

CHRISTMAS AT CHURCH STREET MISSION

By Tammy Madden

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PUBLISHED BY

**Eldridge Publishing Company
PO Box 14367
Tallahassee, FL 32317
95church.com**

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Chris, a very materialistic teenager, just got caught stealing her parents' credit card. To "teach her a lesson about those less fortunate," she is forced to work at the local homeless mission every evening of her Christmas vacation. It's a punishment she is not happy about! Through Sam, a bitter, homeless man; Les, the patient director of the mission; and Miss Jackie, a wise, yet mysterious mission's resident; Chris learns the true meaning of Christian love and unselfishness.

A humorous, yet touching play, with an unexpected twist at the end. Simple interior set.

SETTING

Several cots and chairs are CS and SL. DSR is a desk for Les and either a second desk or small table for Fritz. Both desks are covered with papers and folders. A phone is nearby. A bare Christmas tree should have a prominent place on the set.

PROPS

Blankets, pillows, papers, list of jobs, string of popcorn, construction paper tree decorations, garlands, ornaments, letter, clipboard, pen, books, two pocket watches, bags of decorations and gifts, wooden spoon, mail, cashier's check, small picture.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

CHRIS: A very materialistic teenager.

KIM: Her best friend, a sweet girl.

LES: The long-suffering director of the mission.

MR. FRITZ: The good-hearted, yet bumbling, co-director of the mission.

SAM: A bitter resident at the mission.

MISS JACKIE: A wise, mysterious resident of the mission.

SHAUN: A teen boy who volunteers at the mission.

MATILDA: The cook at the mission.

DELIVERY GUY: Delivers items from a local business.

MR. HARPER: CEO of Harperco Enterprises.

TOBY: A very handsome, yet snobbish teen boy.

EXTRA HOMELESS PEOPLE: As many as desired.

SETTING: The Church Street Mission for the homeless.

TIME: Present day, shortly before Christmas.

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ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: The homeless mission. CHRIS and KIM enter.)

CHRIS: Can you believe my dad made me come here to volunteer?

KIM: Come on, Chris, it might not be so bad.

CHRIS: Kim, are you nuts? Of course, it'll be bad. Working at a homeless mission over Christmas?

KIM: At least, it's only for a few hours every day.

CHRIS: Yeah, but I'm grounded during the day, too!

KIM: I meant to ask you about that ... no time off for good behavior?

CHRIS: No! All I get to do for two solid weeks is stay at home or work here.

KIM: Ooooh! That means you'll miss Lauren's Christmas party.

CHRIS: I know! And Toby's gonna be there. He's so good-looking.

KIM: Toby's a jerk.

CHRIS: No, he's not! He is soooo good-looking.

KIM: Yeah, but he's a jerk.

CHRIS: He is not!

KIM: He is so rude to everybody.

CHRIS: Not everybody. He just chooses the right people to be friends with.

KIM: Whatever!

CHRIS: Oh, yeah, my dad did say I could go to the mission's Christmas party. *(Sarcastically.)* Whoopee!!!

KIM: It might not be so bad. Shaun will be there.

CHRIS: Shaun is a social outcast.

KIM: I think he's sweet, kind of cute, too!

CHRIS: Cute? Under those glasses and ugly clothes, who could tell? And sweet? Who cares? He's still a big ZERO on the social ladder.

KIM: Is that all you care about?

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CHRIS: I care about money, too. (*KIM is obviously annoyed.*) It's just extremely important that I be with the right kinds of people.

KIM: Without trying to sound (*Mocking CHRIS.*) extremely stupid; what are these "right people" you keep talking about?

CHRIS: You know, ones who are socially acceptable.

KIM: You mean, like...?

CHRIS: People who make a lot of money, who live in nice houses; that sort of thing.

KIM: I don't know what's happened to you lately. You didn't use to be this much of a snob.

CHRIS: You're just jealous.

KIM: (*Rolls HER eyes.*) Why did your dad add this mission's work to your punishment?

CHRIS: He said it would teach me a lesson about those less fortunate than I am. Like, I care!

KIM: I still think you got off easy. My mom and dad would've locked me in the cellar until I was thirty if I had stolen one of their credit cards and charged \$700 on it!

CHRIS: It was only \$685 and I think it's stupid. I was going to pay them back - eventually. (*Pause.*) Isn't there anybody here? I thought this place was full of "needy" people.

KIM: They're probably having dinner in the kitchen. It's 5 o'clock.

CHRIS: Oh, yeah, I forgot. You actually volunteer here on purpose, don't you?

KIM: Oh look, there's Les.

LES: (*Entering.*) Hello, ladies. Here for your volunteer shift?

CHRIS: Volunteer? Ha! Forced shift is more like it.

LES: Well, Kim, since you know your way around here, why don't you go help clean up after dinner? I'm going to talk to Chris a minute.

KIM: Sure, see ya, Chris. (*SHE exits.*)

LES: So, Chris, your dad tells me that you'll be volunteering here during your Christmas vacation.

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CHRIS: Let's get one thing straight; I'm not volunteering!
I'm being forced to be here.

LES: *(Clears throat.)* Do you have any ideas about what
you'd like to do while you're here?

CHRIS: I wouldn't like to do anything here.

LES: *(Being patient.)* I meant, are there any areas that
you'd feel more comfortable working in than others?

CHRIS: No, I don't know. I...

LES: Let's just start with something easy. How about
reading the children some stories after dinner?

CHRIS: *(Surprised.)* You have kids here?

LES: Yes, we have four of them right now, why?

CHRIS: I don't know. I thought only old men were
homeless.

LES: We have many different kinds of people who come to
us for help. Women, men, sometimes whole families.

CHRIS: Why? Won't they get a job either?

LES: It's not that simple. Many want to work, but they can't
for one reason or another.

CHRIS: Whatever. I guess I could read the kids one story.

LES: Actually, I thought you could read two or three.

CHRIS: Three??!!

LES: Yes, go and find a couple of good Christmas stories.
The kids are really excited about the holidays.

CHRIS: What could they possibly have to be excited about
living here?

LES: Christmas is exciting to children, whether it's in a
mansion or a homeless shelter. Besides, we try to teach
them that there's more to Christmas than just getting
"things."

CHRIS: *(Laughs.)* Yeah, right!!! *(SHE exits.)*

LES: *(After SHE is gone, HE looks up in an exasperated
prayer.)* Lord, this is going to be an interesting Christmas.

(BLACKOUT.)

End of Freeview

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