

**Title:** **Lily and the Paper Man**

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**Parts (7):** Narrator, Lily, Lily's Mother, Paper Man (Ray), Frank (Crossing Guard), Mrs. Chan, and Lily's Father

### SCENE I

**Lily's Mother:** "Shall we take the bus home today?"

**Narrator:** Lily peers from under her umbrella

**Lily:** "Let's walk. I like the rain."

**Narrator:** Her mother goes around the puddles. Lily skips through them.

**Lily:** "Goodbye, Frank."

**Narrator:** She calls the crossing guard. Frank holds up his bright red stop sign for her.

**Frank:** Goodbye, Lily. See you tomorrow.

**Narrator:** Down the street they go. Lily hops on one foot past the window of Mrs. Chan's store. She waves at Mrs. Chan, who smiles and waves back. They are almost home.

**Lily:** Look, Mama. I can walk backwards the rest of the way.

**Lily's Mother:** Be careful, Lily.

**Narrator:** Lily backs into something. She spins around.

**Paper Man:** A dollar for the paper.

**Narrator:** The paper man is a tall man in a raggedy coat. His hair sticks up higgledy-piddledly all over his head. He thrusts a thin newspaper toward Lily's mother. Lily hides, clutching her mother's coat as she peeks out.

*\*Her mother gives the paper man a dollar\**

**Lily's Mother:** Thank you.

**Narrator:** The man nods and then stares at Lily. The rain runs off his bumpy nose and down into his beard. Lily can hear his wheezy breathing. She clings to her mother, looking back all the way to their apartment door.

## SCENE II

*\*The next day after school\**

**Lily:** I want to take the bus home, Mama.

**Lily's Mother:** Are you sure?

**Narrator:** Lily looks at her feet and nods, so they get in line and board the bus. She sees Frank out the window and waves, but he doesn't see her. They whiz past Mr. Chan's too fast for Lily to see her friendly face. When they drive past the Paper Man, Lily ducks down in her seat. He doesn't see her! Her mother rings the bell.

*\*Lily runs from the bust to the lobby door\**

**Lily:** Hurry, hurry, Mama!

**Lily's Mother:** Is something wrong, Lily?

**Narrator:** Lily shakes her head and looks down the street. The Paper Man is heading their way. Lily feels his eyes on her. She shoves the door and it clicks shut. They are safe now.

### SCENE III

**Narrator:** All that week Lily and her mother take the bus. And all the next week. And every day after that. Until the first snow falls. Lily has fleecy new mitts and toasty and toasty new boots. She tries to catch snowflakes on her tongue.

**Lily:** Try it, Mama.

**Lily's Mother:** Don't you want to take the bus, Lily?

**Lily:** I like the snow. Good-bye, Frank.

**Narrator:** They cross the street. Snow flies around them in a bright flurry.

**Lily's Mother:** Let's see if Mrs. Chan is selling hot cocoa yet.

**Narrator:** Lily claps her mittens together and runs on ahead. Lily closes her eyes and listens to the squeak and crunch of her boots in the snow. Her mother follows her.

**Paper Man:** A dollar for the paper....

**Narrator:** Lily's eyes fly open. The Paper Man holds out a newspaper

with a shaking hand. Lily wants to run away, but she stands still. She sees a thin shirt through the holes in his coat and bare feet through the holes in his boots. Lily shivers.

*\*Lily's mother gives the man a dollar, then she tucks the paper into her purse\**

**Lily's Mother:** Thank you.

**Paper Man:** Have a good day.

**Narrator:** Lily is not sure, but she thinks he winks at her.

**Narrator:** Lily forgets to press the numbers that unlock the lobby door. She forgets to put the UP button on the elevator. She is thinking.

**Lily's Mother:** Lily, is something wrong?

**Lily:** The Paper Man isn't wearing socks, Mama. Why? It's cold out.

**Narrator:** Lily's mother looks serious.

**Lily's Mother:** I guess he doesn't have any. We're very lucky to have warm clothes and a place to live.

**Narrator:** Lily is quiet after that and holds her mother's hand all the way to their apartment.

#### SCENE IV

**Narrator:** On Saturday Lily goes out with her father to buy milk at Mrs.

Chan's. The Paper Man is on the corner. He has no hat and his ears are red from the cold. Lily's father stops to buy a paper.

**Paper Man:** Thank you. Morning, missy.

**Narrator:** Inside the store Lily has the dollar her father gave her for a treat, but she can't decide what to buy.

**Mrs. Chan:** Save it until you find something special.

**Narrator:** Lily walks home hand in hand with her father. She feels the coins in her mittens press against her palm. They come to the corner. There he is again. The Paper Man's shoulders are hunched. His arms are folded and Lily sees him shuffling from one cold foot to the other. He doesn't even notice her this time.

**Narrator:** That night in bed, Lily snuggles down under her favorite quilt. She holds her doll, Steffie, close.

**Lily:** We are warm, and we have enough socks. But the Paper Man is cold. What can we do, Steffie?

**Narrator:** Lily thinks and thinks until her question fades into sleep. In the morning, Lily slips out of bed and, hugging Steffie, whispers.

**Lily:** I know what to do!

## SCENE V

**Narrator:** The next day after school, Lily and her mother stop to talk to

Frank. Then they go to Mrs. Chan's store. Then they visit the caretaker in their building. All week Lily works on her idea. She and her father go to this place and that, fetching carrying until, at last, she is ready. Under her quilt that night, Lily has trouble falling asleep.

**Narrator:** Early, early, Lily wakes up. She and Steffie hurry into her parents' room.

**Lily:** It's time to get up.

**Lily's Father:** Go back to bed, Lily, it's too early.

**Lily's Mother:** It's Saturday.

**Lily:** The wind is blowing and the snow is falling. The Paper Man is cold. Please come now.

**Narrator:** Lily's mother sits up in bed. Her father turns on the light. They look at each other and they get out of bed. They get dressed, pick up a big, big bag, and down they go.

**Narrator:** Outside, the wind is blowing from the North Pole. The Paper Man is on the corner. Lily feels her heart thumping, but she takes the bag from her father and drags it over the snow, right up to Paper Man's feet.

**Paper Man:** Morning, Missy.

**Lily:** My name is Lily.

***\*Lily holds out her hand and the Paper Man shakes it\****

**Paper Man:** My name is Ray. That's a whole lot of garbage you have there.

**Lily:** It's not garbage. It's a present. For you.

**Narrator:** She notices his nose is red from the wind. She rubs her own cold nose.

**Lily:** Open it.

**Narrator:** The Paper Man peeks inside the bag and lifts out a sweater. Lily looks back at her father. Ray pulls the sweater on over his coat. He reaches in again, and out comes a thick pair of socks. He sits down and puts them on. Now Lily can see orange flowers through the holes in Ray's boots. She winks at her mother.

**Narrator:** Next the Paper Man puts on a stripy hat with earflaps. Lily claps her hands. He looks just like Frank. Then he pulls on the new gloves and scarf that Mrs. Chan gave her for her special dollar. Ray keeps reaching in and putting on more, until he is so puffy he can barely bend. From the very bottom he pulls out Lily's quilt, the one her granny made her for being born.

**Narrator:** The Paper Man holds it up and looks at the stars and elephants and turtles. Lily tries to smile, but it is her very favorite quilt. The Paper Man wraps it around himself.

**Paper Man:** Thank you, Lily.

**Lily:** Now you are warm.

**Paper Man:** I'm warmer than I've been for a long, long time.

**Narrator:** His eyes sparkle. He smiles the biggest smile Lily has ever seen. Suddenly, she can smile again too.

**Lily:** The Paper Man is warm.

**Narrator:** Lily and her parents walk home. In the lobby, Lily presses her nose against the frosty window and looks out. The Paper Man waves at her. He is still smiling. Happily, Lily waves back.

**THE END.**