

THEY SAY THAT EACH
CHRISTMAS A GOOD
CHILD'S PRAYERS ARE
ANSWERED AND THEIR
DREAMS COME TRUE.

THAT THE *HOLIDAY SPIRIT*
CHANGES MEN'S HEARTS TO
KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY
FOR HIS FELLOW MAN.

PEOPLE OFFER THANKS FOR
FAMILY AND GOOD FORTUNE.

OFTEN, GIFTS ARE
EXCHANGED.

CHILMARK, MASSACHUSETTS
DECEMBER 24, 1972

AND A YEAR'S WORTH
OF BLESSINGS PAINT
THE SEASON...



BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY WE HAVE TO WAIT DOWN HERE LIKE—

SHHH!



IT'S ALL A DELICATE, SYNCHRONIZED SETUP... AND WE DON'T WANT TO TIP OUR HAND TOO SOON.



WE'LL ONLY GET ONE CHANCE TO TRAP OUR QUARRY.

BUT I DON'T HAVE A GOOD FEELING ABOUT THIS...



WE'RE IN TOO DEEP NOW, SAMANTHA. THIS IS THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE AND THE FAT MAN IS ENTERING THE LION'S DEN.

IT'S EITHER HIM...



...OR US.



IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE CHRISTMAS, FOX!



BUT IT'S A DELICATE COMPACT, CHRISTMAS IS...

LIKE ALL THINGS INVOLVING CHILDREN, THERE ARE RULES.

AND IF THERE IS TO BE REWARD FOR THE GOOD, THERE MUST BE SOME LEVEL OF PUNISHMENT FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS.

FOR THE CONTRARIANS.



AND, MOST CERTAINLY, FOR THE NAUGHTY...

I DON'T THINK YOU APPRECIATE THE LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION THAT'S GONE INTO THIS, SAMANTHA.

I DON'T THINK YOU REALIZE THAT SANTA CLAUS DOESN'T EXIST, FOX!



AND I'M GONNA TELL DAD IF YOU DON'T—

JING BRING



BRING JING BRING



THUMP

THAT CAME FROM THE ROOF!



WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, YOU BETTER MAKE IT STOP!



I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING, SAM!

CHOO CHOO



MUST BE THE SPIRIT OF CHRIS—

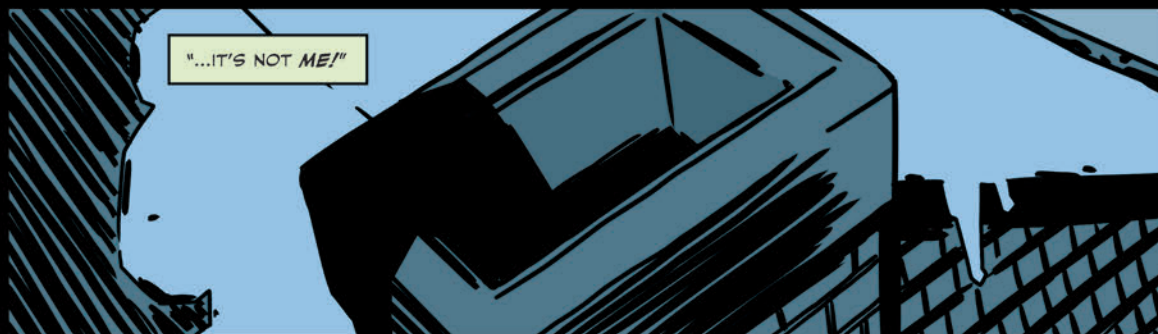
—WHOA.

CLIKT

ENOUGH, FOX! MAKE IT STOP NOW!



I ALREADY TOLD YOU, SAMANTHA...



"...IT'S NOT ME!"



DON'T GO IN THERE, FOX!

I'M JUST GONNA CHECK IT OUT...



...IT'S REALLY DARK IN HERE AND DRAFTY.

I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING, BUT—



—WHOA.

WHILE *SOME* CHILDREN OCCUPY A SPECIAL, RARIFIED PLACE IN THE PATCHWORK ASSESSMENT OF GOOD AND BAD...



...THEY OFTEN SEE THE WORLD IN A WAY THAT *THREATENS* THOSE SAME JUDGMENTAL FORCES.



VOMMMM

AND SO THEY'RE TO BE *DEALT* WITH, IN THE PROPER SPIRIT OF THE SEASON...



...IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO MAINTAIN THE NECESSARY BALANCE...



...AND TO BE CERTAIN IT *NEVER* HAPPENS AGAIN.