

BE STILL AND KNOW ... IT'S CHRISTMAS

By Eddie McPherson

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Dedication: *I would like to dedicate this play to the original cast who brought these characters to life for the first time:*

<i>MR. FOX</i>	<i>Andy Davis</i>
<i>MS. SIZEMORE</i>	<i>Crystal Leigh</i>
<i>JANET</i>	<i>Paula Kornegay</i>
<i>SELINA</i>	<i>Katlin Peace</i>
<i>SAMANTHA</i>	<i>Cathy Marcum</i>
<i>DAVID</i>	<i>Kyle Nunn</i>

STORY OF THE PLAY

It's Christmas Eve at Sizemore's Department Store. Janet, a sales associate, is a new widow trying to make sense of the tragedy that has recently befallen her daughter and herself. Store manager, Mr. Fox, in an attempt to impress his boss, Ms. Sizemore, constantly harasses Janet over small things. Janet's faith is about to dwindle to nothing until she witnesses a simple nativity reenactment her best friend organizes for the shoppers at the end of the hectic business day. She realizes coping with life's heartaches become a little easier when we slow down long enough to put things in their proper perspective. A touching story, mixed with comic moments, creates an entertaining Christmas event complete with a reflective nativity. Favorite carols that can be sung by the cast, an ensemble or complete choir can be added, if desired. Very easy to stage!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 m, 3 w, 1boy, 1girl, many extras)

MS. SIZEMORE: The money-hungry store owner.

MR. FOX: The insipid store manager.

JANET: A recently widowed woman in her late 30s, early 40s.

SELINA: Janet's preteen daughter.

SAMANTHA: A longtime associate of the store; outspoken.

DAVID: A preteen boy who acts like an old-fashioned newsy.

2 JANITORS: Non-speaking.

2-5 SHOPPERS: One liners. You may add more with no lines.

STORE CLERKS: As many as desired.

EXTRAS: Parents and children.

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS

ANGEL

MARY

JOSEPH

SHEPHERDS

WISEMEN

PROPS

Brooms, dusters, etc. (Janitors)

pocket watch with chain, tie, handkerchief, battery-operated or pull string toy (Mr. Fox)

clipboard, white glove (Ms. Sizemore)

purse, compact, cell phone, watch, locket, Christmas gift box (Janet)

large book (Samantha)

music box, Christmas gift bag (Selina)

elf hat and shoes, coupon pages (David/Selina)

shopping bags, gift wrapped boxes, etc. (Shoppers)

PRODUCTION NOTES

All the action of the play takes place inside Sizemore's Department store on Christmas Eve. The set may be as elaborate or simple as the director chooses. There needs to be a simple office scene set up with a small desk, a plant, and a couple of chairs SR or SL. A monitor from a computer can serve as a cash register. Several tables set about the stage covered in goods will be sufficient for the merchandise tables but can be more embellished. The action should move rather quickly so that the hectic mish-mash of the Christmas rush is evident throughout the play and therefore will contrast with the reflective mood of the nativity presentation. When changing action from one side of the stage to the other, the later scene should follow smoothly without any noticeable pauses. Mr. Fox, when talking to Ms. Sizemore in their romantic moments, should speak like a bad Shakespearean actor. Ms. Sizemore responds somewhat in the same manner but more polished and sophisticated. The nativity scene should be soft and reflective. The actors playing the biblical parts could sing the carols or a soloist, ensemble or choir may sing while the actors portray their roles. The director may also choose to add or rearrange the music according to his or her needs. A manger is all you need for the nativity portion of the program since it is reenacted inside the store. But more scenery may be added if desired. All scripture read is from the NIV translation of the Bible.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: A couple of JANITORS are scurrying around sweeping the floor of the store. MR. FOX, the store manager, rushes in straightening his tie and looking quite nervous.)

MR. FOX: *(Pulling out a pocket watch and looking at it.)*
Gentlemen, we are fifteen minutes from opening our doors. Fifteen minutes! And look at this department! Ms. Sizemore will go over this store with a toothbrush. If it isn't spotless, take one guess who will be to blame. Can you guess? Me, that's who. Come on, fellas, give me a break, I need this job, retail is all I know! Are the floors swept? Can you push that broom a little faster? No one has dusted the shelves!

MS. SIZEMORE: *(Offstage.)* Mr. Fox!

MR. FOX: *(Freezing with the OTHERS.)* It's her highness, the queen of retail. This department isn't ready. I'll distract her in another department, fellas. *(Stops and looks back at THEM as HE starts to exit.)* Please ... don't fail me on Christmas Eve.

(MS. SIZEMORE enters carrying a clipboard.)

MR. FOX: *(Distracting HER.)* Ms. Sizemore, I believe the jewelry department is ready for inspection. If you'll allow me to escort you in that direction.

MS. SIZEMORE: Mr. Fox, if you would please allow me to inspect my store the way I so choose.

MR. FOX: Yes, ma'am, it's just ...

MS. SIZEMORE: Silence! *(Looking around while JANITORS stand at attention.)* Hmmmm. Very nice. *(Slides a white-gloved finger across something.)* Splendid. *(Writes on the clipboard.)* Excellent job, Mr. Fox. It seems the store is ready for the Christmas Eve rush!

MR. FOX: It is? I mean, yes, ma'am. It is! It sure is!
(Winks at JANITORS.)

MS. SIZEMORE: *(Dreamy, out to the audience.)* One of the busiest shopping days of the year. The vibrations caused by the multitudes stomping through the front door. The sight of frantic last minute shoppers grabbing at any old thing that will do. The sound of the register scanners beeping each time it reads a price tag. Yes, my dear Mr. Fox, Christmas Eve. My favorite shopping day of the year.

MR. FOX: So well put, Ms. Sizemore, the way your miserly words flow from your frugal lips. It's music. That's what it is, a symphony that plays its sweetest refrain for my lonely heart.

MS. SIZEMORE: *(Flattered, but remaining businesslike.)* Mr. Fox, really!

MR. FOX: I ... I'm sorry, Ms. Sizemore. I ... I don't know what came over me.

MS. SIZEMORE: That's all right, Mr. Fox. *(THEY'RE face to face. She clears her throat.)* Well, I guess we should open the doors.

MR. FOX: *(Straightens HIS tie.)* Uh, yes ma'am. I'm sure the crowd is getting restless. *(MS. SIZEMORE exits.)* Gentlemen! You have passed the inspection ... the store is ready for the masses. Dismissed! *(The JANITORS scurry about as MR. FOX wipes his forehead with a handkerchief.)*

(The CROWD enters. This can be as many people as you'd like depending on stage size. For now, they're standing on the floor below the stage or extreme SR or SL waiting for the store to open. They're getting quite impatient. Once in the store they will browse around during the duration of the play.)

SHOPPER 1: It's nine o'clock! The store's supposed to open at nine o'clock!

SHOPPER 2: It's a quarter 'til. You must be fast.

SHOPPER 3: *(To the next SHOPPER.)* I haven't even started my shopping yet.

SHOPPER 4: Hey, how did you get in front of me?

SHOPPER 5: Would you stop pushing back there!?

End of Freeview

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