

Ralph  
Ralphie

Mother

The Old Man

behind Pulaski's candy store last week. (*He looks hopeful. MOTHER turns slowly to look at RALPHIE. THE OLD MAN lowers his paper.*)

⊛ RALPH. They looked at me as if I had lobsters crawling out of my ears.

MOTHER (*turning back to the stove*). What would you like for Christmas, Ralphie?

RALPH. Horrified, I heard myself blurt out ...

RALPHIE. An official Red Ryder carbine action 200-shot Range Model air rifle! (*He claps his hand over his mouth.*)

MOTHER (*still turned away; almost offhand*). You'll shoot your eye out.

RALPH. Oh no! It was the *classic* mother BB gun block, not surmountable by any means known to kid-dom! Immediately I went into damage control mode.

RALPHIE. I was just kidding. Heh-heh! Even though Flick is getting one ...

RALPH. A lie.

MOTHER (*coming to the table with a cup of coffee*). BB guns are dangerous. You'd shoot your eye out.

RALPH (*crossing to R proscenium*). The boom had been lowered, and I was under it. I thought I'd better change the subject and draw attention away from my master plan.

RALPHIE. Hey, Dad ...

THE OLD MAN (*concentrating on his newspaper*). Hmm?

RALPHIE. Bet you can't guess what I got you for Christmas!

THE OLD MAN (*still occupied*). Let's see ... is it a new furnace?

⊛ RALPHIE (*a forced chuckle*). That's a good one, Dad.

(*RANDY laughs too long and too hard at THE OLD MAN's bon mot. THE OLD MAN is again flushed out from behind*)