

Audition Side A

Act I

Miracle on 34th Street, the Play

11

PIERCE. Kris, if I get that X-ray machine, I'll *know* you're Santa Claus.

KRIS. Just look in your stocking on Christmas morning.

PIERCE. Kris, we've never really discussed your having to leave Maplewood. I want you to know how sorry I am. I did everything I could, but the Board overruled me. They just won't allow us to keep anyone whom they have decided is mentally unsound.

KRIS. But I passed all those tests, didn't I?

PIERCE. I know you did. I've argued for you all along. But I just can't justify what they call paranoid thinking, even though you are not "harmful to yourself or others," to use the psychiatric jargon.

KRIS. You mean because I'm Santa Claus?

PIERCE. Because you *say* you're Santa Claus.

KRIS. But it happens to be true!

PIERCE. But the Board doesn't believe in Santa Claus. So... you're out.

KRIS (*considers a moment*). What happens next?

PIERCE. Maplewood has an arrangement with the Mt. Hope Sanitarium.

KRIS. The "rubber room," huh?

PIERCE. For a public hospital, Mt. Hope is a comfortable and charming place... There's entertainment, TV, and...

Kris, do you have any money?

KRIS. Sure. I've got \$53.

PIERCE. That won't get you very far. You're not a young man anymore. It won't be easy for you to earn a living. If you can't support yourself, you'll become a ward of the state, and end up at Mt. Hope anyway. Why not avoid the disagreeable experience of living on the street?

KRIS. There's nothing wrong with me. I'll be *hanged* if I'll go to the funny farm!

PIERCE. What choice do you have?

KRIS. Wellll... The Central Park zookeeper is a friend of mine. Maybe I'll stay with him. The reindeer don't doubt my sanity.

PIERCE (*derogatory*). Oh, Kris, please!

(The focus shifts to parade preparations.)

SHELLHAMMER. Well, Doris, after five years we have this parade business working pretty well, don't you think?

DORIS. Just as long as Mr. Macy is happy.

(SUSAN and FRED enter.)

SUSAN. I think the Barney float is better this year, Mother.

DORIS. Yes, Susan, we fixed his eyes so they roll, which makes him look more alive.

FRED. You watch your mother, Susan. You'll be able to handle this parade yourself by the time you're ten.

SHELLHAMMER. Would you believe eight?

(DRUNKEN SANTA CLAUS stumbles in, trips and falls.)

DRUNKEN SANTA CLAUS. Berry Dristmas! *(KRIS helps him up. DRUNKEN SANTA tries to crack his whip, but it flops.)*

KRIS. Allow me, sir. *(Cracks the whip smartly.)* You see, it's all in the wrist.

DRUNKEN SANTA CLAUS *(takes a swig from a bottle)*. Never works 'less you oil it zchuss a little. *(He chuckles at his joke.)*