# SEEKING THE SAVIOR

*By John B. Wintermute*

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## STORY OF THE PLAY

Seven youngsters, who have heard that Jesus appears on Earth on Christmas Eve, sneak into the church near midnight. As much as they hope to see Him, they become frightened when a strange man appears. In ragged clothes, hungry and tired, the stranger eats the food the youngsters brought as they question him. Is he some kind of homeless man or is he really Jesus, the Savior they have been seeking? An extraordinary play which, like the legend of the shoemaker, reminds us that our Savior is not just found in church but is everywhere.

## THE SETTING

The play was created to be given in the sanctuary sometime during the Christmas season. A Christmas Eve candlelight service would be natural. If produced in the sanctuary, there would probably be a Christmas tree, advent candles, a communion table, or altar with candles upon it. Two doors are needed, one at the rear of the church that would lead into a vestibule and outside, and another door near the front *(Through which the choir or minister enters.)* However, the play can be produced anywhere.

**THE TIME**: Christmas Eve. The present.

**THE PLACE**: The sanctuary of a church.

**PLAYING TIME:** About 30 minutes.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

It should be noted that most of the roles in the play may be switched about without difficulty. If there is a need for more girls in the cast and less boys, then it is easy enough to change "Chuck" to "Carrie" or "Barney" to "Barbara." The same could apply if more boys than girls were needed. "Betty" could be changed to "Bob" and "Ann" to "Eddie" and so on.

## THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(2 men, 5 teens, 2 children)*

**MARY TUCKER:** About 10 years old.
**NANCY TUCKER:** Mary's older sister, about 15 years old.
**CHUCK TUCKER:** Their brother, age 13.
**BETTY CURTIS:** Mary's friend and of the same age.
**ANN CURTIS:** Betty's older sister and a friend of Nancy.
**BARNEY CURTIS:** Their younger brother, 13.
**LU MILLER:** A neighbor, 14 years old and the friend of Nancy and Ann.
**THE MAN:** Undetermined age. Poorly dressed with long hair.
**THE POLICEMAN:** About 35 years old. Rough and competent.

## PROPS

Flashlight for Lu
Matches for Chuck
Wrapped food for Mary and Betty
Can of Coke for Barney
Amber-like rock, powder, gold coin for The Man
Gun in holster for Policeman

**SCENE 1**

*(AT RISE: The sanctuary is in total DARKNESS except for what little light enters through a window from a streetlight. The WIND is howling and the snow is falling. Girlish giggles are heard from the vestibule at the rear of the sanctuary. Then NANCY speaks, loud enough to be heard through the closed doors.)*

NANCY: Shhhh ...
ANN: Can't you two be quiet?
MARY: I can't help it, Ann. It's so funny. *(MARY and BETTY start giggling once again.)*
NANCY: Mary, you know you and Betty are scared to death and won't admit it!
ANN: *(SHE enters the sanctuary through the doorway at the rear.)* See! There's no one here! It's perfectly safe, Betty!
BETTY: *(SHE follows her SISTER into the sanctuary.)* I don't know, Ann. Maybe he's already here and hiding somewhere.
ANN: I told you, Betty, he won't appear before midnight.
LU: *(SHE enters with a flashlight which she shines about the sanctuary.)* No one here! Come on in, guys! *(The rest of the CHILDREN and TEENAGERS slowly and fearfully enter the sanctuary from the vestibule and just as slowly they make their way down the aisle.)*
CHUCK: You girls are just scared of the dark! Come on, it isn't going to bite you!
ANN: Keep that flashlight down, Lu! Someone might notice it from the outside.
NANCY: They might think we're robbers trying to steal something.
BARNEY: *(HE follows LU down the aisle.)* Who'd be outside running around in this snowstorm unless they were idiots?
MARY: For all we know, he may be out there waiting, Barney!
NANCY: I've told you a dozen times, Mary, it's not time for him to appear!

BETTY: Then why didn't we wait until later on, Nancy? I don't like this. It's too spooky!

ANN: Betty, you've been in this church hundreds of times. You know there's nothing here that could frighten anyone.

MARY: On no! How about the Holy Ghost? What if it should suddenly come floating in here?

NANCY: The Holy Ghost isn't a real ghost, Mary. It's more like God!

BETTY: It's not like it is on Sunday morning when everyone is here for the Church Service. *(By this time, all of the KIDS are near the front of the sanctuary and communion table. LU once again flashes her light about the room. NANCY speaks to her sharply!)*

NANCY: Lu, I told you not to shine that flashlight around like that!

LU: I forgot, Nancy. Did anyone bring any matches with them?

CHUCK: I've got a box full.

NANCY: Chuck, what are you doing with matches? You're not starting to smoke, are you?

CHUCK: Of course not. I knew we'd need them tonight. "Be prepared" is my motto!

ANN: Then light the candles so we can see. They're not so bright as the flashlight and no one would notice them from outside. *(CHUCK lights the candles on the advent wreath and the communion table.)*

NANCY: I like candlelight. It makes the church seem warm and friendly.

ANN: It's a lot warmer in here than outside, that's for sure!

BARNEY: I'll bet it'll go down to zero before morning.

MARY: I brought some food with me. How about you, Betty?

BETTY: I brought some, too ... peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

MARY: Mine is a hamburger and French fries. I just know he'll like them.

BARNEY: I brought a can of Coke only my hands are so cold I can't get it open.

CHUCK: Give it to me. *(CHUCK snaps off the top, then places the bottle on the communion table, along side of BETTY'S and MARY'S lunches.)*

NANCY: *(As SHE sits down on the steps that lead up to the pulpit.)* Now, we'll all have to sit here as quiet as mice so we don't frighten him away when he does come.

BETTY: Don't be silly, Nancy. Nobody can frighten Jesus. He's the bravest man who ever lived.

ANN: But he's not expecting anyone here when he comes in out of the cold of night to rest for a few moments.

BARNEY: Ann, are you, Nancy, and Lu sure you got this right? This story about Jesus walking around the earth every Christmas Eve?

ANN: Of course we do! Don't you remember the story the minister told us about Saint Christopher? How on one Christmas Eve, a long time ago, he carried a little boy on his back across a raging stream?

NANCY: And how the little boy changed into a man as Christopher waded through the torrent?

ANN: But when Christopher got to the other side of the mountain stream and put him down on the bank, the child had grown to a man. It turned out to be Jesus!

CHUCK: The preacher said it was a legend and not necessarily true.

MARY: But it could have happened.

ANN: Then there's the story that Tolstoy told about the poor shoemaker on Christmas Day.

MARY: Shoemaker? I don't remember any story about a shoemaker.

NANCY: Of course you do, Mary. I told it to you just last night.

BETTY: Well, I never heard it unless it's the one about the shoemaker and the elves.

NANCY: It seems that a shoemaker received word that Jesus was going to visit him on Christmas Day, so he got everything ready. But a poor man came along so the shoemaker gave him the shoes he had made for Jesus.

LU: Then a little old lady came by and he gave her the dinner he had prepared for Jesus.

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