

The Christmas Café

A comedy in three scenes

By
Burton Bumgarner

Performance Rights

It is an infringement of the federal copyright law to copy this script in any way or to perform this play without royalty payment. All rights are controlled by Eldridge Publishing Co. Inc. Call the publisher for additional scripts and further licensing information. The author's name must appear on all programs and advertising with the notice: "Produced by special arrangements with Eldridge Publishing Company."

ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY

www.histage.com

© 2006 by *Burton Bumgarner*

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing
<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=124>

STORY OF THE PLAY

“The Christmas Café” is set in a restaurant at an undisclosed location. Betty, the waitress and cook, serves customers from three different familiar holiday stories: “The Night Before Christmas” by Clement Clarke Moore, “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens, and “The Nutcracker” by E.T.A. Hoffman.

In “All of the Other Reindeer,” Blitzen is burned out and upset that he’s always last on the team. The other reindeer have suggestions: Cupid thinks he needs a love life; Donder suggests a good stock portfolio, Prancer thinks an exercise regime is the answer. Baffled, the other reindeer call in Santa’s newest hire, a reindeer called Freud. They tell her Blitzen has jealousy and anger issues. Finally, the waitress Betty simply suggests another reindeer take a turn being last. Finally Blitzen has a better outlook.

In “Bah! Humbug!” Marley’s Ghost goes to Scrooge’s house, but a century and a half too late! The Spirits of Past, Present and Future confront him, but everything’s messed up. Now Tiny Tim is a football player.

In “Nutcrackered,” E.T.A Hoffman is struggling with writer’s block. Young Clara and her brother Fritz give him inspiration when they tell him a wild story about a magical nutcracker.

The play may be performed on a bare stage with café tables and chairs. The genders of some of the characters may be altered to fit the director’s needs.

The Christmas Café

-3-

Scene 1: “All of the Other Reindeer”

(4 m, 6 w)

BETTY: A waitress.
BLITZEN: A reindeer, burned out, male.
DONDER: Another, an investment broker.
DASHER: A reindeer, hyper, male.
DANCER: A reindeer, a dancer, female.
CUPID: A reindeer, matchmaker, female.
PRANCER: A reindeer, a gymnast, female.
VIXEN: A reindeer, glamorous and stylish, female.
COMET: A reindeer, an astronomer, intelligent, male.
FREUD: A reindeer, psychologist, female.

Scene 2: “Bah! Humbug!”

(8 m, 5 w, 2 flexible)

BETTY: A waitress.
MARLEY’S GHOST: A ghost, male.
CHRISTMAS PAST: A spirit, female.
CHRISTMAS PRESENT: A spirit and a glutton, male.
CHRISTMAS FUTURE: A spirit, speaks no lines, flexible.
BOBBY: A child, flexible.
MOMMY: Bobby’s mother.
DADDY: Bobby’s father.
BIG TIM: Formerly Tiny Tim.
COACH: Tim’s football coach.
FAN: Scrooge’s sister, a lawyer.
BELLE: The love of Scrooge’s life, a lawyer.
FEZZIWIG: A former employer of Scrooge’s.
BOB CRATCHIT: An employee of Scrooge’s, Tim’s father.
SCROOGE: A very happy and generous man.

Scene 3: “Nutcrackered”

(6 m, 3 w, 3 flexible)

BETTY: A waitress.
E.T.A. HOFFMAN: A lawyer who wants to be a writer.
FRITZ: A bratty boy, Clara’s brother.
CLARA: A young girl, Fritz’ sister.
THEODORE: Cousin of Fritz and Clara.
ERNST: Cousin of Fritz and Clara.
THREE MICE: Male or female.
DROSSELMEYER: Clara’s godfather.
NUTCRACKER: A handsome prince.
OFFICER JANE: A police officer.

Costumes

Scene 1: The reindeer costumes should be simple cardboard antlers and dress to reflect each character. Blitzen wears jeans and a sweater or dress shirt. He carries a newspaper. *Donder, as a stockbroker, wears a business suit and carries a briefcase.

Dasher, who is very hyper and speaks his lines quickly, wears a jogging suit and sneakers. Dancer wears a leotard and dance shoes. Cupid, a matchmaker, wears a tacky dress with hearts and carries a bow and a quiver of arrows. Prancer, a gymnast, wears a leotard or warm-up suit. Vixen, glamorous and alluring, should wear stylish clothes, perhaps a fur piece. Comet, the scientific type, wears a lab coat and horn-rimmed glasses. Freud, the newest reindeer, is a psychologist. She wears glasses, a business suit and carries a clipboard, or wears a medical coat with a stethoscope around her neck.

Scene 2: The characters should dress as close to the Dickens' characters as possible, with the exceptions of Fan and Belle, who are modern-day attorneys. Past wears a white dress and has a garland of flowers in her hair. Present wears a colorful robe and is draped with strands of artificial greenery. Christmas Future wears the traditional black robe and may have his/her face hidden beneath a hood. The robe covers the arms so that a bare tree branch can be used for pointing. The family living in Scrooge's old house (Mommy, Daddy and Child), should wear modern-day pj's and bathrobes.

Scene 3: Hoffman wears a winter coat, gloves, a scarf and hat, and carries a briefcase. Clara and Fritz should resemble characters from the ballet and wear robes and pj's. The mice costumes can be simple ears of cardboard and painted whiskers on their faces. Soldiers could wear band jackets. Officer Jane is in a police uniform and winter jacket.

* *"Donner" is often used for "Donder." Either name would be acceptable for this play.*

Scene 1
“All of the Other Reindeer”

(AT RISE: The Christmas Café. BETTY is wiping tables. BLITZEN enters. He has a newspaper under his arm. He crosses to a table, sits, picks up a menu and studies it. Betty exits, then returns with a glass of water. She prepares to take Blitzen’s order.)

BETTY: Okay. What ya want? I ain’t got all night.

BLITZEN: (Annoyed.) I just sat down. Will you give me a minute?

BETTY: I’ll give you twenty seconds. (Looking closer at BLITZEN.) Hey, you look familiar. (Cautiously.) Would you happen to be ... a reindeer?

BLITZEN: (Sarcastic.) A reindeer? Well, let’s see. Reindeer have antlers. Do I have antlers?

BETTY: Uh huh.

BLITZEN: Reindeer have hooves. Do I have hooves? (BETTY bends over and looks under the table.)

BETTY: I can’t tell. You’re wearing boots.

BLITZEN: It’s cold outside!

BETTY: We get lots of reindeers in here.

BLITZEN: Anything wrong with reindeer?

BETTY: Well, they’re kind of messy. And they aren’t very good tippers.

BLITZEN: Maybe you’re not a very good waitress!

BETTY: You don’t need to get nasty! Say, would you happen to be one of the famous reindeers?

BLITZEN: It’s rein-DEER. There’s no “s” on the end of the word.

BETTY: What if there’s more than one of you?

BLITZEN: It’s rein-DEER! Singular and plural!

BETTY: Oh. Singular and plural, huh? (BLITZEN nods.) Well, that’s good to know. Same thing either way.

BLITZEN: Right.

BETTY: So, are you one of those famous reindeers?

BLITZEN: (Preens.) Well ... I don’t want to attract a lot of attention ... (BETTY bends over and looks at HIS face.) What are you doing?

The Christmas Café

-6-

BETTY: Checking out your nose. Does it light up?

BLITZEN: NO!

BETTY: It isn't red either. You're not him. *(BLITZEN registers offense.)*

BLITZEN: *(Aside.)* Of course I'm not him! I hate that guy!

BETTY: Since you're not the guy with the red nose, I'm not wasting any more time on you. What'd you want?

BLITZEN: I'll have the chef's special bark and berry plate. And maybe a rosebush salad.

BETTY: To drink?

BLITZEN: Coffee. Make sure it's decaf. *(BETTY takes down his order.)*

BETTY: I heard on TV there's a new reindeer on the team. Everybody's excited about it. *(SHE looks at BLITZEN.)*

BLITZEN: *(Sarcastic.)* Whoopie.

BETTY: I guess that's not you either.

BLITZEN: You got that one right.

BETTY: I really liked the one with the red nose.

BLITZEN: That guy was a fraud!

BETTY: How do you fake being a reindeer? Either you are one, or you aren't. It's not like a polar bear can put on some fake antlers and pass himself off as a reindeer.

(BLITZEN sighs deeply and counts to ten. SHE exits. He reads his paper.)

BLITZEN: *(Reading.)* "New Reindeer Joins Sleigh. The charisma of a rock star and the brains of a Rhodes scholar." And there's a photo of her. Isn't she lovely? *(Throws down the paper.)* I can't stand this!

(DONDER enters carrying a briefcase.)

DONDER: Hey! Blitzen! How's it going? *(HE crosses to the table and sits. BLITZEN is not happy to see him.)*

BLITZEN: *(Sarcastic, aside.)* Great. It's Donder. It just keeps getting better. *(To DONDER.)* I thought you'd be watching over your Wall Street investments.

The Christmas Café

-7-

DONDER: You gotta get out every now and then. I just sold two hundred shares of Consolidated Ice. Who needs to own ice when you live here? Say, you don't look so good. Are you still seeing the shrink?

BLITZEN: Does everyone around here know I see a psychiatrist?

DONDER: I told everybody I know. I also told them about your anger management issues. Hope you don't mind. Doesn't matter. Everybody knew already. Anyway, did you hear about the new reindeer the old man hired? She's really supposed to be something. Attractive. Intelligent. Athletic. She even ran in a couple of Iditarods.

BLITZEN: Those are for dogs!

DONDER: She wore a disguise.

BLITZEN: Why is the old man always bringing in new talent?

DONDER: It's all part of restructuring. Keeping the company vital. Downsizing. Outsourcing.

BLITZEN: We don't need restructuring! He should promote from within. We've all had the same positions for ... *(Counts on HIS fingers and thinks.)* for a really long time. Have we ever failed to get our work done on Christmas Eve?

DONDER: Well ... there was the December of 1875 ... and 1880 ... and the 1930 through 1938 ... and ...

BLITZEN: Except for those little ... glitches

DONDER: Those weren't little glitches. You were having temper tantrums.

BLITZEN: You know what? You're right! I was having temper tantrums! And you know why I was having temper tantrums?

DONDER: Because you have anger management issues and you suffer from work-related stress.

BLITZEN: Because I'm burned out! Year after year it's the same old thing. All the reindeer get hitched up to the sleigh and where do I end up?

DONDER: Behind me.

BLITZEN: Right. Last in line. And what do I see for the entire journey? Your rear end! *(DONDER looks at his backside.)*

DONDER: What's wrong with my rear end?

BLITZEN: I'm sick of looking at it! That's what's wrong with it! And you know what else? I quit!

DONDER: You can't quit! What are you going to do?

End of Freeview

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing
<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=124>

Eldridge Publishing, a leading drama play publisher since 1906, offers more than a thousand full-length plays, one-act plays, melodramas, holiday plays, religious plays, children's theatre plays and musicals of all kinds.

For more than a hundred years, our family-owned business has had the privilege of publishing some of the finest playwrights, allowing their work to come alive on stages worldwide.

We look forward to being a part of your next theatrical production.

Eldridge Publishing... for the start of your theatre experience!