



Seemed like Christmas came earlier every year to Music Row in Nashville. Zimmerman had always wanted to breathe the palmy green air of the Yucatan but up to now his dream was unfulfilled. With a grateful heart he waited, dutifully expecting with all the faith and hope that he could muster that one day he would write that big hit song and the dollars would come rolling in and soon he would be so rich he would say, "Oh, just pile it over there with all the other money, please." Sometimes in Walter Mitty fashion he would drift off into Pleasantville and make plans to first take his poor mother, Vivian, who had never traveled farther than 30 miles from the place she was born, to see the ancient Mayan pyramids for Christmas and then retire to Provence where he would buy a nice country cottage and spend the rest of his days painting sunflowers and writing novels.

And so it came to pass that these were the thoughts that filled his head as he exited the Target in Greenhills bearing secret gifts for the family and the **twinkle** lights that his wife, Rebecca, had sent him to **buy**. In his mind he was sitting at a large table in a **farmhouse** near Arles just about to enjoy the second **course** of his lovely French meal. He had so enjoyed

the raw oysters and was looking forward to the goose roasted in the wood oven with herbs and even as he opened the bottle he was already tasting and analyzing the finish of the rich red wine. And so it was that he didn't see the Lincoln Town Car as it sped out of control and careened through the parking lot. Odd how it hurt so badly when the car struck him that he barely even felt it. Everything seemed to happen so quickly after that. Two women emerged from a car and began screaming, "Oh no", and dialing a cell phone. A man who looked a little like Woody Allen with bad teeth but claimed to be a doctor and had eggnog on his breath was squatting over him. Why was he wearing such a horrible look on his face and why was a crowd of shoppers gathering around and gasping and why the hell was "The Twelve Days Of Christmas" blaring incessantly from the radio of a smoking car with some moaning people trapped inside? And why was Santa running wildly through this bizarre scene so redly and whitely? This all seemed a million miles away from the sound of the mistral winds that were rushing around his head and reminding him of the swaying trees in whatever Van Gogh painting that was he couldn't remember right now. Thankfully the sound of the wind was growing louder and drowning out some of the distracting sounds of sirens etc...and as luck would have it he was sinking into the most amazing feeling of peace and well-being that he had ever felt, like a spring morning with daffodils and Easter bunnies and a basket with his name on it and colored eggs and the first time he hit a home run and his dog, Bark, who swam with him in the creek behind the house and his 16th birthday and his first car and the way it felt to drive down the road all by himself and the first time he fell in true love and his wedding day and the birth of his daughter, Juniper, and how good it felt the day