

# Maria's Christmas Gift

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

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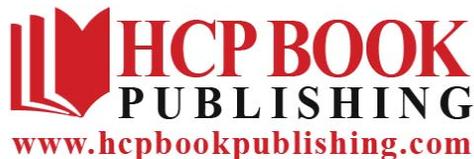
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## Characters

Icyline

Charline

Maria

James

Bishop Thomas

Prince

## Setting

Though a simple living room setting is required, the quality of furniture should reflect a posh lifestyle as in 'upper-class.' (The rest I leave to your imagination)

## The Story

We're first introduced to the life of Icyline Williams, who is well on her way to becoming a successful author. She has a daughter that she favors, Charline, and a Step-daughter she despises, Maria.

It's one week before Christmas and Icyline has landed another contract for her latest book. Charline is also ecstatic that the most handsome guy in town is throwing a massive party on Christmas Eve with the intention of meeting his ideal mate.

As Christmas draws nearer, Icyline helps Charline to prepare for the big night; James, the father Maria thought was dead, shows up and sets off a stage of events that will eventually lead to Maria's deliverance and James return to God.

## Play Details

**Length:** 45-60 Minutes

**Cast:** 3 Males, 3 Females

**Audience:** Children, Teens & Adult

**Genre:** Contemporary Drama

# THE SCRIPT



## SCENE 1

### LIGHTS UP

*Icyline is seated at center stage rummaging through a stack of papers scattered on the center table.*

*She looks at her watch.*

**ICYLINE:** I'm running late again. (*Calls offstage*) Charline, honey.

**CHARLINE** (*offstage*): Yes, mom.

**ICYLINE:** I need you right now.

*Charline appears almost instantly.*

**CHARLINE:** I'm here.

**ICYLINE:** Come over here and help me sort through these papers.

*Charline goes to her side and starts to help.*

**CHARLINE:** Is this your new book?

**ICYLINE:** Yes, 'Living Within Your Means; A Guide to Proper Budgeting.'

**CHARLINE:** Sounds interesting.

**ICYLINE:** Yeah, well, I have a meeting with my publisher in forty-five minutes. If I don't get there in time ---

**CHARLINE:** Why not let Maria do it?

**ICYLINE:** And get my manuscript dirty and wrinkled, I think not. Doesn't she have enough work for today?

**CHARLINE:** If she did, she would not be in her den reading a Bible.

*Icyline stops.*

**ICYLINE:** What? (*calls offstage*) Maria!

*No answer.*

**ICYLINE** (*shouts*) Maria!

**MARIA** (*offstage*): Coming, Ma'am.

*Icyline stands to challenge her as she enters dressed in a maid's uniform.*

**ICYLINE:** Where were you?

**MARIA:** In the den.

**ICYLINE:** Excuse me!

**MARIA:** In the den, ma'am.

**ICYLINE:** Doing what?

*Maria looks at Charline.*

**MARIA:** Reading, ma'am.

**ICYLINE:** How can you find time to read? Uh? Don't you have enough work to do?

**MARIA:** Yes, ma'am.

**ICYLINE:** Well, I sure hope so. Please add to your list '*cleaning of the attic.*' I want to get rid of all the cobwebs and junk from that miserable place today. Also, I want a new look for my bedroom. You can reshuffle the place, and when I get back this afternoon, I'll let you know if I like it this time.

**MARIA:** Yes, ma'am.

**ICYLINE:** Why are you still standing there?

*Maria shuffles away.*

*Charline laughs. Icyline joins her.*

**ICYLINE:** God I hate to see her. She constantly reminds me of ---

**CHARLINE:** Don't get too hyped up about her, mom. If we keep pushing her, with any luck, she'll run away, and then the contract would be breached, and we wouldn't have to give her a cent.

**ICYLINE:** It was a stupid contract in the first place. I should never have agreed to it. I'm her step-mother. She's not my responsibility.

**CHARLINE:** If you hadn't agreed to it, you wouldn't have gotten the money you needed to fast-track your career.

**ICYLINE:** Don't remind me. The things we do to succeed in life.

**CHARLINE:** She's a small price to pay, but not to worry. In any case, she'll be Twenty One in one and a half years.

**ICYLINE:** That's way too long. But, she's a whole lot stronger than I thought. I'm starting to wonder if we'll ever be able to break her.

**CHARLINE:** Don't worry. Don't you have an appointment you're running late for?

**ICYLINE:** Right.

*They both get back to work.*

*A knock sounds at the door.*

**ICYLINE:** Probably my ride. Keep at it. I'll get the door.

*Charline nods and continues working.*

*Icyline gets up, straightens herself and walks to the door.*

*James is standing on the other side.*

*Icyline frowns and closes the door in his face.*

*She walks away a bit but stops when the knocking resumes.*

*Charline looks up from the stack of papers.*

**CHARLINE:** Who is it?

**ICYLINE:** An unwelcome guest.

**CHARLINE:** Oh, him again.

*James opens the door and enters.*

*Icyline speaks without turning around.*

**ICYLINE:** You're not welcome here.

**JAMES:** I didn't come to see you, Icyline.

*Icyline turns to face him. James looks past her to Charline.*

**JAMES:** Hi, Charline.

**CHARLINE** (*flat and uninterested*) Hi, dad.

James meets Icyline's eyes.

**JAMES:** Can I see her?

**ICYLINE:** No.

**JAMES:** You still haven't told her, have you?

**ICYLINE:** No.

**JAMES:** Look, we have our differences, but she should not have to suffer because of our disagreements.

**ICYLINE:** Well, someone has to suffer. I can't think of anyone more worthy than a bastard child.

**JAMES:** You're supposed to forgive others, Icyline. You were a Christian once.

**ICYLINE:** Yeah, well, that's before my so-called Christian husband ran off to get married in another country, leaving me with a bank account I couldn't access unless I signed a stupid contract that I would take care of his bastard daughter till she was Twenty One. Uhm, did I leave anything out?

**JAMES:** No, but your story is a bit twisted. You know it's a little more complicated than that.

**ICYLINE:** Yeah, whatever, so why exactly are you here again?

**JAMES:** I'm here for a few days, Icyline, and I'm not leaving until I talk to my daughter.

**ICYLINE:** Oh yes, right.

*Pause.*

**JAMES:** Where is she?

**ICYLINE:** I don't know. Charline, Have you seen Maria anywhere?

**CHARLINE:** Can't say I have.

**ICYLINE:** I don't know where she is, but I wish you luck in finding her.

*Icyline shoves James through the exit.*

**ICYLINE:** Thanks for stopping by.

*She slams the door in his face again.*

*Charline puts the last few sheets of paper on the stacks.*

**CHARLINE:** I think you're good to go.

*Charline looks up when she hears no response. Icyline wipes tears from her eyes.*

*Charline goes to her.*

**CHARLINE:** Don't do that, mom. He's not worth your tears.

**ICYLINE:** I know.

*They both exit.*

**LIGHTS FADE**

## SCENE 2

### LIGHTS UP

*Maria is busy dusting and rearranging furniture.*

*Enter Icyline with a fresh set of papers in her hands. She ignores Maria, as usual.*

*Charline enters behind her.*

**CHARLINE:** Mom, aren't you hungry?

**ICYLINE:** Of course, dear.

**CHARLINE:** There are freshly baked muffins in the kitchen and Maria can make us two glasses of ice tea.

**ICYLINE:** Maria.

*Maria takes the cue and exits.*

**CHARLINE:** What's that in your hand?

**ICYLINE:** This, my dear sweet daughter, is the new contract.

**CHARLINE** (*getting excited*): You mean, for your new book?

**ICYLINE:** Yep. Fifty Thousand dollars advance and Twenty Five Percent Royalty on the sale of each book.

*They jump in each other's arms and celebrate.*

**CHARLINE:** Have you signed it yet?

**ICYLINE:** What's the rush? Everybody loves my writing. They were practically drooling over the words. I'm wondering if I should ask them to double the advance.

**CHARLINE:** Mom.

**ICYLINE:** Just kidding.

*Icyline takes a pen and signs the contract.*

**ICYLINE:** There. I should be going on tour in a couple of weeks, but we're five days away from Christmas so we need to do something special this year.

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**CHARLINE:** How about dinner?

**ICYLINE:** A dinner.

**CHARLINE:** Yes. Hold on.

*Charline exits almost bouncing the tray from Maria's hand as she enters.*

*Maria places the tray before Icyline at Center Stage.*

**MARIA:** May I take a break now, ma'am?

**ICYLINE:** Whatever for?

**MARIA:** I need to get something to eat, ma'am.

**ICYLINE:** Finish what you were doing here, and then take your break. No more than five minutes though. I need you to clean out the garage today.

**MARIA:** Yes, ma'am.

*Maria resumes dusting the furniture.*

*Charline returns with a flier in her hand.*

**CHARLINE:** Prince is throwing a huge party this Christmas Eve, and he's inviting all the young ladies from this community. Apparently, he's trying to find his ideal mate.

**ICYLINE:** Prince? You mean, the Bishop's son?

**CHARLINE:** Oh Yeah.

*Maria stops cleaning and listens.*

**ICYLINE:** The Bishop's son?

**CHARLINE:** Yes, mother, and guess who his ideal mate is going to be?

*Icyline looks at Charline, then starts laughing. Maria lets out a chuckle.*

*Icyline and Charline turn to her with a serious expression.*

**CHARLINE:** What are you laughing at?

*Maria shakes her head, but cannot contain the laugh.*

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**CHARLINE:** Oh, so you don't think I'm worthy enough to marry a Bishop's son, eh? Well, I have news for you. Every other girl in this community is a nobody, just like you. I will be his ideal mate.

**MARIA:** Whatever you say, ma'am.

*Charline throws her hand in the air and screams.*

**CHARLINE:** Oh, I hate you.

**ICYLINE:** Maria, take that break now. Ten minutes.

**MARIA:** Yes, ma'am.

*Maria takes her duster and bucket and whatever else and exits.*

**CHARLINE:** You're not going to let her get away with that.

**ICYLINE:** She was partially right.

**CHARLINE:** Mother.

**ICYLINE:** Look, if you want the Prince that bad, I'll make sure he's yours. But you need a lot of work. Tomorrow we'll go shopping. Then you will definitely have to consider a manicure, pedicure, facial, and the works. Believe me, come this Saturday, you will stand out as a Princess, worthy of a Prince.

*Charline smiles at the thought.*

**LIGHTS FADE**