

Stuck on Christmas

By

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Theme:

This play conveys the fact that we need to focus our attention on the true meaning of Christmas. The characters in this play are forced to change their perspective when they find themselves stuck on an elevator on Christmas Eve.

Biblical Reference:

The Christmas Story

Approximate Running Time:

45-600 minutes (Depending on the use of music)

Props:

A nativity scene
Stools (see notes)
Elevator sounds

Cast of Characters:

- Lynn: A single man in his mid- to late thirties. He is a successful business man and is dressed in a shirt and tie. He is stopping by the mall before heading out on a date.
- Dennis: A married man in his mid-twenties. Appears as a successful business man. Dressed as if he met his wife just after work so that they could get some last minute Christmas shopping in before it was too late.
- DeVon: Dennis' wife. Also in her mid-twenties. Appears as a successful business woman. Dressed as if she has been getting some last minute shopping in just after getting out of work.
- Ila: A mother in her forties. Mother of Jennifer. They are dressed casually. This was a planned trip for them.
- Jennifer: An 8-year old girl. Sweet and innocent. Plainly dressed in Christmas colors. She has a strong faith in Jesus and has long believed that His birthday was the real reason for the season.
- Sharon: A single woman near 30. She has no one in her life to share Christmas with. She went to the mall because she had the day off of work.
- SG: Security Guard. A mall security guard who is working the Christmas Eve shift. He should be dressed in a security guard uniform.

A choir

A nativity scene. Mary, Joseph, Jesus, shepherds, and wise men.

Recommended Christmas Hymns - these can be replaced with songs of your choosing.

At the beginning of the play:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

After Scene One:

What Child Is This?

After Scene Two:

O Little Town of Bethlehem.

After Scene Three:

Silent Night

After Scene Four:

Joy to the World!

Notes:

The director has few choices as to what the actors should be doing at the end of each scene. The actors could move off to the side and sit down on pre-positioned chairs or stools, on- or off-stage, until the song has ended, they could freeze in their spots until the song has ended, or they could pantomime throughout the song as if there was no break in the action.

Scene One

The Crisis

The actors come together at the elevator door just as the carolers are about through with the first song, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." The young lady and her daughter are standing, listening to the carolers. The others come from all directions and converge on the elevator. The first there presses the call button and stands back in anticipation of the elevator car. Just as the choir finishes the opening number the young lady notices that the elevator car has arrived and pulls her daughter towards the open elevator door. The others have walked into the elevator and turned so that they are facing front. The actors should be staggered so that they each can be seen by the audience yet still give the illusion of being crammed into an elevator. Leave enough room to make interaction between the characters look natural.

They all look above at the numbers above the elevator door. Suddenly, the elevator stops. All bending at their knees simultaneously, and then looking around for a way to signal help, the dialog begins.

Lynn: Aw, come one. This is not what I need. [*Anxiously looking for the phone box.*] Come on, where is that stupid phone box. It should be right around here.

[*They all look around.*]

Sharon: I don't see one.

Lynn: There has got to be a phone box on the elevator. It's the law. How else can we get out of here?

DeVon: [*Looking up.*] In the movies they always go out through the hatch in the top of the elevator.

Jennifer: That sounds cool, mom. Can we try that?

Ila: We're not doing that honey.

Dennis: [*To DeVon.*] She's right, we are not doing that. [*To everyone.*] All right. Everyone just calm down. The last thing that we need is for someone to panic. [*Joining in the search.*] The phone box should be right next to the floor buttons.

Lynn: [*Panicking.*] It's not here.

DeVon: [*In a soothing motherly voice.*] Let's just calm down. I'm sure that someone monitors these elevators and that help will be on the way. If we can't find the call box there must be some sort of an emergency button we can press.

Lynn: The emergency button is probably inside the phone box. *[This dialog should come across as comical.]* I've seen movies where people are stuck in situations like this. There are usually terrorists involved. That's it, terrorists have hijacked the mall and what better day to do it, too. Everyone's got their Christmas money on them. It's genius. I wonder how long until they realize that we're trapped in here. Wait a minute. Maybe they stopped this elevator because they knew that we were on it and that we had a lot of money on us. *[Pulling out his wallet.]* I mean, I've got about six hundred dollars on me. How about you guys?

Dennis: You've got six hundred dollars on you?

Lynn: *[Realizing that he's the only one with a lot of money on him. Sheepishly.]* Yeah, I guess I waited a little long to begin my shopping this year. *[Back to his sinister plots.]* They probably fleeced me out. *[Looking around.]* Is there one of those security cameras in here?

Sharon: No, why?

Lynn: *[Looking up into the corner of the elevator.]* They could be watching us right now. Everyone act natural. *[He stands real straight and begins to whistle a Christmas tune.]*

DeVon: I've had enough of this nonsense.

Ila: Me too. Besides, you're beginning to scare my daughter.

DeVon: Let's get back to looking for that emergency call button. *[She looks.]* Here it is. *[She presses it.]* OK, now it's just a matter of time until someone comes and gets us.

Jennifer: Mommy, are we going to be stuck on this elevator long?

Ila: I don't think so dear.

Jennifer: That's good. I wouldn't want to be stuck here for Christmas.

Sharon: Well, I sure hope that we aren't stuck here that long, dear. I wouldn't want to miss Christmas either.

Lynn: *[Looking at his watch.]* Well, according to my watch, we have just three hours until Christmas is here.

DeVon: Did you say that we have three hours until Christmas?

Lynn: That's what I said.

Ila: That's not good.

Dennis: What's wrong?

DeVon: The mall closes at nine tonight.

Ila: It's now five minutes after nine.

Lynn: Oh great. This is just great. You have got to be kidding me.

Sharon: Maybe they've shut down the elevators for the night. Maybe we won't be found until they open again tomorrow afternoon.

Lynn: I can't be hearing this.

Ila: You don't think that they'd just shut them down without checking to see if they're empty, do you?

Lynn: All I know is that this elevator is not working, there's no way for us to call for help, and I'm late for a very important date. I can't believe this is happening to me.

Dennis: Everyone be quiet for a minute. Listen.

[They are all silent, intently listening. Some put their ears against the sides of the elevator. After a moment of silence.]

Dennis: Do you hear anything?

Ila: I don't hear anything.

Sharon: Me either.


Lynn: Not a thing.

Jennifer: I can't hear anything at all.

DeVon: It's perfectly silent.

Dennis: That's what I was afraid of. *[Pause for effect.]* The mall is empty. We're all alone, trapped in this elevator on Christmas Eve, and there's no way out.

- CURTAIN -



Choir sings "What Child is This?"

Scene Two

Christmas Discovery

DeVon: Well, it looks like we're gonna' be here for a while.

Lynn: Now what are we gonna' do?

Jennifer: I've got an idea.

Ila: What is it honey?

Jennifer: Why don't we tell each other what our favorite part of Christmas is.

DeVon: That sounds like a great idea to me, uh, what is your name.

Jennifer: I'm Jennifer.

DeVon: Well it's a pleasure to meet you Jennifer. My name is DeVon. [*They shake hands.*] And I'd have to say that my favorite part of Christmas is Christmas shopping. I love the hustle and bustle of the mall, all the people moving about in a hurry, all the pretty displays, and the live band that plays Christmas music. I get caught up in the activity. I could spend all day at the mall and not get bored.

Dennis: That's for sure. Unfortunately, you're spending money the whole time that you're here. [*To Jennifer.*] My name is Dennis and my favorite part of Christmas is definitely NOT all the money that we end up spending on all of the gifts we buy for just about everyone we know. Every year we meet more people, every year our family gets bigger, and every year we have to buy all those people more gifts. I just don't understand why we have to spend so much money to give gifts every year. I mean, who thought up this advertising ploy - he must be a genius.

Jennifer: Is there something about Christmas that you do like?

Dennis: I love to sit back on my recliner after Christmas dinner and just watch whatever's on TV. It's like the only day out of the year I can actually relax. I work for a large accounting firm. I'm on call with all of the clients that we have. I have to respond no matter when they call. I usually end up working weekends and most holidays, but there aren't too many people doing business on Christmas day, so nobody bothers me. It's really the only day that I get off.

- Ila: I know what you mean about enjoying Christmas dinner. I enjoy Christmas dinner as well, but for me it's the time after Christmas dinner that I look forward to. You guys leave us women alone and we have a chance to get together in the kitchen and talk about what has been happening during the season. That's when we find out what we were given as Christmas presents and how well the morning went in everyone's homes. That's my favorite part about Christmas.
- Lynn: This is pathetic. I've had enough of this. There could be terrorists watching us right now and all you can do is talk about a silly holiday. Look, I hate to be the one to breaks it to you, but you're probably going to be spending Christmas morning in this very elevator unless we do something about it.
- Jennifer: Isn't there anything that you like about Christmas, mister?
- Lynn: My name is not "mister," it's "Lynn." And yes, there is one thing about Christmas that I like: presents. I come from a family that likes to give expensive presents. And the best part is that they don't expect single guys like me to give anything expensive back. I make out big time every Christmas. [*Looking up.*] But, unless someone finds us in this elevator I won't be able to open my presents tomorrow.
- Jennifer: Let's see. Who hasn't told us what they like about Christmas? [*Roving her finger around the people in the elevator.*] Uh...just you. [*Pointing her finger to Sharon.*]
- Sharon: [*Laughing a bit.*] You're so sweet honey.
- Jennifer: My name is Jennifer. What's your name?
- Sharon: My name is Sharon. It's a pleasure to meet you. [*Shaking her hand.*]
- Jennifer: What do you like about Christmas?
- Sharon: What do I like about Christmas? I could tell you what I used to like about Christmas. I used to love to wake up on Christmas morning and look at the tree with all of the presents spread out at the foot of it. Then I would run into my parents' room and wake them up so that we could go and open the presents. We'd sit together as we opened the presents and then we'd spend all day playing with the things that I got. I wouldn't trade those memories for anything in the world. I just wish that I could do something like that again.
- Jennifer: Why can't you?


Sharon: Well, Jennifer, my parents aren't here anymore. My father died when I was your age and mother died this time last year. I don't have any brothers or sisters and I'm not married. I don't have anyone to spend Christmas with this year and, to tell you the truth, I'm feeling kind'a lonely.

Jennifer: I'm sorry.

Ila: Jennifer, you haven't told us what you like most about Christmas.

Jennifer: That's easy: Jesus birth. Why does everyone forget about Jesus? Christmas is all about how Jesus came to earth.

- CURTAIN -



Choir sings "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

Scene Three

The Christmas Story

Jennifer: Can you tell us the story of Jesus birth, mom?

[As Ila tells the Christmas story the characters of the nativity act out the scene stage right. The nativity scene, once assembled, remains in place for the rest of the play. Lighting should be dimmed on the scene as the scene in the elevator begins in Scene Four.]

Ila: Sure honey. It was about two thousand years ago that Jesus was born here on earth. There was a census throughout all the land. Families had to return to their own town to register. Joseph and Mary went from Nazareth, which was in Galilee, to Judea and the city of Bethlehem. Mary was very pregnant at the time. She could give birth at any time. Unfortunately, the city was full of people and Mary and Joseph couldn't find a place to stay for the night. They did find one innkeeper who took pity on them and offered to let them stay in his barn, which was behind the inn. It was there, in the barn, that Jesus was born.

There was nowhere else to put him after he was born, so Mary laid the newborn child in a manger that was in the barn.

Now that Jesus was born, all of heaven wanted to tell the good news. There were shepherds out in the fields watching over their sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared to them and they were really afraid. But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

As soon as the angel announced the birth of Jesus, angels filled the sky. They began to praise God and said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."


The shepherds had to go and check out this baby the angels told them about. They went to Bethlehem and found the baby lying in the manger. As soon as they left the barn they went out and told everyone they could find all that had happened to them. They returned to see Jesus again before they went back into their fields.

Sometime after that Wise men from the east, who had seen the star that shone bright over Bethlehem, came to see the baby Jesus. They bowed down before Him and worshipped Him because He was the newborn king, and they knew that he was special. They presented Him with gifts of gold, and of incense, and of myrrh. They too left to tell others of the great things that they had seen.

Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and what his birth means to us. Jesus was God's gift to us. He came so that we may have life, and have it more abundantly. He was the greatest gift ever given, that's why we give each other gifts on Christmas morning, in celebration of Jesus birthday.

DeVon: I think that we get too caught up in all of the hustle and bustle of Christmas sometimes and we forget what Christmas is all about. Thanks for telling that story, Ila. I've been focusing in on all the wrong parts of Christmas. Christmas isn't about the hustle and bustle of what we have added to the Christmas story. It's about a humble woman named Mary, her obedient husband Joseph, and Jesus. It's about one silent night two thousand years ago and what that night means to me today.

- CURTAIN -



Choir sings "Silent Night."

Scene Four

The Rescue

DeVon: I have to apologize for the way that I've been acting.

Dennis: I have to apologize as well. Christmas is much more than a time to rush around and get caught up in the commercial aspect. This isn't a time to celebrate Santa Claus and candy canes. Christmas is about Jesus' birth and why He came to this earth.

Ila: You're right. If it wasn't for the birth of Jesus we wouldn't be able to celebrate His death and resurrection.

Sharon: And if it wasn't for what Jesus did on the cross it would be impossible for us to get to heaven.

[Lynn has been overwhelmed by the story of Jesus birth and can't understand what Christmas has to do with heaven. His contribution to the conversation should be controlled and caring. The effect on him should appear as if he is a new person.]

Lynn: Wait a minute. I don't understand what the cross has to do with Christmas.

Sharon: Jesus Christ was God's Son.

Lynn: I know that.

DeVon: And He's the same Jesus that we celebrate at Easter time.

Lynn: Right...

Dennis: At Easter we celebrate how Jesus died and then rose again from the dead. He then ascended to Heaven, where He lives today. We celebrate Jesus' birth because we realize that He was God's gift to us. If it wasn't for His birth here on earth he couldn't have died. His death paid the penalty for our sin. If He didn't die, and rise from dead, then we wouldn't be able to get into heaven.

DeVon: So we celebrate His birth so that we can celebrate when He died and rose again.

Lynn: So, are you saying that we're all stuck in this elevator because we celebrate the birth of Jesus?

Sharon: No, we're stuck in this elevator because we got caught up in what the world does to celebrate Christmas. If we were celebrating Jesus' birth we probably wouldn't be stuck here right now.

Jennifer: That's right. We'd probably be in church right now.

[There is a moment of silence as they all think of what Jennifer has just said.]

SG: *[His voice is heard as if he was calling down from the top of the elevator shaft.]* Hello?

Sharon: What was that?

SG: Is anybody down there?

Lynn: Someone is calling down the elevator shaft.

[They all respond at the same time.]

Lynn: Get us out of here.

Dennis: We're down here.

Jennifer: Help.

Sharon: Please help us.

DeVon: Hello.

SG: Hold on. I'll have you out of there in a minute.

Sharon: Thank you, Lord.

Jennifer: Mommy, we're not going to miss Christmas.

[DeVon and Dennis smile at each other. Dennis looks at his watch.]

Dennis: Hey, everyone. It's not too late to make the candle light service at our church. I'm sure that you'll agree that's a much better way to celebrate Christmas than why we all got stuck on this elevator. What do you say?

Jennifer: Can we go, mommy?

Ila: Sounds like a great idea to me.

[They hug.]

Jennifer: *[Turns to Sharon.]* Will you come with us?

Sharon: Well, I don't know.

Ila: We'd love to have you.

Sharon: *[Smiling.]* I'd love to go.

[Jennifer gives her a big hug.]

Jennifer: I'm glad you said yes.

Ila: We'd also love to have to you over for Christmas dinner tomorrow. If you'll come.

Sharon. [*Smiling even bigger.*] I'd love to.

[*Dennis turns to Lynn.*]

Dennis: How about you, Lynn. Would you like to join us for church too?

Lynn: I don't know.

DeVon: [*As Ila said.*] We'd love to have you.

Dennis: For church and for Christmas dinner as well. It would give us a chance to talk about the true meaning of Christmas some more.

Lynn: [*Giving in.*] I'd like that. [*Remembering.*] Oh! Wait, I just remembered that I was supposed to have a date tonight.

DeVon: Why don't you just bring her along?

Lynn: Would I be imposing on you if I accepted?

Dennis: Not at all.

Lynn: Wait until she hears why I'm late. This is gonn'a be remembered as one of the most unique Christmases I've ever had!

[*Sounds of the elevator starting up again. They all react as the elevator moves again.*]

All: Hooray.

[*The doors open and they step out and move to stage left to meet the Security guard. As they are talking to the security guard the lights begin to come up on the nativity scene. The choir positions themselves behind it.*]

SG: You folks must have been in that elevator for quite a while.

Lynn: You could say that again.

Jennifer: Thanks for saving us from not having Christmas.

Dennis: How did you find us?

SG: I noticed that the elevator emergency light was on so decided to check things out.

Sharon: Well, we're all glad that you did. [*Shakes his hand.*] Thank you, and Merry Christmas.

SG: Merry Christmas to you too.

[They each take turns shaking his hand and wishing him merry Christmas. He returns their greeting. They exit the building as a group and walk over to the manger scene. They stand arm in arm as the choir sings the closing song.]

Choir sings "Joy to The World!"

- CURTAIN -



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