

CHRISTMAS at the PARSONAGE

By Nancy Hedrick Harper

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DEDICATION

This play is dedicated to the children of all ministers everywhere, but especially to my siblings, Wilma, Wanda, and Paul.

*The playwright,
Nancy Hedrick Harper*

THE STORY

If you think your Christmas is hectic, look in on the Taylors at the parsonage! The four Taylor children are unhappy about being in more pageants, stranded travelers need help, a troubled high school couple wants advice about getting married, and on top of it all, a beautiful baby is left at the parsonage door. As the mayhem mounts, Rev. and Mrs. Taylor try to find the young mother who so desperately needs God's help. A delightful and inspiring story with a family you won't want to leave when the curtain closes.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

ANDREW TAYLOR: Dedicated minister.
RUTH TAYLOR: His wife, equally dedicated.
HOLLY: Their 17-year old daughter.
HEATHER: Their 13-year old daughter.
PETER: Their 10-year old son.
JOHN: Their 7-year old son.
JAMES MCARTHUR: Another minister, family friend.
SHIRLEY MCARTHUR: James' wife.
MILDRED TURNER: Troublemaker.
MELANIE: A teenager with problem.
STEVE: Melanie's boyfriend.
MARTIN SMITH: An older man with car trouble.
GRACE SMITH: His wife, nervous and easily upset.
SARAH: Mary's mother.
JACKIE: Sarah's younger sister.

PLAYING TIME: Approximately 1 hour.

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SYNOPSIS

Present day, the living room at the parsonage. All wear modern, winter clothing.

Act 1 - A few days before Christmas

Act 2 - The next evening

Act 3 - The next day

PROPERTIES

Winter coats, etc. for all characters; school books for the Taylor children; throw pillows for sofa; a big box of candy; a basket with a baby in it wrapped in blankets; note about the baby; bassinet; checker game; robe for Holly.

SOUND EFFECTS: Doorbell.

STAGE SETTING

The stage setting may be as simple or as elaborate as space permits. There should be a sofa CS, a sofa SR, two chairs SL, or enough chairs to seat ten people in Act 3. A phone is located UR besides sofa on a small table. The room is decorated for Christmas. There should be a coat rack beside door UL which leads to the outside, and is the main entrance from the outside. A door UR leads to the kitchen and all other parts of the house. A bassinet or small crib is added front CS in Act 2 for the baby. A window is located on far SL, and a large Christmas tree stands UL near the window.

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Act 1

PETER: *(Appears before the closed curtain and speaks to the audience.)* Hi! My name is Peter, and my father is a preacher, so I'm know as a preacher's kid or PK. You may think it's nice to be a PK, but I'm here to tell you that the whole scene stinks. People expect us to be perfect, and they think we should be little angels. Well, we're neither. We're just ordinary kids. And being a PK is worse than living in the White House, because someone is always poking their nose into our business. And we're always moving around. About the time we make new friends at school, we have to move somewhere else. Do you know what it's like to always be the new kid in school? Lots of times I really resent being a PK, but one year at Christmas I found out that there are worse things. Come with me to my house and find out what I mean. *(HE disappears behind curtain.)*

(As CURTAIN opens, stage is empty. PETER, JOHN, HOLLY and HEATHER enter noisily UL, talking and dropping coats, books, mittens, etc on floor.)

HEATHER: I sure am glad this was the last day of school till after Christmas.

HOLLY: Me, too. I need a break from school for awhile.

JOHN: I don't think I could take another day right now. *(Sits on R end of sofa CS.)*

(RUTH enters UR.)

PETER: Hey, Mom, we're home. *(HE sprawls on the sofa as others find seats.)*

RUTH: You were so quiet that I didn't know you had come!

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JOHN: Mom, I don't like being a preacher's kid. I'm just gonna tell Daddy he can quit preaching, or I'll run away from home.

RUTH: What in the world happened this time, John?

PETER: Just the usual. Some kid made fun of him.

RUTH: Peter, I asked John. *(To JOHN.)* What happened?

JOHN: All the kids at school were talking about what they wanted for Christmas. When I said I wanted a bike, Sammy said I couldn't have one because I was a preacher's kid.

RUTH: What does being a preacher's kid have to do with not getting a bike?

JOHN: That's what I asked, and Sammy said that PK's aren't supposed to ride bikes or do any fun things.

RUTH: Now that's just nonsense. *(Hugs JOHN.)* Don't worry about it. Just remember that all this ridicule is a cross we have to bear, and don't let it get you down.

JOHN: But the crosses get pretty heavy sometimes, especially when you're little. That's why I think I'll just run away from home.

RUTH: Running away never solves any problems, does it? *(Sits on sofa SR.)*

JOHN: Maybe not.

PETER: Well, I don't think it's fair.

HEATHER: Neither do I. We're kids just like everyone else.

(ANDREW enters from door UR and listens, unobserved.)

HOLLY: I've put up with this longer than the rest of you, and it doesn't get any easier. Why do people expect us to be different? Some people think we should be perfect, and others treat us like we're some weird creatures from outer space.

HEATHER: That's one reason I don't tell kids at school what Daddy does unless I have to.

RUTH: Why Heather!

HOLLY: It's the easiest way out, but in small towns like this, everyone knows anyway.

End of Freeview

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