

SECOND CHANCE CHRISTMAS

By Regina Ballard

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STORY OF THE PLAY

It's Christmas and Lisa and Tim are nervous. Although they have been married for two years, this is the first Christmas they've ever spent with both of their families together under one roof.

Tim Stanton is from an upper income home; his father is a corporate executive and his mother is known as an upstanding member of the community, active in clubs for the socially elite. On the other hand, Lisa's parents are Christians and own a small farm. They do not possess the wealth and social standing that Tim's family feel are important. The young couple had wed despite protests from Tim's parents that he was marrying down. Lisa and Tim are hoping the holiday gathering will improve the broken relationship.

There are plenty of tense and hilarious moments that put the young couple's marriage to the test. A nosy neighbor and her henpecked husband are on the lookout for any signs of crime. Grandma and Grandpa, Tim's fathers' parents who are considered senile, have just escaped from their very upscale nursing home to be with their family for the holidays. Lisa's somewhat ditzy sister, Kim, and her silent redneck boyfriend, Bud, are also there along with Tim's yuppie, environmentally-conscious sister, Elizabeth, her husband Brett, and their brainy son, Rain.

When things can't get any worse and tension is at its height, they realize they are all snowed in together. An answer to prayer and to family healing is found when Joe and his pregnant wife, Ann, are stranded on their way to the hospital and stop by Lisa and Tim's house for help. The events that follow remind everyone what Christmas and family togetherness truly mean.

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SCENES

Scene 1: Dec. 24, current year, early evening.

Scene 2: Several hours later.

Scene 3: Christmas morning.

Scene 4: A short time later.

SETTING

Living room scene with couch, chairs, coffee table, etc. and decorated for Christmas. There is a outside door, SR and an inside door, SL. There is a window SR, close to the outside door.

PROPS

Luggage, presents and coats for arriving families; two cups of coffee, *Wall Street Journal*; pillows and blankets; empty cup for sugar; 2 small mirrors; shawl, lampshade and wheelchair; watch and book for Rain, binoculars for Laverne; Bible on end table; white lab coat and yellow garden gloves for Rain; doctor's coat, gloves, and bag; baby doll in blanket; birth certificate.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8m, 8w, 1 flexible, 1 child)

LISA: Tim's wife. Early 20s. She was reared in a Christian family and knows the value of prayer. However, her husband Tim has resisted her pleas to come to church. She feels that Tim's parents look down upon her because she does not come from a wealthy family and after two years of marriage, she is tired of their put-downs.

TIM: Lisa's husband. Early 20s. Reared in a very upscale, wealthy family. He is still trying to win back his parents' approval after marrying Lisa against their wishes. He loves Lisa but doesn't see the importance of her Christian faith.

AUDREY: Tim's mother. She is a member of the socially elite and somewhat of a snob. She looks down upon Lisa and her family.

EDWARD: Tim's father. A busy corporate executive who is hung up on appearances and protecting the family name. He also feels Tim is wasting his life as a writer and made a very bad decision in his marriage to Lisa.

ELIZABETH: Tim's older sister. Early 30s. An environmentally-conscious yuppie. She does and says all the right things without really meaning them. She is a spin-off of her father's hang-ups and proper appearance and her mother's snobbery.

BRETT: Elizabeth's husband. Early 30s. Also environmentally conscious. He is a nerdy stockbroker, but probably wears small round glasses and recycles.

RAIN: Elizabeth and Brett's 9-year-old son. He is a genius beyond his years as a result of advanced learning and an environmentally conscious upbringing.

CLARENCE: Lisa's father. He is a do-it-yourself man and owns a small farm. A Christian, he has taught his family the importance of Christian values. Sometimes he is obnoxiously friendly and his southern accent seems to get on the nerves of Tim's parents.

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SARAH: Lisa's mother. Like her husband, she is a Christian and has a kind, gentle spirit. She is always ready to help those in need.

KIM: Lisa's ditzy sister. Late teens. She comes across as a real space case.

BUD: Kim's boyfriend. First appearances are deceiving. Tim's parents think he is a redneck only to learn his true profession and a lesson on judging others in the process.

LAVERNE: Older lady. Lisa and Tim's nosy neighbor who thinks it is her duty to be the neighborhood crime watch patrol. Her overactive imagination usually gets her into trouble.

ROGER: Older man. Laverne's henpecked husband. His tongue-in-cheek tolerance of Laverne and his under-the-breath responses to Laverne's antics give him strength to live with her.

GRANDMA: Edward's mother. Older lady. At one time was considered to be a dignified and formal person, but old age has caused her to loosen up ... to her family's horror and embarrassment. Sometimes her mind wanders, and she has an extreme love for hats. She escaped the nursing home with her husband, Earl, to be with the family for the holidays.

GRANDPA: Edward's father. Not as senile as he has people believe. He and Grandma together make up a hilarious team.

JOE and ANN: Messengers from God in the form of a married couple trying to get to the hospital to have a baby.

DOCTOR RICHARDS: The doctor that checks on the baby and his mother. Can be played by a male or female.

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Scene 1

(AT RISE: LISA and TIM are straightening up living room throughout this scene. As tempers build, they should show their frustration by the way they punch up the sofa and arrange pillows, sling magazines, etc.)

LISA: I can't believe you invited your ENTIRE family!

TIM: Well, I did say that I wanted a family Christmas. What did you expect?

LISA: Considering the family problems we've had in the past, I thought we would start off slow. Just our parents and my little sister.

TIM: If you can invite your sister, then I should be able to invite mine.

LISA: *(Protests.)* It's not the same thing. My sister still lives at home. My parents can't just leave her alone for Christmas. Besides, your sister is married with a child. That's a total of five from your family and only three from mine.

TIM: *(Frustrated.)* You make it sound like some sort of contest and my family outnumbers yours. I don't get it. What's the big deal?

LISA: We've been through this before. You know your family treats my family like we are beneath them. They are such snobs just because my parents aren't from their social class. Don't forget, I wanted you to invite your parents this Christmas, but now that your sister and her family are coming, I just don't feel so optimistic.

TIM: I think you are the one being the snob. You only met my sister once and you've already decided not to like her.

LISA: *(Explodes.)* I can't believe you! So, I guess you think that I was being the snob when your sister refused to come to the bridesmaid party with the rest of the bridesmaids?

TIM: Oh, come on. What was she supposed to do? She didn't know anybody there. They were all your friends. She felt like she would be out of place.

End of Freeview

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