

Mother

The Old Man ACT I

A Christmas Story

67

Ralphie

(THE OLD MAN emerges holding a life-sized female leg in a black spike heel and mesh stocking. He dives back into the excelsior. A moment of silence, then MOTHER, stunned, repeats herself.)

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MOTHER. What is it?

THE OLD MAN. It's a leg. Like a statue.

MOTHER. A statue?

THE OLD MAN. Yeah. Statue.

RALPHIE (who has stepped forward, begins to run his hand up and down the leg. Dreamy). Yeah ... statue.

MOTHER (moving him back). Ralphie ...

THE OLD MAN. Omigosh! Do you know what this is? Would you believe it? (He rises from the crate with a garish, pink satin lampshade trimmed in black fringe. He claps the shade on the leg, which MOTHER has been supporting on the edge of the crate.) It's a lamp! Isn't it great? What a great lamp! Hold it. (He climbs out of the packing crate.) I know just the place for it. (He crosses to the DL table, moves the plant to the floor, moves the table away from the wall, puts the lamp on the table.) Right in the middle of our front room window.

(He holds the power cord aloft, looks along the baseboard for the wall socket, finds it, falls to his knees and sets to work on the cluttered knot of extensions, multiple sockets and plugs.)

THE OLD MAN. Lessee ... the radio ... the Christmas tree ... This goes to ... (Sparks. A puff of smoke rises, a floor lamp in the corner winks out, and the lights on the Christmas tree go off.)

MOTHER. What happened?

THE OLD MAN (blowing on it and replugging). I meant to do that. Nothin' to worry about. Got it under control. Just a minute ... and ... there! (The lamp lights. THE OLD MAN steps back, enraptured.) Oh! Look at that! Will you look at

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