

VIRGINIA. It's not that late Samantha. We've got to try.

SAMANTHA. Virginia, maybe we should just go to sleep, and forget this whole thing.

VIRGINIA. No. I can't. I have to know the truth.

SAMANTHA. Virginia, I just can't stay awake. I'm going to bed. You should to. If you stay up, I think you'll be disappointed.

VIRGINIA. No I won't Samantha. I'll prove you wrong. You'll see.

SAMANTHA. Virginia! (*Re-thinks, then delivers calmly:*) I hope you do. Good night. (*She exits.*)

(*VIRGINIA sits quietly, getting more anxious.*)

VIRGINIA. (*Talking to the sky out the window:*) Please. Please show up. Please. Please. (*She begins to sob a little.*)

(*VIRGINIA'S FATHER enters.*)

FATHER. Virginia, are you crying?

VIRGINIA. (*Holding back the tears:*) No.

FATHER. Why are you crying?

VIRGINIA. It doesn't matter.

FATHER. It does matter. Talk to me.

VIRGINIA. I'm going to stay up all night.

FATHER. And why is that?

VIRGINIA. I'm going to stay up so that I can see Santa Claus.

FATHER. You don't have to do that, Virginia; he'll be by to bring you presents I'm sure.

VIRGINIA. *This is not about the presents!* I just need to know if he's real. I have to know.

FATHER. Why do you have to know?

VIRGINIA. Because. I want to believe in him. I have my whole life. And right now, I'm beginning to think he doesn't exist. Nobody can give me a straight answer. It's like people are avoiding me whenever I ask them about it. Why papa? Why are people not giving me a straight answer? Do they not believe? I have been believing.

FATHER. Well, isn't that enough?

VIRGINIA. No, because of my doubts. There are so many things that don't make sense. Why does Mary Lou not get a Christmas like me? If Santa is real, shouldn't she get a Christmas too? She's as good as I am.

FATHER. I don't know, Sweetheart.

VIRGINIA. Well, that's why I have to talk to Santa. So I'm going to wait.

FATHER. You can't wait for him all night, Virginia. He won't come.

VIRGINIA. Why not?

FATHER. Because...that's part of the rules. That's part of the magic of Christmas. If you stay up all night, then it's like saying, you don't believe in him. You have to believe. If you do, then he is real and he will come. But you have to accept the magic. You have to sleep.

VIRGINIA. Well, then how will I ever know if he's real?

FATHER. You just know. You believe. You... I'm sorry. I wish I had a better answer for you, Virginia.

VIRGINIA. That's okay. (*Thinks for a moment.*) Hey papa? Was that true about what you said earlier?

FATHER. What do you mean?

VIRGINIA. About *The New York Sun*. You said, "If it's in *The Sun*, it must be true." Is that really true?

FATHER. Well, yes. I'd like to think so.

VIRGINIA. What if I wrote them a letter and asked them? Do you think they would respond?

FATHER. Well, maybe. But it's getting late, Virginia. The stories are probably already off to publication.