

Scene 2

(A small church kneeler is lit elsewhere on the stage. RUDY runs in and kneels in the pew. Oops, he forgot to genuflect. He jumps out of the pew, genuflects quickly and jumps back in. He makes a quick sign of the cross and folds his hands, pointing them to Heaven.)

RUDY. Please, please, please Dear Jesus, please make her ease up on me. I promise I'll learn my catechism and get confirmed and all that, but please, I mean, c'mon, *look at that!* *(Shows the stinging palm of his hand to heaven.)* Please just make her not so mean, that's all. And I'll be a soldier for you, I promise. Whatever that means, I'll do it. Thank you. *(Makes a quick sign of the cross, gets up, then suddenly kneels again.)* And the spaghetti! *(Quick sign of the cross.)* The spaghetti! Please don't let Daddy forget the spaghetti tonight. Please, please, that's very important. The spaghetti. Don't let him forget the spaghetti. Okay? The spaghetti. Very important. So, it's Sister Clarissa and the spaghetti. Thank you.

(Makes a quick sign of the cross, gets up, genuflects, almost makes it out, but he runs back again, rushes a genuflection, kneels and makes the sign of the cross.)

RUDY. And the bad mood! Ple-e-eze dear Jesus, don't let Daddy be in a bad mood tonight. Please, just no bad mood! Supper would be great without that. No bad mood, please. And I'll learn my catechism and get confirmed. Okay, so it's a nicer Sister Clarissa, the spaghetti, and no bad mood, and I'll get confirmed. Okay, thank you, dear Jesus, thank you!

(BLACKOUT.)

Scene 3

(LIGHTS COME UP on the apartment. In the living room a boy sits on the floor much too close to the screen of a TV set. He sucks his thumb. This is GEORGIE, 13 years old and severely retarded, his mental age being that of a 3-year-old. Consistently good natured, GEORGIE communicates with gestures, grunts and an occasional real word.)

(Right now he is engrossed in a shoot 'em up Western. We can't see the TV screen, but we hear lots of gunfire.)

(ELLEN PAZINSKI, an attractive woman in her early forties, enters through the back kitchen door with a wicker basket full of