

LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

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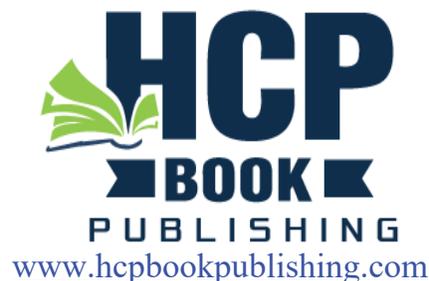


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CHARACTERS

Grandma	–	Female, Late 70s
Dian	–	Female, Early 30s
Johnny	–	Male, Mid 30s
LeeAnn	–	Female child, 7 years old
Diego	–	Male teenager, 14 years old
Officer White	–	Male, Early 40s
Sam	–	Can be male or female, Late 20s
Paul	–	Male, Late 20s
Mrs. Blanch	–	Female, Late 30s
Extras	–	(Speaking & Non-speaking roles)

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SETTING

See notes throughout the script.

The Story

I have written a few plays based on the Rapture but mostly from the same point of view. Someone always witnesses the disappearance of a loved one. From that perspective, it would be hard to continue doubting the Bible...but what about those who do not witness the actual disappearance?

The Bible clearly states that Jesus will come like a thief in the night. Based on that, I was inspired to write a story about a family who missed the rapture without even realizing it. In the midst of all the preparation we put into planning our perfect Christmas...it's the last day we would expect Jesus to come...but what if He did come on that day?

This family wakes up on Christmas morning thinking that it's just another normal day...but as the day progresses, the changes that have occurred become evident...and the truth long recorded in the Bible is even harder to ignore.

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Play Details

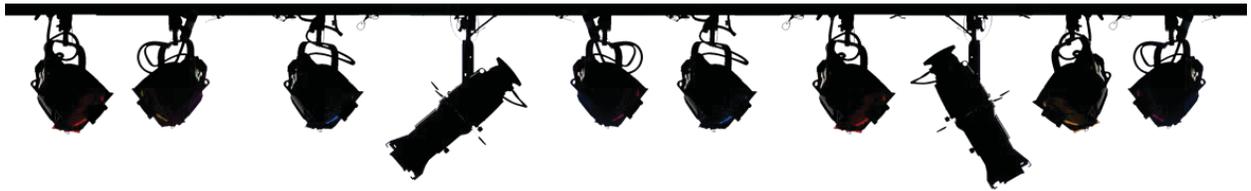
Length: 60-90 Minutes

Cast: 2 Adult Males, 2 Adult Females, 1 Teenage Child, 1 Female Child, 1 Adult Role (Can be Male or Female) Plus Extras.

Audience: Children, Teens, & Adults

Genre: Contemporary Drama, Suspense, Mystery

THE SCRIPT



SCENE 1

SETTING: Living Room/ Kitchen/ Dining Room Combo.

CAPTION: CHRISTMAS EVE

LIGHTS UP

Dian, who is six months pregnant, LeeAnn, and Diego are on stage decorating a Christmas tree and wrapping gifts.

LEEANN: Mommy, can we go to the mall tonight?

DIAN: Lee, we go to the mall every Christmas Eve so you guys can buy your toys.

LEEANN: But Mommy, you are pregnant. Are you sure you can go with that big stomach? It looks so heavy to be carrying it around all the time.

DIAN: Your daddy will be there with us Lee, so don't worry. He will help me to carry it.

LEEANN: How? That's not possible.

Dian is smiling.

DIEGO: Mom, you still haven't answered my question.

DIAN: Which one?

DIEGO: The party at Randy's tonight. Can I go?

DIAN: Right! Let me think about this for a minute. NO!

DIEGO: Mom. This is very important to me.

DIAN: Who is going to be there?

DIEGO: Just some friends from the other side of town.

DIAN: We always go out together as a family, Diego. Why should this year be any different?

DIEGO: I'm a teenager, Mom. We teenagers like to hang out together. You know that. What would I go to buy anyway? I'm too old for water guns and toy soldiers.

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DIAN: Well, then ask your father.

DIEGO: My father is in Miami.

DIAN: Your other father, and don't go giving me no attitude. If your real father had stepped up to his responsibilities, He would be here and not Johnny.

DIEGO: *(cynical)* Okay, Mom.

LEEANN: Why are you two always arguing? It's not healthy for the baby.

DIAN: We are not arguing Lee...just having a passionate conversation.

LEEANN: Sounds like an argument.

DIAN: Okay baby.

Paul enters dressed like a thug.

PAUL: Merry Christmas, family.

DIAN: Paul, don't you think you ought to knock before entering other people's house?

PAUL: Don't be like that, Dian. You know we family.

DIAN: We're not family. You are my husband's friend, and I hope you are not here to ruin this family moment.

Johnny enters, buttoning his shirt. He is dressed to go.

JOHNNY: Paul, my man. Right on cue. You ready to roll?

Paul is trying to signal him to shut up.

JOHNNY: Why you shushing me man?

DIAN: Johnny, where are you going?

JOHNNY: Out — baby face —

PAUL: I'll be in the car. If you're not out in five minutes, I will know what's up.

Paul quickly exits.

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DIAN: You're not doing this to us again. Not today.

JOHNNY: I will be back to take you guys to the mall later, baby. Me and Paul —

DIAN: You and Paul nothing. It's Christmas, for crying out loud. We usually spend most of it together as a family, doing stuff together. And you have us decorating this tree and wrapping these presents while you want to go on the road with your buddies to do what? Drink and smoke?

JOHNNY: We don't need to be doing this in front of the kids.

DIAN: I wouldn't have to if you just think before you act.

JOHNNY: I can't seem to do anything right around here. You argue over the simplest things.

LEEANN: It's not argument, Daddy. It's passionate conversations.

DIAN: Thank you, Lee.

JOHNNY: Look, I'm going. I will be back before you know it.

DIAN: Fine. Do whatever you want.

Pause.

JOHNNY: Okay fine. I won't go.

DIAN: Thank you.

JOHNNY: Let me go tell Paul I'm not coming.

DIEGO: *(looking offstage)* No need. He just drove off.

DIAN: Now be a darling and help us get these gifts wrapped.

Johnny reluctantly begins to help.

DIEGO: Can I go to a party tonight, Johnny?

JOHNNY: I thought we were all going to the mall together.

DIEGO: Well, I am a little too old for that.

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JOHNNY: Then why are we going?

LEEANN: Because I am going and you guys won't let me go alone.

JOHNNY: I think we should all go together.

DIEGO: Can I go to the party after?

Pause.

JOHNNY: I should think that would be okay.

DIEGO: Yeeeeeeees.

DIAN: Are you serious?

JOHNNY: Why not?

DIAN: Do you have any idea what kids do at parties?

DIEGO: I am a teenager...not a kid.

DIAN: It's the same difference.

JOHNNY: Baby, we have to let go at some point. If not at fourteen, then when?

DIAN: Twenty-one sounds good to me.

JOHNNY: You must be kidding. Let the boy go...just lay down the ground rules. If he breaks any of them, then he forfeits his privilege to go again.

Pause.

DIEGO: Sounds fair enough.

DIAN: No drugs, no smoking, you have to be home by midnight.

DIEGO: One.

DIAN: Twelve thirty.

DIEGO: Twelve forty-five.

DIAN: Done. And no girls!

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DIEGO: Just one girl.

DIAN: Hold hands and hugs but definitely...

DIAN & DIEGO: No married people stuff.

DIEGO: Got it.

DIAN: I still don't like the idea of you going, but I'm letting go with the hope that you break a rule so we don't have to go through this again.

DIEGO: Okay, Mom.

DIAN: And don't tell your grandma.

GRANDMA'S VOICE: Don't tell Grandma what?

Grandma enters holding her Bible close to her bosom in one hand and a small bag in the other.

DIEGO: Hi, Grandma.

LEEANN: *(kiddy excitement)* Grandma!

They greet.

LeeAnn hugs her the tightest and longest.

DIAN: Did Peter drop you off?

GRANDMA: Peter was late as usual...so I found my own way. You know I don't like to be kept waiting after I am ready to go.

DIAN: Yes. I'm happy to see you, Mom. How long has it been?

GRANDMA: Four weeks.

DIAN: It feels longer.

GRANDMA: I would see you and my grandchildren every week if you hadn't stopped coming to church.

Pause

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DIAN: Not now, Mom.

GRANDMA: Now is a good time. It's the only time we have...this moment.

DIAN: We're in the middle of preparing for the big day tomorrow.

GRANDMA: You always are, baby. Using now, this moment...the only real blessing you have to prepare for the days you don't have. What guarantee do you have that we will live to see tomorrow? You should be busy trying to get your kids and husband right with the Lord.

DIAN: I don't need to be hearing this now, Mom. I really don't. Please don't make me regret the decision to have you spend Christmas with us.

GRANDMA: I found my way here. I can find my way back. I don't care if I hurt you with the truth, Dian. We had family day at church last Sunday...and I was hurt that my family was not there. I called you and you hung up on me.

DIAN: I apologized for that.

GRANDMA: You did, yes. But I am going to say what I have to say, then you can send me back home if you want.

DIAN: Fine. You say whatever you want to say. But I don't have to listen to any of it.

Dian picks up her pregnant self and leaves the room.

JOHNNY: Sorry, ma'am. I think the pregnancy is taking a toll on her.

GRANDMA: Maybe so. Johnny, you know you are the priest of this house. It is your responsibility to make sure your family is at church.

JOHNNY: You know I'm not into this church thing.

GRANDMA: Why not?

JOHNNY: Too much contradictions. I have more questions than answers.

GRANDMA: Like what?

JOHNNY: Tell you what. Let's get through this Christmas and maybe we can sit and have a really long talk about this whole church stuff. Let us not spoil the children's Christmas. Okay?

Pause.

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GRANDMA: At least let us all go to church for tomorrow's service. Please. I think tomorrow is going to be a very special day, God willing, and I want my family to be there.

JOHNNY: I will think about it.

LEEANN: I want to go. I love church. I love Jesus. He is a cool guy.

DIEGO: You don't know that.

LEEANN: Yes, I do. He lives in my heart cause I asked him to.

DIEGO: You are so stupid.

GRANDMA: Leave her alone. She's the smartest one living in this house.

Grandma hugs little LeeAnn.

GRANDMA: *(Grandma is smiling)* Anyway. Grandma is hungry.

Grandma puts her Bible on the center table.

JOHNNY: I will go make you some tea.

GRANDMA: I didn't say I was thirsty.

JOHNNY: I will go make you a sandwich, or something.

Paul appears.

PAUL: So, does that mean we are not going? It's been like half an hour, man, and the AC in the car don't work.

JOHNNY: I thought you drove off.

PAUL: Nah man, I faked it to get you to hurry up.

JOHNNY: You go ahead, bro. I'm on house arrest.

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE 2

CAPTION: CHRISTMAS DAY – Morning

LIGHTS UP

Dian is sitting in the living room fast asleep in her robe.

The door creaks open and Diego is trying to sneak inside. His back is turned as he tries to gently close the door without making a sound, but it creaks anyway, and Dian wakes up.

Diego turns around slowly only to meet eyes with his mother.

DIAN: How was the last party you will ever attend in this life?

DIEGO: I can explain.

DIAN: No need. The car broke down, the stars fell from the sky, the moon turned blood, the roads were flooded, there was traffic because of a huge accident on the road. I have heard them all.

DIEGO: You have?

DIAN: Don't play smart with me, young man.

DIEGO: I'm not. It's just that some of these things actually did happen.

DIAN: Just go to your room, boy.

DIEGO: But mom...

DIAN: Give me your cell phone, your PDA, and your wallet and go to your room. You are grounded for a month.

DIEGO: A whole month! Mom!

DIAN: I will add a day for every word you say.

Diego complies. He hands over his cell phone, PDA, and wallet and exits with his head hanging.

Johnny enters with two cups of tea. He hands one to Dian.

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JOHNNY: I told you he was fine. You didn't have to lose the entire night's sleep waiting on the couch.

DIAN: I didn't. I fell asleep.

JOHNNY: Sitting up. You must be so rested.

DIAN: Whatever. *(drinks some tea)* Its almost seven o'clock. I'm surprised my mother didn't throw cold water on us to get us to go to that boring church service.

JOHNNY: Yes. Surprised indeed. Seems she left without even saying she was gone. Not quite like her.

DIAN: Mom didn't think it was right to have to wake people up to go to church. I know her well. She believes strongly that everyone had to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

JOHNNY: I can understand that...but if she was going to take Lee, she should have at least let us know she was leaving.

DIAN: She took Lee?

JOHNNY: Yes...I went to check on her this morning and she was gone.

DIAN: Are you sure?

JOHNNY: Yes.

Pause.

They both see the Bible still on the center table.

DIAN: *(re: Bible)* Does that seem just a tad bit strange to you?

JOHNNY: Yes. A bit.

DIAN: Mom never goes to church without her Bible.

JOHNNY: She probably has another Bible.

DIAN: Knowing her, she probably has several.

JOHNNY: Yeah.

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DIAN: It is still a bit strange though. I think that would be the first time Lee has left this house without hugging and kissing me...even if I was sleeping.

JOHNNY: Kids grow very fast these days. Very soon she will be asking you to go to parties and maybe even introducing her boyfriend and getting grounded.

DIAN: Please don't say that.

JOHNNY: Maybe she hugged and kissed you but you were too sleeping to notice.

DIAN: My teacher instincts tell me that there is something very grammatically wrong with that sentence.

JOHNNY: Yeah (*snuggling up*) What else does that teacher instinct of yours tell you?

DIAN: That my husband wishes to hug his pregnant wife.

JOHNNY: Merry Christmas, my one and only.

DIAN: Don't just tell me, husband of mine...show me.

Johnny hugs her tightly.

LIGHTS OUT