

MOTHER (*from kitchen*). Ralphie, be careful out there!
Don't shoot your eye out!

RALPH. She hadn't seen! She didn't know! (*RALPH takes off the neckerchief and tosses it and the cowboy hat over the fence. RALPHIE takes his hand down.*) My eye was all right. The BB must have hit my glasses. My glasses! (*RALPHIE stands and begins searching, myopically, for his glasses.*) Oh no! Where were they? Few things brought such swift and terrible retribution on a kid as a pair of busted glasses! (*A warning to his younger self.*) Be careful, you can't see without those glasses, you might accidentally ... (*A "crunch!" sound as RALPHIE steps down.*) Oh no!

RALPHIE. Oh no! (*He reaches down in the snow and picks up a pair of twisted glasses, one lens broken out.*)

RALPH. Just what I was afraid of! They're pulverized!

RALPHIE. Oh no. (*He tries on the broken glasses. They don't look good.*)

RALPH. For a moment I thought, "I'll fake it! They'll never know the lens is gone!"

RALPHIE. Oh no.

RALPH. I knew that wouldn't work. Rapidly my mind evolved a spectacular plot. Let's see ... uh ... an icicle! Yeah! An icicle falls off the garage and hits me in the eye! It would work! It had to work! Quickly, I whipped up some tears.

(*RALPHIE lowers his head and squirms a bit, then lets out with a wail. MOTHER reacts immediately as the light in the kitchen comes up full.*)

MOTHER. Ralphie? Ralphie!

(*RALPH crosses L. A light comes up DL, and he moves into it. MOTHER crosses outside and through the gate, hovering over RALPHIE.*)

MOTHER
RALPHIE

STREET

MOTHER (*cont'd*). What's the matter, honey? What happened?

RALPHIE (*sobbing*). There was this icicle and it fell off the garage and it hit me in the eye, and I ...

MOTHER. Oh! Oh! (*He sobs as she leads him up the steps.*)
Don't stand out here in the cold. Come on, come on! Sit here. Sit here. (*In the kitchen, she sits him in a chair, then crosses to the sink where she runs water, wets the corner of a dish towel, crosses downstage and wipes his face.*)

RALPHIE.

MOTHER..

It was an icicle! The biggest one I've ever seen! It was up high on The garage. I didn't see it till it was too late! I tried to get out of the way, but it fell and hit me and I tried to save my glasses, but it was too late, and ...

Icicles can be dangerous! Just let me see. Here, here, let's clean it up and see how bad it is. It doesn't look bad at all! Why, no, it's hardly more than a scratch! I'll bet your air rifle deflected it so you weren't hurt as bad as you might have been!

MOTHER. Why sure! There, see? It's just a little bump! Here, here now, you just hold this wet towel on it.

RALPHIE. It hit my cheek and broke my glasses! I tried to get out of the way!

MOTHER (*moving to the refrigerator*). You're lucky it didn't cut your eye! Those icicles have been known to kill people! (*She opens the freezer, takes out ice cubes.*)

RALPHIE. I tried to get out of the way!

MOTHER. Of course you did. (*Moves down to RALPHIE.*)
Here, put some ice cubes in here ... (*She takes the towel, wraps a few ice cubes in it, gives it back.*)

RALPHIE. What about my glasses?

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.)