

(To a group of lingering CHORUS KIDS,  
impatiently.)  
People! People!

BETTY  
Morning!

JUDY  
You sure look bright-eyed today.

BETTY  
You might say Santa came early this year.

JUDY  
If you're talking about Santa Bob Wallace, it couldn't  
have happened to a nicer girl.

BETTY  
We had a long talk last night. Judy, I didn't think  
they made guys like that anymore.

JUDY  
(Kisses her sister's cheek.)  
Happy holiday, sister.

ASST SEAMSTRESS  
(Crossing through, tosses a hat.)  
Hat?

DANCER  
(Catching it.)  
Thanks!  
(JUDY moves off to start work as MARTHA  
enters.)

MARTHA  
Oh, Betty - Betty, there's a telegram for you. From New  
York!

BETTY  
(Taking the telegram:)  
For me? Quite a day.

MARTHA  
"From the Regency Room at the Imperial" - stop. "Can  
you come immediately" - stop. "Solo engagement, you  
name the terms" - stop. Signed  
What-are-you-waiting-for-we're-the-Regency Room.

BETTY  
What did you do, hold it up to the light?

MARTHA

That's for amateurs. I use steam.

MIKE

*(Crossing through.)*

Five minutes, ladies! Five minutes! People, people,  
FIVE!

MARTHA

Too bad you'd have to give up Pinetree to take this  
job. Are you gonna take this job?

BETTY

What, and give up Pinetree?

MARTHA

You are so honorable. Too bad everybody around here  
isn't as honorable as you...

BETTY

Anybody in particular?

MARTHA

I shouldn't tell you this - but. I had a call from a  
Mr. Sheldrake, a friend of Bob's - sounded like some  
big real estate man. Betty, they are scheming to buy up  
the Inn.

BETTY

They're what?

MARTHA

"Our secret plan is going great," he says. Says to me  
he's got a company all ready to take over the Inn - on  
Christmas Eve, no less. The old man'll never know what  
hit him, he says. Oh - and then he says it's a million  
dollar deal and he swears me to silence.

BETTY

That's not possible...

MARTHA

They're not even gonna warn the old coot, just kick him  
in the drawers.

BETTY

Bob couldn't be involved in something like that.

MARTHA

If I'm wrong, I'll resign as President of the New  
England chapter of Busybodies Anonymous.

*(SUSAN enters.)*