

SANTA
BUDDY

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

Awwwwwww.

SANTA turns to the gathered elves.

START

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.

SANTA
BUDDY

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.

END

BUDDY
MANAGER

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)

START

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
MANAGER*

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!

END

The MANAGER and ALL then exit except for the STORE ELF #1, STORE ELF #2, BUDDY and JOVIE. JOVIE is at one side putting on her coat. BUDDY is smiling and sucking on a candy cane.

BUDDY

BUDDY
JOVIE

(staring at JOVIE)

Gee, she's so pretty.

MANAGER

Well, why don't you ask her out?

BUDDY

Out?

MANAGER

On a date. Take her to dinner...

BUDDY

Eat food with her?

MANAGER

You know. Show her a good time, dance with her, take her home, get her into bed...

BUDDY

(continuing the list)

....snuggle under the covers, get out the flashlights, eat fluffernutter ...

MANAGER

Whatever turns your crank, Buddy.

STORE ELVES #1 and #2 exit, as JOVIE starts to leave.

START

JOVIE

Good night.

BUDDY

Hey, wait a second. Would somebody like a hug?

JOVIE

No, would somebody like a punch in the throat?

BUDDY

No.

JOVIE

So, good night.

BUDDY

Wait. Do you....wanna eat food?

JOVIE
 Do I want to eat food?

BUDDY
 Um-hmm. You know...

JOVIE
 Are you asking me out on a date?

BUDDY
 Yes, right, that's it. A date!

JOVIE
 Oh, you don't want to go out with me.

BUDDY
 Yes, I do!

JOVIE
 No, you don't.

BUDDY
 Yes, I do!

JOVIE
 Why?

BUDDY
 Well, because I like you. I feel really warm when I'm around you. And, um, my tongue swells up.

JOVIE
 Your tongue swells up?

BUDDY
(with a swollen tongue)
 Yeth, it doth. See?

JOVIE
 Well, it's weirdly nice that I make your tongue swell up, but I just don't see this date happening.

BUDDY
 Oh, of course. I'm sure you already have a date tonight. Obviously. You probably have guys wanting to eat food with you all the time. Lunch, dinner...I bet you have a different guy for breakfast every morning. It was dumb of me to ask.

JOVIE
 What the hell. I'm free Thursday.

BUDDY
 JOVIE

BUDDY
JOVIE

BUDDY

Thursday? Thursday! Yessss!!! This is going to be the best Thursday ever in the history of Thursdays!

JOVIE

You know what? I find if you lower your expectations in life, you avoid a lot of disappointment.

She starts to leave and notices he isn't moving.

Don't you have a home to go to?

BUDDY

Sure. I have a home to go. A nice home, with a big bed. And walls and a ceiling and everything. I'm just going to stay here and put up a little more tinsel.

JOVIE

Seriously? Okay. Well. Good night.

BUDDY

G'night, Jovie.

END



JOVIE exits. MUSIC underscores as LIGHTS change and BUDDY, alone on stage, lies down covered by a Christmassy-looking quilt. BUDDY sings himself a lullaby.

AND IF IT'S TOO COLD TO SLED
WE'LL EAT GINGERBREAD INSTEAD
AND THEN CUDDLE TILL HE TUCKS ME IN AT NIGHT

BUDDY snores loudly.

Fade to black.

Lights up. The following morning. Buddy wakes to see The MANAGER arriving for work followed by a department store FAKE SANTA who takes his place in Santa's big red chair. CHILDREN and PARENTS stream into the toy department along with the other STORE ELVES (except for JOVIE). MUSIC out.

MANAGER

Santa! Santa's here! We're open! Send in the kids.

A MOTHER leads a small BOY to the FAKE SANTA.

FAKE SANTA

(in a heavy New York accent)

Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!

MICHAEL
BUDDY

ACT ONE
SCENE 8

Hobbs apartment, the following morning. BUDDY and MICHAEL are having cold spaghetti for breakfast together.

START

MICHAEL

Wow, Buddy. Left over spaghetti for breakfast is the best, huh?

BUDDY

I've never had spaghetti before.

MICHAEL

No way!

BUDDY

Yes way. At the North Pole, we only eat from the five major food groups; cookies, candy, candy canes, candy corn and syrup. Something's missing....

(HE takes a bottle of syrup from his sleeve)

Syrup! I never leave home without it!

MICHAEL

You like sugar, huh?

BUDDY

Is there sugar in maple syrup?

MICHAEL

Yes.

BUDDY

Then yes!

MICHAEL

You do know that sugar's bad for your teeth right?

BUDDY

Of course, that's why it's important to chew your sugar carefully, drink lots of syrup and see your dentist twice a day.

END

BUDDY now pours maple syrup all over his spaghetti, and hungrily starts eating.

Meanwhile, stage left, in the living room, we hear the SOUND of a door CHIME as EMILY, in a bathrobe, enters and answers the door. She takes a Fed-Ex envelope from a uniformed DOORMAN, closes the door and crosses to sit down in an easy chair. SHE opens the Fed-Ex envelope and begins reading its contents.

BUDDY
JOVIE

JOVIE

Miraculous, huh? Okay, well you look miraculous too. That elf getup made you look incredibly dorky.

BUDDY

Thanks!

JOVIE

That wasn't a compli-

BUDDY

I know! It's the night before the night before Christmas. Let's do something Christmas-y!

#7b - Big Tree Music

MUSIC begins under.

JOVIE

You want Christmas-y? Okay. Follow me!

JOVIE runs off playfully. BUDDY follows. When they return, the set has changed. We see Rockefeller Center and its enormous Christmas tree, up stage center, decorated but unlit. Down stage is the skating rink, with many CHILDREN and ADULTS skating about.

START

BUDDY

(staring, gob-smacked, at the Christmas tree)

Oh! Let's go skating!

JOVIE

I'm not a very good skater

BUDDY

That's okay, Neither am I. Santa says I'm a hazard. He calls me "Edward Scissor feet".

JOVIE

Stop. Let's make a pact. If you try to be less elf-y, I'll try to be less bitchy.

BUDDY

Okay. I'd like it if you'd be less bitchy.

During the following dialogue, THEY rent skates and put them on.

JOVIE

I came here last year too, my first Christmas in New York.

#7c – Rockefeller Center Skating

BUDDY
JOVIE

BUDDY

Oh, where'd you come from?

JOVIE

L.A.

BUDDY

L.A.? Never heard of that place. I don't think Santa goes there.

JOVIE

He doesn't. Christmases there are surreal. No snow.

BUDDY

No snow?!?

JOVIE

I've never even seen snow. I've always wanted to.

BUDDY

That's the saddest thing I've ever heard.

JOVIE

Yeah, I've been here for almost two years and it hasn't snowed once. You know, when I was a kid I dreamed of having a snowy Christmas Eve dinner at Tavern on the Green with Billy Crystal. That sounds so stupid.

BUDDY

No it doesn't! Who's Billy Crystal? He sounds magical.

JOVIE

He's an actor. He was in my favorite movie of all time: "City Slickers". Anyway, last year I spent Christmas Eve in a 400 square foot studio apartment with no heat watching a "Law and Order" marathon on TNT. Sad, huh?

BUDDY

You know what? We are going to have Christmas Eve Dinner at Tavern on the Green!

JOVIE

I don't think so. For one thing, it's been closed for months. It just re-opened, now it's even harder to get in.

BUDDY

My dad can get us a table! He can do anything!

JOVIE

Buddy, don't promise things you can't deliver.

BUDDY
JOVIE

BUDDY

Jovie, I will make your dream come true. I promise.

JOVIE

Wow, I might actually have a real Christmas.

BUDDY

You see? You do have Christmas Spirit!

JOVIE

I guess I do. A little.

BUDDY

Now you have to spread it around and remember the best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear.

#8 - A Christmas Song

JOVIE

I told you, I don't sing.

BUDDY

What do you mean, you don't sing?

JOVIE

I mean I don't sing for anyone, at anytime, under any circumstances, and that includes birthdays, Bar Mitzvahs and especially Christmas. Okay?

END

MUSIC begins. BUDDY leads JOVIE onto the ice and they start skating, and continue throughout the number.

BUDDY

COME ON, JOVIE, SINGING CAN BE EASY

JOVIE

Please stop.

BUDDY

IT'S FUN, IT'S FREE AND BEST OF ALL IT'S ...

JOVIE

Totally cheesy?

WOMAN

Emma Van Brocklin.

BUDDY

Christmas. 1960. A Bobby Rydell Lunchbox.

WOMAN

I loved Bobby Rydell!

CHARLOTTE

What is this, some kind of a trick?

BUDDY

What's your name?

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Dennon, New York 1.

BUDDY

Charlotte Dennon, New York 1. Yeah, right, here you are. This year you want a Tiffany engagement ring and your boy friend Dwayne to stop dragging his feet and pop the question.

CHARLOTTE

Who told you to say that? My mother?

BUDDY

No, it's right here!

CHARLOTTE

(losing her cool)

Okay. That's it. I don't know how you're doing this, but I'm not an idiot. Everybody knows that there is no Santa Claus.

(realizing what she has just said.)

Omigod! I ruined Christmas.

BUDDY

You didn't ruin Christmas. No one can!

(turning to the crowd)

Oh, I could stand here all night reading names out of this thing and you still wouldn't believe in him, would you? Well, it doesn't matter, because Christmas is a lot more than just Santa Claus. Christmas is....is....sleeping on a futon. Having cold spaghetti for breakfast with your little brother. Right? It's going ice skating with your girlfriend and kissing her for the very first time under a big, glittery Christmas tree. It's travelling miles and miles to be with your family, walking through the Lincoln tunnel with cars blowing their horns the whole time and truck drivers yelling things that no person should say to another human being, let alone to an elf.

START

(BUDDY)

It's hoping that when you wake up on Christmas morning all the cars, and all the big grey office buildings, and all the piles of garbage will be covered in snow.

#13b – Snow Music

A light snow begins to fall.

You see? You can't ruin Christmas! It's all around you. You just got to get into the spirit of it. And the best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear! Everybody! Sing! Sing! Anybody?

Silence

END

#13b – A Christmas Song – Reprise

JOVIE

(stepping out of the crowd and singing)

JUST SING A CHRISTMAS SONG
IT'S LIKE MAGIC IF THINGS GO WRONG
JUST SPREAD SOME CHRISTMAS CHEER
BY SINGING LOUD FOR ALL TO HEAR

Come on people! Get into it!

BUDDY

Jovie? You're here! I thought you were mad at me.

JOVIE

I was, but then you made it snow!

JOVIE & BUDDY

JUST SING A CHRISTMAS SONG
AND KEEP ON SINGING ALL SEASON LONG
THINK OF THE JOY YOU'LL BRING
IF YOU JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND SING

Now, gradually, as LIGHTS come up all around the stage, we see SANTA sitting in his sleigh with his reindeer, at stage left. One by one, ALL join in the song, including such former Scrooges as WALTER.

JOVIE, BUDDY & EMILY

JUST SING A CHRISTMAS SONG
IT'S LIKE MAGIC IF THINGS GO WRONG