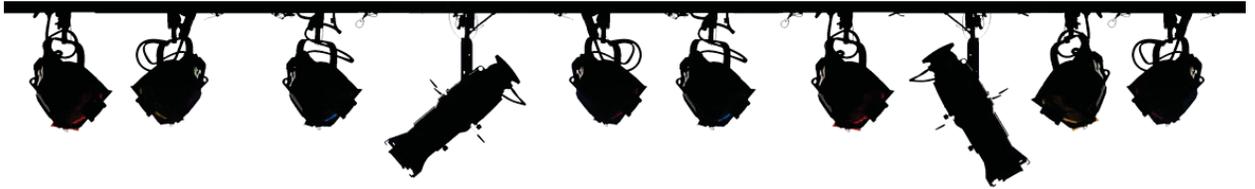


Maggie's Christmas

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

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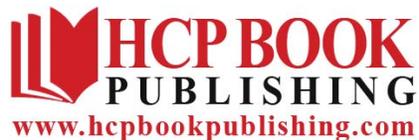


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Characters

THOMAS: Man, about 35 years old. Popular pastor. Son of Maggie and Grandson to Grandmother.

GRANDMA: Female, about 75 years old. Thomas's Grandmother and Maggie's mother. Spunky. Wise. Intelligent. Strong.

MAGGIE: Thomas's mom, 16 years old. Attitude changes throughout play from troubled teen to responsible parent.

MAN/JESUS/

DOCTOR: Male, late 30's. Three parts played by the same actor. Gives consolation to Maggie and Thomas.

LUCAS: Maggie's boyfriend, father of Thomas. Drug addict and thief. Tries to convince Maggie to abort her baby.

INNKEEPER: Manages hotel where Maggie attempts to stay. Good hearted, but cowardly.

CHURCHGOERS

1 & 2: Women from Thomas's congregation. Early 50's-Late 60's.

Setting

The stage is bare, except for some needed chairs and appropriate props.

The Characters should enter from different parts of the stage.

The Story

After the death of his mother, Thomas is left feeling a bit somber around the holiday season, until his grandmother reveals a story about Christmas Eve when his teenage mother turned her life around.

Play Details

Length: 30-45 Minutes

Cast: 4 Males, 4 Females, Plus Extras (non-speaking roles)

Audience: Teens & Adults

Genre: Contemporary/Biblical Drama

THE SCRIPT



Scene I

LIGHTS UP

Church.

Thomas is standing before his congregation giving a sermon on Christmas morning.

He stands center stage facing audience.

THOMAS: During this time of year, we are often concerned with gifts. We give gifts and receive gifts. We spend hours at shopping malls trying to find the perfect gifts for our loved ones and delight in the faces of our children when they unwrap their presents on Christmas morning. Some of that delight is the joy in getting a gift we've wanted, but other times the gifts we receive are things we didn't even know we needed. The Wise Men followed a star to a Baby in a manger. When they arrived, they gave the Child, a complete stranger, gifts fit for a king. This Child, though the product of humble beginnings, would prove to become the greatest gift humanity has ever received.

Thomas pauses to reflect.

THOMAS: What gifts have you been given? Which ones were you expecting? Which were you surprised by? This week, while we share the joy in giving and receiving, let us remember the spirit behind the season and the gift that was given to us in the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thomas pauses to wipe a tear.

THOMAS: As you may know, one of our most devoted church members, my mother, Maggie, passed this week.

He is having a difficult time holding back the tears.

THOMAS: I believe you will all agree with me when I say she was, without a doubt, a gift to this congregation. Since Christmas was her favorite time of year, it would mean the world to me, if you could please join me in prayer.

He lowers his head.

THOMAS: Heavenly Father, we ask that You bless us as we give thanks for Your one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Allow us to be humble and remember all the gifts we receive, for we know that they are bestowed upon us through Your grace and Your

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mercy. We thank You, Lord, and ask that You help us recognize Your gifts, especially those that we aren't expecting. Amen.

CHURCH GOERS: Amen.

THOMAS: God bless you all and have a wonderful week.

Church Goers approach Thomas at the podium.

CHURCH GOER 1: What a lovely sermon, Pastor. Your mother would have been so proud.

CHURCH GOER 2: What a tragedy. So sudden. She was such a light to this congregation. I still expect to see her sitting there in the front row every Sunday.

Church Goer 1 nudges Church Goer 2.

CHURCH GOER 2: Whaaat.

CHURCH GOER 1: How *are* you doing, pastor? This must be a difficult time for you.

Thomas seems somewhat startled by this comment but regains composure quickly.

THOMAS: Yes, well it has been a bit of a struggle. As you know, mother loved the holiday season, but she is with the Lord right now and is truly ---

He breaks.

GRANDMOTHER (Offstage): --- In a better place.

Grandmother enters. Thomas notices her and seems eager to leave the uncomfortable conversation.

THOMAS: If you'd excuse me. Thank you so much for your concern and condolences and for being here on this glorious day. Merry Christmas.

CHURCH GOER 2: Merry Christmas to you too, pastor. God bless.

Church Goers exit as Thomas walks towards Grandmother and embraces her.

GRANDMOTHER (Smiling): Merry Christmas, darlin'.

THOMAS: Merry Christmas.

GRANDMOTHER: Those ninnies at the nursing home sure did ask a lot of questions about where I was going on Christmas morning. I almost missed the bus, but I am glad I got here in time to hear your sermon today. It always brings me so much joy to hear you speak about God's love.

THOMAS: Thanks, grandma. I know they do ask a lot of questions.

GRANDMOTHER: Tom, you don't even know the half of it. It's been getting on my nerves being asked things every hour of the day. *Where are you going? What are you doing? Where did you put your teeth?* I'll tell you; it drives me near crazy.

THOMAS: Well, I'm so glad you were able to make it out. It's so great to see you. I've been having a little ---

GRANDMOTHER (*interrupting, looking in purse*): Tom, honey, I have something I need you to help me with.

She fumbles through her purse, looking for an item.

GRANDMOTHER: Where is that thing, AHA. (*Pulling out cell phone*) I need some help with this thing. I just can't seem to figure out how to send a --- one of those CON-text messages. Can you show me?

THOMAS: Sure, Grandma. (*She hands him the phone*) See, you press the little message button here, then select who you are sending the message to, then type your message with the keypad, then press "send."

GRANDMOTHER (*overjoyed*): Oh, thank you, honey. You make it look so easy. I'll tell ya, I can't figure out any of these new gadgets. I don't know how you young folks can even press a keyboard that small. You make typewriters look like a sanctuary for these old hands.

THOMAS: Well, you're probably right about that, Grandma. Anyway, I wanted to talk with you a bit about ---

GRANDMOTHER (*Interrupting, looking in purse again*): Oh, Tom, one more thing. Do you think you could ---

THOMAS: --- mom.

GRANDMOTHER (*same time*): --- help me with this iPad thingy?

THOMAS: Grandma, can we do that later. I just ---

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, it'll only take a second. You young folks are so quick with these things—

THOMAS (*Snapping at her, frustrated*): Later, okay!

Pause.

Longer pause.

GRANDMOTHER: Thomas. This doesn't sound like you.

She motions for them to sit in one of the church pews and they sit.

GRANDMOTHER: What's bothering you, darlin'? It's Christmas Day. It's time to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

THOMAS: I know, it's just --- it's the first Christmas Day without mom. I guess I'm just a little upset. I can't believe she's --- gone.

Thomas wipes a tear. Grandma rests her hand on his shoulder.

GRANDMOTHER: I know, honey. I miss her too. But you know what? She's not gone at all. She's still with us. In fact, you sounded just like her just then when you got frustrated. Oh boy, could your mother ever yell. (*Laughing*)

THOMAS: Oh, c'mon, Grandma. Mom was always even-tempered. She never raised her voice in my life.

GRANDMOTHER: Well, maybe not in YOUR life she didn't, but I can tell you, your mom and I had some knock down drag out fights when she was young. Got so bad, we could barely stand in the same room with each other.

THOMAS: Are you sure we're talking about the same person? I thought you guys were really close.

GRANDMOTHER: Thomas, you know people change over the course of their lives, and sometimes it takes a big change to make them want to be different.

Thomas is hanging on Grandma's every word.

GRANDMOTHER: Your mama and I had our differences in the past, but it's never too late to turn your life around and turn to God. Your mama had enough sense to do that, just like the folks out there who come hear your sermons every week. In fact, I remember one Christmas Day when I got the best present of my life. The best present of your mama's life too, I'll bet.

THOMAS: Would you tell me about it?

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GRANDMOTHER: I don't know if you are ready to hear.

Pause.

GRANDMOTHER: But, maybe it is time you did.

LIGHTS FADE

Scene 2

LIGHTS UP

City Street - 1980's

Maggie enters.

She looks as if she hasn't changed her clothes or showered in several days. She has been living on the street. It's Christmas Eve and snowing. She stands on the sidewalk as if she is waiting for someone.

MAGGIE: Excuse me, sir? Do you know what time it is?

She turns to another passerby.

MAGGIE: Spare some change? I need a place to ---

She slowly sits down, defeated.

MAGGIE:--- stay. Merry Christmas? What's so merry about it? I thought Christmas was supposed to be the time of charity and giving to others.

She looks up and speaks to God.

MAGGIE: What do you have to give to me? I'm here. I'm ready to accept anything you have to offer, seriously anything would be better than this.

She's cold, and shivers a bit, standing up.

Lucas enters.

LUCAS: Hey. How's it going over here?

MAGGIE: Not so good. I think everyone is starting to head home for the night. Christmas and all.

LUCAS: Oh yeah. I forgot it was Christmas today. Merry Christmas. I would have gotten you a little present, if I had remembered.

MAGGIE: I'd settle for a warm place to sleep for the night.

LUCAS: Well, you could always call your mom. I'm sure she'd be willing to let you come back home.

MAGGIE: No way. That is NOT happening. I wouldn't give her the satisfaction. God. I can't stand that woman.

LUCAS: Yeah, but c'mon, she's your mom, that counts for something, right?

MAGGIE: No. I'm sick of living with her. I'm done. Besides, I worked hard to get a college scholarship just to get away from her. You really think I'd go crawling back now?

LUCAS: No offense, Mags, but it's not like you DID anything with that scholarship.

MAGGIE: That's not the point. The point is that I don't need her to take care of me. I can take care of myself.

LUCAS: Well, hopefully, you won't be opposed to me taking care of you, just a little?

MAGGIE (*smiling*): For you, I'll make an exception. Since it IS Christmas after all, I've been wanting to tell you something.

LUCAS (*confused, nervous*): Yes?

MAGGIE: I've got a present for you. I'm pregnant.

Lucas is shocked. Doesn't know quite what to say.

LUCAS: Woah, pregnant huh? That wasn't what I was expecting you to say (*He looks very uncomfortable*) Uh, Mags I, uh, a baby? I don't think we can do that right now. I mean, look at where we are. We don't exactly have the kind of cash for a baby now, do we?

MAGGIE: I thought you'd be happy, well, what else can we do? We're having a baby.

LUCAS: Well, Mags, we can't keep it. I'm not ready to be a dad. I've got my business to think about and you. I mean, you don't want to ruin your life and your figure with some snot-nosed brat.

MAGGIE (*shocked*): Lucas, what are you saying?

LUCAS: There's a free clinic not far from here. Let's just get it over with and move on.

MAGGIE: An abortion? You want me to kill our baby?

LUCAS: Now c'mon, Mags, we don't have money. We don't even have a place to live. You wanna bring a kid into all of that?