

PRESENT: (*ENTERS RIGHT.*) Oh, I am exhausted! Simply exhausted.

35 Oh, wow. This is a cute place. Look at all these pretty things!

PRESENT (*Checks out a price tag.*) Oh my! These prices would make my bank account cry, let me tell you. (*Notices ELEANOR.*) Hi! You must be

ELEANOR Eleanor!

ELEANOR: Uh, yeah. And you are?

40 **PRESENT:** I am Christmas Present. Not present like a gift, but Present, as in here, now, right away, at once, instantly, in a jiff, or pronto.

1 **ELEANOR:** But what happened to Past?

PRESENT: Past? Oh, she's history. (*Laughs.*) She hates that joke, but I tell it anyway.

ELEANOR: Obviously, you two didn't bump into each other while she
5 was on her way to sanitize heaven, but I don't need any more spirits, or whatever you are, to show me the meaning of Christmas. I'm very happy being my depressed self.

PRESENT: Oh, I love a challenge!

ELEANOR: Go away!

10 **PRESENT:** (*Twirls and laughs with delight.*) C'mon. It'll be fun. Hope you don't get motion sickness! (*Twirls DOWNSTAGE out of the shop. PRESENT'S twirling acts as a magnet, pulling ELEANOR along. EXTRAS ENTER RIGHT and LEFT with benches and carts full of various trinkets for sale, creating a modern Christmas festival market. Other EXTRAS ENTER and browse the merchandise. Mothers laugh, children play, others carry packages, etc.*) Yum, yum!
15 I love the smells of Christmas!

ELEANOR: (*Sniffs.*) I don't smell anything special.

PRESENT: Oh, no! It's delightful! (*Again begins to twirl and laugh, and*
20 *ELEANOR is pushed to the floor by the force.*)

ELEANOR: (*Gets up.*) Hey, could you warn me when you're going to do that?

PRESENT: Oops. Sorry. I guess I just get carried away. Christmas has that effect on me. All the wonderful food, smells, the lights, the
25 smiles.

ELEANOR: Bah! Humbug!

PRESENT: Oh, dear Eleanor! You're so funny! (*Twirls and laughs, and ELEANOR grabs onto a cart to steady herself.*) Sorry again! I can't help it. The spirit just moves me.

30 **ELEANOR:** Well, do me a favor. Just stand still awhile. Much more of this, and I'm going to have to take some Dramamine. (*Suddenly, two SHOPPERS bump into each other and begin to quarrel, then two children, then two mothers, until the entire CROWD is arguing with each other.*)

35 **PRESENT:** Oh, no! We can't have this! Not on Christmas.