

Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing

**"A True Gift! A sparkling new stage musical adaptation,
with a surefire charmer of a score."**

—*New York* magazine, Scott Brown

Book by Joseph Robinette **Music and lyrics by Benj Pasek & Justin Paul**

A CHRISTMAS STORY

One of *USA Today's*
Best Musicals
of 2012

The Musical

Based upon the motion picture *A Christmas Story*
distributed by Warner Bros., written by

Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark

and upon *In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash*,
written by Jean Shepherd

"The best darn musical I've seen in years!"



David Richardson

© The Dramatic Publishing Company

"One of the 'Top 10 Plays and Musicals of 2012.' An unexpectedly delightful holiday musical with a slew of sprightly songs." —*TIME* magazine, Richard Zoglin

"Joyous! ... A musical that dares to mess with one of the most popular Christmas-time movies of all time and yet manages to not only do the film justice, but top it."

—*Associated Press*, Mark Kennedy

"This tuner boats a heartwarming but wise story, an impressive score ... canny staging and a series of laugh-out-loud production numbers."

—*Steven Suskin, Variety*



A CHRISTMAS STORY

The Musical

Book by Joseph Robinette. Music and lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul. Based upon the motion picture A Christmas Story, ©1983 Turner Entertainment Co., distributed by Warner Bros., written by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark, and on the book In God We Trust: All Others Pay Cash by Jean Shepherd.

Cast: 15m., 10w. May expand to 20+m., 15+w. This musical, which received rave reviews on its Broadway run, is based on the movie classic that runs round-the-clock on television every Christmas. Set in the 1940s in the fictional town of Homan, Indiana, the musical follows 9-year-old Ralphie Parker and his quest for the Holy Grail of Christmas gifts—an Official Red Ryder carbine-action 200-shot Range Model air rifle. Rebuffed at every turn with a similar echoing response, Ralphie plots numerous schemes to achieve his desperate desire for the coveted BB gun. All the iconic scenes from the movie are here: Ralphie's friend, Flick, getting his tongue stuck to the flagpole; his brother, Randy, getting dressed in his snowsuit; the bullies, Farkus and Dill; the leg lamp award; the bunny suit; the Chinese restaurant; Christmas dinner; and many others. The delightfully versatile score ranges from gentle ballads to show-stopping full-ensemble numbers such as "Ralphie to the Rescue," "A Major Award," "Sticky Situation," "Up on Santa's Lap," "Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana" and the inevitable "You'll Shoot Your Eye Out!" *A Christmas Story, The Musical* will bring an exciting new dimension to those who have seen the movie and will certainly stand on its own for those who haven't. *Area staging. Approximate running time: 2 hours. Code: CD2.*

ISBN: 978-1-58342-408-7



9 781583 424087 >

www.dramaticpublishing.com



Dramatic Publishing

311 Washington St.
Woodstock, IL 60098
ph: 800-448-7469

Cover design: Jeanette Alig-Sergel.

© The Dramatic Publishing Company

A Christmas Story, The Musical

Book by

JOSEPH ROBINETTE

Music and lyrics by

BENJ PASEK and JUSTIN PAUL

Based upon the motion picture

A Christmas Story

Distributed by Warner Bros.,

Written by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark

and upon

In God We Trust: All Others Pay Cash

Written by Jean Shepherd



Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

©MMXIV

Book by JOSEPH ROBINETTE

Music and lyrics by BENJ PASEK and JUSTIN PAUL

Based upon the motion picture

A Christmas Story

Distributed by Warner Bros.,

Written by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark
and upon

In God We Trust: All Others Pay Cash

Written by Jean Shepherd

Printed in the United States of America

All Rights Reserved

(A CHRISTMAS STORY, THE MUSICAL)

For inquiries concerning all other rights, contact:
William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, LLC,
1325 Avenue of the Americas, 15th floor
New York, NY 10019 • Phone: (212) 586-5100

ISBN: 978-1-58342-408-7

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the musical *must* include the following notice in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the musical and in all instances in which the title of the musical appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the musical and/or a production: “Book by Joseph Robinette. Music and lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul. Based upon the motion picture *A Christmas Story* distributed by Warner Bros., written by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark, and upon *In God We Trust: All Others Pay Cash* written by Jean Shepherd. The names of Joseph Robinette, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. The names of Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark *must* also appear on a separate line on which no other name appears, immediately following the names of Joseph Robinette, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, and *must* appear in size of type not less than thirty percent (30%) the size of the title type. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., of Woodstock, Illinois.”

In addition, all producers of the musical *must* include the following acknowledgments on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the musical and on all advertising and promotional materials:

“Produced with permission of Warner Bros. Theatre Ventures and
Dalfie Entertainment.”

“Originally Produced on Broadway by Gerald Goehring, Roy Miller,
Michael F. Mitri, Pat Flicker Addiss, Peter Billingsley, Timothy Laczynski,
Mariano Tolentino, Jr., Louise Beard, Michael Filerman, Scott Hart,
Alison Eckert, Bob Bartner, Michael Jenkins, Angela Milonas
and Bradford W. Smith.”

A Christmas Story, The Musical had its premier Broadway production at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre in New York under the direction of James M. Nederlander and James L. Nederlander with opening previews on November 5, 2012. Opening night was held on November 19, 2012, running until December 30, 2012.

Cast (in order of appearance)

Jean Shepherd	Dan Lauria
Ralphie	Johnny Rabe
Ralphie (at certain performances)	Joe West
Mother	Erin Dilly
Randy	Zac Ballard
The Old Man	John Bolton
The Bumpus Hounds	Pete and Lily
Schwartz	J.D. Rodriguez
Flick	Jeremy Shinder
Esther Jane	Analise Scarpaci
Mary Beth	Alexa Niziak
Scut Farkus	Jack Mastrianni
Grover Dill	John Babbo
Other Children.....	Grace Capeless, Sarah Min-Kyung Park, Luke Spring
Miss Shields	Caroline O'Connor
Fantasy Villian	Mark Ledbetter
Bank Manager	Luke Spring
Bank Robbers	Nick Gaswirth, Thay Floyd
Prisoner	Eddie Korbich
Can-Can Girlfriend	Alexa Niziak
Delivery Men	Thay Floyd, Mark Ledbetter
Mrs. Schwartz	Kirsten Wyatt
Policeman	Mark Ledbetter
Fireman	Thay Floyd
Doctor	Eddie Korbich
Nurse	Kirsten Wyatt
Flick's Mother	Lindsay O'Neil
Mobster Tap Specialty	Luke Spring
Santa Claus	Eddie Korbich
Chief Elves	Andrew Cristi, Kirsten Wyatt
Nancy	Grace Capeless
Goggles Kid	John Babbo
Waiter	Andrew Cristi
Waitress	Sarah Min-Kyung Park

Cast (continued)

Neighbors, Shoppers, Parents, Students,
Townpeople, Elves & Others.....Tia Altinay, John Babbo,
Charissa Bertels, Grace Capeless,
Andrew Cristi, Thay Floyd, Nick Gaswirth,
Eddie Korbich, Mark Ledbetter, Jose Luaces,
Jack Matrianni, Alexa Niziak, Lindsay O’Neil,
Sarah Min-Kyung Park, J.D. Rodriguez,
Analise Scarpaci, Lara Seibert, Jeremy Shinder,
Luke Spring, Kirsten Wyatt

Production Staff

Director.....John Rando
Producers.....Gerald Goehring, Roy Miller,
Michael F. Mitri, Pat Flicker Addiss,
Peter Billingsley, Timothy Laczynski,
Mariano Tolentino Jr., Louise H. Beard,
Michael Filerman, Scott Hart, Alison Eckert,
Bob Bartner, Michael Jenkins,
Angela Milonas, Bradford W. Smith
Associate Producers.....Vincent G. Palumbo,
Dancap Productions, Inc.,
Jeffrey Jackson, Ric Zivic
Casting.....Stephanie Klapper, CSA
Music Coordinator.....Talitha Fehr
Choreographer.....Warren Carlyle
Associate Choreographer.....James Gray
Dance music arrangements.....Glen Kelly
Vocal arrangements.....Justin Paul
Orchestrations.....Larry Blank
Music direction & supervision.....Ian Eisendrath
Production Stage Manager.....Peter Wolf
Technical Supervisor.....Fred Gallo
General management.....Corker Group, LLC, John S. Corker
Press Representative.....Keith Sherman & Associates
Advertising & marketing.....aka
Set design.....Walt Spangler
Costume design.....Elizabeth Hope Clancy
Lighting design.....Howell Binkley
Sound design.....Ken Travis
Hair & wig design.....Tom Watson
Animals trained by.....William Berloni

The world premiere of *A Christmas Story, The Musical* was produced by Kansas City Repertory Theatre with Eric Rosen, artistic director, Jerry Genochio, producing director, and Cynthia Rider, managing director.

Subsequently produced by The 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle, Wash., with David Armstrong, executive producer and artistic director, Bernadine C. Griffin, managing director, and Billy Berry, producing director.

A Christmas Story, The Musical

CHARACTERS

JEAN SHEPHERD/NARRATOR: Late 40s to early 60s. A charismatic storyteller who has the ability to weave a spell and draw an audience into his magical world. He is omniscient but not overpowering—a good-natured curmudgeon with a deadpan sense of humor. He holds the audience with his tremendous presence and spark. [Note: The framing device begins with Jean’s radio show, but as the action unfolds he becomes a physical part of the storytelling, a narrator who comes in and out of the scenes. When he is onstage as the narrator, he is unnoticed by the other characters (except for the few occasions when he has direct interaction with Ralphie). When Jean assumes an onstage role (e.g., the telegram deliverer), he is, of course, seen by the others as that character. When Jean is observing Ralphie, he feels and expresses everything just as Ralphie would, exactly paralleling the boy’s emotional state. The “Universal I” phrase that Jean uses in his opening speech is his way of distancing himself from the story, but it is truly autobiographical in nature.]

THE PARKERS:

RALPHIE: 9, going on 10 (may be played by a 9 to 12-year-old). Cute and winsome, but not precious. Bright, but not precocious. A regular kid you wouldn’t mind having as a next-door neighbor. He’s a bit mischievous and rascally but with a twinkle in his eye.

MOTHER: 30s to 40s. More in charge of the family than the Old Man is, but she would never let him know it. She is warm and affable ... at times a bit daffy ... but not a pushover. A vibrant woman, she is always busy, especially anytime she’s in the kitchen. She is the secret engine that keeps the family running, keeping the household together with an impressive balancing act.

THE OLD MAN: 30s to 40s. A guy with a good heart, though it is buried beneath a sometimes gruff (and rough) exterior. He's a devoted husband and father who loves his family but doesn't overtly show it. He usually expects the worst but is capable of excitement if the situation warrants (though it usually doesn't). In his moments of fantasy, he is transformed from his usual grumbling blue-collar self to a true song and dance man.

RANDY: 7 to 8 (may be played by a 7 to 10-year-old). Ralphie's younger brother. Cute, cuddly and whiny. Admires Ralphie but won't admit it. He's at the stage of childhood wherein he seems opposed to everything, but he's still lovable—not a brat.

THE KIDS (*may be doubled*):

SCHWARTZ: a classmate.

FLICK: a classmate.

ESTHER JANE: a classmate.

MARY BETH: a classmate.

SCUT FARKUS: 14 to 15. The textbook example of a schoolyard bully, except this truant doesn't go to school. He is loud, obnoxious and intimidating. Older than Ralphie and his classmates by a year or two, he wears a perpetual scowl beneath his trademark coonskin cap. He always appears at the most inopportune times to scare and harass his innocent victims.

GROVER DILL: 9 to 12. Always at Farkus' side is his toady, Dill. Much younger and decidedly smaller than Farkus, Dill delights in being tethered to his "hero." He punctuates the bully's threats and warnings with a series of rapid-fire belly-laughs, thus making the two of them the scourge of the neighborhood whenever they appear. But, like most of their ilk, when the two are finally challenged and bested, they turn out to be the biggest cowards of all.

BOY

GIRLS (3)

NANCY

BANK TELLERS

CUSTOMERS

TAP SPECIALTY BOY

GOGGLES KID

WAITER'S DAUGHTER

THE ADULTS (*may be doubled*):

MISS SHIELDS: Mid 30s to late 50s. The local elementary school teacher. A seemingly stereotypical 1940s educator—prim and proper. Stern when necessary, though warm—and even humorous—when the situation merits it. In Ralphie’s fantasy, she becomes a dynamic, show-stopping, brassy belter and tapper—a force to be reckoned with.

SANTA: Early 30s to early 60s. The Santa Claus at Higbee’s Department Store is decidedly unlike the typical “Jolly Old Elf” of legend and lore. Ill-tempered and slightly inebriated, he is unhappy with his job. He dismisses each child as quickly as possible in an attempt to put an end to the day and, perhaps, head for the nearest “watering hole.”

ELVES (8)

DELIVERY MEN (2)

TOWNSPEOPLE

PARENTS

VILLAIN

BANKROBBERS (2)

ESCAPED PRISONER

BARTENDER

CUSTOMERS

CAN-CAN GIRLS

CAN-CAN GIRLFRIEND

POLICEMAN

FIREMAN

DOCTOR

NURSE

WAITER

SETTINGS

ACT I

- PROLOGUE: Christmas Eve, several years ago
New York City
A street corner outside the radio studio of Station WOR
The radio studio desk
- SCENE 1: December 1, 1940
The Parker family house
Higbee's Department Store
- SCENE 2: The next day
The Parker family house
A small portion of the outside yard
- SCENE 3: Soon afterward
A path leading to school
- SCENE 4: A few minutes later
The classroom
- SCENE 5: A week later
The Parker family house
- SCENE 6: Early evening on December 13, 1940
The Parker family house
- SCENE 7: Immediately following
On the road
- SCENE 8: Late that night
The Parker family house

ACT II

- SCENE 1: December 20, 1940
The schoolyard and classroom
- SCENE 2: A 1930s kid gangster fantasy at a speakeasy
- SCENE 3: Immediately following
A path from school
- SCENE 4: A few minutes later
The Parker family house
- SCENE 5: Christmas Eve
Santa's station at Higbee's Department Store
- SCENE 6: Christmas Eve
The Parker family house
- SCENE 7: A half hour or so later
Ralphie and Randy's bedroom
- SCENE 8: Christmas Morning
The Parker family house
A Chinese restaurant, Chop Suey Palace
The town

MUSICAL NUMBERS - ACT I

1.	Overture	17
	Orchestra	
1a.	Transition to 1940	18
	Orchestra	
2.	It All Comes Down to Christmas (Part 1).....	18
	Ralphie, The Parkers	
2a.	It All Comes Down to Christmas (Part 2).....	22
	The Parkers, Kids, Ensemble, Townspeople	
2b.	Higbee’s Window.....	25
	Ralphie, Kids, Ensemble	
3.	Red Ryder Carbine-Action BB Gun.....	26
	Ralphie, Jean25	
3a.	It All Comes Down to Christmas (Reprise).....	28
	Ralphie, Ensemble, Townspeople, Kids, Mother	
4.	The Genius on Cleveland Street.....	30
	The Old Man, Mother	
4a.	The Furnace Blues	34
	Orchestra	
4b.	An Opening!	35
	Ensemble, Ralphie	
4c.	The Path to School.....	38
	Orchestra	
5.	When You’re a Wimp.....	39
	Ralphie, Randy, Schwartz, Flick, Esther Jane, Mary Beth, Farkus, Dill, Kids	
5a.	After Wimp	42
	Orchestra	
5b.	What I Want for Christmas	43
	Orchestra	

6.	Ralphie to the Rescue!	43
	Ralphie, Miss Shields, The Old Man, Mother, Randy, Ensemble	
6a.	After Ralphie to the Rescue!.....	50
	Ralphie	
7.	What a Mother Does	52
	Mother	
7a.	Miss Shields Fantasy.....	55
	Orchestra	
7b.	Haul It In.....	58
	Orchestra	
8.	A Major Award	59
	The Old Man, Mother, Townspeople, Kids	
8a.	After Major Award.....	66
	Orchestra	
9.	Parker Family Sing-along	68
	The Parkers	
9a.	Flat Tire.....	69
	Orchestra	
9b.	F*@#!	71
	Orchestra	
10.	Act I Finale	74
	Ralphie, Townspeople, The Old Man, Mother, Randy	

MUSICAL NUMBERS - ACT II

11. Entr'acte.....	77
Orchestra	
11a. Before Sticky Situation.....	77
Orchestra	
12. Sticky Situation.....	77
Ralphie, Kids (Girls), Schwartz, Flick, Policeman, Doctor, Fireman, Flick's Mom, Nurse	
12a. Sticky Situation (Playoff)	83
Orchestra	
12b. To the Nightclub	85
Farkus, Dill, Kids	
13. You'll Shoot Your Eye Out!.....	86
Farkus, Dill, Schwartz, Flick, Kids, Miss Shields	
13a. You'll Shoot Your Eye Out! (Playoff).....	89
Orchestra	
13b. The Fight.....	90
Kids	
14. Just Like That.....	92
Mother	
14a. Red Ryder (Reprise) & At Higbee's	97
Ralphie and Elves	
15. Up on Santa's Lap.....	99
Santa, Mary Beth, Elves, Ralphie, Randy and Kids	
15a. Up on Santa's Lap (Playoff) & Transition Back to the Parker House	106
Orchestra	
16. Before The Old Man Comes Home	108
The Parkers	
16a. The Night Before Christmas	113
Orchestra	

17. Somewhere Hovering Over Indiana.....	113
Ralphie, Randy and Kids	
18. Christmas Morning	117
Ralphie and Randy	
18a. Ralphie to the Rescue! (Reprise).....	122
Ralphie and Ensemble	
18b. Bumpus Hounds.....	125
Orchestra	
18c. To the Chop Suey Palace	127
Orchestra	
19. A Christmas Story	129
The Parkers and Full Company	
20. Bows	134
Orchestra	
21. Exit Music.....	134
Orchestra	

PRODUCTION NOTES

FARKUS and DILL: The two villains are not members of Ralphie’s class. They are, however, used in production numbers that occur outside of school and, of course, in any scenes where they have lines.

THE BUMPUS HOUNDS: In the original Broadway production, live trained dogs were used to great effect. If trained dogs are not available, it is suggested that adult or child actors might portray the animals or that puppets be used. If not practical, all of The Old Man’s lines about—and to—the dogs may be played and delivered offstage before he enters the house and/or through the open door when he comes inside.

BB GUNS: In the simpler times of 1940’s America, the wish for a Christmas or birthday BB gun was on many a young person’s list. It was a very common gift in those days. Most of the instances of guns being used in this show, particularly by the ensemble, can be done with guns in boxes with a picture on the outside of the box (as appeared on the original Red Ryder box). Only in the fantasy, “Ralphie to the Rescue” and in the final moments of the show—when Ralphie unwraps his gift—do we actually see a real BB gun being held.

A Christmas Story, The Musical

ACT I

(#1: “Overture”)

PROLOGUE

(New York City. A street corner outside the radio studio at Station WOR. Christmas Eve, many years ago.

At C is a Salvation Army SANTA, slowly and rhythmically ringing a hand bell next to a donation kettle hanging from a tripod. Anxious shoppers and businesspeople hurry along their way, ignoring SANTA and his bell. Near the end of the “Overture,” JEAN SHEPHERD, wearing an overcoat, gloves and hat enters. He stops, tosses a few coins into the kettle and begins to walk toward the suggestion of a radio studio that has materialized, in some form, DC. Perhaps a desk, containing a microphone, which may have an “On Air” sign attached. SANTA gives the bell a good-natured scolding ring, stopping JEAN, who pulls out a couple of bills and ceremoniously drops them into the kettle. As JEAN goes to leave, SANTA once more stops him with a rather violent ringing of the bell. JEAN, incredulous, tosses his remaining change in the bucket. SANTA resumes the rhythmic ringing and disappears from view. JEAN moves to the studio, removes his outer garments, signals to an unseen engineer, sits and speaks into a microphone.)

JEAN (as the “Overture” ends, delivered with high energy, excitement and a wry, nostalgic sensibility). Hi, gang! Are you ready to play radio on this blustery, blizzardy Christmas Eve? I am if you are. Yes, once again, right here on WOR in the heart of Manhattan, it’s “The Jean Shepherd Show.”

(He blows “Charge!” on a kazoo.) Home of the greatest stories ever told—by yours truly, of course. On my way into the studio, in the spanking December breeze, I passed by a Salvation Army Santa Claus listlessly tolling his bell, and remembered another Christmas, in another time, in another place, and ... a gun. I take you back to the exotic city of—*(Anticlimactic.)* Hohman, Indiana—where the state line ends abruptly in the icy, detergent-filled waters of Lake Michigan. Back in the day, Lake Michigan was so polluted you could run halfway to Milwaukee before you sank to the bottom. Any-the-how, it was there in Hohman, back in 1940, that I experienced my most important

(#1a: “Transition to 1940”)

JEAN *(cont’d)*. Yuletide season. Now when I say the word “I,” I don’t mean me, necessarily. It’s a universal “I.” And the “I” in this particular story is Ralphie Parker. So sit back, turn up the volume and let’s go!

(JEAN “orchestrates” the set change as the studio goes off, and the interior of the Parker house comes into view.)

SCENE 1

(The Parker family house and outside. December 1, 1940.)

MOTHER *(impatiently)*. Ralphie!

(Action onstage freezes.)

JEAN. There it is! The house on Cleveland Street.

(#2: “It All Comes Down to Christmas” [Part 1])

MOTHER *(calling upstairs to RALPHIE and RANDY, with growing urgency)*. We have to go right now! I’m not kidding, boys! Do you want to miss it?

(Action onstage freezes.)

JEAN. My mother in the kitchen, trying in vain to get us bundled up and out the door.

MOTHER. Ralphie! Randy! I mean now!!

(RANDY enters from the upstairs, going downstairs, not eager to venture out in the blizzard.)

RANDY. Aw, Mom!

MOTHER. Randy—now!

(Action onstage freezes.)

JEAN. My kid brother Randy—

RANDY *(as MOTHER begins to dress him)*. Awwwwwww ...

(We see RALPHIE in his bedroom holding a magazine.)

JEAN. And there I am with my December issue of *The Open Road For Boys*, itchy, nervously, obsessing over a three-colored, framed, full-page back cover advertisement of the greatest gift a boy could ever hunger for—and realizing that time was my enemy.

RALPHIE.

GOODBYE NOVEMBER
THANKSGIVING'S GONE
NOW EV'RY HOUSE YOU PASS
HAS A PLASTIC REINDEER ON ITS LAWN

MOTHER *(calling to upstairs, snappy)*. Ralphie! Please!

RALPHIE.

IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS
THAT'S CLEAR TO SEE
AND THERE'S A CERTAIN SOMETHING
THAT I WANT BENEATH MY TREE

MOTHER (*calling to offstage*). Frank! Start the car, the boys are almost ready!

RALPHIE (*starts downstairs*).

THIS YEAR
DON'T WANT ANOTHER PLAID TIE
THIS YEAR
CAN'T LET MY CHANCE PASS BY
AND I'M RUNNING OUT OF TIME!

MOTHER (*fed up*). Ralphie!

RALPHIE (*eagerly*).

THERE'S A GIFT I GOTTA GET
AND IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS
I KNOW THE CLOCK IS SET
AND IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS
I'VE GOT ONE SHOT AND IT'S TWENTY-FOUR DAYS
AWAY!
I HAFTA HURRY UP
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS DAY!

(*MOTHER helps RALPHIE into his coat.*

Outside, sounds of the BUMPUS HOUNDS barking are heard as THE OLD MAN enters.)

THE OLD MAN. Get away! Get away! Shoo! Shoo!

JEAN. And then there's my old man—

THE OLD MAN (*disgruntled, this is a daily occurrence*). Bumpus! Call 'em off. Bumpus!

JEAN. My old man and the Bumpus hounds next door.

THE OLD MAN. Get out of here you rotten—no no no!

(*The BUMPUS HOUNDS chase THE OLD MAN across the stage.*)

THE OLD MAN (*cont'd*). Bumpus! Call 'em off!

JEAN. Our neighbors, the Bumpuses, were so low down on the evolutionary chain they weren't even included in Darwin's family tree.

THE OLD MAN (*firing off a series of grumbled fake-swears*).
Consarned gadbits cummerbutts rackin' frackin' flick-flock-in' sham-shuckin' mangy mutts!

RALPHIE (*cobbling together a plan*).

I HAVE A MISSION

I HAVE A PLAN

I KNOW TO GET THAT GIFT

I'VE REALLY GOTTA GET TO MY OLD MAN

THE OLD MAN (*entering the house*). Stupid hillbillies!

RALPHIE.

AND THEN THERE'S MOTHER

SHE CAN BE TOUGH.

I'LL DROP A COUPLE HINTS

MAYBE THAT'LL BE ENOUGH!

(*RALPHIE makes an effort to get MOTHER to notice the Red Ryder BB gun advertisement.*)

MOTHER. The store windows are lit at six o'clock. You don't want to miss it, do you, boys?

RANDY (*overlapping*). Come on, Ralphie—we got to get to Higbee's!

JEAN (*with nostalgic anticipation*). Ah, Higbee's. The high-water mark of the pre-Christmas season was the corner window at Higbee's Department Store. The window was now packed with gifts galore. Including the gift of my constant yearning.

(*RANDY, MOTHER and THE OLD MAN exit outside as the house begins to fly away and the Parkers' car is revealed.*)

RALPHIE.

THIS YEAR
DON'T WANT A BOOK I WON'T READ
THIS YEAR
I KNOW THE THING THAT I NEED
AND I'M—RUNNING OUT OF TIME.

RANDY, MOTHER & THE OLD MAN (*a bit frenetic*).

TO HIGBEE'S
THAT WINDOW!
WE GOTTA GO!

(THE PARKERS are in the car and drive downtown to Higbee's Department Store. Trees swirl by.)

THE PARKERS.

NOT A SECOND CAN WE SPARE
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

MOTHER & THE OLD MAN (*exasperated*).

WE'RE PULLING OUT OUR HAIR
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

THE PARKERS.

WE'VE GOT ONE SHOT AND IT'S TWENTY-FOUR DAYS

MOTHER. RALPHIE & RANDY. THE OLD MAN.

AWAY

AWAY

AWAY

AWAY

THE PARKERS.

WE HAFTA HURRY UP
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS DAY!

(Music segues to the next song.)

(#2a: “It All Comes Down to Christmas” [Part 2])

(Various children appear, in a dream-like state, filled with deep yearning.)

KIDS (SOPRANO 2).

THIS YEAR

I WANT A SHINY RED BIKE

KIDS (ALTO).

I WANT A MODEL TOY PLANE

KIDS (SOPRANO 1).

HOW 'BOUT A LIONEL TRAIN!

(Adults appear around them, forming family clusters.)

ENSEMBLE & TOWNSMAN.

THIS YEAR

TOWNSMAN (*grouchy*).

I WANT

A WIFE WHO CAN COOK

TOWNSWOMEN 1 & 2.

I WANT MY KID TO EARN A'S

TOWNSMEN 1, 2 & 3.

I HOPE THEY GIMME THAT RAISE!

ALL KIDS.

AND I'M RUNNING OUT OF TIME!

THE PARKERS & ADULT ENSEMBLE.

WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO CHRISTMAS

ENSEMBLE.

WE'RE GETTING CLOSE
TO CHRISTMAS

KIDS.

THERE'S ONLY TWENTY-FOUR
DAYS

ENSEMBLE.

IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

ALL.

TO CHRISTMAS DAY!

(A flurry of activity as parents prepare themselves and their children for the bitter cold outside. Hats, gloves, and scarves abound.)

ENSEMBLE.

WE'RE SCRIMPING AND WE'RE SAVING
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

KIDS *(a realization)*.

WE BETTER START BEHAVING
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

ALL.

WE'VE GOT ONE SHOT AND IT'S TWENTY-FOUR DAYS

KIDS ENSEMBLE. TOWNSWOMEN. TOWNSMEN.
AWAY AWAY

AWAY

THIRTY-FOUR
THOUSAND,
FORTY-NINE
MINUTES

MEN (TENOR).

ALMOST
CHRISTMAS

ALMOST
CHRISTMAS

AWAY

ALL.

CHRISTMAS DAY!

(With determined cheer, they face the storm.)

WE'LL BRAVE THE BITTER WEATHER
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS
AND MAKE IT THROUGH TOGETHER
'CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

ENSEMBLE.

WE'VE GOT ONE SHOT AND IT'S TWENTY-FOUR
DAYS AWAY!

ALL.

TIME IS ALMOST UP
AND IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

SOPRANO 1, TENOR 1 SOPRANO 2, ALTOS RALPHIE & KIDS.

& BARITONE 1.

& TENOR 2.

DAY!

ALMOST
CHRISTMAS!

ALMOST
CHRISTMAS!

CHRISTMAS DAY!

NEARLY
CHRISTMAS DAY!

NEARLY
CHRISTMAS DAY!

(On the button of the number, we find the ENSEMBLE and THE PARKERS staring out front, looking through Higbee's store window, which has materialized in front of them.)

(#2b: “Higbee’s Window”)

(In sudden commotion, all the KIDS and PARENTS exclaim what they see and what they want in the window.)

KID 1. Look. It's Raggedy Ann and Andy!

KID 2. Lincoln Logs! That's what I want!

NANCY'S MOTHER. Nancy, see Mrs. Claus sitting in the rocking chair?

KID 3. Tinkertoys! Tinkertoys!

KID 4. Mama—Daddy, can I have the red wagon?

KID 4'S FATHER. A Radio Flyer. That's expensive, son.

KID 4. Well, can I?

KID 4'S MOTHER. You have to ask Santa, dear.

(Sudden exclamation and joy from all as they survey the window. The music swells in excitement. JEAN appears at C, wearing Red Ryder's outfit and carrying the BB gun. The ENSEMBLE and KIDS freeze.)

RALPHIE (*a burst of excitement, he is coming face-to-face with what, up until now, he has only dreamt about*). That's it! That's it!

JEAN (*as Red Ryder*). Boys, at last you can own ...

RALPHIE.

AN OFFICIAL RED RYDER RANGE MODEL CARBINE-ACTION BB GUN

ENSEMBLE & KIDS (*as if the gates of heaven have dramatically burst open*).

AH!

RALPHIE.

WITH A COMPASS IN THE STOCK
AND THIS *THING* THAT TELLS TIME

ENSEMBLE & KIDS.

AH!

(#3: “Red Ryder Carbine-Action BB Gun”)

JEAN (*as himself*). The fever was well upon me. For months, I had thought about a Red Ryder air rifle. And now, there it was! The real thing!

RALPHIE (*a slow realization*).

YOU DON'T NEED A STEED TO BE A COWBOY
NO, YOU'RE NOT A HERO JUST BY
GALLOPING OFF IN THE SUN

WHAT YOU REALLY NEED TO BE A COWBOY
FEARLESS, KEEPIN' BANDITS TREMBLIN' ON THE RUN
IS A RED RYDER CARBINE-ACTION BB GUN

(The ENSEMBLE and KIDS fade away as RALPHIE steps through the window and joins RED RYDER who hands him a box containing the gun.)

JEAN (*as Red Ryder*). That's right, boys! If you want to keep your homestead free of villains, I give you—OLD BLUE!

RALPHIE. (*fantasizing, concocting scenarios in which he might use the gun*).

SEE ME STANDING GUARD UP AT MY WINDOW
I'LL PROTECT THE NEIGHBORHOOD SO
OUTLAWS ARE ALWAYS OUTDONE

AND I'LL BOMBARD THEM FROM THAT WINDOW
SHOW THOSE WEASELS HOW THE
WILD WEST WAS WON!

BANG! BANG!

WITH A RED RYDER CARBINE-ACTION BB GUN

MY TEACHER COULD BE TAKEN BY A PACK OF GOONS
MY CLASS MIGHT BE INVADED BY RACCOONS!
THE KIDS WOULD HURRY DOWN THE HALL
AS TIGERS TRY TO EAT THEM ALL
BUT THEY WOULD BE OK
I'D SWOOP IN AND SAVE THE DAY!

AND THE GIRLS WOULD SIGH AND SAY, "OOOH,
RALPHIE!"

WHEN YOU'RE BIG AND BRAVE LIKE ME
NO BULLY CAN EVER MAKE FUN

MY MOM IS CRYIN' "*COWBOY RALPHIE*"

WHILE MY DAD IS YELLIN'

"THAT BOY, HE'S MY SON!"

WITH A RED RYDER CARBINE-ACTION BB GUN

(He gets lost in this dream for just a moment, then is quickly snapped back to reality.)

BUT IT'S ALMOST NEARLY GETTING CLOSE
COUNTING DOWN, THE CLOCK IS SET
DON'T KNOW HOW, DON'T KNOW WHO
BUT I JUST KNOW I GOTTA GET
A RED RYDER CARBINE—

JEAN.

A RED RYDER CARBINE!

RALPHIE.

STOCK WITH A COMPASS—

JEAN.

WITH A COMPASS IN THE STOCK!

RALPHIE (*with triumph*).

RED RYDER CARBINE-ACTION BB GUN!

(#3a: “It All Comes Down to Christmas” [Reprise])

(The ENSEMBLE enters hurriedly, finishing their shopping before bundling up and heading home. RALPHIE’s fantasy is over; the Red Ryder BB gun is a million miles away.)

ALL.

THE LINES ARE GETTING LONGER
’CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

TOWNSMEN 1 & 2 (*surreptitiously*).

OUR DRINKS ARE GETTING STRONGER
’CAUSE IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS

RALPHIE (*determined desperation*).

I’VE GOT ONE SHOT

ALL.

AND IT’S TWENTY-FOUR DAYS AWAY!
IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS DAY!

(As the ENSEMBLE and KIDS exit, the Parker family house reassembles. We hear barking dogs. MOTHER is in the kitchen stirring a pot on the stove. THE OLD MAN sits at the table, flipping through mail.)

SCENE 2

(The Parker family house and a small portion of the outside yard. The next day.)

MOTHER.

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO DO
AND IT ALL COMES DOWN TO CHRISTMAS ...

(Calling to upstairs.)

Ralphie! Randy! Breakfast! Get ready for school!

(JEAN blows a puff of snow from his hand, creating a snowfall effect.)

MOTHER *(cont'd)*. Goodness gracious. It's a blizzard already. And December's just begun.

JEAN. With only twenty-three days till zero hour, and my mission already well underway, my father had embarked on a quest of his own.

THE OLD MAN. Bills ... bills ... bills. Hey, look—here it is! *(Opens an envelope and withdraws a puzzle page. He goes to work on it.)*

JEAN. The Depression days were the golden age of the crossword puzzle. And my old man was hooked. Contest after contest, my old man labored doggedly. He entered them all, but this was the farthest he'd ever gotten.

THE OLD MAN *(struggling, in frustration)*. Argh!

MOTHER. What's wrong, dear?

THE OLD MAN. What is the name of the Lone Ranger's nephew's horse?

MOTHER *(nonchalantly)*. Uh. Victor. His name is Victor.

THE OLD MAN. How did you know that?

MOTHER *(in a matter-of-fact manner)*. Oh, everybody knows that.