

## **Sam, Walter, Deb, Emily, Michael**

**SAM**

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

**WALTER**

Why?

**SAM**

Because two whole pages are missing from the last chapter.

**WALTER**

What?

**SAM**

Without them the end of the book makes no sense.

**WALTER**

*(calling to DEB)*

Deb!

**DEB**

Yes, Mr. Hobbs.

**WALTER**

Coffee! Now!

**DEB**

Right away.

**WALTER**

*(EMILY and twelve-year-old MICHAEL enter.)*

**EMILY**

Hi, darling.

**MICHAEL**

Hi, Dad.

**EMILY**

Ready to go?

**WALTER**

Go where?

**EMILY**

Christmas shopping, remember?

**WALTER**

I can't. I'm swamped.

**MICHAEL**

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

## **Deb, Buddy, Mr Greenway, Walter**

**DEB**

Mr. Greenway, sir.

**BUDDY**

*(standing up)*

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

**MR. GREENWAY**

What? Who the devil is that?

**WALTER**

Well, he is, uh, he is my, son.

**MR. GREENWAY**

What?!

**WALTER**

Deb! Buddy needs a break.

**DEB**

*(to BUDDY)*

Buddy, why don't you come help me put these documents through the shredder?

**BUDDY**

What is a shredder?

**DEB**

It is a machine that makes snow.

**BUDDY**

No way!

*(BUDDY and DEB leave the office.)*

**MR. GREENWAY**

Hobbs! My phone has been ringing off the hook. Angry mothers, kids crying, What happened to Jingles, the jolly Christmas puppy?

**WALTER**

It was an unfortunate oversight, Mr-

**MR. GREENWAY**

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

**WALTER**

Well, sir, that's easier said than done

**MR. GREENWAY**

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