

CHARLIE. ...And ice cream, and doughnuts and cupcakes and...

LEROY. Who gives it to you?

CHARLIE. (*momentarily stumped*) Uh...the minister.

LEROY. Why? Is he crazy?

CHARLIE. No... I think he's rich.

LEROY. (*pause*) ...Sunday school, huh?

(*Spot off boys: Spot up on BETH, downstage right.*)

BETH. That was the wrong thing to tell Herdmans...and, sure enough, the very next Sunday there they were in Sunday school, just in time to hear about the Christmas pageant...

(*Spot off BETH: Spot up on ALICE and IMOGENE, downstage left.*)

IMOGENE. What's a pageant?

ALICE. It's a play.

IMOGENE. Like on TV? What's it about?

ALICE. It's about Jesus.

IMOGENE. (*visibly disenchanted about Sunday school*)
Everything here is.

ALICE. And it's about Mary. Mostly, it's about Mary.

IMOGENE. Who's Mary?

ALICE. I am... Well, *probably* I am. I know the part.

(*ALICE walks off stage left: IMOGENE watches her go, then looks out at the audience, wearing a cheshire-cat smile. Spot off IMOGENE. Curtain opens on church setting with risers in place. As curtain opens, kids are straggling in, with MOTHER herding them along.*)

MOTHER. Come on, Beth... Charlie, you and David *come*.

(*She leads the reluctant CHARLIE to a seat.*) Now, this won't take very long if you all settle down... Today we're going to decide who will play the main roles in our Christmas pageant, but of course everyone will have an important part to play. You know what Mrs. Armstrong