

1. MUSIC THEME
2. ANCR Well sir, It's early evening as our scene opens now and here in the living room of the small house half-way up in the next block we find Mr. and Mrs. Victor Gook abiding quietly at home. The master of the ménage occupies the easy-chair reading the newspaper while his wife, established on the davenport, devotes her attention to the mending of gentlemen's socks. And now there's conversation. Listen:
3. VIC What's eatin' Stove-poker?
4. SADE Why?
5. VIC Wanders aimlessly from room to room.
6. SADE Where is he now? - In the kitchen?
7. VIC Yeah.
8. SADE **(BRIEFLY)** Wants to take his money outa the bank.
9. VIC That's it?
10. SADE Didn't ya notice how he was flourishing his book around at the supper-table?
11. VIC Uh,uh. I was occupied with the consumption of my meat and potatoes.
12. SADE Flourished his book around to beat the band, ostentatious as a horse. Means only one thing. He's got some notion in his noodle about doin' something with his money.
13. VIC **(CALLS)** Dog license.
14. SADE **(LITTLE GIGGLE)** Gonna stick your neck out, huh?
15. VIC Might as well. Otherwise our darling will mope.
16. RUSH **(OFF)** You holler, gov'?
17. VIC **(CALLS)** Yeah. Will you step into my presence, please? When you're out of sight I grow lonesome an' anxious.

1. SADE **(LITTLE GIGGLE)** Giving him just the opening he's lookin' for.
2. VIC Why not? Get it over with.
3. SADE Well, one thing: he's absolutely not gonna touch that money.
4. VIC O.K.
5. SADE Um.
6. VIC **(RAISES HIS VOICE)** Haloo, Rush, old man. By George, it's grand to see ya.
7. RUSH **(COMING UP)** Want me for something?
8. VIC You've been so silent and preoccupied this evening your mother an' myself are a little worried.
9. RUSH **(ALMOST UP)** Humorous joke, huh?
10. VIC Not at all. If you're in some trouble, we feel you should confide in us. We feel...
11. RUSH I'm not in any trouble. Just thoughtful is all.
12. VIC **(ENCOURAGINGLY)** Uh-huh.
13. RUSH I've been faced with an important problem.
14. VIC Really?
15. RUSH A very important problem.
16. VIC Um.
17. RUSH But I've put my mind to work an' I believe I've hit on a satisfactory solution.
18. VIC That's good.
19. RUSH Yes sir, I believe I've hit on a satisfactory solution.
20. SADE "I'll draw my money outa the bank."

1. RUSH **(POLITELY)** Beg pardon, mom?
2. SADE **(LITTLE GIGGLE)** Ain't that the satisfactory solution ya hit on?
3. RUSH **(POLITELY)** I'm afraid I don't catch on to the angle you're attempting to put across.
4. SADE **(GOOD NATURED)** Oh, I think you do.
5. RUSH (NO COMMENT)
6. VIC If the problem that faces you isn't of too private a nature, Mouse-trap, perhaps you'd take us in your confidence an'...
7. RUSH Oh, it's not so private. I got no objections to draggin' it out in the public eye.
8. VIC Um.
9. RUSH **(SIGNIFICANTLY)** Christmas presents.
10. VIC Ah.
11. RUSH **(CONFIDENTIALLY)** Been drivin' me insane.
12. VIC I expect you...
13. RUSH See, I'm at an age now, gov, where the Christmas-present-problem looms up important. My friends have multiplied to an alarming extent during the past few years. Also, when an individual gets to be fourteen, their relatives expect to be remembered with gifts. As you people know, I am not flush with ready cash. I am penniless eighteen hours a day.
14. VIC Yes. An' my heart bleeds for you. I think I am qualified to sympathize. For I've known poverty myself, Rush. Picture, if you will, a small boy on the farm driving home the cows at the end of the day. The sun is sinking to its bed in the West an' a languorous evening breeze sighs across the ...
15. RUSH **(A TOUCH OF CHILL)** I thought you wished to keep this discussion on a serious basis.
16. VIC I do, my son – believe me.
17. RUSH **(COLDLY)** Uh-huh.

1. VIC (QUIETLY) Proceed with what you were saying. I shall take care not to interrupt again.
2. RUSH (COLDLY) NO – but shucks.
3. VIC Proceed.
4. RUSH Well, like I just stated, the Christmas-present-problem looms up important to an individual fourteen years old. I've lost considerable sleep.
5. SADE When?
6. RUSH Beg pardon?
7. SADE When'd you lose any sleep?
8. RUSH Lots of nights lately. I toss an' turn. I tumble an' thrash.
9. SADE Um.
10. RUSH Sure.
11. VIC However, you've hit on a solution. Your agony is over.
12. RUSH I think so – yes.
13. SADE (MISCHIEVOUSLY) "I'll draw my money outa the bank."
14. RUSH (COLDLY POLITE) Mom, I am afraid you ...
15. SADE (GIGGLES) Ain't that it?
16. RUSH (COLDLY POLITE) Civilization has sunk so ...
17. SADE (GIGGLING) Civilization's in a terrible plight – yeah. No, but ain't that it? I saw you wavin' your bank-book around tonight. Waved it around ostentatious as a horse. You were just itchin' to make an opening to tell us some big scheme ya got up your sleeve. Well – what's the scheme? 'Course you understand in advance you wouldn't be allowed to touch that savings-account with a ten-foot pole.
18. RUSH (COLDLY) If civilization has actually sunk so low a common ordinary American citizen ...

1. SADE (GIGGLES) Oh, put that big talky-talk in your hat.
2. RUSH An' pull my hat down over my ears, I s'pose?
3. SADE (GIGGLES) Yeah.
4. RUSH (COLDLY) Mom, do you know how many friends I got?
5. SADE No.
6. RUSH (COLDLY) Expecting Christmas presents?
7. SADE No.
8. RUSH Twenty-five.
9. SADE Quite a large ...
10. RUSH Twenty-five friends expecting Christmas presents. Twenty-five friends, eight high-school teachers, an' sixteen relatives. I'll name 'em off for ya.
11. SADE Don't bother.
12. RUSH Smelly Clark, Leroy Snow, Blue-tooth Johnson, Milton Welch, Nicer Scott, Heinie Call, Leland Richards, Rooster Davis, Harry Turpin, Joseph Green, Edson Montgomery ...
13. SADE (GIGGLES) Don't bother, Willie. Go ahead an' tell about your scheme.
14. RUSH (BRIEF PAUSE) Gonna send 'em all money this year.
15. SADE Oh, really?
16. RUSH Money in the form of a check.
17. SADE I knew this all had something to do with ...
18. RUSH (BRISKLY) "Dear Smelly. A Merry Christmas an' a happy new year. Enclosed find check for twenty-five dollars. Rush Gook.
19. SADE That's lovely but ...
20. RUSH Got the idea from Blue-tooth Johnson. Know what Blue-tooth's gonna do?

1. SADE No.
2. RUSH Gonna give the principal of the high-school a Christmas present in the form of a check for three thousand berries.
3. SADE Good lands.
4. RUSH I figured you'd be impressed.
5. SADE I am.
6. VIC Charlie, this remark is off the record an' I wouldn't wanta be quoted, but if Blue-tooth sent me a check for three thousand berries I'd be highly dubious as to its negotiability.
7. RUSH Yes – an' that's what's the matter with Blue-tooth's scheme. Mr. Chinbunny'll jump to the conclusion the check's no good.
8. VIC He'll be right, won't he?
9. RUSH 'Course he'll be right. Blue-tooth made the figure too high. What he should of done was write out the check for forty or fifty.
10. VIC Blue-tooth got that much?
11. RUSH No. But Mr. Chinbunny'll think so.
12. VIC When he goes to cash it though, won't he discover ...
13. RUSH You miss the entire point, gov.
14. VIC Do I?
15. RUSH Mr. Chinbunny won't attempt to cash the check. He'll say to himself, "By George, that Johnson boy is a wonderful fella. Imagine him sending me this money for Christmas. However, I won't take advantage of his generosity. I'll destroy the check."
16. VIC Um.

1. RUSH Sure. He'll tear up the check, but he'll feel tender an' grateful towards Blue-tooth the rest of his life. That is, he'd feel tender an' grateful towards Blue-tooth if Blue-tooth used his head an' made out the check for reasonable amount. Three thousand dollars is ridiculous.
2. SADE Blue-tooth hasn't done this yet, has he?
3. RUSH No, but he's going to. **(Quotes)** "To Mr. Chinbunny, the finest high-school principal in the United States. Wishing you a Merry Christmas an' a Happy New Year. Enclosed find my personal check for three thousand dollars. Blue-tooth Johnson."
4. VIC & SADE Um.
5. RUSH Three thousand dollars is ridiculous.
6. VIC & SADE Um.
7. RUSH I'm gonna be smart. My checks are all gonna be for twenty-five.
8. VIC & SADE Um.
9. RUSH Aunt Bess'll get one; Uncle Walter'll get one; cousin Eunice; Uncle Fletcher ... everybody. An' they'll all say, "Why how nice of Rush!" An' they'll all tear up their checks. "I can't take his money," they'll say.
10. VIC & SADE Um.
11. RUSH Ain't that right, mom? You know Aunt Bess wouldn't cash a check of mine.
12. SADE No, I don't expect she would. Only ...
13. RUSH Well, there ya are. I fulfill my obligations an' I'm not out a red cent.
14. SADE Very cute stunt only ...
15. RUSH An' another thing: - it'll be a pump-primer. I'll get Christmas presents from people that'd never think of me otherwise. Take them families you an' gov know in Flick Orchard, Minnesota: Mr. an' Miz Glump an' Mr. and Miz Heevey. I'll send them checks. Send 'em good an' early. All right, they'll receive 'em an' be deeply touched an' say, "Why, imagine Rush Gook sendin' us a check for twenty-five dollars. We must remember him with a pair of socks or something."

1. SADE I wouldn't go so far as to say there was anything selfish about your idea only ...
2. RUSH An' your friends here in town I could send checks to. Mr. an' Miz Stembottom. Mr. an' Miz Chestbuster. Mr. an' Miz Call. Miz Harris. Mr. Ruebush. Mr. an' Miz Kneesuffer. Your chum out in Nebraska, gov – Y.Y. Flirtch. Wouldn't Y.Y. Flirtch be touched if he received my personal check for twenty-five dollars along with best wishes for a Merry Christmas?
3. VIC Sure. Y.Y. Flirtch'd be delighted to have a rubber check.
4. RUSH Rubber?
5. VIC You've named off at least twenty people. Twenty people at twenty-five bucks a throw is five hundred dollars.
6. RUSH They won't cash their checks though.
7. VIC Suppose some of them did?
8. RUSH All right, fine. I'll have money in the bank to take care of anybody that's rotten dirty mean enough to try to get the money.
9. VIC Um.
10. RUSH But I'm confident there won't be anybody sink that low.
11. VIC How about Smelly Clark an' Rooster Davis an' a few impecunious chaps of their stripe to whom twenty-five dollars would mean ...
12. RUSH I plan to make out special checks to Smelly an' Rooster.
13. VIC That right?
14. RUSH Yes. Smelly Clark, Rooster Davis, Nicer Scott, Heiner Call, Leroy Snow, Leland Richards an' Milton Welch will all receive checks made out to their parents.
15. VIC Oh.

1. RUSH Means the checks will require their parents signature before they can be cashed. Well, the parents'll refuse to give their signature. Just like say I received a check from Heinie Call made out to you folks. Check for twenty-five berries. You'd say, "Rush, you can't accept at that money from Heinie." You'd destroy the check.
2. VIC Um.
3. RUSH In case some of the various parents are so horrible greedy they endorse the check, I'm taking another precaution.
4. VIC What's that?
5. RUSH Disguising my hand-writing so the banks won't honor the checks.
6. VIC **(MILDLY)** Hey, Hey.
7. RUSH Air-tight, moisture-sealed, an' fool-proof, hey?
8. VIC Yeah.
9. RUSH Completely settles my Christmas problem.
10. VIC Ah – are your mother an' myself scheduled to receive beautiful holiday remembrances such as you've just described? Will we get twenty-five-dollar checks made out to somebody else an' signed in disguised handwriting an' ...
11. RUSH Oh no. I'll take care of you an' mom O.K.
12. VIC I'm relieved.
13. RUSH **(COMPLACENTLY)** Yessir, this settles my Christmas problem without costing me a red cent an' also makes a pump-priming apparatus where I'll receive gifts from individuals that'd never in the wide world thought of me otherwise.
14. VIC Um.
15. RUSH **(AFTER A PAUSE)** Well, mom, just one little detail.
16. SADE Um.
17. RUSH In order to be entitled to write checks an' not break the law, I hafta have a checking account.

1. SADE Um.
2. RUSH **(CASUALLY)** So tomorrow morning I'll just drop around by the bank an' transfer the money in my savings over to the checking department an' ...
3. SADE **(CASUALLY)** No.
4. RUSH **(IN SOME SURPRISE)** No?
5. SADE No.
6. RUSH But I thought I'd explained this won't make any difference in my money. I'll continue to have exactly the same amount as ...
7. SADE No.
8. RUSH Surely you must ...
9. SADE No. You understood before you plunged in this rigamarole you couldn't touch that savings-account with a ten-foot pole.
10. RUSH Yes, but I have ...
11. SADE No.
12. RUSH ... tried to make it clear ...
13. SADE **(SHARPLY)** No. No, no, no.
14. RUSH **(QUIETLY)** No, huh?
15. SADE No.
16. RUSH **(QUIETLY)** Mom, in the past three months I've come to you with twenty-six different schemes.
17. SADE Um.
18. RUSH Twenty-six different schemes.
19. SADE Um.
20. RUSH Know how many you've vetoed?

1. SADE How many?
2. RUSH All of 'em.
3. ANCR Which concludes another brief interlude at the small house half-way up in the next block.
4. MUSIC CLOSING THEME