

SIDNEY. It would only take ...

DOROTHY. Sidney! Mr. Wellacre needs to get on with his assignment, dear.

SIDNEY. Oh. Oh. (*Privately.*) We understand. (*Finger to lips.*)

DOROTHY. SIDNEY.

You can trust us. My uncle was a G-Man.

LUTHER. (*Enters, carrying photos.*) Ok. Folks. Here they are. I got 'em. You pick 'em. I got to FAX some guy my resume shot. We got me happy. We got me serious. Which?

WALTER. Happy.

SIDNEY. Happy.

DOROTHY. Happy.

WAYNE. Happy.

LUTHER. It's unanimous. That's what my manager said, too.

PHIL. You have a manager?

LUTHER. Sure.

PHIL. I don't believe it! A 12-year-old with a manager! What do you pay him? Ten percent of your lunch money?

WALTER. What is it with you? You can't pick on somebody your own size?

PHIL. Let's keep it loose, m'man. The kid's a friend of mine. A status you have not as yet achieved, m'man.

WALTER. And I've been working so hard at it.

(*LARRY enters with M.J.*)

LARRY. (*Distributing the copies.*) Ok. Look this over quickly, folks. Save the questions for later.

WALTER. No, you don't mean this? More?

LARRY. Give it a chance.

WALTER. Give *me* a chance.

LARRY. Phil, is that making sense to you?

PHIL. Shouldn't Zorah be here for this? (*HE reads.*)

LARRY. Wayne, this is better. But I think we're still pulling our punches about Tiny Tim's sexuality.

WAYNE. Oh. Ok.

LARRY. Because it's emerging. How could it not be.

(*General consternation.*)

LARRY. What? You think Tiny Tim never had a wet dream?

SIDNEY. Oh, I don't think that's necessary.

DOROTHY. Really, Larry, I don't think they even have wet dreams in England, dear. Certainly not in the 19th century.

SIDNEY. I think they're more recent, aren't they?

M.J. I know what you're doing, Larry. We all do. But we didn't take your things. Marci did. Punish Marci.

LARRY. Can we do this please?

DOROTHY. What about Zorah? We can't do this without her.

M.J. She got tied up. She's on her way.

LARRY. All right, folks, the moves stay the same; we're just changing a few words.

M.J. Bart, give me a hand with this.

(*M.J. and BART set the stage for Cratchit's parlor.*)

PHIL. (*To Wayne.*) You enjoy yourself last night?

WAYNE. Yes, thank you.

PHIL. You were real helpful about the accents.

WAYNE. Oh good.

PHIL. Zorah's a lovely woman, don't you think.

WAYNE. Very. Very.

PHIL. I noticed she had her eye on you last night.

WAYNE. Oh, yes. I noticed that, too.

PHIL. Did you.

WAYNE. Yeah. Wherever I was, I'd turn around and there she'd be. Sort of staring and smiling. At me.

PHIL. Uh-huh. You know that she and I are ... ah ... a thing.

WAYNE. A thing?

PHIL. Oh, heavy.

WAYNE. Ah.

PHIL. Yeah and we play these stupid sick games with one another like what she was doing with you last night right there in front of me. Trying to inflame me.

WAYNE. Oh, yeah.

PHIL. Don't let her take it any further. Can I ask you that? Please. She's just trying to get to me.

WALTER. *(To Phil.)* Are we doing this?

PHIL. We are. *(To Wayne.)* You promise?

WAYNE. Ok.

*(We are in the Cratchit parlor. BART as Peter, M.J. as Martha sit on the settee. DOROTHY as Mrs. Cratchit sits between them. Though M.J. is in costume, SHE keeps her headset on.)*

M.J. *(Into intercom.)* Spike, get me into Cue Seven. *(To Dorothy.)* "What happened to your precious father."

DOROTHY. *(English accent.)* "What happened to your precious father then? He works so hard. When he gets home—"

PHIL. Wayne.

WAYNE. Yes, Phil.

PHIL. I thought we agreed last night about the accents, Dorothy.

DOROTHY. But that's the way I sound.

PHIL. That's not the way we sound.

DOROTHY. Very well. *(In flat American accent.)* "What happened to your precious father then? He works so hard. When he gets home, I'll sit him down beside the fire and ease his mind."

*(Offstage LUTHER and PHIL merrily sing a traditional Christmas carol.)*

BART. "Tim and Father are coming. Quick! Hide, Martha! We'll play a trick."

*(M.J. gets behind couch. CRATCHIT enters, followed by TINY TIM. Phil's back problem has given him a pronounced limp and a twisted stance. DOROTHY rises to greet them. SHE, of course, is also limping from her earlier injury.)*

PHIL. "Ok, come on, Tiny. Come on. You can make it. That's it. You are so special. Happy Christmas! *(Dramatic.)* Oh, oh, what's that I smell?"

DOROTHY. *(Flat American accent.)* "What'dya think? It's the plum pudding steaming in the copper."

PHIL. "Where's Martha? Where's our girl?"