

## Side A - Brierly and Amos

### Start

UNCLE BRIERLY. *(cont.)* Ah. Children. There you are. Good afternoon and welcome all of you on this snowy and wonderful Christmas Eve to this magnificent home, and may I say to every one of you: *Merry Christmas!* I'm now going to recite for you my favorite poem of all time, one that I'm sure you've never heard before, "*'Twas The Night Before Christmas.*" Ahem.

*(He clears his throat and Christmas music begins to play in the background, the kind with jingling sleigh bells, evoking a ride in the country behind a trotting horse. The opening of the first movement of Mahler's 4th Symphony would do nicely. Perhaps a bit of snow falls from above and dusts UNCLE BRIERLY's shoulders.)*

"'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house,

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse."

*(At which moment a mouse enters holding a bowl in his arm, stirring the contents with a wooden spoon. The mouse's name is AMOS.)*

AMOS. Hold it! Hold it! Stop the presses! You got it wrong! UNCLE BRIERLY. I beg your pardon! Who are you? And what are you?

AMOS. What do I look like? I'm a mouse. I live here. Now look at me carefully. What am I doing?

UNCLE BRIERLY. I have no idea.

AMOS. I'm stirring. See? I'm makin' cookies for Santa Claus, so I'm *stirring the batter*. Stir, stir, stir, stir.

UNCLE BRIERLY. So?

AMOS. So you fibbed to all those nice little children out there. You said "Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse." But I'm a mouse and I'm stirring. Stir, stir, stir, stir.

UNCLE BRIERLY. That's not the kind of stirring I was talking about. The word "stirring" can also mean "moving" – "not a creature was *moving*" – and I was using it in that sense, to describe a house where everything is *quiet* on Christmas eve like this house should be now may I *continue*?

AMOS. Okay. If you feel you gotta. Whatever floats your boat.

*(AMOS stands to the side, watching and stirring.)*

UNCLE BRIERLY. Ahem. 'Twas then night before Christmas and all through the house not a creature was stirring not even a mouse. ... Right.

*(The music and the snow return happily again.)*

"The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, In hopes that Saint Nicholas soon would be there."

AMOS. *(to himself)* "Hopes" is right, Mister. Let's "hope" that Santa makes it to the house this time. Just get yourself down that chimney, baby-face, that's all I'm askin', down the old...

*(UNCLE BRIERLY is staring at him.)*

sorry.

UNCLE BRIERLY. ... "The children were nestled all snug in their beds,

While visions of sugar plums danced in their heads."

*(AMOS starts dancing and humming to himself. He's now holding a stuffed animal – a pigeon – and he dances with it.)*

AMOS. Dya dum de daaaaa, dya da da da da daaaaaaa...

UNCLE BRIERLY. What are you doing?

AMOS. I'm dancing.

UNCLE BRIERLY. Why are you dancing?

AMOS. I'm a sugar plum. Dya ~~dum de~~ daaaaa, dya da da da da –

UNCLE BRIERLY. You are *not* a sugar plum. A sugar plum is a piece of candy. Are you a piece of candy?

AMOS. No.

UNCLE BRIERLY. And what is *that*?

AMOS. A pigeon.

UNCLE BRIERLY. Yes, I see it's a pigeon, but why are you dancing with it?

**JEND**