

Live From Mistletoe Ridge

By Brian Sylvia

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Without their knowledge, the residents of the sleepy country town of Mistletoe Ridge are about to be on national television. When TV producer Nash Adams is stranded in the town and forced to stay at the Pear Tree Inn, he meets the proprietor, Trixiebel Partridge – and a few other colorful residents who are obsessed with the Christmas holidays. With the Tearjerker Television Network's failing ratings, Nash Adams realizes that an undercover Christmas special about them would be the perfect solution!

Add in apocalypse-obsessed town preacher Rev. Purvis Campbell and his aspiring standup comedian daughter Misty Dawn; mumbling auto repairman Billy "Brokedown" Burns; Sasquatch hunter Nylette Kettlebottom (who also is a prize-winning yodeler); senior citizen hotel housekeeper Bernice McNally who suffers from random fainting spells; and former mayor, war veteran, and amateur puppeteer Milo Nixon (and his sidekick Rocky the puppet) and the adventures take some creative twists and turns.

During his attempt to sensationalize the holiday and demean the citizens, Nash Adams discovers that these simple country folks have more savvy than he imagined when the tables are creatively turned on him.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 4 w [1 is a teenager])

NASH ADAMS: (M) Network TV producer who finds himself stranded after his car slides off the road in Mistletoe Ridge.

BILLY “BROKEDOWN” BURNS: (M) Auto mechanic trying to fix Nash’s car; mostly mumbles when speaking.

TRIXIEBELLE PARTRIDGE: (W) Proprietor of the Pear Tree Inn; former “actress.”

NYLETTE KETTLEBOTTOM: (W) Friend of Trixiebelles; award-winning yodeler and owner of the Sasquatch Inquisitors of America.

MISTY DAWN CAMPBELL: (W) Teenage brutally blunt daughter of Rev. Campbell, whose dream is to be a stand-up comedian.

REV. PURVIS CAMPBELL (M) The pastor of Mistletoe Ridge’s local church; hellfire and brimstone preacher.

MILO T. NIXON: (M) War veteran (We are unclear as to which war); goes everywhere with his puppet named Rocky (Who speaks the things that Milo can’t find it in himself to say).

BERNICE MCNALLY: (W) Senior citizen; housekeeper at the Pear Tree Inn; suffers from situational syncope (SINK-a-pee), which is fainting when in high-stress situations.

SETTING

The lobby of the Pear Tree Inn that is decorated for Christmas in an over-the-top manner. It has a welcome desk or counter with a bell. A full-sized sofa with a side table is also on stage. The Christmas decorations should be plentiful and mostly tacky (definitely no need to follow a specific theme).

PROPS

Business card for Nash
Cell phone
Car keys
Cell phone for Billy
Hat or rag for Billy

SOUND EFFECTS

Woman yodeling
A person hitting the ground from passing out
A sasquatch yelling

ACT I
Scene 1

(BILLY and NASH enter. Nash is wearing a business suit and an overcoat. Billy is in overalls and flannel shirt.)

NASH: I am so sorry, sir, but I don't know what you're trying to tell me.

BILLY: *(Mumbling - only the words other than mumble are actually discernible.)* Mumble - mumble - tow truck - mumble - mumble - crash - mumble - mumble - three days.

NASH: *(Looking totally confused.)* I heard "three days" in there.

BILLY: Mumble - yup. *(Walks to hotel check-in desk and rings the bell.)*

NASH: I'm guessing that you think I'm going to need to stay here at this *(Looking around.)* Christmas horror show of a hotel.

(BILLY nods in agreement. TRIXIEBELLE enters.)

TRIXIE: Well, howdy there, and a very merry Christmas to you.

NASH: Hello there. I think I need a hotel room for the night.

TRIXIE: You do, do ya?

BILLY: *(Mumbling.)* Mumble - mumble - tow truck - mumble - mumble - crash - mumble - mumble - three days.

TRIXIE: Well, according to Brokedown, he has your car on his tow truck because you done crashed your fancy car and to get the parts will take at least three days.

NASH: You understood all that?

TRIXIE: Why sure. You didn't?

(SHE looks at BILLY and they shrug in confusion.)

NASH: And his name is Brokedown?

BILLY: Mumble - mumble - Brokedown - mumble. *(Laughs.)*

TRIXIE: *(Laughing.)* Well, his name is actually Billy Burns, but he got his nickname of Brokedown because he helps fix all the broke down cars here in Mistletoe Ridge.

NASH: Mistletoe Ridge?

TRIXIE: You bet your boots. This here is the most Christmasy town anywhere in this entire county, maybe even the state. *(Proudly.)* Some say maybe even in the whole U.S.A.

NASH: *(Looking around.)* I can believe it.

BILLY: Mumble - mumble - hit road - mumble - mumble. *(Waves and exits.)*

TRIXIE: See ya tomorrow, Brokedown. And thanks for referring the Pear Tree Inn.

NASH: Is there another hotel in town?

TRIXIE: Nope, just us. But sometimes when we're full up, ole Cleon Bates puts people up in his spare room. For some reason out-of-owners don't like to stay there though. As soon as he puts out his Bates Motel sign, folks head for the hills. We ain't quite figured that out.

NASH: *(Sarcastically.)* Yeah, that's a little hard to figure out. Listen, um, Mrs. ...

TRIXIE: It's Miss. *(Smiles big.)* Miss Trixiebelles Partridge.

NASH: Partridge? And you run the Pear Tree Inn?

TRIXIE: Yessir.

NASH: You don't see the irony here?

TRIXIE: No sir, we don't do laundry. You'll have to do the irony of your wrinkly clothes all by yourself. We certainly do not see irony here.

NASH: I mean that your last name is Partridge and you run the Pear Tree Inn.

TRIXIE: *(Missing the point entirely.)* And?

NASH: Like the Christmas song... *(Sings.)* "And a partridge in a pear tree."

TRIXIE: Well, I'll be a live armadillo. I never thought of that. And that "Twelve Days of Christmas" song is one of my favorites.

NASH: It's one of your favorites and you never noticed that...

TRIXIE: *(Back to business.)* Is it just you staying here, Mr. uh...

NASH: *(Hands her a business card.)* Nash Adams. And, yes, it's just me needing the room.

TRIXIE: It says on this little card that you're a TV producer.

NASH: I am. I work for the Tearjerker Television Network.

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TRIXIE: I ain't never heard of that one. We only get two stations here and that ain't one. No cable here either. And no one in Mistletoe Ridge goes in for those satellite dishes. *(Whispers.)* We all know that they transmit secret alien messages direct into homes.

NASH: Secret alien messages?

TRIXIE: So you agree?

NASH: No, I meant...

TRIXIE: And the cable tv just sends them in with the electricity.

NASH: Actually, it's not electricity, but rather a...

(NYLETTE enters.)

NYLETTE: Trixiebelle, did you happen to see *(Notices NASH.)* my, oh, my.

TRIXIE: Did I happen to see what?

NYLETTE: I'm sorry. I saw this perfectly delightful young man and lost my brain of thought.

NASH: You mean *train* of thought.

NYLETTE: That too. *(Making a train sound while staring at NASH.)* Woo-woo!

TRIXIE: Nylette Kettlebottom, this is Mr. Nash Adams, TV producer.

NYLETTE: Ooh, a TV producer, you say. What brings your perfectly handsome self to Mistletoe Ridge?

TRIXIE: Mr. Nash's car broke down and he's gotta stay here with us for a few days.

NYLETTE: A few days? Well, that should be sufficient time.

NASH: *(Nervously.)* Sufficient time? Sufficient time for what?

TRIXIE: I'm not sure you want the answer to that question.

NYLETTE: So, Trixiebelle, does Mr. hunky TV producer know that you are the best actress to ever spring from Mistletoe Ridge?

TRIXIE: Well, no, he just arrived here and...

NYLETTE: And that Trixiebelle Partridge has even been to Broadway?

NASH: Broadway? You've been onstage on Broadway?

NYLETTE: She sure has.

NASH: That's impressive.

NYLETTE: That is exactly what the County Bugle said.

NASH: County Bugle?

TRIXIE: That's the weekly newspaper that reported when I sorta stole the stage at the Woodchuck Community Theatre in Cattedale.

NASH: Cattedale? I thought you said Broadway.

NYLETTE: Oh, that's the street the theatre's on in Cattedale.

TRIXIE: So we just call the theatre Broadway.

NASH: Of course you do. I just thought you meant Broadway in New York.

NYLETTE: There's one of them there too?

TRIXIE: *(To NYLETTE.)* Maybe they fashioned it like the one in Cattedale.

NASH: *(Sarcastically.)* Yeah. Just like Cattedale.

NYLETTE: So, I bet you're impressed about Trixiebelle Partridge's acting resume, aren't ya?

NASH: Impressed doesn't even describe it.

(NYLETTE and TRIXIEBELLE giggle.)

TRIXIE: Most of my work was done right here at the Mistletoe Ridge Christmas Playhouse.

NYLETTE: I'm sure Mr. Nash has heard all about the Christmas Playhouse. Why, people come from way over in Serenity Howl to see our Christmas productions.

(MISTY DAWN enters walking backwards.)

NASH: *(Sarcastically.)* All the way from there, huh?

MISTY: See ya, Charlie Bob. *(Turns.)* Oh, hey there, Miss Partridge and Miss Kettlebottom. Who's this guy?

NYLETTE: This is Mr. Nash Adams.

TRIXIE: He's a TV producer. *(To NASH.)* This is Misty Dawn Campbell. Her daddy is the local preacher at our very own Mistletoe Ridge Fellowship.

MISTY: *(To NASH.)* A TV producer?

NASH: Yes, I am.

MISTY: Did you hear that the prophecy convention is cancelled?

NASH: I'm sorry?

NYLETTE: Oh, Misty Dawn considers herself quite the little comedian.

TRIXIE: This must be one of her jokes.

MISTY: So, did you hear that the prophecy convention is cancelled?

TRIXIE: *(To NASH.)* Just play along.

NASH: No, I didn't.

MISTY: Yep, the prophecy convention was cancelled on account of unforeseen circumstances.

(NYLETTE and TRIXIE laugh.)

NYLETTE: That's funny.

TRIXIE: 'Cuz it was about prophecy.

NASH: *(Sarcastically.)* Hilarious.

TRIXIE: See, Mr. Nash thinks it's funny.

MISTY: *(To NASH.)* So, can I be on a show on your TV station?

NASH: Well, actually we have quite an extensive process for auditioning. The Tearjerker Television Network is a corporate entity. And you'll need a SAG card first.

NYLETTE: A sag card?

TRIXIE: That sounds utterly depressing.

NYLETTE: We're too young for one of those, Trixiebelle.

NASH: It's the Screen Actors Guild. S. A. G.

(REV. PURVIS CAMPBELL enters.)

PURVIS: Misty Dawn Campbell, are you in here? There you are. I told you to leave these ladies alone.

TRIXIE: Oh, Pastor Campbell, she is just fine.

PURVIS: You must be the TV producer whose car broke down here in Mistletoe Ridge.

NASH: Yes, I am. News travels fast.

PURVIS: I saw Brokedown just outside the inn. He told me the story. I sure hope if you're here for next Saturday night, you'll join us for the annual Christmas pageant.

NASH: Oh, I'd love to, but I'll be long gone by then.

End of Freeview

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