

A CHRISTMAS MEMORY

*Conceived and written by
the Advanced Drama Class of
Pleasant Grove High School,
Pleasant Grove, UT*

Compiled and edited by Jason Anderson

Music and Lyrics by C. Michael Perry

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STORY OF THE PLAY

It is Christmas time. The Rasmussen family is gathering at Grandma's country home for the holidays. Everyone will be there - except Grandpa, who died recently. All are concerned for Grandma in her first Christmas without Grandpa, but Danni McKenna, a sort of step-granddaughter, may be the solution. Danni is now living with her stepmom, Samantha, who is Grandma's daughter. Danni has problems. She doesn't want to fit in -- or maybe she's decided that she can't fit in. She feels unloved and unwanted. By solving Danni's problems Grandma eases the loss of her beloved husband by centering her attention on Danni. Through the memories of Christmases past, the family comes closer together, eases the loss of Grandpa for all and shows Danni that they accept her for who she is. For the first time in a long time Danni feels wanted and loved. In the original production two community adults were brought in to play Grandma and Grandpa. All other roles, including the young children, were played by high school students. Any method of casting can work. The show was overwhelmingly received and sold out for its run. About 1 hour.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 5 w, 1 teen boy, 1 teen girl, 1 boy, 6 girls)

IRENE RASSMUSSEN: Grandma - late 60s.
NICKOLAS RASSMUSSEN: Grandpa - late 60s.
YOUNG IRENE: A memory - early 30s.
YOUNG GRANDPA: A memory - early 30s.
SAMANTHA MCKENNA: The oldest daughter – 32.
JON MCKENNA: Sam's deceased husband – 34.
NICK MCKENNA: Sam's oldest – 16.
CHRIS AND EVE McKenna: Sam's Twins – 12.
CHARLES MCKENNA: Sam's "Chucky" - 9-10.
JACEY MCKENNA: Sam's youngest - 7-8.
DANNI MCKENNA: Sam's step-daughter – 17.
ALICIA RASSMUSSEN: Irene's deceased child - 5-12.
JAMES RASSMUSSEN: Irene's oldest son – 30.
BRITNEY RASSMUSSEN: His wife – 28.
SUMMER RASSMUSSEN: Their daughter - 5-6.
ASHLEY RASSMUSSEN: Their other daughter - 4-5.
MARK RASSMUSSEN: Irene's youngest – 25.
DIANA KIMBER: His fiancé - 24 .

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

The entire production of "A Christmas Memory" was written and or improvised as a class project. The following is a listing from the program of the original cast of Pleasant Grove High School's production:

Grandma Irene Rassmussen: Jane Williams**; Grandpa Nickolas Rassmussen: Keith Christeson**; Young Irene: Angie Olpin*; Samantha McKenna: Natalie Stueck*; Jon McKenna: Louis Oliphant; Nick McKenna: Adam Reed*; Chris McKenna: Kristi Shaw*; Chucky McKenna: Derrik Horman*; Jacey McKenna: Sage Boyer*; Danni McKenna: Jaci Nelson*; Alicia Rassmussen: Alicia Bush; James Rassmussen: Ryan Thorne*; Britney Rassmussen: Angie Fidel*; Summer Rassmussen: Michelle Gentry*; Ashley Rassmussen: Angie Olpin*; Mark Rassmussen: Jason Anderson*; Diana Kimber: TaShera Lindsay*; Director: Jeff Grace*; Asst. Dir. and Choreographer: Nanette Pearson; Technical Director: Bo Hallett*; Script Editor: Jason Anderson*; Music and Lyrics: C. Michael Perry*

* denotes active membership in International Thespian Society Troupe 4196. ** denotes honorary membership for community adults in Thespian Troupe 4196

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND SONGS

*(Contact the publisher for these additional items:
Piano Score, Vocal Score, Rehearsal/Performance CD.)*

Musical #1 – Overture (*Orchestra*)

Scene 1 - The Rassmussen household. December 23 of the present year, late afternoon.

Musical #2 - A Christmas Memory (*Mark, Grandpa and Cast*)

Scene 2 - The Rassmussen household. December 23 of the previous year, early evening.

Musical #3 - Christmas Is (*Grandpa and Family*)

Scene 3 - The Rassmussen household. December 23 of the present year, immediately following Scene One.

Scene 4 - The Rassmussen front yard, moments later.

Scene 5 - The Rassmussen household, moments later.

Musical #4 - Christmas Through the Years (Lyrics by Kristi Shaw) (*Young Irene*)

Scene 6 – Transition

Scene 7 - The Rassmussen household. December 24, early morning.

Musical #5 - Just Once (*Kids*)

Scene 8 - The Rassmussen household. Christmas Eve, after dinner.

Musical #5a - So Many Times (*Jon McKenna*)

Musical #6 - A Tale to Tell (*Danni and Family*)

Musical #7 - Finale and Curtain Call (*Ensemble*)

MUSICAL #1 – OVERTURE

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: The stage is set with an empty dining room table UPC, a Christmas tree with packages beneath it DSR, a fireplace near the tree, an old rocking chair in the DSR corner and a sofa and chair DC living room area. The set is dimly lit as if in a half-memory. MARK enters from the stairway USR. Spotlight on MARK. As he says his dialogue he walks down the stairs, through the dining room to DSC.)

MUSICAL #2 - A CHRISTMAS MEMORY

MARK: Good evening ... welcome to a memory. My memory. My family's memory. A Christmas memory. I lived these Christmases in Maine. I couldn't wait for Christmas-at Grandma's house. *(MUSIC in.)* She's my mother actually, but everyone calls her Grandma. During the holidays this house was alive with songs, love and the aromas of Christmas because mom-uh, Grandma was always in the kitchen baking or cooking something. *(Smells air.)* Ahhh!
CHRISTMAS IS MORE THAN A WONDERFUL MEMORY.

(SFX: KNOCK on the door. LIGHTS come up. MARK quietly sits in Grandma's rocking chair. Lights come up on entrance and dining room. DIANA REESE enters from the entry way.)

DIANA: Irene! Irene?

GRANDMA: *(Offstage.)* I'm in the kitchen!

DIANA: *(Looking around hopefully.)* Irene! Is Mark here yet?

GRANDMA: No, for the third time, Mark isn't home yet!

DIANA: *(Is noticeably let down.)* Oh, well, do you mind if I wait?

GRANDMA: Sure, come on in. Make yourself at home.

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(SHE walks up to the dining room and sits at the table. She freezes. LIGHTS fade down slightly.)

MARK: *(Standing up.)* That's Diana. She lived next door. Moved in a few years before Dad died. She was born and raised in New York City, so Maine was quite a shock to her. *(Teasingly.)* Until she met me.
CHRISTMAS IS MORE THAN A WONDERFUL MEMORY
HAPPY TIMES FILLED WITH A LONG LIST
OF SPECIAL FRIENDS AND FAMILY TRENDS.

(Spoken.) She kept on chasing me, until I caught her.

IT HAPPENED ONE SPECIAL BUT SAD CHRISTMAS SEASON
THE FAMILY WAS GATHERING JUST FOR ONE REASON
GRANDMA WAS ALONE!

(GRANDPA enters from behind the Christmas tree.)

GRANDPA: *(Sings.)*
GRANDPA WAS GONE AND YOU COULDN'T HELP KNOW IT
EVERYONE FELT IT BUT TRIED NOT TO SHOW IT
HOW THE TIME HAD FLOWN.

(Spoken.) I had only been gone for three months. Irene carried on like the strong Maine woman she was bred to be. Mark, who arrived first that year?

MARK: Diana Kimber.

GRANDPA: Who?

MARK: Diana, from next door.

GRANDPA: Oh-yes, the New Yorker. Whatever happened to her?

MARK: She got married, Dad.

GRANDPA: Oh, did she? Good for her! Who was next?

MARK: James and Britney-I believe-with their little girls Ashley and Summer.

GRANDPA: Ah, yes!

MARK: Here they come now! I gotta go, Dad. I'll be back to help with the story later. Can you handle it from here? After all, you're dead.

End of Freeview

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