

(Young) Patrick

1-9-44

48

ACT ONEScene 9

SCENE: The Beekman Place penthouse. To a wistful and minor "IT'S TODAY", MAME enters her apartment -- now denuded of its extravagant furnishings.

MAME

(Calling, without spirit)
Agnes? Ito?

(PATRICK hurries down the stairs)

PATRICK

START → Hi, Auntie Mame!

MAME

(Hugging him)
Darling! What are you doing home?

PATRICK

I got a long week-end, on account of good grades. I belong to you legally for three whole days.

MAME

Oh? I was hoping maybe you'd been expelled.

(ITO and AGNES emerge from the kitchen)

ITO

(Brightly)
Missy get fired again?

MAME

I'm afraid so, Ito. I was just as bad at fingernails as I was selling vacuum cleaners.

AGNES

I'm glad you're home, Miss Dennis. I didn't know what to fix for dinner.

MAME

What did we have last night?

AGNES

Shredded Wheat.

(Young) Patrick

1-9-45

49

MAME

Agnes -- Ito -- I did hope I could pay you some of your back salary --

AGNES

I'm not money-mad, Miss Dennis; I wouldn't think of leaving you.

ITO

(Cheerfully)

No place else get job anyhow.

(There is a strained moment. MAME looks from one face to the next -- then at the blank walls, previously hung with expensive paintings -- and she breaks! Suddenly, the pillar of the household collapses into tears)

PATRICK

Please don't cry, Auntie Mame!

MAME

Oh, hell, we don't even have any Kleenex!

(AGNES offers MAME a handkerchief from her sweater sleeve)

AGNES

You're a loving woman, Miss Dennis. You're peculiar, but you're loving!

(MAME returns the handkerchief, patting AGNES' hand)

MAME

(Through her tears)

Thanks, Agnes. You're peculiar, too.

(She gets up with sudden resolve)

What are we doing, sitting around, letting the depression depress us?!

(She pulls three packages from beneath the couch)

Merry Christmas, everybody!

(They are all astonished at this)

ITO

Missy Dennis get mixed up with calendar again. Not Christmas yet.

AGNES

It says in the paper 16 shopping days until.

(Young) Patrick

1-9-46
50

MAME

Well, we need it now, so let's go ahead and have it.

(Handing out the presents)

About three jobs ago, I bought these Christmas presents fast, before I was tempted to spend the money on something foolish like food.

PATRICK

(Eagerly tearing open a suitcase)

Golly! Long pants! At last!

(ITO takes a wristwatch out of his package)

ITO

Oh, thank you, Missy.

MAME

It's not Tiffany's, Ito. It's Walgreen's.

AGNES

(Unwrapping a bottle)

Perfume! It's so French-smelling.

MAME

(Suddenly)

Ito, where are last year's Christmas decorations?

ITO

In kitchen closet.

MAME

Go and get 'em!

/ 10 /

WE NEED A LITTLE CHRISTMAS

(ITO runs off.

MAME sings)

HAUL OUT THE HOLLY

PUT UP THE TREE BEFORE MY SPIRIT FALLS AGAIN!

FILL UP THE STOCKING

WE MAY BE RUSHING THINGS BUT DECK THE HALLS AGAIN NOW

FOR WE NEED A LITTLE CHRISTMAS

RIGHT THIS VERY MINUTE

CANDLES IN THE WINDOW

CAROLS AT THE SPINET

YES, WE NEED A LITTLE CHRISTMAS

RIGHT THIS VERY MINUTE

IT HASN'T SNOWED A SINGLE FLURRY

BUT SANTA DEAR WE'RE IN A HURRY --

SO CLIMB DOWN THE CHIMNEY.

