

Hilda
Satch

ACT ONE

AT RISE: *SATCH* is sitting on the couch, reading a newspaper. *HILDA* is behind the counter, as usual, going through some travel folders. A long resigned silence hangs over the room. Finally, *SATCH* lowers the newspaper.

SATCH. What time is it?

HILDA. December.

SATCH. Can you be a little more specific? Narrow it down a little for me, darlin'.

HILDA. It's time for you to get a watch.

SATCH. Got a watch. *(He holds up his wrist.)*

HILDA. Well, what time is it?

SATCH. It's...I asked you.

HILDA *(moves to SATCH)*. Satch, if you have a watch, why're you asking *me* what time it is?

SATCH. I want to see if my watch is right.

HILDA. You're not going anywhere, you're not coming from anywhere, you're not expecting anybody and you're not clocking any horses. What *difference* does it make if your watch is right?

SATCH. 'Cause it's stopped.

HILDA. Then it's right.

SATCH. It says here that a man on the move always needs to know what time it is.

HILDA. Fine. When I see you move, I'll tell you what time it is.

SATCH. Merry Christmas to you, too.

HILDA (*shows a brochure to SATCH*). Lookee here, Satch. Australia. The land down under. They got kangaroos in Australia.

SATCH. You want a kangaroo?

HILDA. No...

SATCH. You never said nothing to me about wanting no kangaroo.

HILDA. I was just telling you...

SATCH. I done already got your Christmas present and I didn't get you no kangaroo.

HILDA. Satch!

SATCH. Fact, I don't knows I could even *find* you a kangaroo.

HILDA. If you'll let me get a word in...

SATCH. Where do you *get* kangaroos, anyway? Wait! They got kangaroos in Australia! (*He smiles at this deduction.*)

HILDA (*after a pause*). Ever notice our conversation goes in circles?

SATCH. What time is it?

HILDA. Ohhh! (*She crosses back to her counter. SATCH gets off the couch and moves over to the radio.*)

SATCH. You know, maybe we ought to put up some decorations around here.

HILDA. What kind of decorations?

SATCH. Well, let's just think on it some. Today is December twenty-third, tomorrow's Christmas Eve. Now, let's see here. What sort of decorations would you put up...

HILDA (*jumps in*). Shut up! (*SATCH shrugs and begins trying to tune in the old radio.*) And don't go cranking that thing up. You know it ain't worked in a year or more. I don't know why I don't just throw it out. (*A loud buzzing of static is heard from the radio.*)

SATCH. If we had some music around here, then maybe it might cheer up things a bit.