

MOTHER. You can wear your old ones with the broken ear-piece until we can call the doctor and get some new ones. *(She moves back upstage to close the freezer. RALPHIE turns and faces downstage, with a wide grin.)*

RALPH. I had pulled it off!

*(As MOTHER comes back downstage, RALPHIE goes back into whimper mode.)*

MOTHER. Let's go get you dressed.

*(They move toward the back hall. The lights in the kitchen and backyard fade slowly to black. RALPH's light DL remains up.)*

RALPHIE *(as they cross)*. I left my gun outside.

MOTHER. When you're dressed, you can go outside and get it. *(They exit.)*

RALPH. Life is like that. Sometimes, at the height of our reveries, when our joy is at its zenith, when all is right with the world, the most unthinkable disasters descend upon us. *(In the house, in the darkness, the sounds of a multitude of dogs, snarling and growling and furniture being upset.)* Like now.

*(A tight spot comes up on THE OLD MAN, reading his paper in the living room. He lowers the paper. For a moment he is still. Another crash and the back screen door slams. Slowly it dawns on him that these noises are out of the ordinary. Suddenly, he knows.)*

THE OLD MAN. Bumpus hounds! *(The dog sounds fade quickly.)* Turkey! *(He rises and the lights come up.)* Turkey!

*(He rushes into the kitchen. The table is upended. Chairs are scattered. The turkey pan is upside down on the floor. The screen door hangs on one hinge and we hear, in the distance, dogs fighting over some prize.)*

RALPH. The Bumpus hounds had struck! They'd been in and out in seconds, and had taken The Old Man's precious turkey with them.

THE OLD MAN (*standing in the doorway, crying out*). Bumpuses! You songs of business! You frabjabbling wangdoodling Bumpuses!

*(MOTHER, RALPHIE and RANDY come rushing into the kitchen. MOTHER begins crying, her face in her hands. The BOYS are thunderstruck.)*

THE OLD MAN. The turkey! The Bumpus hounds got the turkey! (*He grabs the roaster.*) Here, you hounds of hell! Take the pan, too! (*He flings the roasting pan. Now he has momentum going, grabs a pan and a covered basket and races back to stand in the door, shouting.*) Why don't you take the sweet potatoes, too? (*He flings the pan out into the darkness.*) And the rolls! (*He throws the cover off the basket and begins lobbing dinner rolls, one by one, high in the air, then turns back to the kitchen for more ammunition.*) Where's the creamed corn? Gimme the pie! Let's throw it all over there! How 'bout the ... how 'bout the ... the ... (*He has run out of steam. He sees that MOTHER is crying, and crosses to comfort her. RALPH crosses slowly to DC as he speaks.*)

RALPH. The heavenly aroma still hung heavy in the house, but the turkey was gone! No turkey! No turkey sandwiches, turkey salad, turkey gravy, turkey hash, turkey a la king! No gallons of turkey soup! It was gone! All gone!

THE OLD MAN (*in a low, barely controlled tone*). All right. Everybody get dressed and get your coats. We're eating at the chop suey joint for Christmas dinner.

*(The lights fade to black in the house. RALPH crosses to DR and a pool of light. An instrumental of "Deck The Halls" comes up at a low volume under.)*