

MARY LOU. I don't know. I can't remember the last time I received a present from anyone, let alone Santa Claus.

VIRGINIA. But what about at Sammie's Toy Store? Isn't that Santa?

MARY LOU. No. I have visited that Santa many times. Every year I've told him what I want, and every year he says he will get it for me. So far, I've gotten nothing.

VIRGINIA. Oh.

MARY LOU. I've been good every year. I get good grades in school. I help my mom around the house. I follow the rules. What am I doing wrong?

VIRGINIA. I don't know, Mary. (*Awkward pause.*) Do you believe in Santa Claus?

MARY LOU. I guess not. I have to get going anyway (*She shivers in the cold.*)

VIRGINIA. Hey Mary. (*Pause.*) Where's your scarf?

MARY LOU. Mama had to trade it for some cash last week. She said that would be only temporary too.

VIRGINIA. (*Slight pause.*) Here. Take my scarf and gloves.

MARY LOU. No Virginia, I can't.

VIRGINIA. Really. It's okay. I have an extra pair at home.

MARY LOU. Really? Thanks Virginia. Well, I'll see ya.

VIRGINIA. Merry Christmas, Mary Lou.

MARY LOU. Thanks.

(They begin to exit to opposite sides of the stage. VIRGINIA turns and looks back at MARY LOU.)

VIRGINIA. Hey Mary!

MARY LOU. Yes.

VIRGINIA. I'm sure Santa will bring you something.

MARY LOU. I hope so.

(They exit.)

Scene 5

A Very Icy Public Area Near the Soup Line

(This scene should be played as if the entire ground was covered with ice. We are closer to the soup line. VIRGINIA gets up and starts to walk on the icy sidewalk. She almost slips.)

VIRGINIA. Woh, it's slick out today. *(She goes to sit on a bench. She struggles on the ice.)* Why doesn't Santa visit Mary Lou? Mama says that there's a Santa. Mama wouldn't lie to me. Why was so mean to me this morning? I thought she believed in Santa Claus too. This just doesn't make sense. I wish someone could give me a straight answer.

(FRANCIS enters. He doesn't see the ice and slips and falls.)

FRANCIS. Wooh!!!

VIRGINIA. Sir! Sir! Are you okay?

FRANCIS. *(Still on the ground:)* I think I broke every bone in my body. What a day I'm having!

VIRGINIA. Can you lift your legs?

(He tries, but fails. He moans in comical pain.)

What about your arms?

(He tries, but same reaction.)

Your head?

(Nothing.)

What about a finger?

(Slowly, but steadily, FRANCIS lifts one finger from the ground.)

FRANCIS. Yes! YES! YEEESSS!!