

THE CHRISTMAS PLAY

By Craig Howard

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to the members of the Brake Church of the Brethren Program Committee who encouraged me to try to write a Christmas Play. To them I say thank you for the push.

The Playwright

STORY OF THE PLAY

"The Christmas Play" is a story about acceptance and forgiveness and how God, through the gift of His Son, can bring about both, in the hearts of those that are open to Him. It is about a church that is slow to welcome or include new people that may be different and not quite up to their standard. It is about the struggle for acceptance by two comical and quite different brothers and finally their understanding of the One who is willing to accept and forgive them just as they are.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

Scene 1 - Randy and Karen's living room.

Scene 2 - Church chancel. The following Sunday afternoon.

Scene 3 - Randy and Karen's living room a half an hour later.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

RANDY ROGERS: A young Christian man who loves the Lord and is trying to serve Him in his local church by carrying the difficult duty of directing the Christmas play for the Church this year. He begins to question his decision when he sees the disaster that the play is turning into.

KAREN ROGERS: Randy's wife who supports his decision even when he begins to question it. She is a solid Christian lady who isn't afraid to have an understanding heart. She is more concerned about others than herself.

FRED FINK: Randy and Karen's crazy back woods, out-of-the-hills neighbor. He keeps making up his own lines for the play driving everyone crazy. He and his brother have a knack of making a mess out of everything that they get into. He needs to dress like a real hick and have a lot of expression.

ROYCE FINK: Fred's brother. He over hears the cast members discussing that they don't want him and Fred in the play, but when they apologize and ask for forgiveness, it is a real turn around for Royce, and he accepts the Lord. He needs to dress as a hick and have a lot of expression.

DON BLACK: A long-time member of the church and one that has been active in its Christmas programs for years. He has become proud of the programs that his church does and he doesn't want to see anything cause the quality of the programming to drop. He is caught between doing what is right and his own pride.

BEVERLY BLACK: Don's wife with pretty much the same character description.

JENNY: Karen's sister that lives next door. She rarely agrees with Randy and the two are always picking at each other. She is not thrilled with having the Fink's live in the same neighborhood, much less be in her church and the church play, which she is sure will be a disaster.

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KEVIN STONE: He is in the church play and has been in many before this. He is sure the play is going to be a failure and he blames it all on Randy. He feels no responsibility to try to help Royce and Fred, and is quick to accuse them of not being fit to act in the Christmas play.

KRISTY STONE: Kevin's wife, and she has the same feelings as Kevin.

DEBBIE: A teenage girl in the Christmas play who can't understand what Randy could have been thinking when he gave the lead parts in the play to the Finks. She is ready to quit rather than be in a play that may fail.

BECKY: Another teenage girl, but she is much more understanding and willing to give Royce and Fred a chance. She can't understand why the others are being so hard on them.

PASTOR DAVE: The pastor of the church that is perplexed by the attitudes of many of the actors in the church play. He tries to point out that the play will do better if everyone talks about Royce and Fred to God, instead of each other. He finally shows them that the production means nothing if we can't live the message of the play.

PROPS

Telephone, several play books

Karen - Clean clothes to fold, coffee and tray of cookies, glass of water

Fred - Hat, funnel, coin, handkerchief

Kevin - Very large card

Jenny - Purse

Don - Clothes from dry cleaners

Bev - Small box of candles

SOUND EFFECTS

Doorbell, telephone

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Scene 1

(AT RISE: KAREN is sitting on the couch folding cloths. RANDY comes in the door, obviously upset.)

RANDY: I can't believe those people. They act like a bunch of babies.

KAREN: What people are you talking about. I thought you just came from the church.

RANDY: That's who I am talking about. They're just like a bunch of children, if they don't get their way they want to pick up their toys and go home. In fact, in some ways they are worse. At least with children you can correct them.

KAREN: What is everybody getting all upset about this time, I thought you were just going over to hand out the Christmas parts.

RANDY: That's all we did! The way some of them acted, you would have thought they were handed an eviction notice instead of an opportunity to serve God.

KAREN: Well, why did they volunteer to be in the play in the first place? If they don't want to take the part that is assigned to them, they shouldn't have said they would be in it.

RANDY: That is part of the problem. They didn't all volunteer. We didn't have enough people to be in the play so we had to draft some help. By the way here is your part.

KAREN: What do you mean, my part. I'm not a actor, and I never said I wanted to be in the play.

RANDY: See what I mean. Even you are going to give me a hard time about this.

KAREN: I'm just not an actor, Randy. As soon as you put me in front of people I forget everything.

RANDY: Julie will be right down front to prompt anyone who needs help remembering their lines, and besides, how can I ask anyone else to take a part if I can't even ask my own family?

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KAREN: Maybe we should just skip having a Christmas play this year. If no one wants to do it, and everyone is just going to get upset, why not just forget it?

RANDY: That would just be like saying, "Okay Satan, you win. We can't get along so we give up, no Christmas play." I'm going into the kitchen to get a cup of coffee. Maybe that will calm me down. *(RANDY exits.)*

KAREN: *(Looking at the playbook SHE reads out loud.)*
"Miss Rachel Pickery - A society lady with her eye on status and little concern for those that she might have to step on to achieve it. She has a short fuse and does not know the meaning of forgiveness. Her gift is holding grudges, but she is to come face-to-face with the author of forgiveness." Boy, I hope he didn't choose this part for me because he thought it fit my personality.

(The DOORBELL rings.)

KAREN: Just a minute. *(KAREN goes to answer it. Enter ROYCE and FRED FINK, the neighbors.)* Hi guys, come on in. Did you guys need to see Randy?

ROYCE: Yep, we wanted to thank him on accounta givin' us these great parts in the Christmas play.

FRED: Yeah, we's the star of the whole shebang. I shore hope someone films this with one of them there VCR cameras. Momma will bust clean outta her bloomers when she sees I become a star of the stage.

ROYCE: Momma's gonna bust outta her bloomers anyhow, if'n she don't quit a hangin' around Lena Thorne. That woman is always a passin' Momma some candy. Don't know where she gets it all from. I think she's a tryin' to sweeten Momma up, but that ain't gonna happen - she just has a sour personality. All that's a happenin' is, she's gettin' fat as a 30-gallon washtub. Fred sorta takes after her personality wise, but he could use some of that candy in the fattenin' department.

FRED: Is you a sayin' I's sour.

End of Freeview

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