

Hold the Christmas Presses!

By Rev. Craig Howard

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STORY OF THE PLAY

What does Christmas really mean in the heart of the average person? That is what news reporter Vicki Huffman is assigned to find out and her story will be featured in the paper's Christmas edition. She needs to interview a number of people from different walks of life to try to come to some consensus about this special holiday. She is assisted by her friend Elisabeth, who already has a good handle on what Christmas is about, as well as a young papergirl who touches the hearts of everyone in the office and beyond. She even melts the heart of a gruff pressman by sweetening him up in a very unique way. The story is filled with humor and timeless truth!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 4 w, and 1 teen.)

VICKI: The reporter tasked with the job of finding the answer, "What does Christmas mean to the average person?"

ELISABETH: Vicki's friend and co-worker. Recently married and young enough to still appreciate a good-looking man.

MARCUS: The managing editor of the newspaper who is himself struggling to understand Christmas.

SARAH: Another co-worker at the newspaper who has a way of bringing perspective to the group.

DAPHNE: A hairdresser who is invited in to share her stories of what Christmas means to her. She needs to be a little loud and crazy in her storytelling.

ERIC: A wealthy businessman who starts out with a very selfish view of Christmas only to have an eye-opening experience through the words of a young paper delivery girl.

LEE: Daphne's brother who also has his Christmas rearranged and eyes opened through the journey of this article.

JERRY: The man in charge of keeping the presses running though they have seen better days. His job has made him grumpy and gruff, but it is softened by the life of Jenny, the paper girl who shows nothing but love in spite of her circumstances.

JENNY: About 12 years old. Papergirl from a very poor home who understands Christmas better than all of the adults put together. She knows that Christmas is about the gift of a loving Savoir coming into the world to make God's love and salvation possible. That is, it not about the gifts but about God's love. She is a bit of a firecracker but humble at the way God takes care of her in the end.

SET

The staging is as simple or complex as you desire. At a minimum, two desks with desk chairs set up like a work area and two guest chairs to sit in next to the desks for interviews. A small table with coffee and snacks. Minimal Christmas decorations. The sparser the look the better.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The Newspaper office. VICKI and ELISABETH are sitting at the desks working on laptops. The door opens and MARCUS enters from another office.)

MARCUS: Vicki, I have a project I want you to work on for this coming Tuesday's edition. *(Adjust the day to fit Christmas Eve.)*

VICKI: This Tuesday... I hope it isn't a big project. That doesn't give much time. Hey, that is Christmas Eve. That's the special edition.

MARCUS: Give that lady a prize! You figured that out all by yourself.

VICKI: Ha, Ha. What is the project?

MARCUS: I want you to write a piece on Christmas.

ELISABETH: I love Christmas. It is my favorite holiday.

VICKI: There, you should let Elisabeth do the piece.

MARCUS: She is already working on a Christmas piece.

ELISABETH: I am, but I am having a hard time with it.

VICKI: What is it?

ELISABETH: Marcus wants me to do a piece on Christmas and the single man. Why couldn't you have assigned me this piece before I had a husband?

MARCUS: I did it to protect the single men!

VICKI: So, what do you want me to focus on? I think every Christmas angle has been exhausted. I know, I could do Christmas and pets. Do you know how much money people spend on their pets at Christmas?

MARCUS: No, the *Herald* just did a piece on that. Everyone would think we just copied their idea.

VICKI: I can live with that. In fact, since the story is already written, why not just run that one?

MARCUS: That is not the way we do things here.

VICKI: It could be. It would make our lives easier.

MARCUS: If you're done making wisecracks...

VICKI: Yeah, not really...

MARCUS: Oh yes, you are. (*VICKI rolls her eyes.*) Now, here is my idea. I want you to do a piece on what Christmas means to the average person in our town. Is it just another excuse for a party? A reason to get gifts. A time to empty their bank account. What does Christmas mean to Joe and Jane normal citizen?

VICKI: And how am I going to answer that?

MARCUS: It will be a man or woman on the street interview kind of thing. Go to where you find people, at games, at the mall, at the supermarket and ask questions. Get answers and put it together.

VICKI: You want me to do all of these interviews at all of these different places and get an article written in four days?

MARCUS: (*As HE exits.*) Sounds like plenty of time to me.

VICKI: It would, you don't have to do it. (*Pause.*) Can you believe that? How in the world am I going to get that done in four days? I'd like to tell him what this job means to me!

ELISABETH: It might not be as hard as you think.

VICKI: What do you mean? I have to travel all over the city interrupting people I don't know at the busiest time of the year and see if they wouldn't mind answering a question that I don't even know what my own answer would be.

ELISABETH: You don't! Why that is the easiest question there is to answer.

VICKI: So, what is your answer? Might as well start it off right now.

ELISABETH: Oh no, you don't. I will tell you my answer once you have figured out what yours would be. I don't want to slant your opinion with the undeniable truth that is my answer.

VICKI: Undeniable truth! Don't you have a high opinion of yourself?

ELISABETH: You will see. Now do you want to hear my idea or not?

VICKI: Let me hear it.

ELISABETH: Take out your phone book and just start randomly calling people around town.

ELISABETH: *(Cont'd.)* Tell them you are doing an article about Christmas and would they have time to stop in here for a few minutes to answer a couple of questions. They could do it at their own timing as long as it is within the next three days. That will give you a day to write the article and you can work on the draft between people coming in.

VICKI: Do you really think people would come in?

ELISABETH: You won't know if you don't ask. I'll bet you can get several people to come in if you ask. Just try to get as much diversity as you can. You don't want all factory workers or firemen or something like that, although, if you can get some single firemen to come in, I can take them off of your hands. Strictly for my article.

VICKI: Down girl! *(Writes on a tablet.)* No firemen!

(ELISABETH sticks her tongue out at VICKI as the LIGHTS go out.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: ELISABETH is typing on the computer and VICKI is on the phone when MARCUS enters.)

VICKI: Yes, sir. I understand, I am sure you are a busy person.... No, sir. I am not trying to stick my nose in your business.... Yes, sir. I realize there isn't much time left to get the rest of your shopping done.... No, sir. I don't think your time is less valuable than mine. This is just how I am trying to contact a variety of different people. I am sorry you feel that way.... *(SHE jerks pulling the phone away from her ear as the person on the other end supposedly hangs up on her. In a growling voice.)* Merry Christmas to you too! *(Puts the phone down and walks over to the coffeepot and pours herself a cup.)*

MARCUS: Who was that on the phone?!

VICKI: Scrooge!

MARCUS: What?

End of Freeview

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