Christmas on Prosperity Lane

By Susan Evans

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DEDICATION

To my husband Don and our four children
Rachel, Donny, Rebekah, and David

STORY OF THE PLAY

It's almost Christmas on Prosperity Lane. The Johnson family can't get any of their Christmas lights to work, but worse than that, Charles and Elaine, along with their four children, have lost the Christmas Spirit – and they haven't even noticed! After Mrs. Snodgrass, their outspoken elderly neighbor, points this out, Elaine offers a hasty prayer for help and comes up with a plan to help the children reach out to others during the season. Charles is with Elaine, but of course the kids all put up a fuss.

Meanwhile bumbling thieves Rex and Roxie Lewis are making plans of their own. They pose as electricians to help the Johnsons, but are really there to case the house, planning to take advantage of their prosperity. What they don't know is that Broden, the youngest son, has his "toy" spy equipment set up everywhere!

Broden discovers their plans, but with all the Christmas activities going on, and the fact that everyone is tired of him spying on them, he can't find anyone who will listen to him.

Can the Johnsons save Christmas on Prosperity Lane? With a little help from an unlikely source -- and a lot of help from God-- the Johnson family may receive the best gift of all, their Christian Spirit!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 m, 5 w, 1 flex, 2 boys, optional extras)

CHARLES JOHNSON: Family man, attends church and gives money, but not personally involved.

ELAINE JOHNSON: Charles's wife, wants to get her family back on track.

TUCKER: Their teen son, nice kid, but spoiled.

PAIGE: Their teen daughter, mainly concerned about herself.

SYDNEY: Their 12-year-old daughter, has a long Christmas list.

BRODEN: Their 8-year-old son, has several pieces of "spy gear."

REX LEWIS: Career thief who makes his living robbing homes and selling the goods.

ROXY LEWIS: Rex's wife and partner in crime.

FRANCES SNODGRASS: The Johnsons' older, outspoken neighbor, a widow.

JOEY: Child about 8 years old from children's home.

CASEY: Teen boy who Paige meets at homeless shelter.

MR. HOLMES: Older gentleman from nursing home.

OFFICER HENSON: Local police investigator. Officer Henson and Mr. Holmes may be played by the same person or Officer Henson can be female.

Extras may be used for the Johnsons' dinner party.

SETTING

The action takes place in the Johnson family living room and outside in front of their home. The living room is nicely furnished with a sofa, loveseat and comfortable chairs, end tables, and tasteful Christmas decorations. There is a large Christmas tree in the room. SR is the front door while a hallway SL leads to the rest of the house.

Downstage, before the curtains, are several lighted outdoor decorations and/or blowup decorations. They are off and deflated at the start of the play. At the end everything is lit up and blown up.

PROPS

Flashlights (2)
Street sign and house number
Stuffed toy cat
Remote control vehicle
Outdoor Christmas decorations
Pack of batteries
Nativity set
Small recording device
Coats and book bags for kids
Gifts for under tree
Long Christmas list
Wrapping paper
Spy Camera (could be any small camera)
Coveralls 2 pairs
Tool boxes (2)
Cookies and punch
Christmas tree

ACT I
Prologue

(AT RISE: REX and ROXY LEWIS enter from back of the theatre. Both are dressed in black with black toboggans and a flashlight. Rex is carrying a slip of paper. They are looking for an address. They see street sign for Prosperity Lane.)

ROXY: Are you sure we're at the right place?
REX: Yes, we're close. *(Shines light on street sign.)* Here it is, Prosperity Lane. Living at a place like this, these people got to be loaded. We've hit the jackpot.

(THEY talk as they walk slowly, shinning the light as they look for house numbers. At front of stage Christmas lights are strung at various places, but are not turned on and at least one blowup figure lays deflated.)

ROXY: Tell me again how you know about these people.
REX: Well, I stepped into Valley Electrical to pick up some new batteries for the flashlight and I hear this guy on the phone talking. He says "So none of your outside lights are working." They talk a little longer and the sales guy says, "We're really busy right now with the holidays and it's not an emergency. It will be several days before we can get anyone out there." I'm just hearing the conversation, not paying much attention until the guy says give me your address.
ROXY: I still don't know what made you pick this place.
REX: When the sales guy repeats the address I know we got to check it out. I jotted it down so I wouldn't forget it: 313 Prosperity Lane. These guys got to be loaded with an address like that.
ROXY: We'll case the house and see if it's worth our trouble. See if they have anything worth taking. *(Walk to front of stage.)*
REX: This must be it. *(Shines light on the house number.)* None of the Christmas lights are on. Look at this place. I told you they were loaded.

ROXY: You're right, Rex. You sure know how to pick'em.
REX: Like I always tell you babe -- Keep your mouth shut and your eyes and ears open. Never know what might fall in your lap.
ROXY: It always works for you. Nice family neighborhood. They probably don't even have a security system in place.
REX: If they do it may not be working anyway, *(Points to darkened lights and deflated blowup decorations.)* with their little electrical problem.
ROXY: Now all we have to do is get into the house.
REX: That will be easy enough. I've got an idea. Let's get back to the hotel and I'll tell you all about it.

(THEY smile at each other as they exit the stage.)

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The next day, inside the Johnson home. ELAINE is putting up the last of the Christmas decorations. Gideon, the family cat, is nearby, sleeping in spite of the upbeat Christmas tune playing on the radio.)

ELAINE: *(Holding a large, glittery Christmas decoration. Agitated, talking to Gideon.)* At last! The final one. *(Surveys the over-decorated room, trying to find space to place the decoration.)* What do you think, Gideon? Here? *(She positions it.)* Christmas has come to the Johnson house! Ta-da! *(She steps back, is silent a beat; looks at the Gideon still "sleeping.")* Yeah, that's how I feel too. So much work to get ready for Christmas. Buying presents, baking, decorating… *(Turns off music, sits on the sofa, petting the cat.)* It still doesn't feel like Christmas though. *(Remembering.)* Oh! Maybe this will help. *(SHE pulls out a box holding a nativity set. She rises to replace the last decoration she placed with the set. Speaking as she does so.)* No one seems to remember what Christmas is even about. Charles, the kids, and myself included.

End of Freeview

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