

# ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN ON CHRISTMAS

A Christmas Drama

By Alberta Hawse

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CAST: 2M, 4W, 1b, 1g

**BILL OGDEN** Warm, understanding, genial Father of a Christian family.

**RUTH OGDEN** His wife. Loving mother, a little quick in temper and too emotional.

**ERIKA** Their 18-year-old adopted daughter. Pretty, likeable, but a little bad tempered now and then.

**R.B.** Their son, age 9-12. Typical boy with a firm faith and an inquiring mind.

**GRANDMA** Ruth's mother. Plump, good-natured; likes to sing around the house.

**ROGER** Erika's steady boyfriend. Good-looking and sensible.

**TAMMY** R.B.'s friend and fellow actor in the church pageant. Age 8-10.

**RACHEL** Erika's teacher in a social science class. A very attractive career woman with a warm and unusual interest in some of her students.

**TIME:** Day before Christmas.

**PLACE:** Ogden's living room.

**PLAYING TIME:** Approximately 1 hour, depending on music.

**SOUNDS:** Christmas background music. Doorbell. Telephone. Music used at breaks in the scenes and between acts should be kept short. Acts should succeed one another quickly.

**SUGGESTED SONGS:**

"Deck the Halls" . . . old carol.

"Bless This House" . . . words by Helen Taylor, music by May Brabe.

"O, Little Town of Bethlehem" . . . old carol.

"That Beautiful Name" . . . words by Jean Cary, music by Mabel J. Camp.

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### SCENERY PLOT:

Ordinary living room nicely decorated for Christmas. Small tree on a table or larger tree on floor as space permits. Sofa faces audience. Two chairs on either side. Small table toward rear with telephone. Two exits, one toward kitchen and interior of house; one toward outside. Coat rack near outside exit with Bill's suit coat and R.B.'s jacket hanging on it. Tree is full of lights but some of the bulbs don't work.

### PROPERTIES:

Pair of brightly-colored or striped woven leg-warmers. In place of leg-warmers, a brightly-colored scarf, long mittens, or even a long-sleeved sweater can be used. (Modify speeches to the item used.)

Books - two hard-bound, library type and one small, thin booklet.

One loose-leaf notebook or business file folder.

Small doll and baby blanket.

Banana or other fruit or vegetable for Bill.

Box of brownie mix.

Grandma's wrapped packages, including one loaf-shaped package.

Tray with coffee cups, etc.

Extra colored tree bulbs.

Homemade play script for R.B.

A recorded cassette tape for the small portion of "remembered" seminar leader's message.

Pretty Christmas apron for Grandma.

Kitchen towel.

Large photograph album with pictures.

### LIGHTING:

Ordinary lighting. A spotlight could be used in third act as the children make a nativity tableau.

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ACT I

(TIME: Early morning, the day before Christmas. AT RISE: Scene opens with Christmas music in background. Allow audience to have a good view of the staging before action begins. R.B. races on with some brightly - colored leg-warmers flopping on arms. HE is followed by an angry, screaming ERIKA. R.B. is in nice robe and pajamas. His sister could be robed too, if desired.)

ERIKA: (From offstage, as SHE enters) Robert Benjamin, you give me those leg-warmers.

R.B.: (Climbing over chair and footstool) Catch me and they're yours.

ERIKA: (Angrily) You have no right to bother my things.

R.B.: (Standing on stool or in chair) What are they? (Holds them up as HE grimaces)

ERIKA: (Stretching to reach them) Don't act as if you don't know. They are leg-warmers. Roger gave them to me for my birthday.

R.B.: Fine friend. (Disgusted) Is he going to let your feet freeze? (Runs his hand through warmers and wiggles his fingers.)

ERIKA: Stop it. Give them to me. (SHE grabs them and THEY stretch warmers full length. HE suddenly lets go, stumbles and yells as HE holds his side.)

R.B.: (Howling) Ow. You've broken my ribs. I got a broken leg. I got something awful! Mother! (Yells quite pathetically)

ERIKA: I ought to break your head. (In very ill humor) How did I ever get such a demon for a brother?

R.B.: And I wonder why they ever picked YOU to be my sister? Mother!

(RUTH enters, holding a box of brownie mix.)

R.B.: (Wailing) Erika broke my arm.

ERIKA: Too bad it isn't true.

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RUTH: (Calmly) And I suppose you were not doing a thing to torment her?

R.B.: (Emphatically) That's right!

ERIKA: He was messing around with my present from Roger. (Holds leg-warmers up for inspection) They're only five days old and if he has stretched them I'm going to . . . (Shakes her fist)

R.B.: If I was a girl's best boyfriend, I'd give her something nice for her birthday. (Disgusted) They ain't even got feet in them.

RUTH: They haven't got feet in them.

R.B.: That's what I said.

ERIKA: No use, Mother. He is never going to become educated.

R.B.: Maybe I don't study all the time like you do, but I don't have to hide books under my bed either.

ERIKA: You stay out of my room. (Angrily) Mother, he's a snoop.

RUTH: Enough is enough. You stop tormenting your sister.

R.B.: She ain't . . . I mean she isn't my real sister. (This is not a mean remark, but rather a statement of fact.)

RUTH: (Bristling a little) Robert Benjamin, don't you ever say that again, even in fun! (Gives him a swat on the bottom.) Go get dressed. There's a few good tree lights somewhere. See if you can find them and take the old ones off the tree.

(R.B. goes out crestfallen, rubbing his backside. As HE passes Erika, HE gives her an accusing look.)

R.B.: Thanks to you, now I've got a broken bottom.

ERIKA: I hope these things still fit.

RUTH: Erika, why do you have books under your bed?

ERIKA: (Trying to brush it off) No particular reason, Mother.

RUTH: But you have a desk and a bookcase.

ERIKA: (Defensively) Can't I put my books where I want them? The only books under my bed are for a project Miss Duvall has given me. Three of us are working on it as a special project. (SHE rolls leg-warmers into a ball.)

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RUTH: What is it?

ERIKA: Just a project. Aaron Steiner and Debbie Wells and I.

RUTH: Are they two of her favorite students, too?

ERIKA: Favorites?

RUTH: Yes. You seem to be. For the past two years.

ERIKA: Oh. . . yes . . . I suppose so. I'll tell you about it later. I've got some packages to wrap and . . .

RUTH: I'll make R.B. stay out of your room.

ERIKA: Thanks, Mom. (Kisses her quickly as SHE starts to exit.)

RUTH: If Dad or I can help on the project let us know.

ERIKA: (A little too quickly) Oh, no. . . I mean . . . really it isn't anything. Just a social science study.

RUTH: I've got to get these brownies mixed if I expect to have them for church tonight. (SHE exits.)

(ERIKA is about to leave, too. Phone rings. SHE pitches leg-warmers toward chair as SHE answers. Leg-warmers fall on floor.)

ERIKA: (Answering) Ogdens. Yes . . . Oh, yes, Miss Duvall. Merry Christmas to you, too. (Very warm and friendly) You have? . . . (Listens and seems to grow a little apprehensive.) Oh . . . I . . . I don't know what to say. So close to Christmas? I wouldn't want to spoil . . . Oh, no, I didn't mean ME. I meant the family. I'm not sure it's the kind of Christmas surprise. . . (Laughs a little) Oh, 'course I'm glad. . . I've been looking forward to it for months . . . but now . . . ? (Seems to be listening for someone in the hall.) Oh, Miss Duvall . . . can you hold on until I go upstairs? I'll get my phone . . . don't go away. (Sets the receiver down, starts to exit) Today . . . Today! I can't believe it. (Nervously excited)

(R.B. comes in dressed in ordinary clothes, juggling some light bulbs for the tree. HE passes the phone, notices it is off the hook, picks it up and begins to listen. His expression goes from interest, to concern, to worry, almost everything.

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