

**LOST IN YONKERS**

by Neil Simon  
BELLA

You think I can't have healthy babies, Momma? Well, I can...I'm as strong as an ox. I've worked in that store and taken care of you by myself since I'm twelve years old, that's how strong I am... like *steel*, Momma. Isn't that how we're supposed to be?...But my babies won't die, because I'll love them and take care of them...And they won't get sick like me or Gert or be weak like Eddie and Louie...My babies will be happier than we were, because I'll teach them to be happy....not to grow up and run away or never visit when they're older or not be able to breathe because they're so frightened...and never, *ever* to make them spend their lives rubbing my back and my legs because you never had anyone around who loved you enough to want to touch you, because you made it so clear you never wanted to be touched with love...Do you know what it's like to touch steel, Momma? It's hard and it's cold, and I want to be warm and soft with my children.... Look, Momma, I'm not crying...I know you're very angry with me, but I'm not crying. And it's not because I'm afraid to cry. It's because I have no tears left in me. I feel sort of empty inside. Like *you* feel all the time. You don't think I know anything, do you? You think I'm stupid, don't you, Momma? ....I'm not a child. If God wanted me to stay a child, why did he make me look like a woman? ... And feel like a woman inside of me? And want all the things a woman should have? Is that what I should thank him for? Why did he do that, Momma, when I can do everything but *think* like a woman?...I know I get confused sometimes....and frightened. But if I'm a child, why can't I be happy like a child? Why can't I be satisfied with dolls instead of babies? Let me have my babies, Momma. Because I have to love somebody. I have to love someone who'll love me back before I die...Give me that, Momma, and I promise you, you'll never worry about being alone....Because you'll have us...Me and my husband and my babies...Louie, tell her how wonderful he would be... Gert, wouldn't that make her happy?...Momma? Please say yes....I need you to say yes...Please?

*It is deathly silent. No one has moved. Finally, Grandma gets up slowly, walks to her room, goes in, and quietly closes the door.*