

# ***IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE***

*By E. FLO COLLITT*

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### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

A Christ-centered Christmas play for the entire Sunday School, depicting a modern day family's preparation for celebration and the amazing things that happen when Christmas is transformed into CHRISTmas.

The activities and attitudes of the Moore family and their hired help make for laughter and tears, and a message not soon to be forgotten. Dave Moore is home for the holidays having given up a successful army career overseas for a "new line of work." Progressive Mr. and Mrs. Moore have built "air-castles" as to what fabulous-paying job this might be until David explains that he is going to be a preacher. Deflated but for the moment, Mrs. Moore, in her determination to keep the social wheel in motion, returns with vigor to oversee everything and everybody.

But Dianne, Dave's socialite sister, sees a difference in Dave. She sides with him and demands that he have a opportunity to give a reason for his decision. This he does - a dramatic story of life and death, and a new life which ended forever his Christmases without Christ.

The "Come-to-Life-Christmas-Cards" with their cheery greetings are a unique way to include children, along with Little Bess, in this moving Christmas Play.

### **SETTING**

This one-act play takes place in the living room of the Moore family just prior to Christmas. The room should be nicely furnished with several chairs, footstool, lamp, sofa, small table, telephone, Christmas tree with lights, and Bible.

**TIME:** Approximately 60 minutes.

### **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(5 m, 7 w, 1 girl, 10 children, extras, doubling possible)*

**DAVID MOORE:** The son, who has given up a successful army career for a "new line of work."

**DIANNE MOORE:** The daughter, determined, yet sympathetic.

**MARY MOORE:** The mother, progressive, but it's-all-so-much trouble type.

**JOHN MOORE:** The father, successful, busy, bothered.

**LOUELLA LIVINGSTON:** The grandmother, wholly devoted to her family and the Lord.

**KATIE COLEMAN:** The maid, a sweet Christian woman with a brogue. *(Can double as Marilyn White.)*

**HERMAN HOOPER:** Handyman who tries to keep one step ahead. *(Can double as Pastor Loran.)*

**LITTLE BESS:** Daughter of an unfortunate but fine Christian family.

**MARILYN WHITE:** Young woman supervisor at the Mission; no lines but sings two songs.

**DICK (RIC) ANDERSON:** Young minister in charge of the Mission; works as a courier during the day.

**PASTOR LORAN:** Pastor of the church that sponsors the Mission.

**JERRY:** Old friend of Dave and Dianne.

**JOAN:** Another.

**JEAN:** Another.

**THE CAROLERS:** Young people from the Mission.

**THE CHILDREN:** Ten children for the seven Christmas scenes depicting "SEASON'S GREETINGS."

## **COSTUMES AND PROPERTIES**

Modern day dress may be used by all. Suggestions are given as new characters are introduced. Hand props include packages for Dianne, overnight letter, pencil and clipboard for Courier; dollar for Dad; Christmas cards for Bess; overnight bag and handkerchief for Grandma; song books for chorus; coat for Dianne.

To make "Come-to-Life" Christmas Cards begin with 6 pieces (1 green, 1 red, 4 white.) medium weight poster cardboard, approximately 22" x 28", and 11 yards 3/4" strong, red ribbon. Cut ribbon into 2 1/2 foot lengths. Fasten ribbon securely in place on "inside" of cardboard, for shoulder straps. On the other side of cardboard make attractive Christmas Cards as follows:

**CARD No. 1** - Draw design of door on red cardboard, fasten a large Styrofoam cane, sprigs of pine and ribbon. Boy dressed in snow clothes carries a large Christmas cane to complete the picture.

**CARD No. 2** - Cut a large bell out of brightly designed foil Christmas paper. Paste on white cardboard with a few holly leaves. This is worn by a little girl carrying a silver-tone bell to "accompany" herself as she sings.

**CARD No. 3** - On the green cardboard paste large white snowflakes, write an artistic "Season's Greetings," and add much glitter. The child carries a large sparkling snowflake to portray action of poem.

**CARD No. 4** - White cardboard trimmed in gold paint has one large green holly wreath topped by a big red ribbon bow. The two children each carry a holly wreath, but only one wears the card, while the other stays closely in front of him.

**CARD No 5** - This greeting is portrayed, not in picture, but in pantomime. Three angels dressed in white gowns and tinsel raise hands of blessing as "Silent Night" is softly played by the instrumentalist of your choice.

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**CARD No. 6** - On white cardboard paste or staple red crepe paper to form a "brick" fireplace. Color in the fire, and add three little stockings. The little girl wearing this wish is dressed in bright red pajamas, and wears a big Christmas stocking around her neck. In the stocking is a rag doll.

**CARD No. 7** - Cover white cardboard with flannelgraph background used for the nativity scene. Carefully staple in place against this stable scene, the figures of Mary, Joseph, Manger, Baby, and a kneeling Shepherd with a Lamb. The boy wearing this greeting is followed by a boy dressed as a shepherd carrying a toy lamb, and a boy dressed as a wise man carrying a gift.

**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: Soft LIGHT of dawn. DAVE, wearing army trousers, attractive shirt, enters briskly carrying his Bible. He turns on reading lamp, sits in big chair, bows head in silent prayer, then opening his Bible, reads. MRS. MOORE enters wearing house coat, slippers. She yawns sleepily, sits down lazily.)*

MOTHER: Sonny! You are up so early this morning! Are you ill?

FATHER: *(Enters wearing robe.)* Who is ill? I saw the light! 6:30! Then I remembered - Dave came home last night! Home for Christmas! We're glad to see you, Son! *(Goes to DAVE, slaps him on shoulder.)* But are you all right? *(Puts hand on DAVE'S head tilting it back until he can look in Dave's face.)* You're looking fine, Son, fine, but something must be the matter with you to get up this early. Never thought I'd live to see it! And something must be the matter with you to quit that good job in the Army. *(Paces floor.)* Just like that, you're through, you quit and come home! What's behind all this, Son, what ... ?

DAVE: *(Grins, closes Bible, lays it on stand. MOTHER reaches over and picks it up.)* Now, Dad, you'd better give me a chance to answer one thing at a time, you see -

MOTHER: *(Interrupting.)* A BIBLE! David! You have been reading a Bible? Really, really! I can't quite understand! You get up early, you read a Bible ...

DAVE: There you have the answer, Mother. I got up early in order to read my Bible. I've found this to be an ideal time to -

FATHER: *(Interrupting.)* Uh-h-h, David, you wrote about this new line of work you're going into. Must be a fine paying job to induce you to drop your rank in the army. *(Sits in chair.)*

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