

# **PreView**

(2020)

The Girl Who Slept Through Christmas  
[The Golden Thistle]

Created and Written By  
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## **Manuscript Formatting Note**

Based on reader and reviewer feedback, and current eBook formatting requirements, traditional stage play manuscript format and style have been replaced with the following, hopefully, reader-friendly format and style.

## **ProLogue**

The Girl Who Slept Through Christmas  
[The Golden Thistle]

A Magical and Mythical Celtic twist of the Fabled tale of Santa Claus and The Night Before Christmas

A heartbroken and headstrong 12-year-old facing her first Christmas Eve without her beloved grandfather. A stolen bowl of forbidden brandy-laced hard sauce for the Christmas Pudding. A missing granddaughter. Evidence of a struggle in the bloodstained snow at the foot of the back-porch steps. A magical and mystical dream of a grandfather's return from The Other Side of the Wind. And the discovery under the Christmas tree of a solid-gold kilt pin cast in the shape of a thistle, combine to turn Christmas Eve at grandmother's house upside down and put a magical and mythical Celtic twist on the fabled tale of Santa Claus and the Night before Christmas.

Donald Knight Beman

Cast of Key Characters  
[Order of Appearance]

The Girl Who Slept Through Christmas  
[The Golden Thistle]

Penelope ('Penny'): age 12-13; tall; lanky; pigtails.

Andrew: Penny's older cousin.

Kim: Penny's younger cousin.

Kate: Penny's 'favorite' aunt.

Grandmother: 'matriarchal' grandmother; widow.

Flora: Penny's mother; Kate's sister-in-law.

Christopher: Penny's younger cousin.

Diane: Penny's older cousin; late teens.

William: Penny's uncle; Christopher's father.

Grandfather: Penny's grandfather (now in the wind)

Mr. Johnson: neighbor; ex-boxer.

Edward: Penelope's father.

Tommy: uniformed police officer.

Cast members: cousins; aunts; EMTs; police officers.

FADE IN:

EXT: VICTORIAN HOUSE - PRESENT - NIGHT - WINTER  
House exterior decorated for Christmas all around.  
Unplowed, snow-covered circular driveway overflowing  
with parked cars.

EXT: FRONT PORCH - FROSTY WINDOW  
Through a frosty lace-curtained window we see a double  
room decorated for Christmas and filled with children  
ages 8 to 16.

INT: LARGE VICTORIAN COMBINATION LIVING ROOM-PARLOR  
We hear Christmas music and see the excited 'buzz' of  
children. Decorated Christmas tree is at one end, gifts  
spilling out from beneath the tree. Two wood armchairs,  
set side-by-side, are in front of the tree. A huge  
hearth is hung with stockings. Little kids are flitting  
window-to-window, goggling, peering outside. Teenagers  
are in the parlor, whispering, aloof, cool, texting.

PENNY KNIGHT squares off against older cousin ANDREW.

PENNY

You don't know anything, 'Master'  
Andrew W. Benton the third'.

ANDREW

It's babies like you who don't know  
anything, 'Miss' Dumb-Dumb.

PENNY

I'm not dumb! I'm smarter and  
lots taller than you are.  
And stop calling me a baby: shorty!

ANDREW

Oh yeah? Then why can't you have  
any of Aunt Kate's hard sauce for

ANDREW

(continued)

your plum pudding and I can? So  
there, little 'baby' Penny.

PENNY

Stop calling me a baby!

Penny starts poking Andrew with her finger.

PENNY

And it's 'plumped' pudding, not  
plum pudding. You're the real  
'dumb-dumb'.

Andrew SLAPS Penny's hand away and SHOVES her  
backwards.

ANDREW

Plum, plumped, schmumped. Who  
cares. You still can't have any  
hard sauce, you little baby, and I  
can. Naaah.

PENNY glowers, stiffens and clenches fists  
KIM jumps up, waving hands, little miss know-it-all.

KIM

Look everyone! Penny's making  
fists! Better watch out Andrew!

ANDREW

From what? A baby girl with a  
little baby's pigtails? Not me!

Andrew swats Penny's pigtails.

PENNY

Stop that! And stop calling me a  
baby! You ... you ... 'dwarf'!

Kids laugh. Andrew is mortified. Penny is delighted.

PENNY

Look everyone! It's Dopey's twin  
brother, the eighth dwarf of dumb-  
dumb land!

Laughter. Andrew yanks Penny's pigtail. She yelps.

ANDREW

See! You are a baby. A cry baby.  
Even your name's a baby name,  
Penny, grandpa's shiny 'penny'.

PENNY

Shut up!

Penny 'clocks' Andrew, knocking him onto his butt. Kids  
gasp. Penny sticks out tongue and storms out of room.

INT: DINING ROOM

Victorian dining room. Table set with a Holiday buffet.

OC: We hear women talking, laughing, kitchen sounds.

Penny circles the table, her gaze fixed on the large  
Christmas Pudding ringed with holly. She glances  
around, nods, then gouges out a chunk of pudding with  
her fingers, neatly covers the hole with holly, and  
stuffs the pudding into her mouth.

OC: We HEAR someone clear their throat.

INT: DOORWAY - KITCHEN IN B.G.

AUNT KATE, 30's, tall, pretty, is holding a platter of  
food. In B.G. we see women bustling about in the  
kitchen. Kate walks in and sets the platter down,  
warily, affectionately, eying Penny.

KATE

Is it as good as it was last year?

PENNY  
(angelic)  
What?

KATE  
Don't 'what' me, young lady.

PENNY  
It's ... it's okay ... I guess.

KATE  
You 'guess'? My Christmas pudding,  
I  
spent two days making, just 'okay'!

PENNY  
That's not what I meant, Aunt Kate.  
It's just that it's not the same  
without some of your super yummy  
delicious hard sauce on top.

KATE  
Nice try, kitten. You'll have to  
live with whipped cream for one  
more year.

PENNY  
Grandfather always gave me hard  
sauce!

KATE  
Yes he did.

(BEAT)

KATE  
(continued)  
But you know your grandmother's  
rule.  
No hard sauce until you're  
thirteen.

Penny feigns a soft deep-voiced man's' Sottish brogue.



PENNY

'Tis only a wee bit 'a brandy in  
it, it canna' hurt a sturdy lass  
like me.

KATE

(amused-affectionate smile)  
It's not my call, kitten. You'll  
have to speak to your grandmother.

PENNY

(fighting back tears)  
I miss him so much, Aunt Kate.

KATE

I know. We all miss him, kitten.  
And it'll be even harder, when  
Santa arrives. So let's just try to  
make the best of...

PENNY

No! It's not Christmas without  
grandfather!

KATE

I see.

PENNY

You don't see anything!

KATE

Penny!

PENNY

And don't call me Penny. My name is  
Penelope ... Penelope Jean Knight!

INT: KITCHEN

Women - ages 30 to 70 - are talking while busily  
unwrapping and arranging brought-from-home food dishes.

Kate enters, grabs a platter, winks at Penny, and EXITS to the dining room. Penny steals across the kitchen to the counter cluttered with mixing bowls, a long wooden spoon sticking up out of the biggest bowl, and an open pint bottle of brandy nearby. Penny sneaks the spoon out and is about to lick it, when Kate appears and snatches it.

KATE

A rule's a rule, like it or not.

PENNY stiffens and clenches her fists at her sides.

PENNY

Well it's a dumb stupid rule!

PENNY stomps her foot, spins away, and starts to leave.

GRANDMA [GRANDMA MURRAY] - hands on hips, blocks Penny's exit.

GRANDMA

Penny, child, I know Grandfather gave you some of his hard sauce. But the rule in my house ... a rule even your mother had to follow ... is no hard sauce for children until they are thirteen.

PENNY

Grandfather never had any dumb stupid rules. And this was his house, too, not just yours.

FLORA KNIGHT - PENNY's mother - steps forward.

FLORA

I won't have you speaking to your Grandmother like that. Apologize. Now.

PENNY stands in stiff and silent defiance.

FLORA  
Penelope Jean Knight?

PENNY  
Okay. Okay. I 'a-pol-o-gize'. Happy?

FLORA  
That was not an apology.

Grandma gestures to Flora to back off. She does, reluctantly.

GRANDMA  
Penny, dear, I know how much your Grandfather meant to you, but....

PENNY  
No you don't! And don't call me Penny. My name is ...

FLORA  
Stop this! What do you think your grandfather would say if he were...

PENNY  
What do you know about Grandfather?  
(scowls and pans the kitchen)  
What do any of you know! You always made fun of Grandfather on Christmas Eve. You laughed at him and said that he acted like a little boy, and...

Kim BURSTS into the kitchen and ANNOUNCES in one breath.

KIM  
Andrew's eye is red and puffy and his nose is bleeding from when Penny punched him and knocked him on his dwarfy butt!

Flora starts to speak, but is waved off by Grandma.  
Flora is OBVIOUSLY not pleased by her mother's actions.

GRANDMA  
(to Penny)  
Is this true?

PENNY  
He deserved it. He shoved me.  
Pulled my pigtails. Made fun of my  
name. And made fun of Grandfather.  
That's when I hit him! And I'll do  
it again if ...

FLORA  
Penny!

GRANDMA  
Kimberly ... is this true?

KIM  
Well, you see, they were...

GRANDMA  
Kimberly Eileen Murray!  
True or false?

KIM  
It's true, Grandma.

GRANDMA  
I see.

Grandma bustles Kim out of the kitchen.

FLORA  
Penny, dear, Santa should be here  
any minute now. Why don't you...

PENNY  
There is no Santa Claus!

FLORA

Penny! Who told you that?

PENNY

Andrew. The family dwarf. He said Santa Claus is really...

GRANDMA

Stop it this minute young lady!

Penny storms out, pushing past Kate in the doorway.

FLORA

I don't know what's gotten into her tonight. She was always so excited about Christmas Eve.

KATE

Try a broken heart and a little girl's world turned upside down.

FLORA

Oh dear. You're right. I should have known. Let me go see if I...

GRANDMA

No! Let her be.  
She just needs some time to come to terms with it all.

KATE

Oh, she does, does she?

Everyone draws silent. Kate 'confronts' Grandma.

KATE

Tell me, 'Mother Murray', do any of us ever come to terms with death? And what if the person who died was our only Grandfather and we're only twelve years old?

There is 'silent approval' of Kate.

INT: DINING ROOM

Penny is STALKING the table. She stops, looks around - knocks over a Santa figurine - smirks, nods, and EXITS the room.

INT: LIVING ROOM-PARLOR

Penny ENTERS the room.

ANDREW

Look! It's Goofy's twin sister,  
Doofy, a scrawny giraffe with  
stupid pigtails!

Penny glowers and points at Andrew.

PENNY

Hey everyone! Know what the  
eighth  
dwarf of dumb-dumb land told me?

The kids all perk up.

PENNY

He said Uncle William is Santa  
Claus.

Chorus of gasps. Andrew is stunned. Teenagers discretely smile.

CHRISTOPHER, nine, patch over one eye, timidly approaches Penny.

CHRISTOPHER

My daddy is not Santa Claus.

PENNY

How would you know, Chrissie,  
you're half blind?

DIANE MURRAY, mature 16, nicely dressed, steps forward.

DIANE

That is not nice, Penny. You know  
why Chrissie has that patch. And  
he's not dumb, he just speaks  
very slowly.

PENNY

But out Diane you nosy busy-body.  
(to Christopher)  
Okay, patch-boy, how do know your  
father isn't really Santa Claus?

CHRISTOPHER

'Cause he's my daddy, silly.

PENNY

(to Diane)  
Not dumb, huh?  
(to Christopher)  
Okay, then where is he?

Christopher looks around, faces PENNY, shrugs.

PENNY

See! I told you! You're not only  
half-blind, you're half-dumb too.

OC: We HEAR door open and shut and hear feet stomping.

Kids perk up. The foyer door pops open. WILLIAM MURRAY  
enters carrying an armful of packages and brushing snow  
off his head.

WILLIAM

Merry Christmas everyone! Sorry  
I'm late, I got caught in Holiday

WILLIAM  
(continued)  
traffic coming out of the City.

CHRISTOPHER  
Daddy!

Christopher rushes his father, throws his arms around him, turns back and sticks out his tongue at Penny. Penny responds in kind.

WILLIAM  
Christopher, what's going on  
here?

CHRISTOPHER  
Are you Santa Claus?

WILLIAM  
Me? Santa Claus?  
Of course not.

CHRISTOPHER  
See! Miss 'Piggy-tailed' shinny  
penny.

Andrew jumps up and starts leading a chant.

ANDREW  
Piggy Penelope! Piggy Penelope!  
Piggy...

The teenagers join in, followed by some of the younger kids.

CHILDREN  
(sing-song chorus)  
Piggy Penelope! Piggy Penelope.  
Pig--

PENNY  
Shut up!



KIM  
Grandma says you can't say shut  
up  
in her house, or you have to...

Grandma enters, scowling, and stands behind Penny,  
unseen.

PENNY  
Shut-up! Shut-up! Shut-up!

GRANDMA  
Penny! Shame on you!  
(to all of the children)  
And shame on every one of you,  
too.  
(to Penny)  
And you, young lady, what would  
your  
Grandfather say if he heard....

Fighting back tears, Penny covers her ears with her  
hands, darts across the room and EXITS through an  
archway into dark hallway.

OC: We hear her STOMPING up the stairs. Grandma scowls  
at all of the children, who flash angelic innocent  
smiles and shrugs.

INT: SECOND FLOOR - HALLWAY  
Penny, crying, runs down a long darkened hallway and  
scrambles up a flight of stairs onto a landing, closed  
attic door in B.G.

PENNY  
Stupid dwarf!

OC: We hear faint sounds of jingling bells, a man's  
voice Ho-Ho-Hoing and children excitedly squealing,  
cheering, laughing.

PENNY

And stupid Santa Claus!  
And stupid, stupid Christmas.

Penny, sniffing, falls back against the attic door. And again. It pops open. Penny nods and steps backwards into the attic.

INT: ATTIC

In shadowy darkness, we see the door swing shut and hear it latch closed. Penny flops down into an old stuffed arm chair and curls up. We hear her whispering as she drifts off to asleep.

PENNY

I miss you so much, grandfather.

DISSOLVE: SUMMER - MIST-COVERED LAKE - ROWBOAT IN FAR B.G. In Far B.G. we SEE a man and a child in the rowboat, dressed for fishing. SLOWLY ZOOM-IN at water-level through the morning mist.

EXT: ROWBOAT - TACKLE BOX - FISHING GEAR - THERMOS GRANDFATHER [DONALD MURRAY] -- solid white hair, wire-rimmed glasses, weathered face and hands, but not 'OLD' looking, is tying a shiny silver lure on the young girl's fishing line.

PENNY -- pigtails, wearing a tattered man's hat, life vest, t-shirt, shorts, sneakers, is holding her fishing rod with both hands, her gaze fixed on her grandfather's every move.

PENNY

Grandfather, why did we come out here on the lake so early? The sun isn't all the way up yet. Aren't the fish still asleep?

GRANDFATHER  
(in a soft Scottish brogue)  
Only the lazy ones, lass.

They share a laugh. Penny leans over, peers into water.

PENNY  
But it's so dark down there.  
How can they see my lure?

GRANDFATHER  
That's why I have you here, my  
'shiny penny'. Your smile will  
bring them to the surface.

Penny starts making goofy funny faces. Grandfather reaches into his fishing vest, pulls out a small camera and snaps a flash-photo. Penny sticks out her tongue and is photographed again.

PENNY  
Make sure you have enough film so  
that everyone can see that I  
caught a bigger fish than you  
did. Again!

GRANDFATHER  
How about a wee wager. The one who  
catches the biggest fish wins.

PENNY  
Is biggest fattest, heaviest or  
longest?

GRANDFATHER  
'Tis no difference, lass. Bigger  
is biggest, no?

PENNY  
Not so fast, grandfather. You  
told me that a bass can be

PENNY

(continued)

shorter than a pickerel, but can weigh more because it's fatter.

(BET)

Right?

GRANDFATHER

Aye, that I did.

PENNY

Then how can we tell who wins?

GRANDFATHER

(sly expression)

What if my bass is fatter and heavier than your skinnier, lighter and longer pickerel? Who wins?

Penny - scowling, thinking - eyes her grandfather.

PENNY

Are you trying to trick me?

GRANDFATHER

Me? No!

PENNY

Then I win!

GRANDFATHER

You! How can that be?

PENNY

You always say ladies go first and I'm a young lady. So I am first and you are second. I win!

GRANDFATHER

And I give up! But you must catch  
a fish. And sunnies don't count!

PENNY

What do I get when I win?

GRANDFATHER

Name your prize and it shall be  
yours ... 'if' you win, lass.

PENNY

Anything?

GRANDFATHER

Aye.

But it must be something I have.

PENNY

Your kilt pin!

GRANDFATHER

What! Lass, my kilt pin is...

PENNY

Beautiful! I want it for my kilt  
mommy and daddy said they will  
have made for my sixteenth  
birthday.

GRANDFATHER

Penny, do you know what my kilt  
pin is made of?

PENNY

Only that grandmother said it  
was made when Scotland was  
born, and by our ancestors  
lived in the Highlands.

Penny, smiling proudly, stares back into her Grandfather's gaze.

GRANDFATHER

Then you shall have it. But only if you win. Shall we start fishing?

Penny jumps up and throws a two-handed cast into lake.

PENNY

Better hurry, grandfather. You always told me second place is last place.

DISSOLVE

INT: PRESENT - LIVING-ROOM PARLOR

Adults are filing into the room. OC: We hear a knock on a door. Grandma - followed by a flock of excited kids - opens the foyer door to reveal SANTA CLAUS carrying a sack of wrapped gifts.

SANTA

M-e-r-r-y Christmas everyone!

ADULTS & KIDS

Merry Christmas, Santa!

The younger children squeal with delight as Santa enters - Ho, Ho, Hoing - tousling hair and wishing everyone a Merry Christmas by their first name. A toddler hides behind his mother. Grandma leads Santa to an armchair, where he sits and sets his sack on the floor between the two chairs. Grandma takes the seat beside him. The kids gather around, teenagers next, adults in the background. The room settles down to a nervous twitter, as Grandma digs a gift out of Santa's sack, checks it, and whispers a name to Santa as she hands him the gift. Santa's gaze locks onto the teenagers, who SNAP to attention and begin fidgeting.

SANTA

Andrew? Is that you back there?

Andrew - sporting the start of a SHINER - trying to act cool, goes up to Santa, who pats his knee for Andrew to sit down. He balks. The kids start booing. Andrew reluctantly sits down.

SANTA

Have we been a good boy this year?

We HEAR boos and jibes. Santa examines shiner.

SANTA

Andrew W. Benton, have you been fighting, and on Christmas Eve?

The kids all clam up.

ANDREW

Me? Fight?

MATTHEW

You better tell the truth for once, Benton, or you're gonna find coal in your stocking.

Santa ho-ho-ho's and hands Andrew the gift. Teenagers all boo. Santa holds tight. He and Andrew engage in a tug-of-war. Kim JUMPS up and speaks in a single breathless run-on sentence.

KIM

Andrew shoved Penny, pulled her pigtails, made fun of her name, and made fun of Grandfather so she punched Andrew and knocked him on his dwarfy butt and gave him a shiner.

Everyone laughs. Kim nods officiously and sits down.

TEENAGERS

Coal for Andrew!

Coal for Andrew!

Coal...

Grandma raises her hand, commanding instant silence.

SANTA

Is this true, Andrew?

Andrew glances at Grandma. She glowers back at him.

ANDREW

Yes. But I didn't...

TEENAGERS

Coal for Benton! Coal for...

Grandma raises her hand commanding SILENCE.

ANDREW

I...maybe...well...I  
was picking on Penny.

SANTA

And what do we say, young man?

MATTHEW

Andrew's gotta give Santa a  
Christmas  
kiss to make up for what he did.

TEENAGERS

A kiss for Santa!

Santa starts bouncing Andrew on his knee and laughing.

SANTA

Deedlydee, deedlydee, a Christmas  
kiss for merry old me?



The kids taunt Andrew until he gives in, earning him his gift. Hopping up, he rejoins his cohorts. Grandma retrieves another gift, reads it and whispers to Santa as she hands it to him.

SANTA

Penelope Jean Knight?  
Everyone looks around. Grandma  
looks at Flora. Flora shrugs.

GRANDMA

Penny isn't feeling well, Santa.

Grandma and Santa continue, starting with Aunt Kate, who much to everyone's delight sits on Santa's knee and hugs and kisses him.

INT: DIMLY LIT HALLWAY OFF LIVING ROOM

We SEE Penny in the darkened hallway EXITING to the outside.

EXT: SNOWING

Penny high-steps her way through the snow around the house to the back porch, tiptoes up the steps and peers into a window.

INT: KITCHEN

In B.G. we see Penny's face framed in the window. The kitchen is aglow from the dining room light. One counter is still cluttered with the hard sauce fixings. Penny nods with determination.

EXT: BACK PORCH

We SEE the back door swing closed behind Penny.

INT: KITCHEN

OC: We hear merriment. Penny steals across the kitchen. The linoleum crackles. She freezes, looks around.

INT: DOORWAY - DINING ROOM IN B.G.

OC: We hear living room sounds but do not see anyone.

INT: KITCHEN - RETURN TO PREVIOUS SCENE

Penny nods, steps up to the cluttered counter, grabs the long handled wooden spoon sticking out of the mixing bowl, the spoon covered with thick buttery hard sauce. She licks the spoon.

PENNY

(whisper-soft brogue)

We canna' forget the brandy,  
lass.

Opening the pint of brandy, Penny repeatedly fills and empties the wooden spoon into the hard sauce. Stirring it, Penny licks the spoon clean.

PENNY

(soft feigned manly voice)

Nay, lass. Still need a wee bit  
more.

Adding more brandy three more spoonful's - mixing it in - Penny tastes it, shakes her head and begins to add more brandy.

INT: LIVING ROOM-PARLOR

Torn and shredded wrapping paper is everywhere. Kids are on the floor, playing with assorted toys. Teenagers are engrossed in hand-held eGadgets. Adults are smiling and talking. Grandma, a few unopened gifts under her chair, is surveying her Clan, her expression a mix of pride, love and sadness. Kate and Flora are standing off to one side.

KATE

Did I put the bowl of hard sauce  
in the fridge before we came in  
here?

FLORA

Are we having a senior moment?

Kate and Flora share a laugh.

FLORA

Better check. We can't have Aunt  
Kate's famous hard sauce soft and  
runny.

Flora affectionately spins Kate around. Kate nods and starts weaving her way through the wrapping paper and kids on floor.

CHRISTOPHER

Mommy? Wait! Help me. Please?

Christopher holds up action-figure pieces and peers at Kate with a needy, one-eyed tilt of his head.

CHRISTOPHER

These don't fit!

Kate continues heading for the dining room doorway, while calling back over her shoulder to Christopher.

KATE

In a minute, sweetie. First I have  
to check something in the kitchen.

INT: KITCHEN

Penny, spoon in one hand, brandy bottle in the other, is frozen and STARING wide-eyed at the dining room doorway.

INT: LIVING ROOM

CHRISTOPHER

Mommy! Pleeeeease?

Kate turns back. Christopher flashes a smile no mother could resist. Kate returns, kneels beside Christopher, takes the parts from him and starts trying to make heads or tails of them.

CHRISTOPHER

Should I ask uncle Michael for help?

KATE

No! Girls can fix things, too. I fix you when you're broken, don't I? And where would daddy be, if I didn't always fix him, too? Right!

Sharing a laugh, Christopher and Kate snuggle together.

INT: KITCHEN

Penny is pouring brandy onto the spoon. We hear a loud noise. Startled, Penny drops the bottle, upside-down, into the bowl.

PENNY

Oops!

As Penny lifts the bottle, the brandy all drains out.

PENNY

Oh dear!

Penny, worried and half-amused, stirs the mix.

INT: LIVING ROOM

CHRISTOPHER

You did it, mommy!

KATE

No, sweetheart, 'we' did it.

Christopher jumps up.

CHRISTOPHER

Wait 'til I show Uncle Michael!

Kate lovingly watches Christopher scurry away.

EXT: BACK PORCH

Penny, cradling oversized bowl in both arms, long-handled wooden spoon sticking up, carefully starts down the snow-covered porch steps, unaware PETER JOHNSON - sixtyish, stocky, ex-boxer's battered face - is watching her every move. He steps forward.

JOHNSON

And just where do you think you're going with that, you little thief?

Startled, Penny jumps, slips and almost drops the bowl. She catches her balance and hops off the porch into the deep snow.

PENNY

Mr. Johnson! You scared me!

JOHNSON

What are you stealing?

PENNY

(backing up)

It's ... I ... my mother ... I mean,  
Aunt Kate ... she asked me to...

Johnson steps towards Penny and peers into the bowl.

JOHNSON

It's that damned hard sauce your  
'pretty' Aunt left on the porch  
last Christmas that almost killed  
my dog, isn't it? Give it to me!

PENNY

No! It was your fault, not Aunt  
Kate's. Your dog got loose.  
Again!

JOHNSON

I said give it to me!

PENNY

No!

Johnson reaches for the bowl. Penny grabs the long  
handled wooden spoon and whacks Johnson's hand.

JOHNSON

Owe! You little ...

PENNY

Leave me alone or I'll scream!

He starts towards her. Penny backs up step-for-step.

PENNY

Stop or I'll hit your glass eye!

JOHNSON

Give me the bowl you little brat.

Penny tries to slip past, but he blocks her path and  
reaches for her. She hits his hand. He laughs. She  
winds up and smacks him in his puffy ex-boxer's eye.  
Blood spurts out.

PENNY

Oh dear!

Johnson touches eye, then bloody hand, and sneers.

JOHNSON

You shouldn't have done that.

Johnson, holding his hand over bleeding eye and face, grabs at Penny. She smacks his hand with the spoon. Johnson crouches like a boxer and starts closing in on her. Penny swings at him, but keeps missing as he avoids her efforts to hit him. He reaches out for her. She jumps backwards. He tries to grab her, but slips and drops to one knee. Penny whacks him on the the other eye, and again. Blood starts spurting out into his eye and down his face. Johnson, face bloodied, starts towards her, grabbing.....

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