

ACT ONE
SCENE 11

WALTER's office. WALTER confers with CHADWICK. It's obvious that the meeting has been going on for hours. MATTHEWS is conspicuously absent.

CHADWICK

Okay. How about this: a town populated only by tomatoes—

WALTER

Tomatoes.

CHADWICK

Little tomato people. They are busily preparing for Christmas, but little do they know, the mean tomato who lives on top of the mountain is planning to steal Christmas this year.

WALTER

You are describing the Grinch.

CHADWICK

But with tomatoes!

WALTER

You're an idiot, Chadwick. Greenway is going to fire us all if we don't come up with something good, you understand that? Can you grasp the seriousness of this situation? Where the hell is Matthews?

CHADWICK

He's working a lead.

WALTER

He's what?

MATTHEWS bursts in carrying a small manuscript.

MATTHEWS

I got it!

CHADWICK

You got it?

WALTER

An original idea I hope?

MATTHEWS

We got something better than an idea.

CHADWICK

We got a book.

MATTHEWS

You are familiar, of course, with Christopher Smith.

WALTER

Are you kidding? Christopher Smith was the greatest writer of Christmas stories who ever lived. When you think of Christmas you think of Chris Smith.

CHADWICK

So, you would be happy if we brought him in?

WALTER

He's dead, you morons.

MATTHEWS

Mr. Hobbs, I met this guy who deals in used furniture; high end stuff, from the homes of prominent dead writers. So, he recently acquired a desk once owned by one Christopher Smith.

CHADWICK

And in this desk he finds a secret drawer--

MATTHEWS

--and in this secret drawer he finds a manuscript.

CHADWICK

A lost Chris Smith Christmas story!

WALTER

A lost Chris Smith Christmas story?

MATTHEWS

It's a Chris Smith Christmas for Walter Hobbs!

MATTHEWS hands WALTER a small, yellowing manuscript.

WALTER

My God. It's beautiful!

MATTHEWS

Isn't it? The illustrations--

CHADWICK

And the story will make you cry.

WALTER

I can't believe I'm actually holding an original Christopher Smith in my hands.