The REPS Radio Readers presented "My Friend Irma", created by Cy Howard. Parke Levy wrote the script with Stanley Adams and Roland MacLane. It was originally broadcast on Dec. 25, 1950.

NILES (Announcer)(commercial):
Poor Millicent...Poor Millicent!
No film-removing PEPSODENT
Her smile grew dim
And she lost her him
So, folks, don't be like Millicent
Get Pepsodent!

NILES: And now PEPSODENT--film-removing PEPSODENT-- presents "My Friend Irma", in our annual Christmas Show.

## MUSIC: JANE THEME

JANE: Well, Christmas is over and I'm thankful I'm still in one piece. Why do I say that? Let me tell you what happened Christmas Eve at our little apartment at 8224 W. 73rd Street in New York City. All was serene and quiet except for my room-mate Irma Peterson, who was reading:

IRMA:"'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring..." ahh, Look, Jane! A mouse!

JANE:No don't get excited.--It's lost--it's probably looking for Professor Kropotkin's room

IRMA:Gee, Jane, I've never been so happy on Christmas Eve and that's because I have such wonderful friends. You and your new boy friend Steve, Mrs. O'Reilly, Professor Kropotkin and of course, Al.

JANE:Oh, by all means, Al.

IRMA:Of course I can't really consider Al a friend because someday I'm going to marry him.

JANE: That's logical.

IRMA:Jane you don't know what it means to have a few good friends you can count on, especially on Christmas eve, when you'd like to be with your family--but mine lives over fifteen hundred miles from here....

JANE:Irma, you never say much about your family.

IRMA:Oh Jane there isn't much to say. They're just an average family just like meperfectly normal people. For instance there's Bertha Peterson, my younger sister--she's not as old as I am.

JANE: It figures.

IRMA: And there's my brother, Ernie Peterson--he's engaged...to be married of course.

JANE:Of course...What about your parents?

IRMA:I miss them the most. They were just like a mother and father to me.

JANE: You know, that happens in most families, Irma.

IRMA:But gee they're all in Minnesota and I'm here. But I'm not lonesome because I'm surrounded by good friends and Jane I really appreciate them. That's why I'm giving a Christmas Eve surprise party tonight for you, Steve, Professor Kropotkin, Mrs. O'Reilly and Al.

JANE:Tonight?...Oh, Irma honey, I don't know hot to tell you--

SOUND: PHONE RINGS

IRMA:Tell me what?

JANE:Well dear---

SOUND: PHONE RINGS

JANE:Excuse me, honey...

SOUND:RECEIVER UP

JANE:Hello?...Oh hello Steve...What? Yes I know it's formal...No, I've never been to the Copacabana...Yes, I'm terribly excited--it'll be our first Christmas Eve together since we were kids...I'll be ready. Goodbye, dear.

## SOUND:RECEIVER DOWN

IRMA:Jane you mean you're going out tonight with Steve...What about my Christmas Eve party?...

JANE:But honey, you didn't say anything about it and Steve invited me to a Christmas party at the Copacabana. I'd hate to miss it. All of his friends in show business will be there.

IRMA:But this is Christmas Eve and I thought tonight we'd be together. Christmas Eve isn't like other holidays you know.

JANE:I realize that, honey, but---

IRMA:I could understand it if it was Independence Day then we wouldn't have to be together...we could be independent.

JANE:Oh, Irma, I'm terribly sorry--but there's nothing I can do about it. Steve asked me last week. Anyway my not being here shouldn't spoil your party...You'll still have Professor Kropotkin, Mrs. O'Reilly and Al...

IRMA:I understand Jane...I still have the others.

SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR

JANE:Sure. Come in.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS

KROP:It's only me, Professor Kropotkin. How are my two little Christmas trees? One full grown and one a little sapling.

JANE: Why, Professor.

KROP:Excuse me--a little Yuletide joke. By the way girls, a Merry Christmas to you both.

JANE: Merry Christmas to you, too.

IRMA: Merry Christmas Professor.

KROP:I hope you'll excuse me for coming down...I don't mean to interrupt but I wasn't feeling so good...and when I don't feel so good, I always rush out of my room as fast as I can.

JANE:Why?

KROP:I woudln't be found dead in that place. Well, girls, do you realize tonight's Christmas Eve?

JANE: Yes, and just look at that blanket of snow outside...isn't it lovely?

KROP: That's a matter of opinion. If Mrs. O'Reilly doesn't put glass in my windows, not only will I have a blanket of snow, but I'll have a carpet of the same material.

JANE:Irma, you'd better ask the Professor about this evening, before it's too late.

IRMA:Oh, yes. Professor will you come to my Christmas Eve party tonight?

KROP: Tonight? Oh, Irma, I'm so sorry.

IRMA: You mean you can't come either?

KROP:It can't be helped, Irma. Tonight I'm playing my fiddle at the Gypsy Tea Room. I've been practicing all day.

IRMA:Oh, that's terrible.

KROP: I know, but they pay me for it.

IRMA:Gee, first Jane disappoints me and now you.

JANE:Look honey, the Professor can't help it...he must earn a living...after all you'll still have Mrs. O'Reilly and maybe the Martins upstairs...and of course there's Al.

## SOUND:KNOCK ON DOOR

JANE:Come in.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS

O'REILLY: Hello, everybody. Merry Christmas.

JANE: The same to you, Mrs. O'Reilly.

IRMA:Merry Christmas.

KROP:Say, Mrs. O'Reilly, that's a beautiful wreath you got on your door downstairs. But that sign in the middle of it!

O'REILLY: You don't like it?

KROP:"Merry Christmas, lots of cheer...remember the landlady or you'll freeze next year"...To me, it's not a sentimental thought.

IRMA:Mrs. O'reilly I'm giving a big surprise Christmas Eve party tonight for you and Al-will you come?

O'REILLY: Tonight? Oh, Irma, darling, I'm so sorry.

IRMA: You mean you're busy too?

O'REILLY:Yes. The Martins have invited me to go to Jersey with them, and since they owe me four months back rent, I can't afford to let them get on a train by themselves.

IRMA:Oh, this is awful. First Jane turne me down, then the Professor and now you (sobs).

O'REILLY: Maybe next year Irma. Merry Christmas and goodbye.

SOUND:DOOR CLOSES

IRMA: (crying)Oh, Jane.

JANE:Oh, Sweetie, now...stop crying. I know you're disappointed but you should have told us about your party eariler. And besides you won't be left alone...you bought some food didn't you?...

IRMA: What do you mean? Of course I bought some food.

JANE: Then Al will show up, I'll guarantee it.

KROP: Speaking of food, I think I'll go up to my room and have dinner.

JANE: Are you cooking, Professor?

KROP:No, I take one look at that dump, i sit down and eat my heart out. Merry Christmas, girls, and I'm sorry, Irma.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS. DOOR SLAMS

JANE:Honey, I'm sorry things turned out this way for you.

IRMA: That's all right Jane, at least I found ou who my friends are. I'm going to take a shower.

JANE: Sweetie, why don't you take a hot bath.

IRMA:No, if I get in that much water and think who my friends are I'm liable to drown myself.

SOUND:DOOR CLOSES

SOUND:KNOCK ON DOOR

JANE:Come in.

SOUND:DOOR OPENS

JANE:Al!

SOUND:DOOR OPENS

IRMA: Was that Al's voice I heard...Oh, Al honey!

AL:Chicken! Baby! Merry Christmas.

IRMA:Merry merry Christmas to you, Al. I'm so glad to see you.

AL:Same here. Chicken. Give me a great big kiss.

IRMA: Sure Al (KISS) Oh, Al...you're shivering. How did you get so cold?

AL: Wanted to take the cross town trolley, but with all that snow on the ground, it took me four hours to find a transfer.

JANE:Oh, my goodness, look at the time. Steve's going to pick me up in an hour and I'm not even dressed yet. Arent' you going to take your top coat off, Al?

AL:Thanks, Jane, but I'm not staying. Just came in to wish Chicken a Merry Christmas. I've got to be on my way..got a big deal brewing.

IRMA:(pause)Oh, Al. (sobs)

AL:Chicken, it's important.

IRMA:Oh you and your deals.

AL:Business is business, Chicken. I've got to be running along.

IRMA:But I'll be left all alone on Christmas Eve and Al, I depended on you,my own boy friend...

AL: Chicken, if I could only explain.

IRMA:Don't bother. None of you must think very much of me if you can leave me alone on Christmas Eve. Fine friends I have...Goodbye.

SOUND:DOOR SLAM

AL:How do you like that?

JANE:Al, of all the low down contemptible good for nothing---

AL:Hold it, Jane...I won't have you saying those things about the girl I love...

JANE: I'm not talking about Irma. i mean you. How could you desert her Christmas Eve, of all nights. Me, I have to go out with Steve, but you're Irma's only boy friend.

AL:Jane, I love Irma. And when a man is in love he's not responsible..he may do strange things...things he'd never do in his right mind!

JANE: What are you talking about?

AL:I went and got a job, like I promised.

JANE: You...got a job! Al, have you been drinking?

AL:Knew it would shock you...but want to make a little dough and buy Chicken a present.

JANE: A present? What kind of present?

AL:She wants one of them toasters that pops the bread up...My friend Mushy almost got one for me from a store, but at the wrong time the manager popped up...so I'll have to get it the hard way.

JANE: You mean you're going to work and break five years of tradition?

AL: When I was away from Chicken I realized how much she means to me so now I'll do anything.

MUSIC: CHRISTMAS CAROL BY QUARTET--OFF

JANE:Listen Al, the Christmas Carolers.

AL:Gee that's pretty...I'd like to stay but I start the job tonight. Tell Irma I'll see her tomorrow. Goodbye.

SOUND:DOOR CLOSE. FOOTSTEPS--WINDOW OPEN--CAROLING LOUDER--WINDOW DOWN--FOOTSTEPS--PHONE RECEIVER PICK UP--DIALING--RING

STEVE: (ON FILTER) Hello...hello...who is this?

JANE:(depressed) It's me, Steve--Jane.

STEVE: Jane? What's wrong, Doll-Face? You sound terrible.

JANE:Steve I can't go with you to the Club.

STEVE: Why not? Are you sick, Jane?

JANE:No, Steve--I'm all right...it's just that...well, Irma...you see...well Irma hasn't any family or relatives in New York and this Christmas Eve all our friends seem to be busy and I just couldn't leave her alone, Steve.

SOUND:DOOR OPEN

STEVE:I wouldn't want you to.

JANE: Are you sure you mean that, Steve?

STEVE:Sure, Honey. I'll talk to you tomorrow. Goodbye and Merry Christmas, Jane.

JANE: Merry Christmas, Steve.

SOUND:FOOTSTEPS--RECEIVER DOWN

JANE:Al...I thought you left.

AL:Came back for my hat...didn't mean to eavesdrop Jane, but if you're willing to give up a good time tonight for Irma I guess it's my duty to be with Chicken too.

JANE:Oh Al, that would be just wonderful, but what about the present you were going to get for Irma? If you don't work tonight, where will you get the money for it?

AL:Going to hock my watch.

JANE:But Al, that's the only thing you own and you know that no matter how bad times have been you always said you'd never hock your watch.

AL:Well, a man like me don't need a watch--er, I sleep all day so time is not important and at night it's too late to do anything.

SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR

JANE: Come in.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS, CLOSES.

JANE:Oh, it's you Professor.

KROP:Excuse me Jane...I've been thinking about poor little Irma, and well...I decided to give up the job so tonight I could be with Irma.

JANE:But Professor, won't that cost you money--you get big tips during Christmas.

KROP:On Christmas Eve, it's not important to make money. It's important to be with friends...After all what's money?

JANE: Well it's pretty important.

KROP:I see you've been talking to Mrs. O'Reilly again...No my little Irma has no father in New York so tonight Professor Kropotkin will be her father.

AL:Atta boy, Pop.

KROP:Listen Al, the first chance I get I'm disinheriting you.

SOUND:DOOR OPENS

O'REILLY: Excuse me everybody, I took the liberty of walking in.

JANE: Why Mrs. O'Reilly, i thought you were on your way to New Jersey.

O'REILLY:I changed my mind. I got to thinking about poor little Irma being all alone tonight, and I just didn't have the heart to go. I'm going to stay here with Irma.

JANE:Isn't that wonderful? Professor Kropotkin just said that he's going to be her father.

O'REILLY: I'll tell you if that's the case, I'll be her mother.

KROP: I've got news for you--if you're the mother I'll be on the train for Reno in the morning.

JANE:Listen everybody, I've got a wonderful idea. Irma was going to throw a surprise party for us. now we'll throw one for her. We'll give her the best Christmas a girl ever had.

AL:Swell...I'll go out and hock my watch and buy the present.

KROP: I'll go get my violin.

O'REILLY: We can have the party in my apartment. It's bigger... Come along Janie, we'll start decorating. Oh it'll be a Merry Christmas. Come on Professor, take my arm.

KROP: A fair swap...she's been taking my blood all year.

JANE:Oh, wait until Irma finds out...she'll be the happiest girl in New York.

MUSIC:BRIDGE

SOUND: RAILROAD STATION

**BIZ:TRAIN CALLS in background** 

TICKETTAKER: Next... Where to Miss?

IRMA:Please mister what is the fare to Minneapolis?

TICKETTAKER: Fifty eight dollars round trip.

IRMA:Fifty-eight dollars--I only have six...where can I go for six dollars?

TICKETTAKER: Six dollars? Let me see--how about Niagra Falls?

IRMA:Oh I couldn't go to Niagra Falls...I'm not even married. I'll find some other place to go. Merry Christmas.

MUSIC:PLAY-OFF

MUSIC: JANE THEME

JANE: Well, we're down in Mrs. O'Reilly's room..the Professor, Al and myself...Al is beaming proudly. Come January the first, he will have completed a solid six years of steady un-employment. I'm setting the table and Mrs. O'Reilly is out trying to find a Christmas tree.

SOUND:DOOR OPEN

O'REILLY:(breathlessly) Oh, my aching feet--I've walked all over and I can't find a Christmas tree

JANE:Did you see Irma anywhere in the neighborhood?

O'REILLY:No, I didn't, but it's nothing to worry about. We must get the tree before she gets back.

AL: Tree? There's only one man who can help us.

SOUND:RECEIVER UP--DIAL

JANE: Who, Al?

AL: Who else but...Hello Joe...Al...Got a problem...Need a Christmas tree right away. What? I can get one at Macy's already trimmed for a dime? Oh, the dime is for a glass cutter--the tree is in the window...No, Joe...this is Christmas Eve...when I hear jingle bells I don't want 'em on a patrol wagon...What Joe, you're playing Santa Claus tonight? Going down a chimney? Joe, this is quite a change for you, isn't it? Oh, you're going in with an empty bag and coming out with a full one. Well, Joe, nothing I can say except good luck and Merry Christmas.

SOUND:RECEIVER DOWN

JANE:Oh, Al, what are we going to do...it's getting so late...

SOUND:KNOCK ON DOOR

JANE: That must be Irma...let's surprise her...Stand over there...let's put out all the lights and give her a big kiss.

SOUND:LIGHT SWITCH

O'REILLY:Come in.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS

JANE:Merry Christmas, honey.

(KISS)

AL:Here's one for me.

(KISS)

KROP:Me too, my darling daughter--

STEVE:For Pete's sakes, will someone please put on the lights.

SOUND:CLICK

JANE:Steve.

KROP:I thought Irma needed a shave.

JANE:Steve...we didn't expect you--I thought you went to the Copacabana.

STEVE:I couldn't take it--same old crowd, same old monotony--so I realized that I'd rather be here with real people on Christmas Ever. Where's Irma?

JANE: Well she thought we were all deserting her so she went out in a huff. That's why we're throwing a surprise party for her and we're waiting to her to come back.

KROP: We don't want to find Irma until we get a Christmas tree though. Got any ideas Steve?

STEVE: Why don't we go out and buy one.

AL:Nice gesture, Steve. We'll wait here for you.

JANE:Oh, Steve you don't have to.

STEVE:It's my pleasure Jane--I saw several on the way over. I'll have one in a few minutes.--be right back.

SOUND:FOOTSTEPS--DOOR OPEN, CLOSE

O'REILLY: And I'll get the cake out of the oven.

KROP: And I'll make some punch.

AL:And I'll tell you when it's right...hey, Jane...what are you crying about? The party's taking form.

JANE:I know, and it's so wonderful having everyone pitch in. Steve's getting a tree, and all of you giving up things--oh, this is the most wonderful Christmas I ever had.

MUSIC:BRIDGE

SOUND:HARBOR NOISES

CAPTAIN:Look Lady, this is your third round trip on this ferry boat. Ain't you got a home...Ain't you got any friends?

IRMA:No.

CAPTAIN: Well, take my advice--make some.

IRMA:All right, I'll try...thank you and a merry Christmas to you.

SOUND:FOOTSTEPS ON PAVEMENT...STREET NOISES

CAROLERS: Jingle Bells...jingle bells...jingle all the way...

IRMA:(sings) Sleigh...

CAROLERS:Oh, what fun it is to ride...

IRMA:(sings) On a sleigh

CAROLERS:On a one horse...(dying out)

MERRILL:Hold it fellows...look, lady...we're Christmas carolers...we don't do this for a living but we enjoy it. And we rehearse a great deal. We don't mind you joining us but we like to have the sleigh come after the horse.

IRMA:I'm sorry

MERRILL:Okay fellows...let's do it again.

CAROLERS: Jingle Bells...jingle bells...jingle all the way..Oh, what fun it is to ride...

IRMA: When the horse comes after the sleigh.

MERRILL:Look lady, ..would you mind running along.

IRMA:Oh all right...I was just lonely...Merry Christmas.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS ON PAVEMENT, STREET NOISES

BUGSY:Pardon me, lady...have you a dime for a cup of coffee?

IRMA:Yes, poor man. And a merry Christmas...maybe you ought to have another dime for a doughnut.

BUGSY:Oh, thank you...

IRMA:Oh, dear...I don't have any change.

BUGSY: Would you like me to break that five for you?

IRMA:If you don't mind...Are you all alone in New York too?

BUGSY: Yes. How about you?

IRMA:I'm from Minnesota.

BUGSY:Minnesota...how well I know that place. You know you look very familiar.

IRMA:I do? My name is Peterson.

BUGSY:Of course...you're Peterson's little daughter...

IRMA: My father's name is George.

BUGSY:Let me think...Peterson...say, that must be George Peterson.

IRMA:How did you know?

BUGSY: Why I remember you used to live in...in...

IRMA: Minneapolis.

BUGSY:Let me see...George Peterson...Minneapolis...that's the place...Never forget a man.

IRMA: Well, it's so nice to meet old friends...especially when you're lonely. You can keep the five dollars sir.

BUGSY:Thank you. But this is only a loan. I'll return it the next time I see your father...good old Fred Petersburg in Wisconsin. Goodbye.

SOUND:FOOTSTEPS OFF

IRMA:No, it's Peterson in Minnesota...oh, mister...mister...

**MUSICBRIDGE** 

SOUND:FOOTSTEPS ON PAVEMENT

JANE:Al, we've walked for miles--perhaps we'd better go home and call the police to look for Irma...

AL:Maybe you're right Jane...

SOUND: APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS

BUGSY:Pardon me bud...you got a dime?...Oh, Al it's you. Got that quarter you owe me?

AL:Bugsy...Ain't you got no character? How can you panhandle on Christmas Eve?

BUGSY:Great pickings tonight. Just got a fin from a blonde. Told her I knew her old man...Peterville or Peterson in Minnnesota.

JANE:Peterson! Al!

AL:Bugsy, which way did she go?

BUGSY: Cross town. You know her?

AL: Why, what's the difference?

BUGSY:I been feeling like a crumb ever since I clipped her...seemed like such a nice kid. Would you give her back this fin?...Thanks. And Merry Christmas. (FADING) Hey, bud, got a dime for a cup of coffee?

JANE: Come on, Al, let's go home and call the police. Now I'm really getting panicky.

AL:All right, Jane. I'm with you.

**MUSICBRIDGE** 

SOUND:FOG HORN...FOOTSTEPS, STOP, SILENCE

WATCHMAN:Look, lady, I seen that picture "Mildred Pierce". Now you get off this bridge.

IRMA:I was just looking at the water, Mr. Watchman!

WATCHMAN:Look, Lady, don't look down there--everything that's beautiful is up here...it's Christmas Eve you know.

IRMA: Yes I know--and I'm so lonely.

WATCHMAN: I get it...you're all alone, huh?

IRMA: (sobs)Yes.

WATCHMAN: Any friends?

IRMA:(sobs)Yes, but my closest friends are far away.

WATCHMAN:Don't cry, sister...you're coming home with me. We ain't got much but we're happy to share it.

SOUND:POLICE SIREN...CAR PULLING UP

SARGE:Hey, Bill

WATCHMAN: Yes, Sargeant?...

SARGE:Did you happen to see a blonde girl?--say, lady, what's your name?

IRMA:Irma Peterson.

SARGE: That's all we want to know. Come on along, sister.

IRMA:I didn't do it...I didn't do it...

SARGE:Didn't do what?

IRMA:I don't know but my boyfriend always says to say you didn't do it.

MUSIC BRIDGE

KROP:Now look Janie, we've got to be brave. Now it's up to the police. They'll find her. But we've got to take our minds off of it...Mrs. O'Reilly...would you like to dance?

O'REILLY:Oh, I'd love to.

KROP:Al, dance with her...I'll play the fiddle. Merry Christmas, everybody.

JANE:(depressed--almost sobbing) Merry Christmas.

SOUND: FIDDLE STRAIN

SOUND: SIREN OFF

KROP:How do you like that...I just started playing and already the neighbors got the police here.

STEVE:No, it's a squad car pulling up...I think it's Irma!

AL:My Chicken...

JANE:Oh, Al...It's Irma...the police have found her...she's coming up the steps...quick turn out the lights everybody. Come on--we can still surprise her and have the party.

SOUND:LIGHTS CLICK--KNOCK ON DOOR.

O'REILLY:Come in, Dearie.

SOUND:DOOR OPENS

JANE:Irma, darling.

(KISS)

AL:Surprise Chicken...here's a big kiss for you.

(KISS)

KROP: And here's a kiss from your father...

(KISS)

O'REILLY: Why, Professor!

KROP: Quick turn on the lights, I'm dying. I just kissed Mrs. O'Reilly.

SOUND:LIGHT SWITCH

JANE:Irma darling, Merry Christmas...where have you been?

IRMA: You're all here? I thought no one loved me and I felt so alone.

JANE:Oh, honey, don't you know that people always spend Christmas Eve with their loved ones and you're the one we love the most...

KROP: Exactly my sentiments.

O'REILLY:Bless my little Irma...you're like me own daughter.

AL:Sure Chicken, I'd never leave you. I want to spend all my Christmas Eves with you.

IRMA:Oh, this is the best Christmas a girl ever had--surrounded by her friends...

SOUND: CHIMES (OFF)

IRMA:Oh, it's midnight, is that right Al?

AL: Wait a minute, I'll look at my watch.

IRMA:Al, why are you going to the window?

AL: Watch happens to be across the street. You're right, Chicken, it's twelve o'clock...Merry Christmas, Chicken.

IRMA:Merry Christmas, Al...and Merry Christmas Professor Kropotkin, Mrs. O'Reilly, Steve, Jane and all our friends, Merry, merry Christmas.

JANE: And as for me, my sentiments are the same as those of My Friend Irma.

MUSIC IRMA THEME UP AND APPLAUSE--fade for Commercial

NILES:Remember, your friend Irma says:

IRMA: All my friends buy Pepsodent.

(RAVE HITCHHIKE)

Anner: What's the really hardest, trickiest part of your home permanent? Isn't it curling those short ends around your forehead and neck? Now, at last, that problem's licked! Yes, by an amazing little curler that's utterly different from any you've ever seen! It's the new Mary Martin Short-Cut Curler! The famous star of "South Pacific" says:

MARY:It works like magic--grips short ends, hugs them fast through every step of your Rayve Home Permanent. It's wonderful!

Anner:Get your short-cut curlers now! This offer's made for a limited time only. Ask at your favorite drug or cosmetic counter for the special pack...12 Mary Martin Short-Cut curlers, plus a Rave Home Permanent refill. Only one dollar and twenty-nine cents.