Everyone loves it. Except the Elf Manager, who complains to a co-worker.

ELF MANAGER

Who the hell took a dump in housewares?

Jovie walks up to Buddy.

JOVIE

Hey. I want to talk to you.

Buddy is now terrified by her.

3000Y

Oh, uh, um, okay, uh...

(she lets him squirm)

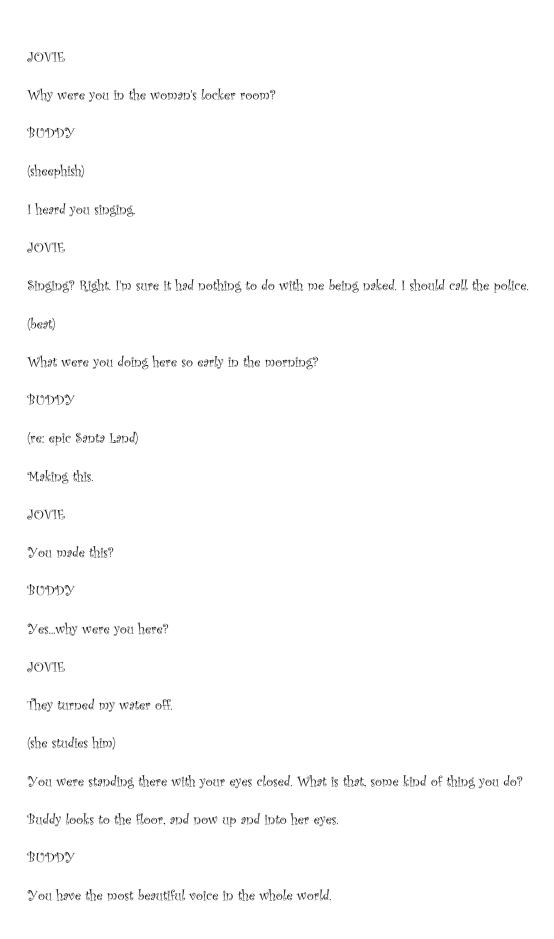
What do you want to talk about?

JOVIE

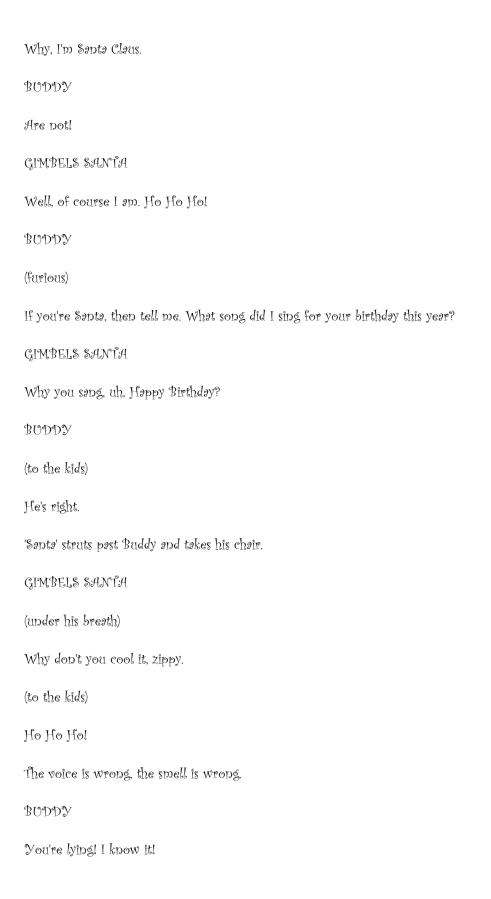
What the hell do you think?

BUDDY

I know a pig who can run eleven miles an hour.







Buddy attacks. He grabs Santa's bear and it comes right off. Buddy looks at the beard in shock, like a horror movie.
BUDDY
(at the beard, horrified)
AAHHHHH!!! Imposter! He's an imposter!!! His beard is take! Come on, kids, get him!
The kids all pile on, wrestling Santa, loving it. Now the manager dives in and tries to help. Some parents and other elves try to contain the disaster in panic.
Jovie giggles. She is confused but intrigued by this mysterious stranger.
INI. WALTER'S OFFICE - GREENWAY PRESS - DAY
Walter sits behind his desk staring at the note that accompanied the package from Buddy. The package sits on the desk, still wrapped in a Gimbels box. The note says "Dad, this is for you because you are my special someone."
Walter unwraps the gift, then holds up a RED SLINKY NIGHTIE with fur where the nipples would be.
Deb enters and he scrambles to hide the nightie.
DEB
Hey the what's that?
WALTER
What's what?
(best)
Intercom!
DEB
Right.
She leaves. Walter looks deeper into the box and sees a card. It's the old photo of a young Walter next to his smiling girlfriend - on the other side is a crayon drawing of Buddy.
DEB (O.S.)
(from intercom)

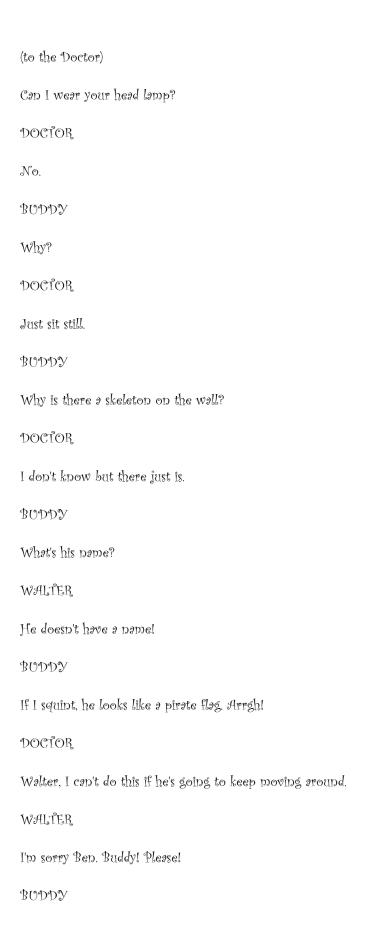


Another convict shares the cell with him. He stares at Buddy with disgust. But now, slowly, it's contagious. The CONVICT CANT HELP IT AND HE STARTS TO CRY TOO. Buddy hears the cell door clang open. REVEAL Walter stands at the open jail cell door. BUDDY Dad!!! Buddy wipes his tears and rubs his face. Trying to look like a good son. The convict wipes his tears away too, sitting up straight. But now starts crying again. EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY Walter marches out of the front doors, Buddy following closely behind, almost like a puppy dog trying to keep UP. Walter is about to burst but holds back, until they're clear of the station. BUDDY I'm so happy! I knew you'd come! I love that you came and I love you Dad! Know how much I love you? (spreading his arms wide) This much. Except my arms would have to be way longer, like pterodactyl wings --WALTER Alright, pal. Who the heck are you and what's your problem? BUDDY I'm Buddy. Your son. WALTER I already have a son!

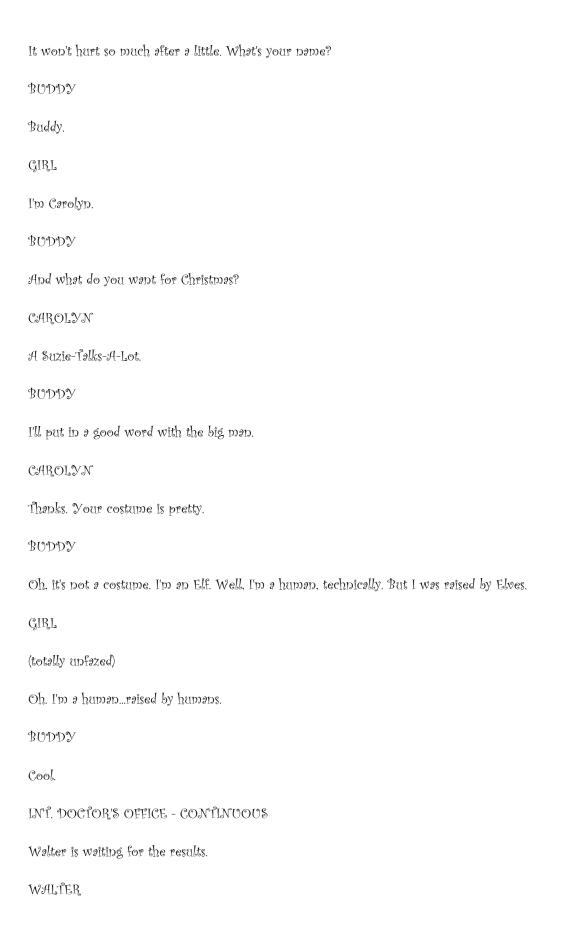
BUDDY
Then who am I?
WALTER.
Where did you get this picture?!
He holds up the picture he included in the gift.
BUDDY
Papa Elf gave it to me.
Walter shakes Buddy violently by the lapels. Buddy's scared.
WALTER
Is this some kind of game? What do you want, money?!
BUDDY
I just wanted to meet youand I thought that, maybe, you might want to meet me
Walter senses an element of truth in here somewhere.
WALTER
(serious)
You really believe this, don't you?
BUDDY
I thought we could make ginger bread houses and eat cookie dough and go ice skating and hold hands. I'm sorry if I made you mad.
WALTER.
(conflicted)
Come with me.

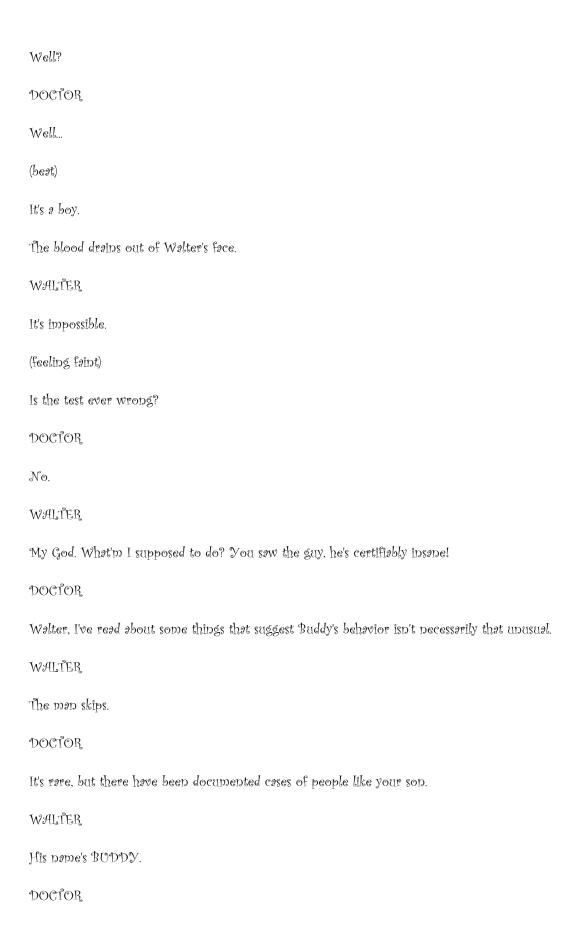
Their silhouettes walk together away from camera. Buddy REACHES OUT TO HOLD HANDS, but Walter's hands stay in his trench coat... Buddy is still holding his hand out. Walter suddenly SMACKS BUDDY'S HAND DOWN. INT. PEDIATRICIAN'S OFFICE - AN HOUR LATER Buddy sits on the examining table as Walter watches. PROP NOTE: Del Close's skull sits on a shelf in the B.G. Buddy reaches into a jar of cotton balls and starts eating them quickly one at a time. Like cotton candy nuggets. WALTER Don't est those. Buddy goes to eat one more, Walter tries to grab his arm but Buddy fakes him out and eats it anyway. BUDDY Am I sick? WALTER YES. (best) But that's not why we're here. We're here to test whether you're my son or not. BUDDY Why am I sitting on paper? Buddy pulls the roll and paper spills out everywhere. The doctor and Walter try to stop him, but get tangled up. DOCTOR So it's clean for each patient that comes in. Try to sit still. I'm going to perform something called a finger prick. BUDDY (pabba)

Finger prick!

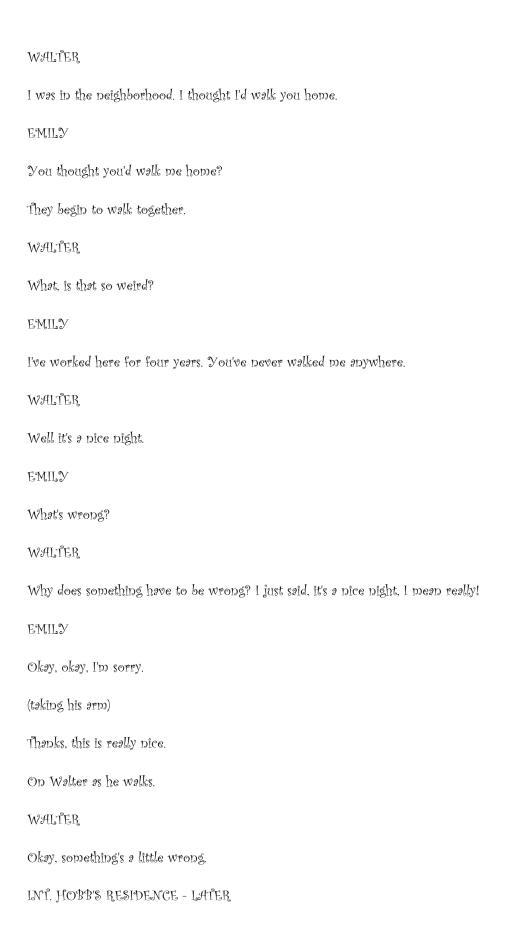


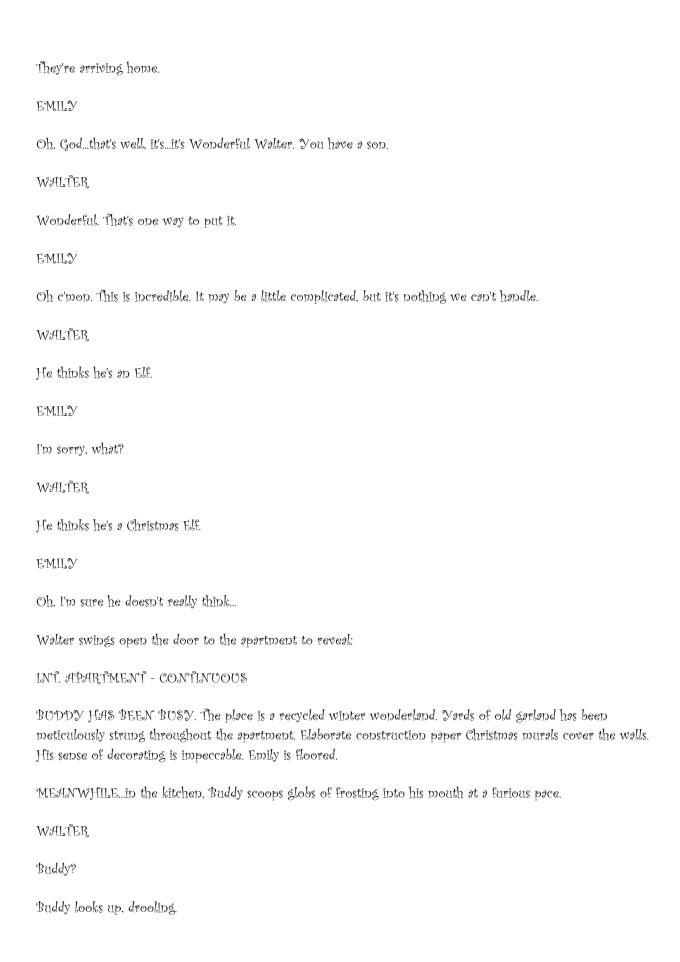








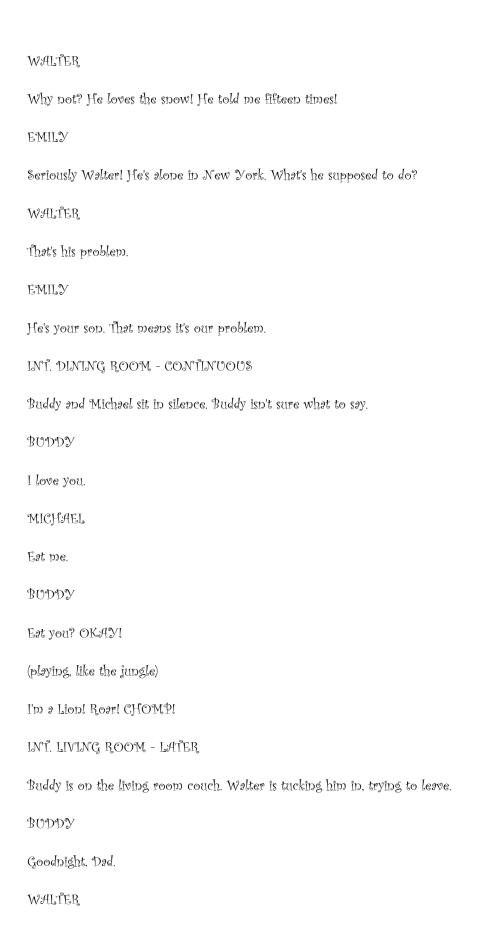


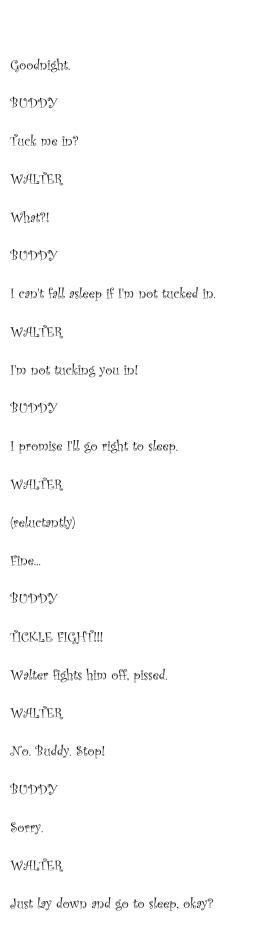


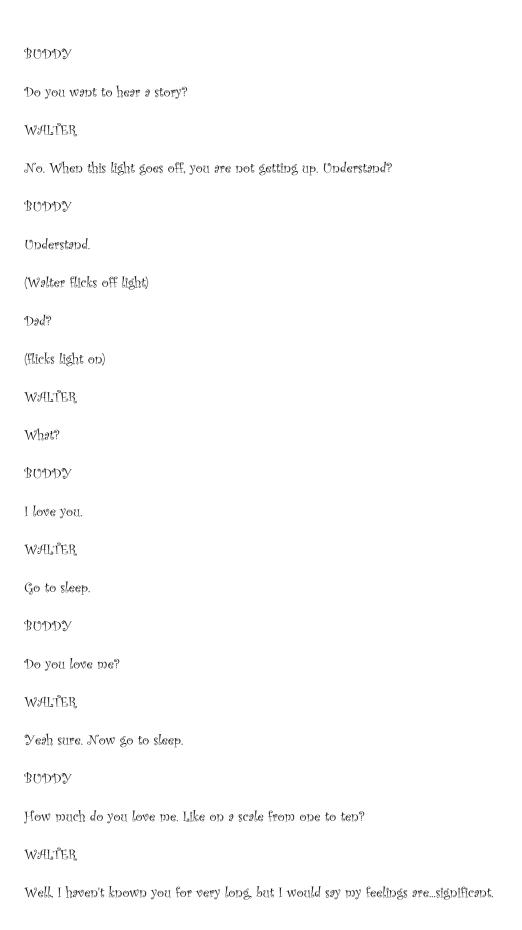
WALTER
This is Emily.
EMILY
(muffled, mouth full)
Emuree!
Swallows frosting hard. He jumps up and gives her a big hug.
BUDDY
Walter hasn't told me anything about you!!!
Meanwhile, Michael, their son, has arrived.
MICHAEL
Why is mon hugging Robin Hood?
IN1. DINING ROOM - AN HOUR LATER
Walter, Emily, Michael and Buddy are seated around the dining room table eating spaghetti.
BUDDY
then I traveled through the seven levels of the candy cane forest, past the castle of the abominable snowman and past the sea of swirly, twirly gumdrops. And then I walked through the Lincoln tunnel. Can you pass the Coke pretty please?
Michael hands over a two-liter. Instead of pouring it in his glass, Buddy chugs the entire thing. The family watches, amazed.
EMILY
So, where exactly have you been for the last thirty years?
WALTER
The North Pole. He's an "Elf". That's where elves live.
BUDDY



Oh, don't be silly. Of course you can. How long do you think you'll be with us?
BUDDY
Well, I hadn't really planned it out, but I was thinking, like, forever?
WALTER
EMILY!?
EMILY
WHAT?!
WALTER
May I speak with you in the kitchen for a moment?
EMILY
Om, sure. Excuse me, Buddy.
Left alone, Buddy stares at Michael. Michael ignores him. Turning his whole chair away. Buddy looks around for a moment. And now suddenly BURPS so loud and long, it's insane.
BUDDY
Wow, did you hear that?
Yes, Michael did
INI. KIICHEN - CONTINUOUS
Walter argues with Emily in hushed tones.
WALTER
Are you crazy? He can't stay here.
EMILY
Clearly he has some serious issues. We can't just kick him out in the snow.

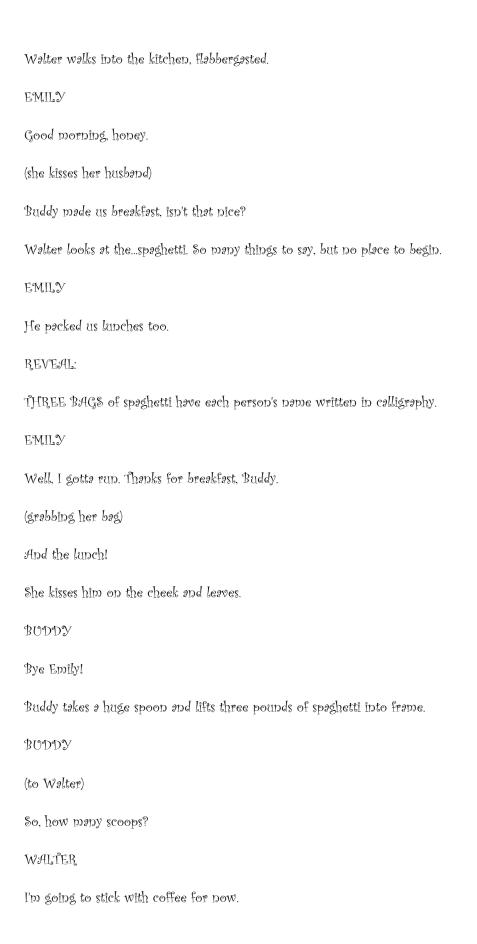


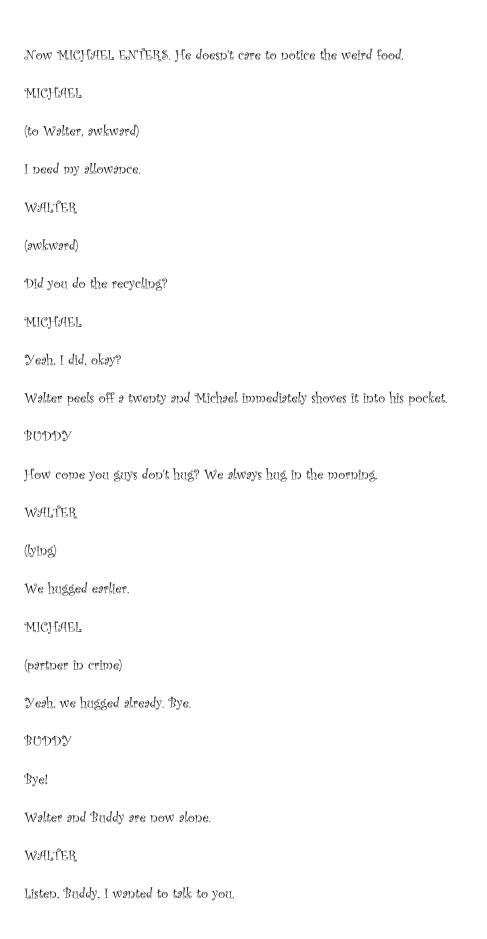






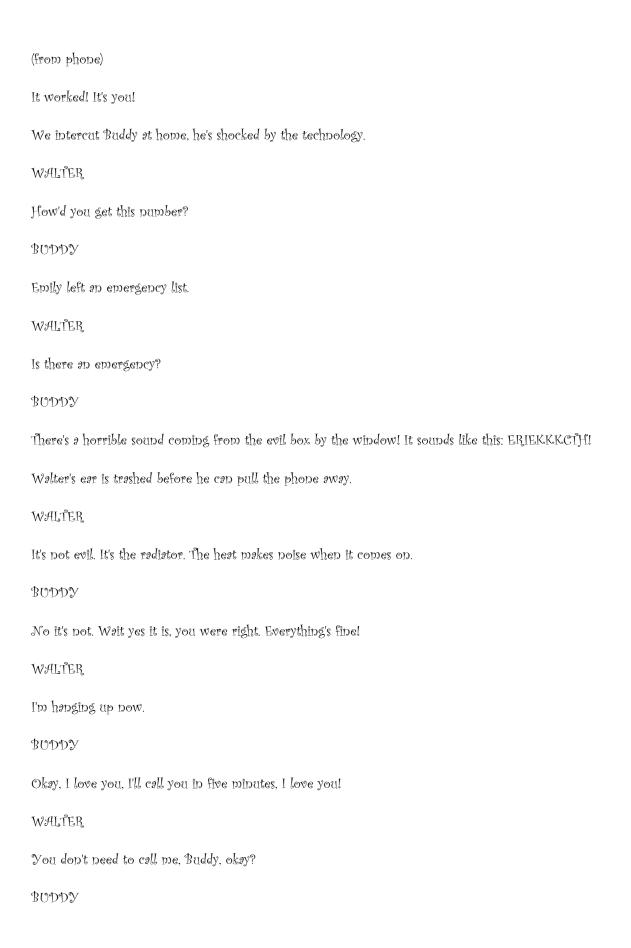
BUDDY
Dad?
INI. HOBBS' KIICHEN - MORNING
Buddy has prepared a huge batch of spaghetti. The table is set up like a deranged thanksgiving feast. Buddy, the host, hurries around the kitchen as Emily eats.
EMILY
This sure is something, I'm usually the one making breakfast.
BUDDY
Want some more spaghetti?
EMILY
Um, sure, why not.
Buddy dumps more spagnetti on her plate. Then sprinkles it with candy snow caps.
EMILY
So how'd you sleep last night?
BUDDY
Great. I got a full forty minutes and still had time to build a rocking horse.
We see a painted and trimmed rocking horse in the corner.
EMILY
My gosh, you built that? Where did you get the wood?
WALTER (O.S.)
Why is the TV on the ground?
REVEAL:
The ENTERTAINMENT CENTER has been completely dismantled to provide wood for the rocking horse. Sawdust and paint litter the living room.

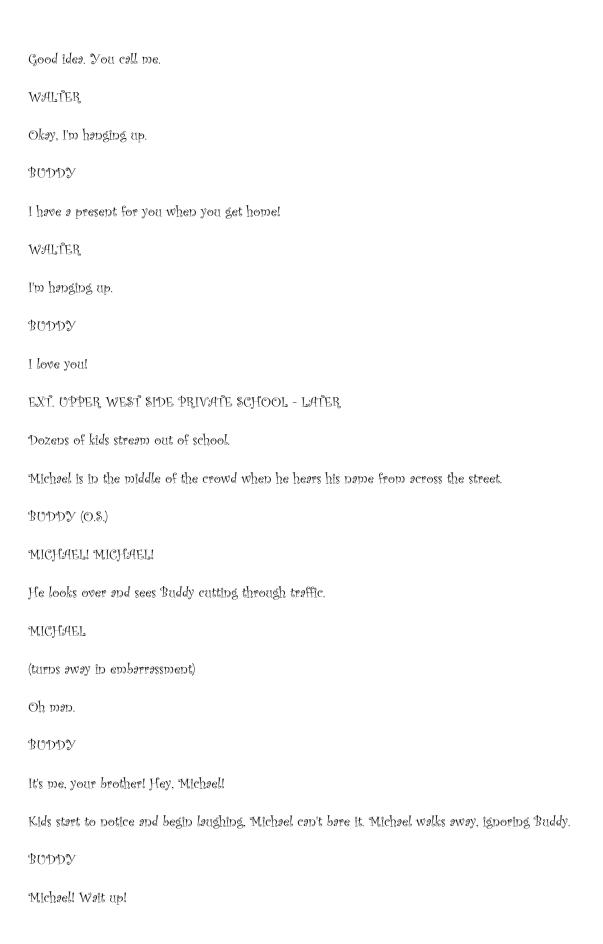




BUDDY
Good, I wanted to talk to you too. I've planned our whole day
He's made a list on the Etch-a-sketch.
BUDDY
First we make snow angels for two hours, then we go ice-skating and then we eat a log of toll house cookie dough as fast as we can and then, to wrap up the day, we snuggle.
WALTER
Buddy, I have to go to work.
(best)
And another thing, if you're going to be staying here, you should think about getting rid of the costume. We've got neighbors and people around here, you know?
BUDDY
(looking at himself)
I've worn this my whole life.
WALTER
Yesh, well, you're not in the North Pole snymore.
Buddy is unsure.
WALTER
You said you wanted to make me happy, didn't you?
BUDDY
More than anything.
WALTER
Then lose the tightsas soon as possible.
BUDDY







EXT. CENTRAL PARK - LATER Michael is walking through the park, Buddy trails twelve feet behind, sort of hiding behind trees. But not really. Michael finally turns and confronts him. MICHAEL LEAVE! BUDDY How about I leave, then you count to ten and come find me? MICHAEL This isn't a game, spaz. Leave NOW. For REAL. BUDDY You really want me to leave MICHAEL Ves. BUDDY (sad) Oh. Okay. I'll uh, leave, then. I'm sorry. Just then, a SNOWBALL WHACKS MICHAEL IN THE SHOULDER. EDGE OF THE RAVINE A big bunch of JACKASS WANNA-BE teenagers look down at them and laugh. MICHAEL Oh, no. These guy are bad news. We better get out of here. Thump! Michael gets hit in the head.

BUDDY

OW! PEANUT BRITTLE! SON OF A NUTCRACKER!

BUDDY

Now a barrage of snowballs rain down upon them and they dive behind a fallen tree trunk as snow missiles rip into the barricade.
BUDDY
Divel
MICHAEL
(genuinely worried)
There are too many of them!
BUDDY
We can do this! Make as many snowballs as you can!
Michael quickly sculpts two snowballs.
WE PAN BACK
To see Buddy has already rounded out a pile of THIRTY.
BUDDY
Ready?
MICHAEL
Yeah.
WIDE SHOT
We can't see Buddy, but we can see the snowballs shooting out of his bunker like a machine gun. A Nolan Ryan fastball ever 1.5 Seconds.
A series of targets explode with precision as this blur of snowballs hits guts, butts, nuts and faces. A kid raises a snowball and it immediately explodes out of his hand. This is the one thing Buddy's actually better at than hockey.
Michael stands to launch one. Exposing himself.

Noooo!

Michael is frozen with shock as a HOGE KID winds up and releases a snowball right at him. Buddy fires a snowball that hits the incoming snowball exploding both of them in mid-air like a patriot missile. They both sit panting.

BUDDY

He's bunkered in! I'm going to flank around from the East. If I don't make it, tell my Dad I love him.

Buddy jumps and charges - and now Michael follows. Buddy descends upon the guy, launching a flurry of snow. The guy finally raises his arms and steps up slowly in surrender.

Buddy looks at the GUY WITH HIS ARMS UP, then winds up and explodes a snowball off his chest at close range.

SNOWBALL GUY

Ow!

(holding his chest)

Hey, I surrendered!

BUDDY

(to Michael)

What does surrendered mean?

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - LATER

Walter does some paperwork, then hits the intercom.

WALTER

Can you bring me in a bottle of water please?

DEB (O.S.)

(from the intercom)

Fulton Greenway is on his way in.

Eulton Greenway? Walter immediately loses blood in his face.



FULTON GREENWAY

Well, to be honest, I got a call from my niece.

WALTER

Your piece. I don't think I've met her.

FULTON GREENWAY

She's six.

Fulton tosses THE PUPPY AND THE PIGEON (the flawed book from earlier) onto Walter's desk. Uh oh.

FULTON GREENWAY

She wants to know how a certain puppy and a certain pigeon escaped the clutches of a certain evil witch.

WALTER

Believe me, we've already started looking at new printers. This one's obviously gotten sloppy.

Greenway holds up the proofs, signed by Walter.

FULTON GREENWAY

Maybe it isn't the printer who's gotten sloppy.

WALTER

(forcing a laugh)

What a disaster, huh? Twenty-five years in publishing, never seen anything like it. Well, I guess you can't bat a thousand, right?

Eulton Greenway nods skeptically. Walter adjusts in his seat.

FULTON GREENWAY

I got news for you, even if those two pages were in there, that book still would have sucked. I read it. I'll tell you, I wish all the pages were missing.

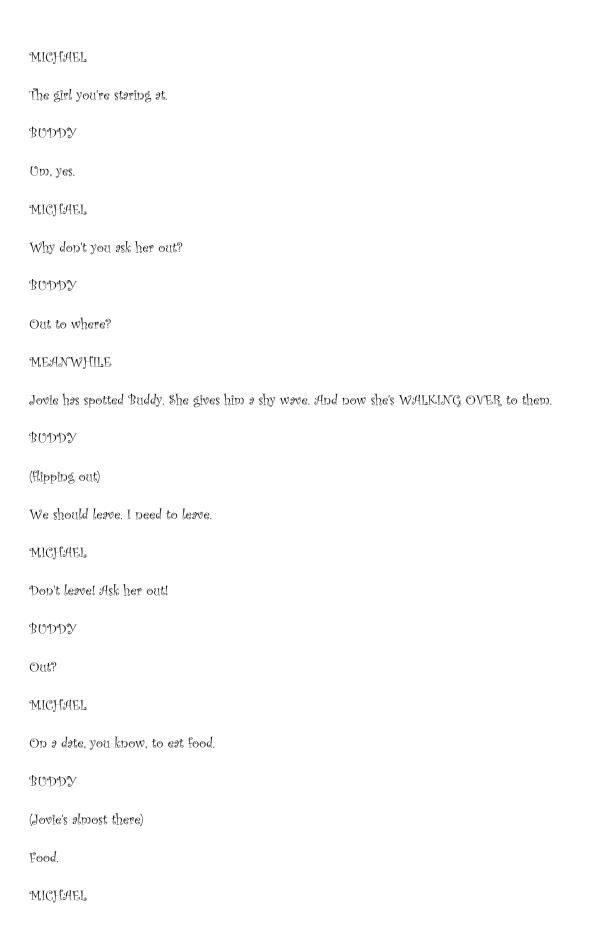
(Walter's dying)

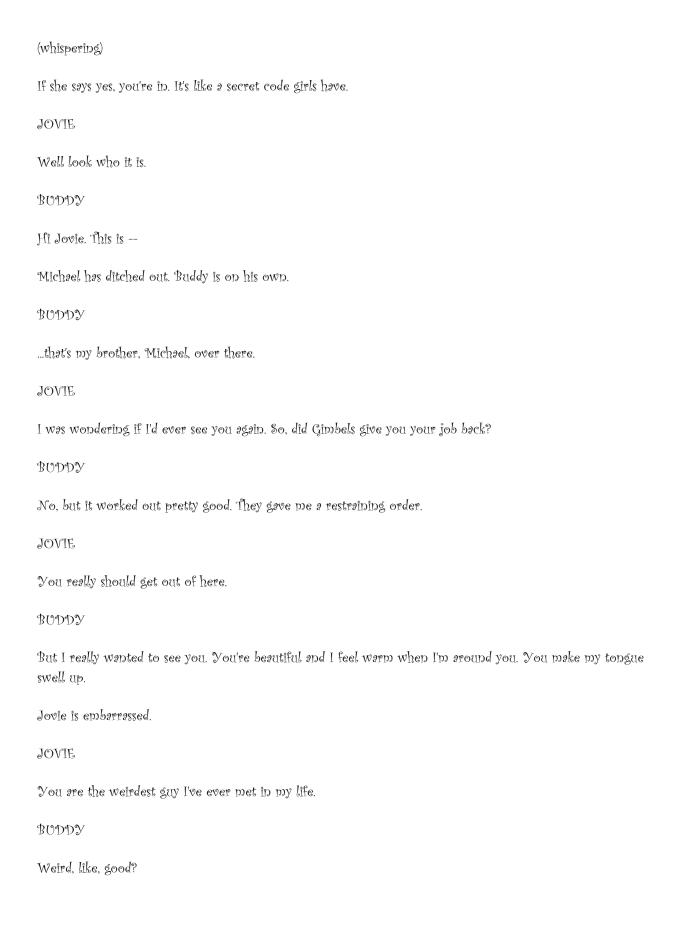
Have you seen the numbers from this quarter?

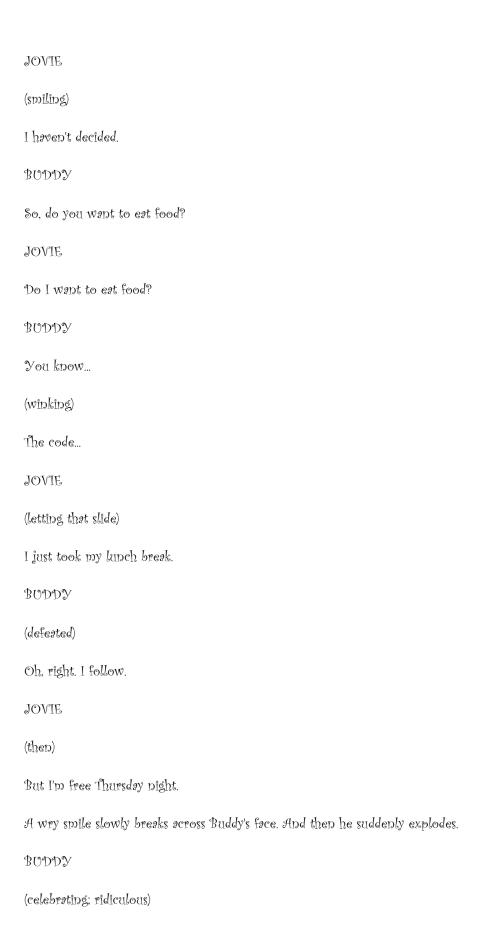
WALTER
They should be coming in today.
FULION GREENWAY
(holds up the numbers)
They're in!
WALTER
That good, huh?
FULION GREENWAY
The Pigeon and the Friggin' Puppy is tanking hard, Hobbs. My people estimate we'll be posting a minus eight for this quarter. A minus eight cannot happen.
WALTER
Well, we'll bounce back. We always do.
FULTON GREENWAY
We're not going to 'bounce back.' We're going to get a new book before the end of the quarter.
WALTER
Before the end of this quarter?
FULION GREENWAY
I'll be back in town on the twenty fourth. At that time, I'd love to hear, in great detail, exactly what your plans are for this new book.
WALTER
But that's Christmas Eve.
FULION GREENWAY
And?
WALTER

Hey, no problem. It'll be fun to have you in the loop. INT. GIMBELS - LATER THAT DAY Buddy and Michael are goofing around inside Gimbels. Buddy pegs him with a dodge ball. Michael laughs and pegs him back. MICHAEL (looking at toy bugs) Hey, look at this, it's a big mosquito! BUDDY What's a mosquito? MICHAEL They land on your arm, then stick their needle face down through your skin, suck your blood out and then fly away. BUDDY That's a scary toy. MICHAEL It's not just a toy. They're real. They're everywhere in the summer. BUDDY (horrified) OH MY GOD. EXT. GIMBELS - CONTINUOUS They leave the toy section and walk toward the SANTA LAND that Buddy built. We see the sign has been awkwardly changed to 'Welcome, Santa. Love GIMBELS.' BUDDY I wish Dad were here.









YYEEESSSSSSSSS!

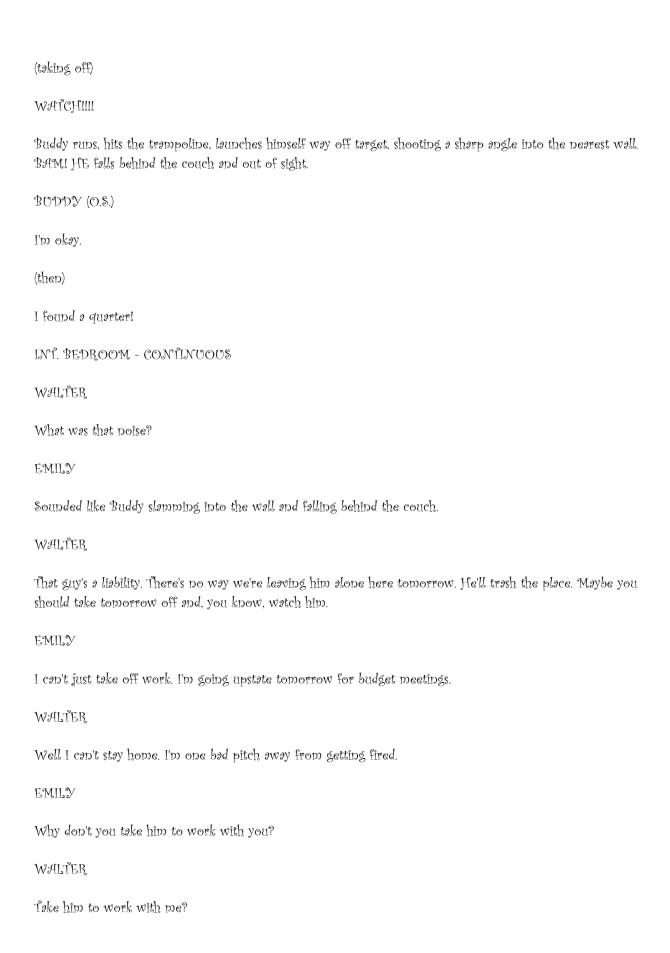
(beat)

INT. HOBBS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

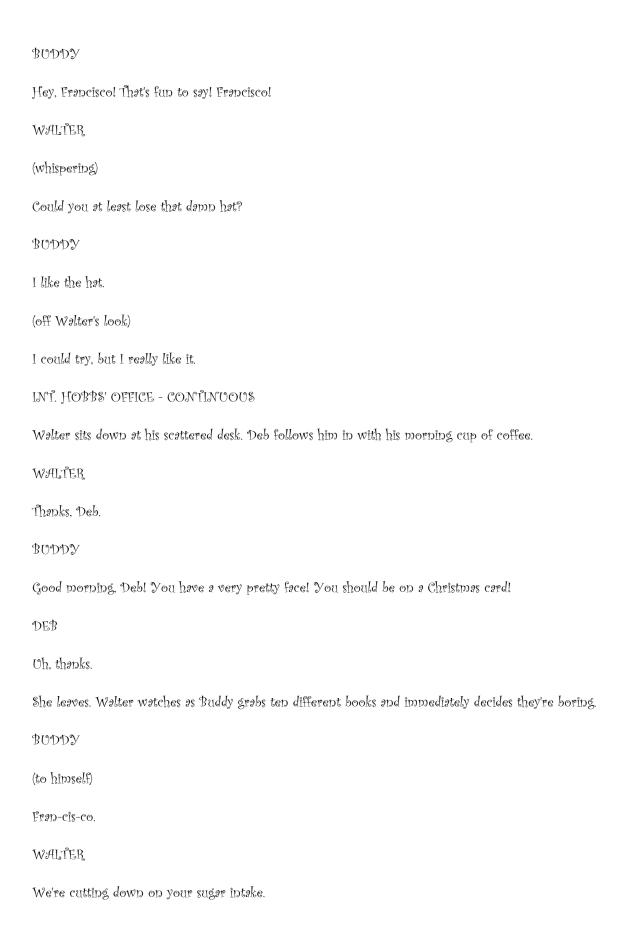
Walter enters and sees Buddy and Michael as they hoist an enormous FOURTEEN FOOT TALL CHRISTMAS

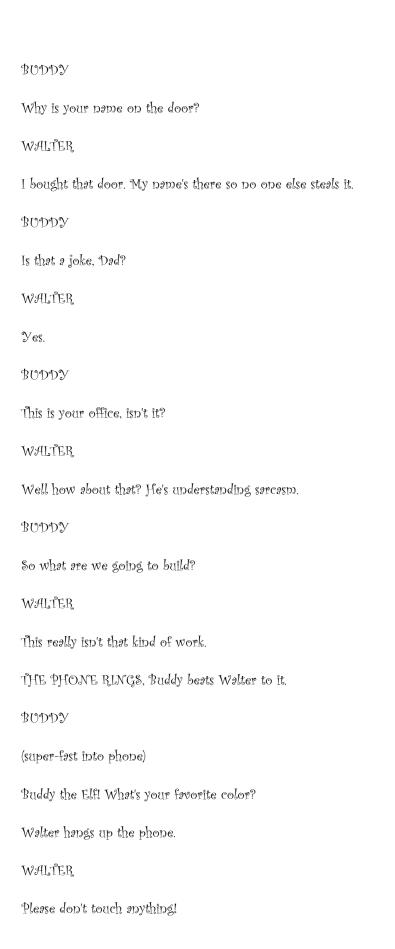
TREE into the corner. It scrapes the ceiling as they wedge it in place. WALTER What the hell is that? MICHAEL A Christmas tree! WALTER A Christmas tree? MICHAEL Buddy chopped it down in the park! Buddy smiles at Walter, Walter does not smile back. INT. WALTER AND EMILY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER Michael and Emily are having a heated discussion. EMILY I don't know what you're so worked up about. They're just having a little fun. WALTER Eun? Felonies are fun now? I thought felonies were felonies? EMILY Okay, the tree thing was bad. We'll have to plant another one. But at least Michael's happy for once.

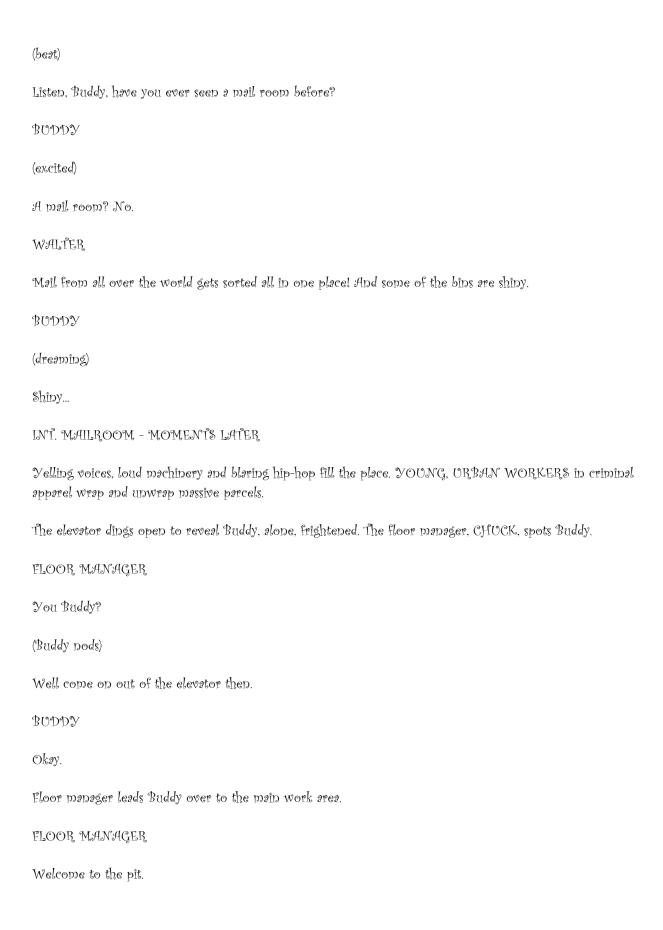
It's amazing what a little attention will do.
WALTER
What's that supposed to mean?
EMILY
Well, you haven't exactly been there for him lately. He's a kid Walter, he's not going to raise himself.
WALTER
Oh! So let's allow a deranged Elf-man to raise him. Great idea! Maybe we should pull Michael out of school so they can commit felonies full time!
EMILY
I think you're jeslous.
WALTER
Jeslous? Of Buddy? The man is wearing tights.
INT. LIVING ROOM - MEANWHILE
Buddy uses a drill to secure the trunk to the floor. ZZZZRRrrrr. He then stands at a distance. Like a high jumper, holding a star for the top of the tree in hand.
POV
He eyes a mini-trampoline. Then the top of the tree. And now looks at the star in his hand. This has bad news written all over it.
MICHAEL,
Are you sure about this? Maybe we can get a ladder.
BUDDY
A ladder? What's fun about a ladder?
(concentrating)
Ready?



EMILY
Yezh, I bet he'd like it.
WALTER
Absolutely never.
SMASH CUT TO:
INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY
The ELEVATOR DOOR DINGS open to reveal Walter & Buddy. Buddy sports a new suit. He looks ever bit the professional as he enters with his father.
CO-WORKER
Hey, Walter.
WALTER
Hey, Jack.
BUDDY
Hello, Jack!
Another co-worker, #2, nods hello.
WALTER
Hey, Sarah.
BUDDY
Hi, Sarah. I love that purple dress. It's purplie.
CO-WORKER #3
How's it going, Walter?
WALTER
Hello, Francisco.







TREY, an enormous, bald African-American man and CRAIG, a bald, wiry kid with a neck tattoo, stop their sorting and look up at Buddy with threatening glares.

FLOOR MANAGER

...over here is the trench. All the mail comes out of the shooter. You scan and find the floor each piece is moving to. Put her in the canister and shove her up the tube with the same number, got it?

BUDDY

Yeah! I like tubes and cannisters and numbers. This place reminds me of Santa's workshop. Except here it smells like mushrooms and everyone wants to hurt me.

INT. CONVERENCE ROOM - DAY

It's a writer's meeting. The three writers: EUGENE, HUSKEY and MORRIS sit around a table with Walter.

WALTER

So, we've got Greenway coming in tomorrow. Where are we at?

EUGENE

Well, Huskey and I were brain storming and we came up with what I think is a pretty big idea.

HUSKEY

You're going to love this.

MORRIS

I heard it already and I think it's fantastic.

WALTER

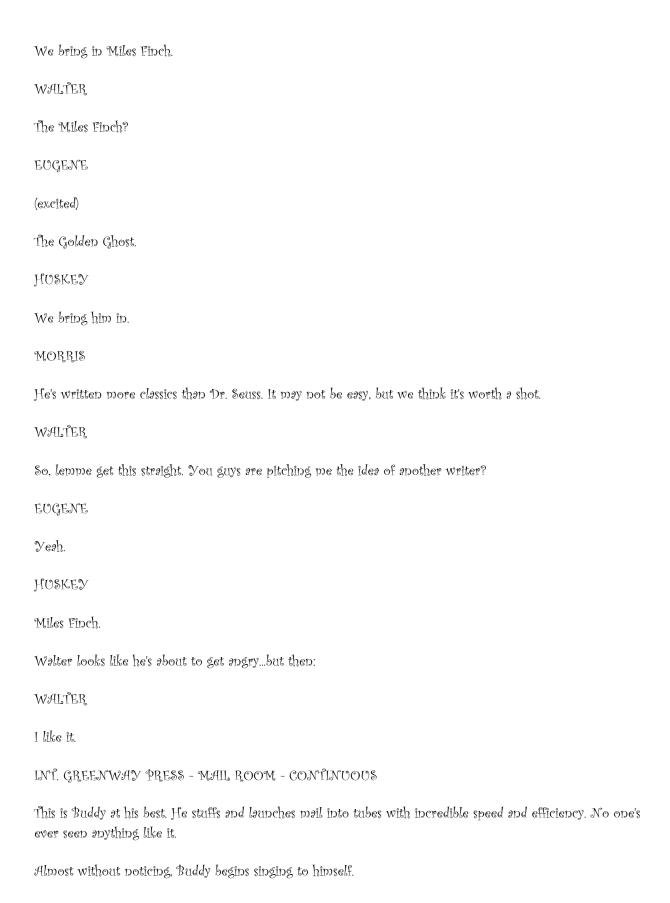
(pleasantly surprised)

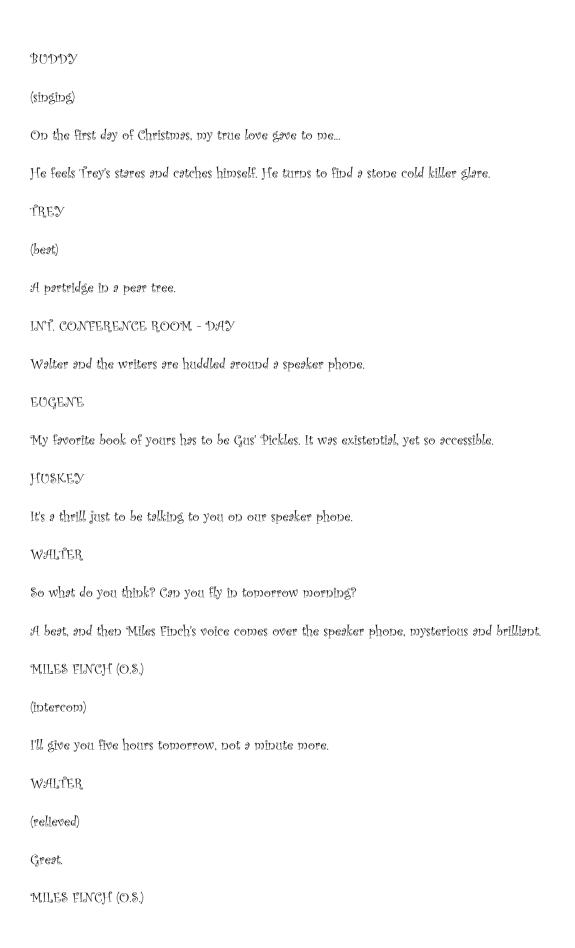
Okay, great. Let's hear it.

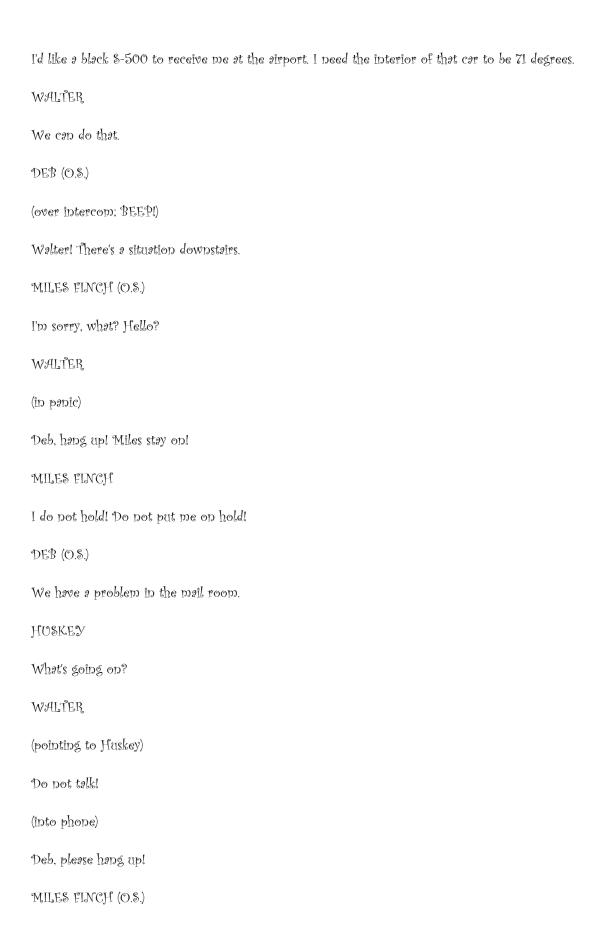
HUSKEY

Picture this...

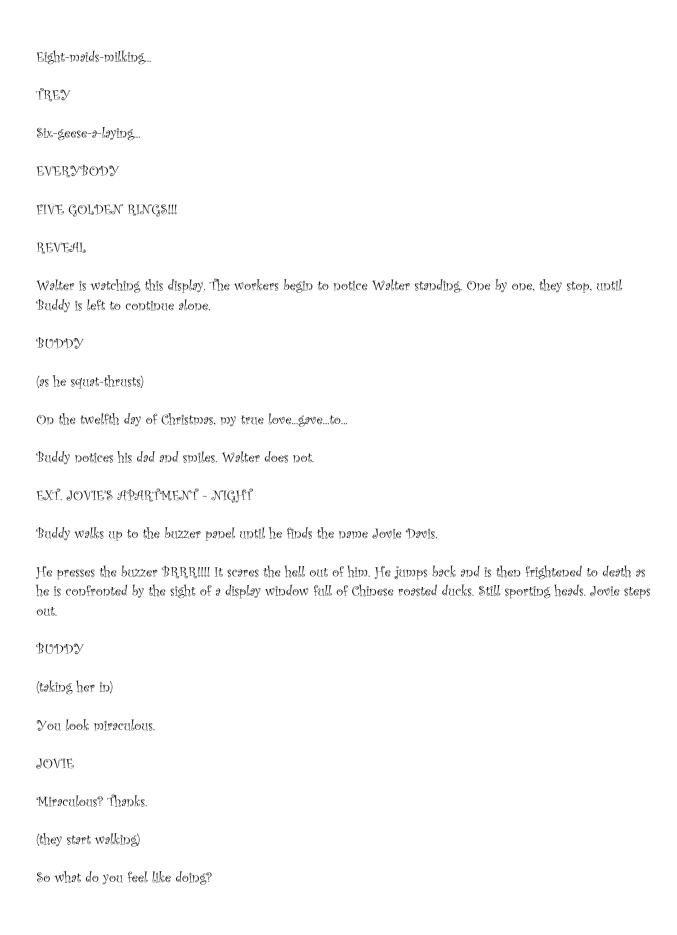
(long dramatic pause)

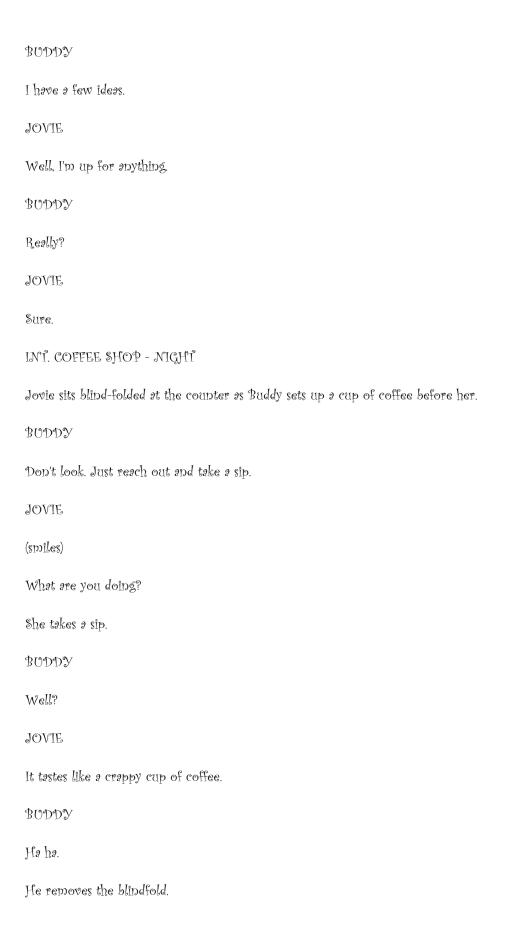












It is a crappy cup of coffee.
EXT. MID-TOWN MANHATTAN - LATER
Buddy is running around and around a revolving door. Loving every moment.
Jovie watches, confused. Smirking slightly as OTHERS wait and grow annoyed with him.
EXT. MANHATIAN - NIGHT
Buddy pulls her by the arm.
BUDDY
Check out the size of this
He shows her a pine tree decorated for Christmas.
BUDDY
Can you believe it?
JOVIE
(popplussed)
Come with me.
EXT. ROCKEFELLER CENTER - LATER
Jovie leads him around the corner.
REVEAL:
ROCKEFELLER CENTER. Buddy sees the GIANT CHRISTMAS TREE for the first time.
BUDDY
Wow, that looks wondrous.
They share their first genuine smile.
EXT. ICE RINK - LATER

JOVIE

Buddy and Jovie are skating, having fun. Jovie accidentally slides, BUMPING BUDDY. Buddy bumps her back. She bumps him back harder. It escalates until she checks him off of his feet. THEY FALL to the ice together, Jovie on top, nose to nose.

They look into each other's eyes and Buddy abruptly plants a kiss on Jovie's cheek.
BUDDY
Sorry.
JOVIE
You missed.
BUDDY
I missed?
JOVIE
Yesh.
With that, She leans in and kisses him full on the mouth. Buddy's hear fills his whole chest.
DISSOLVE TO:
INI. CONFERENCE ROOM - NEXT DAY
Walter and the writers sit in silence, waiting. Walter checks his watch. Still waiting.
HUSKEY
I sure hope that car's seventy one degrees.
EXT. MANHATTAN - CONTINUOUS
The door swings open with a purpose:
REVEAL
Buddy. The morning after. Steps into the door frame like ELVIS. A changed man. WE follow him down the street. Buddy's not skipping, he's SKIPPING.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walter and the writer's continue to wait. Nervous hand wringing

LNT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

We see only the shoes of the infamous Miles Finch march through the company, echoing throughout the halls.

We see some of the workers' reactions.

This is epic.

LNT. CONTERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

More pervous waiting.

EUGENE

I should have brought my camera.

More silence...and then:

MILES FLNCH (O.S.)

Alright. Let's do this.

REVEAL

Miles Finch is FOUR FEET TALL. He may be very small, but in this business, he is a monster.

WALTER

Miles! Thanks so much for coming. We're all big fans. I'm Walter. We spoke on the phone.

MILES FINCH

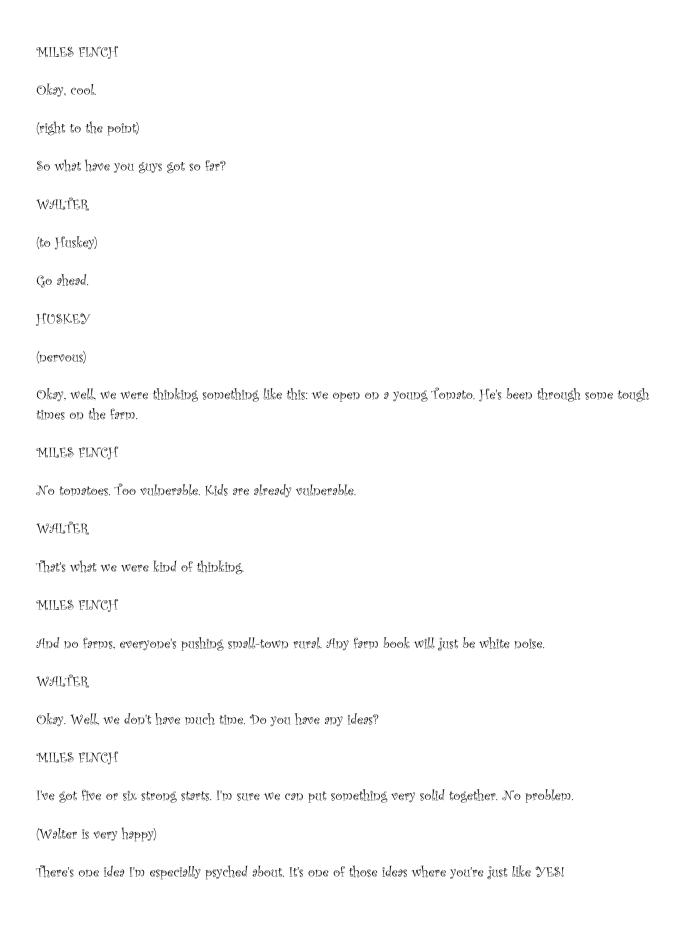
Yesh, yesh. Grest. Let's get the uh --

(i.e. Cash)

Taken care of so we can get started.

Walter pulls out a small manila envelope stacked with cash and slides it across the table. The three other writers watch it slide across, moving their heads like a tennis match, until Miles stops it with his hand.

Miles checks the money and tucks it into his vest pocket.



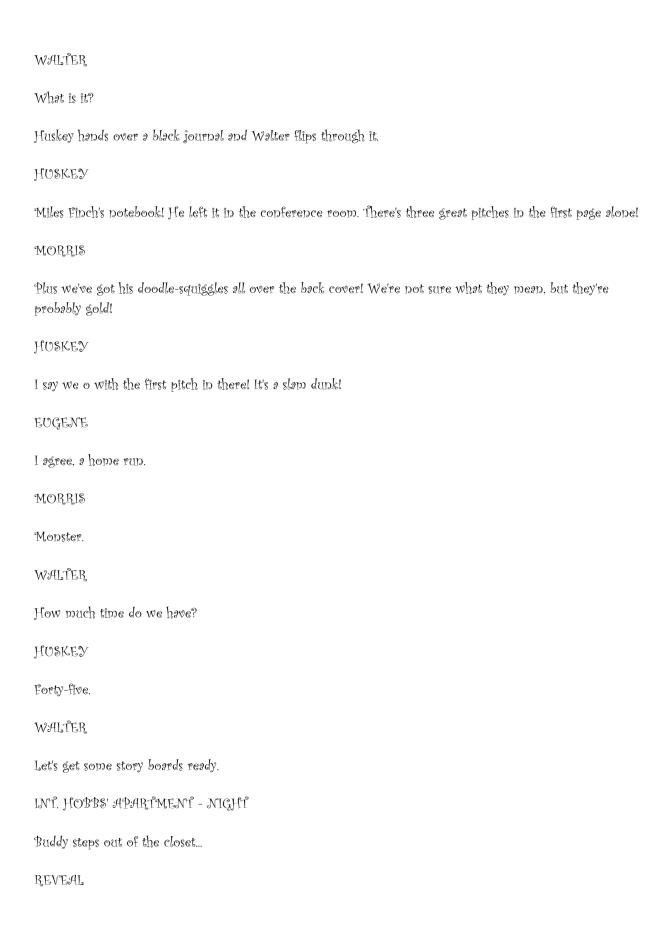


BUDDY
Boy, the candy canes here in New York just don't measure up to Elf standards, do they?
MILES FINCH
(another icy stare)
Gee whiz, we're all laughing our butts off.
WALTER
Buddy! Please. Just go in the basement!
BUDDY
Do you guys have an Elf hockey league here? I'm just curious.
MILES FINCH
Hey, jack weed. I may be "little," but I get more action in a week than you've had your whole life. I've got houses in LA, Hawaii, Vail and Paris, with a seventy inch plasma screen in each one of them. So I suggest you wipe that friggin' smile off your face before I bite it off.
(di gaines)
You feelin' strong, friend? Cell me ELF one more time.
BUDDY
(to his Dad)
Boy, he's an angry Elf.
Miles suddenly ATTACKS! Buddy tries to evoid him, but Miles is surprisingly strong, flipping Buddy over the table.
Now out of nowhere, Buddy winds up like Popeye and decks him across the face. Buddy looks at his own fist in horror.
BUDDY
(looking at his fist)
What have I done?

This gives Miles permission to deliver five QUICK HOCKEY PUNCHES to the face. Buddy is down for the count. Miles stands, victorious and grabs his coat. MILES FINCH All of you can kiss my vertically challenged ass. Miles takes the envelope of money out of his jacket and pretends to toss it on the table, pump faking. Then returns it to his vest pocket and walks out. WALTER Miles! Wait! BUDDY (to himself) A South Pole Elf. Buddy rubs his chin and stands to face his father. BUDDY You're really red. WALTER DAMMIT BUDDY! THIS TIME YOU REALLY DID IT! GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!! BUDDY (scared) Where do you want me to go? WALTER Go anywhere! I don't care if you're crazy. I don't care if you're an elf!! I don't care if you're my son!!! JUST STAY OUT OF MY LIFE!!!

This one stings hard. Buddy runs off, upset like never before.

EXT. MANHATTAN - LATER QUICK CUTS Buddy walking through the city, devastated. INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - LATER Walter is stressed, rubbing his face, pulling his hair out, on the phone. He's losing his career, and now he knows he's hurt Buddy. WALTER (into phone) I can't really talk right now. INT. EMILY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS INTERCUT with Emily. EMYou're gonne be home for dinner, eren't you? I mean it is Christmes Eve. WALTER It looks like it's gonna be a late one. EMOh. Do you wanna send Buddy home early? WALTER (riddled with guilt) Oh, um, we'll talk about it later. I gotta go, okay? Suddenly the three writers rush in. Walter hangs up. HUSKEY Walter! Huge news. The cleaning man just found this!



He's wearing his ELF SUIT again. Never before has an Elf looked so sad.

Buddy sits at the table and unfurls some long paper. He dips a quill pen in to some ink and writes in PERFECT CALLIGRAPHY.

WE HEAR BUDDY'S VOICE AS HE WRITES.

BUDDY (V.O.)

I'm sorry I ruined your lives... And crammed eleven cookies into the VCR. I don't belong here. I don't belong anywhere. I will never forget you. Love, Buddy.

Buddy sets down the scroll, and now, as if sealing it, sets his SNOW GLOBE down on the crease.

Buddy walks out into the night.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In his Elf Suit, Buddy trudges through the stormy New York night. The wind viciously blows. Buddy walks against it, the snow blowing into him.

INT. HOBBS' APARTMENT - LATER

Michael comes home, carrying a bunch of presents. He looks around the empty house.

MICHAEL

Buddy?

INT. GREENWAY PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Fulton Greenway and his crew sit at the end of the conference room, looking sharp as a tack. Walter is at the other end, looking even sharper.

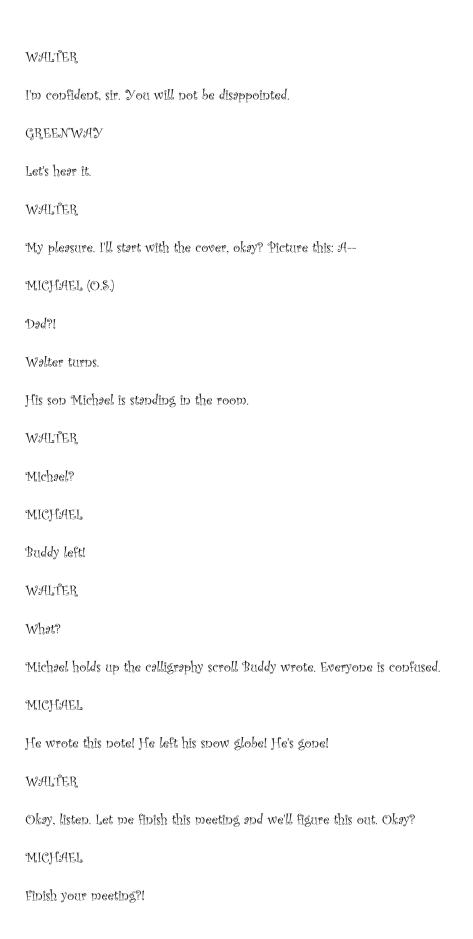
GREENWAY

As you know, we need a big launch, fast. To get this company back on track. So, I think I speak for my fellow board members when I say...

(dramatic pause)

This better be good.

Walter smiles, then re-checks his storyboards, beaming.



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(beat)
How'd I know you were going to say that?
Michael turns to leave, furious. Walter is torn...
WALTER
Michael! Wait!
Michael stops in his tracks, giving his dad a chance. Hopeful.
WALTER
(to the board)
Mr. Greenway, we have to reschedule this.
GREENWAY
We don't have time to reschedule! I want to hear the damp thing NOW!
(to Michael)
Son, this has to wait.
WALTER
No it doesn't. We'll do this some other time, Mr. Greenway.
GREENWAY
This isn't happening. You're going to sit in that chair and pitch me a hit friggin' book! NOW!
WALTER
Mr. Greenway, with all due respect, KISS MY ASS!
MICHAEL
Kiss my ass, too!!
INT. GREENWAY PRESS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS
Walter and Michael walk down the hall, triumphantly, together.
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GREENWAY (O.S.) (in the distance) If you walk out, Hobbs, you can never come back to Greenway! EXT. THE 59TH STREET BRIDGE - NIGHT Buddy's on the bridge, looking down. Contemplating the worst of all possible conclusions. WAVES crash and churn for below. EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST - CONTINUOUS Walter and Michael are walking fast, searching, half-jogging, Losing hope. Where's Buddy? EXT. 59TH STREET BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS Buddy closes his eyes tight, then looks up, a tear streams down his cheek. SUDDENLY SOMETHING CATCHES HIS EYE. A distant point with a glowing trail of smoke. Buddy narrows his eyes to see as the point grows as it approaches. It slowly reveals itself to be SANTA'S SLEIGH! Tangled with reindeer, fish-tailing, and CRASHING! BUDDY Santa?! EXT. MANHATTAN - MEANWHILE Walter is facing away from the park, in the sky behind him is the diving sled. Michael sees this all. If is face is aglow. MICHAEL Oh...My...God! WALTER

(missing it; turning)

What was that?!



But I'm not an Elf, Santa. I can't do anything right.

SANTA

Buddy, you're more of an elf than anyone I've ever met, and the only one who I would have working on my sleight.

3000X

Really?

SANTA

Really. Will you fix the engine for me, Buddy?

BUDDY

I will. Papa taught me how.

SANTA

You'll have to find it first, she dropped off back there a ways.

Buddy runs off into the woods.

INT. JOVIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jovie walks out of the kitchen as NEW YORK ONE drones quietly on the TV. II features a breaking NEWS STORY set in CENTRAL PARK. A REMOTE REPORTER is on the scene.

REMOTE REPORTER

New York One has been unable to confirm anything, but it's obvious that something has happened in Central Park. Authorities are clearing out the park and all entrances have been barricaded. As you can see, quite a crowd is starting to gather.

The camera pans and we see a huge crowd is gathering outside Central Park, held back by barricades and police.

The female reporter steps over to a Latino man, who holds his 5-year old son in his arms.

REMOTE REPORTER

Sir, you say you were able to get a first-hand look at what happened? Tell me, what did you see?

LATINO MAN

I was walking along, and I saw a huge flash, and then something came swooping down... REMOTE REPORTER Something? Do you mean an airplane or a helicopter? LATINO MAN It wasn't like that. It sounds crazy, but it looked like, uh... He's too embarrassed. LATINO CHILD It was Santa's Sleigh! REMOTE REPORTER (dismissive) Aren't you a cutie. (listening to earpiece) This could be a big hoax. I'm now told we have some amateur footage of a strange man dressed as an Elf. Let's take a look. ON THE SCREEN A zoomed-in blurry image of Buddy running. He trips and falls on his face like an idiot. Then scrambles up and runs into the woods. Sort of like that old Big Foot Footage, if he had done a face plant. It ends in a freeze frame of Buddy's EACE as he looks over a shoulder. They re-play the footage over and over and over again. JOVIE (seeing Buddy) Oh my God. EXT. ENGINE SITE - CENTRAL PARK -CONTINUOUS

Walter and Michael stop at a smoking object in the snow. It's SANTA'S MISSING ENGINE.
WALTER
What the
BUDDY (O.S.)
You found it!
Michael and Walter look up to see Buddy approaching them. Michael runs to him with a hug.
MICHAEL
Buddy! You're here!
BUDDY
(în ə hurry)
There's something I've got to tell you guys!
WALTER
(ignoring; focused)
No. Me first. There's something I want to tell you right now! I take back everything I said. You may be a littlehow do you say chemically imbalanced. But you've been right about a lot of things. I promise you, I'm going to be making some changes in my life. I don't want you to leave I need you. You're my son and I love you.
They hug. This means more Buddy than anyone could ever know.
SANTA (O.S.)
(from a foggy distance)
Buddy?! How are we looking?? We gotta move!
WALTER
Who was that?
EXT. SANTA'S CRASH SITE - CONTINUOUS

Buddy leads them to the clearing. Pulling back a tree branch to reveal:

TRUTH

Santa's GROUNDED SLEIGH and nine grazing reindeer. Shocked awe.

MICHAEL

(can barely speak)

Cool...

Walter cannot yet deal with this reality. His eyes getting wider and wider...about to faint?

TV COVERAGE - CONTINUOUS

REMOTE REPORTER

Dick, according to authorities, the area has been cleared. Only the Central Park Rangers remain in the park.

EXT. BELVEDERE CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

TRACKING CLOSE UP OF HOOVES

All lined up along a ridge. FOUR BLACK MARES breathe steam into the night air. Their RIDERS are silently staring into the night. They wear black leather boots and trench coats.

Chrome helmets sit stop faces shrouded in shadow. A silver eagle badge reads CENTRAL PARK RANGERS. They look down upon the sleigh, quite a distance away.

REMOTE REPORTER (V.O.)

These forces are highly trained, but rarely see action. Some have accused them of being too "gung ho" when called into duty. And their crowd control tactics at the Simon and Garfunkel concert in '85 were much criticized.

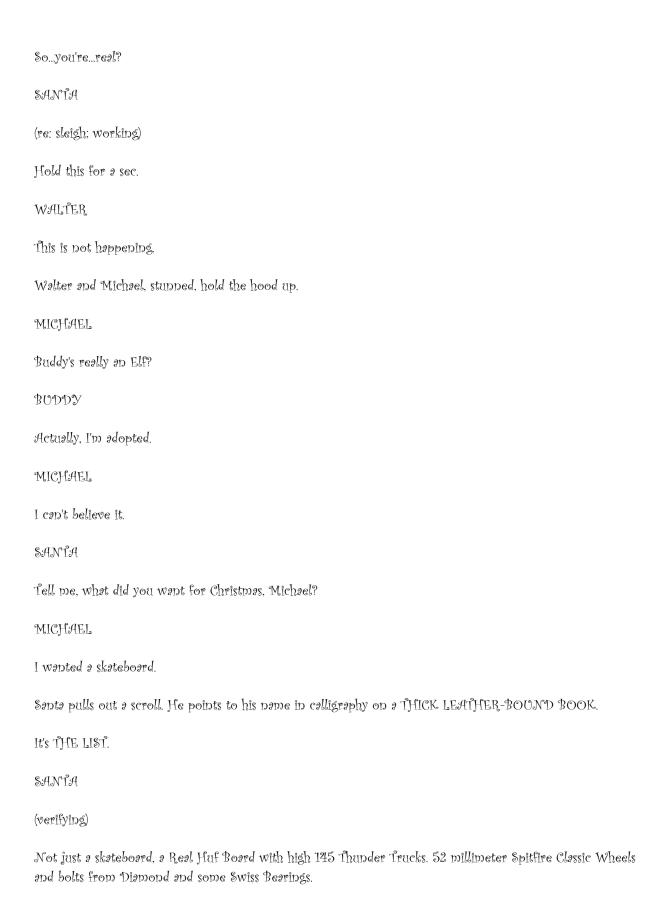
EXT. STREET - NIGHT

JOVIE IS RUNNING down the street, heading into Central Park.

EXT. GREAT LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Buddy works on the engine while Walter and Michael try to wake up from this strange dream.

MICHAEL







EXT. BARRICADES - CONTINUOUS REMOTE REPORTER spots Michael running out of the trees. REMOTE REPORTER A young boy has just come running out of the park...Let me see if I can get a comment... (to Michael) Did you see anything? MICHAEL It's the real Santa! His sleigh can't fly cause nobody believes in him! REMOTE REPORTER (blowing him off) Now, this is feeling more and more like some kind of elaborate Christmas hoax. MICHAEL This isn't a stunt. It's true! Everyone out there, Santa needs us to believe! I can prove he's real. This is Santa's LIST! He pulls out the LIST and reads: MICHAEL Lynn Kessler wants a Powerpuff Girls play set! Mark Webber wants an electric guitar! SERIES OF CUTS TO: Lynn and Mark. Each with their eyes wide open, believing, giving Santa power. INT. HOBBS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS Emily still in her cost with groceries is watching Michael on TV in the sportment. EMILY Michael!

CUT TO: EXT. CENTRAL PARK - CONTINUOUS Michael reads the list into the camera. MICHAEL Stan Tobias wants a powerpumper water rifle. Carolyn Reynolds wants a Suzie-Talks-A-Lot... SERIES OF CUTS TO: Carolyn, the girl from the Doctor's office, at home watching on TV. CAROLYN Thank you, Buddy! MICHAEL Dirk Lawson wants a day of pampering at Burke-Williams spa. WE CUT TO: A ROUGH-LOOKING BIKER, 35, in a bar. His biker friends all look at him. BIKER Must be another Dirk Lawson... EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS MICHAEL Dave Keckler wants some Pony High Tops! EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS The female Remote Reporter attempts to step in. REMOTE REPORTER That's quite enough little fella. MICHAEL

What's your name? REMOTE REPORTER (gailing) I'm Charlotte Dennon. MICHAEL Lemme see. Charlotte Dennon wants a "Tiffany engagement ring, and for your boyfriend to stop dragging his feet and commit already!" Off the Reporter's look, we... SMASH CUT TO: The SURGE IN CHRISTMAS SPIRIT makes Santa's Sleigh RISE A FOOT OFF THE GROUND. We see the gauge go forward a bit. SANTA We got power! Santa snaps the reigns. The sleigh starts to lumber forward. Buddy still struggles with the engine under the sleigh. BUDDY I don't have the engine fixed yet! EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS The reporter stands speechless as the ANCHORMAN talks into her earpiece... INT. NEW YORK ONE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS The Anchorman is confused. ANCHORMAN

Charlotte? Charlotte? We seem to be having some technical difficulty with our remote unit. Now for weather

EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS

on the ones...



WALTER

Get out of here! They're coming! There's enough Christmas spirit to start moving!

Buddy jumps in The sleigh slowly hovers forward a foot off the ground, in a herky-jerky way. The MOUNTED RIDERS come at Walter who wears Santa's hat and coat. He attempts to be a decoy.

WALTER

Hey! I'm right here! Ho ho ho! You got me! I surrender!

They ride right post him and ofter the sleigh.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

Buddy and Santa swerve past trees, scraping bark and smashing branches. Santa catches a glimpse over his shoulder of the Rangers in hot pursuit.

SANTA

Grab the shot gun under the seat and give 'em some heat!

BUDDY

What?!

SANTA

A joke, Buddy. Lighten up! Listen, there's barely enough magic to make this thing move. Keep working on the engine!

EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS

Above the huge crowd that has gathered at the barricade, we see Jovie standing on top of a car roof. Timidly, she begins singing, her sweet voice cracking with fear.

JOVIE,

You better watch out, you better not cry, you better not pout. I'm telling you why...

Walter finally arrives. He joins his family, watching Jovie.

WALTER

(to Emily)

He wasn't lying.
Merry Christmas.
They hug
EXT. CENTRAL PARK - CONTINUOUS
Buddy, risking his life, working on the engine at high speed. Smoke and sparks billow out. Santa struggles to maintain control. They hit a bump and some toys fly out of the back.
A Jack in the Box rattles by Buddy, POPPING OPEN.
BUDDY
Ah!
They find themselves blocked by a giant FOUNTAIN with the Rangers close behind.
BUDDY
I've almost got it!
SANTA
We need power, now!
Buddy tweaks the engine. It HOWLS TO LIFE and the urge of power BLOWS THE SLEIGH FORTY FEET INTO THE AIR, clearing the fountain.
BUDDY
(in triumph)
YES!! I DID IT!! I'M THE GREATEST ADOPTED ELF IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD!
SANTA
Good job, Buddy!
But now the belly of the coach nails the winged statue atop the fountain, yanking the whole engine back out of the sleigh. YOINK! The machine whirls and shoots off the trees. The engineless sleigh crashes down to the

bricks.

SANTA

That's it. With no engine, we're toast.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS

JOVIE,

He sees you when you're sleeping...

Emily is the first to join in. And now Michael sings too. And now some others...

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

Still with some Spirit power, the sleigh scrapes along the paved mall, sending sparks showering into the night air as the horses close in.

EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS

The WHOLE CROWD sings. The Remote Reporter sees this and puts her finger to her earpiece.

REMOTE REPORTER

(to the studio)

Dick, come back to remote 3. I think I've got something here.

JOVIE & THE CROWD

He knows if you've been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake...

CAMERAS TURN BACK ON.

REMOTE TRUCK'S LIGHT'S POP BACK ON. Again, the scene is aglow.

REMOTE REPORTER

(into cameras)

Charlotte Deppon, back at Central Park. Although we're still unclear about what led to this holiday rally, hundreds of New Yorkers have spontaneously gathered together and broken out into song. A curious Christmas Eve, to say the least. Let's listen in...

BRIEF CUTS AROUND THE CITY
The Broadcast is being watched
- We see the MAILROOM guys in A bar singing along in perfect harmony.
- the THREE WRITERS are singing.
- the DOCTOR, is singing.
- the GUARDS from the Empire State Building are singing.
- the TEENAGERS who threw snowballs sing.
- the ELF MANAGER from Gimbels sings with co-workers.
ELF MANAGER
(as his friends sing)
Do what you want, I ain't singing a damn thing.
EXT. THE MOVING SLEIGH - CONTINUOUS
Santa's sleigh is being rail-roaded. Right into the barricades. No steering, no liftup in the distance, we see they are headed for a collision.
EXT. BARRICADE - CONTINUOUS
As Emily and Michael sing along, Michael looks up at Walter and notices something peculiar. He busts his father.
MICHAEL
Wait! You're NOT singing!
WALTER
Yes I am.
MICHAEL
No you're not. You're just moving your lips.
WALTER

Michael! Please, I have a terrible voice.

MICHAEL

Dad!!!

Then, in spite of himself, WALTER BELTS OUT THE CHORUS in such an awful voice, it draws looks from the singers around him. As the bad notes rise into the chilly night air...

WALTER

(terrible)

Santa Claus is coming to town!

EXT. THE MOVING SLEIGH - CONTINUOUS

Walter's singing somehow does the trick. The CLAUS-O-METER shoots to the MAX!

A dash light BLINKS "HO HO HO" as the gauge hits the red zone. Santa howls in approval. The SLEIGH flies up into the night air and over the barricade, reporters and on-lookers. The rangers slide to a stop, foiled at last.

As the shadow of the sleigh zips high over them, the whole crowd joins in, singing their hearts out. Jovie can't believe it. She sings even stronger.

A VOICE BOOMS OUT from a mysterious silhouette into the magical winter night...

SANTA

Ho, ho, ho. Merry Christmas!

Santa's sleigh whips down Sixth Ave. and into the Manhattan night sky. And silhouettes against the moon.

FREEZE FRAME

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

And so, with a little help, Buddy managed to save Christmas.

INT. HOBBS' APARTMENT - CHRISTMAS DAY

Walter, Michael, Buddy, Emily and Jovie sit happily gathered around their Christmas tree. Wrapping paper everywhere.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

And his spirit saved a lot of other people, too. It was quite a Christmas, and quite a New Year.

INT. WALTER'S NEW COMPANY - DAY

Walter is stenciling the name 'HOBB'S PUBLISHING'.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

Walter started his own independent publishing company. His first book was written by a brand new critically acclaimed children's author...

INT. GIMBELS - DAY

The 'ELF' book from the beginning of the movie is Buddy's. He's doing a book signing. The place is packed.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

The book was called Elf. A fictional story about an adopted Elf named Buddy who was raised in the North Pole. Went to New York, ate spaghetti, worked in a shiny mail room and eventually saved Christmas.

Buddy and Walter ice skate together at Rockefeller Center in the middle of the night.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

And every year, on Christmas day, after all the presents are opened by children around the world, Buddy and his Dad make up for lost time...

Buddy still tries to hold his hand. Walter slaps it away.

INSERT

We see an Elfish hand applying white out to Walter's name on the List.

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

Walter even made the jump from 'naughty' to 'nice'.

INT. PAPA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

PAPA ELF (V.O.)

And, as for me, I can't complain. Buddy comes up to visit from time to time.

RAPID FIRE FINALE OF BUDDY SLAMMING HIS HEAD INTO DOORWAYS, BEAMS AND CABINETS.

BUDDY

Ow! Yikes! Golly! Charles Dickens! Sone of a Gnome! Eiddlesticks! Snow Elickers!

INT. PAPA ELE'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Jovie, in real Elf clothes, sets a pitcher of milk in front of Papa Elf. She sits beside Buddy who cradles a NEWBORN BABY in his arms wearing a pink Elf hat that says SUSIE.

This is the last image of the movie and also the last image of the book. It freezes and now becomes a drawing and we pull out to see it's the last page of Buddy's ELF book, which magically flips closed.

We're back in the bookstore from the very first scene. A little kid grabs the book out of the window.

EADE TO BLACK.

Credits