

BUDDY

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

SANTA

Good question.

(SANTA walks over to BUDDY.)

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

BUDDY

Really? Where is he? Is it Charlie?

SANTA

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

BUDDY

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

SANTA

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

(SANTA takes out a New York City snow globe and hands it to BUDDY.)

And he works

(pointing to the globe)

Right there, in the Empire State Building.

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

SANTA

Keep it. It's a gift from me.

BUDDY

Thank you, Santa. What's my dad like?

SANTA

He's 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 just doesn't believe in me anymore. He's lost the Christmas spirit.

BUDDY

But Christmas spirit is what makes your sleigh fly!

SANTA

I know. Buddy, it's time you went there to meet him.

BUDDY

Okay. Which direction is New York?

SANTA

It's south. We're at the North Pole, Buddy; everything is south.

(BUDDY starts to leave.)

BUDDY

Oh, hey, what's my dad's name?

SANTA

Hobbs. Walter Hobbs.