



**THE HEART OF A CHRISTIAN PLAYWRIGHT**

Written by us, inspired by Jesus

## **LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT**

An Original Stage play

By

**Cleveland O. McLeish**

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Tele: 1 (876) 352-2650

## **SYNOPSIS**

It's Christmas Eve and everybody is planning for the big day. There is talk of the perfect gifts, the excitement of the season, the parties and social events. All is in the place...the necessary preparations have been made. Its gonna be the best Christmas ever...and yet, some gave no thought to what Christmas would be like without Christians...without Christ. As the day approaches, the thought of such a cataclysmic event like the rapture will be hard to ignore when gradually people start to realize that something is terribly wrong. People are missing.

## **THE CHARACTERS**

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

## **SETTING**

See notes throughout the script.

## 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, are we going on the road tonight?

**DIAN:** Lee, do you really think you have to ask me that question? We go on the road every Christmas Eve so you guys can buy your toys.

**LEEANN:** But mommy, you are pregnant. Are you sure you can go on the road 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:** As if he can.

*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. 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.

**DIAN:** 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 step up to the plate we would have been married instead.

**DIEGO:** Whatever mom.

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

**DIAN:** We are not arguing Lee...just having conversations.

**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 on the road.*

**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.

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

*Paul quickly exits.*

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

**JOHNNY:** I will be back to take you guys on the road later, baby. Me and Paul ---

**DIAN:** You and Paul nothing. Its 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 buddy's 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 of things.

**DIAN:** That is not true. Kids...tell your father that is not true.

*The kids turn away and start looking busy.*

**JOHNNY:** Kids don't lie. You are way too miserable.

**DIAN:** Fine. Do whatever you want.

*Pause.*

**JOHNNY:** Okay fine. I won't go.

**DIAN:** Thank you...and in return, I promise you guys to try and be a little less miserable.

**JOHNNY:** Amen. It's the season to be jolly right?

**DIAN:** Sure...now be a darling and help us get these gifts wrapped.

*Johnny begins to help.*

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

**JOHNNY:** I thought we were all going on the road together.

**DIEGO:** Well I am a little too old for grand market.

**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 ok.

**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 gotta 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!

**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:** Ok 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 as it been?

**GRANDMA:** Four weeks.

**DIAN:** It feels longer.

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

*Pause*

**DIAN:** Are we gonna do this now?

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

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**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 let 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 the phone 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 her pregnant self up 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. Ok.

*Pause.*

**GRANDMA:** At least let us all go to church for tomorrows 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 cuz I asked him to.

*Grandma hugs little LeeAnn.*

**GRANDMA:** Out of the mouth of babes....(*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 thirty.

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

Paul appears.

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

**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.

**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.*

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

**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 believed 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.

**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**

**SCENE 3**

**CAPTION: CHRISTMAS DAY – A little later**

**LIGHTS UP**

*Dian enters looking at her watch.*

*She shakes her head and starts setting the table for breakfast.*

*Johnny enters buttoning his sleeve on his shirt. He is ready for the road.*

**DIAN:** Where do you think you are going?

**JOHNNY:** Baby, don't start.

**DIAN:** Seriously.

**JOHNNY:** Baby..Its Christmas day. You get to see your mother, don't you think I want to see mine.

**DIAN:** You are going to Miss Joyce? Now?

**JOHNNY:** I won't be gone all day. I was hoping Lee would have been back already to come along.

**DIAN:** It's almost Nine o'clock. They should have been home by now.

**JOHNNY:** I'll just drive past the church and pick her and your mother up.

**DIAN:** Good idea. Give her feet a rest. She needs all the rest she can get with that husband she has at home.

**JOHNNY:** He is the only father you know Baby. You shouldn't be talking about him like that.

**DIAN:** He is losing a few screws if you know what I mean. I have my concerns. If you don't want to listen I will just talk to someone else.

**JOHNNY:** Ok Madam miserable. I will be back in a little while.

**DIAN:** Have you seen my cell phone?

**JOHNNY:** As usual, no. Later honey.

*Johnny exits.*

*Dian starts searching the room for her cell phone. When she gets tired of searching.*

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**DIAN:** Diego.

**DIEGO'S VOICE:** Mom.

*Pause.*

**DIAN:** I called you boy.

**DIEGO'S VOICE:** I answered Mom.

**DIAN:** Get down here!

*Pause.*

*Diego appears.*

**DIAN:** Have you been playing with my cell phone again?

**DIEGO:** Nope.

**DIAN:** Then where is it?

**DIEGO:** I have no idea.

**DIAN:** Then why do you look like you are hiding something.

**DIEGO:** Mom. I am grounded. I shouldn't be answering all these questions.

**DIAN:** I am the one who grounded you smarty pants...and I know you know where my cell phone is. You always do.

**DIEGO:** If I tell you will you drop a few weeks off my sentence.

**DIAN:** If you don't tell me I will add a few weeks...with hard labor.

*Pause.*

**DIEGO:** You know you are breaking the law right now right?

**DIAN:** Where's my cell phone?

**DIEGO:** Same place it always is when you don't know where it is. In the laundry room charging.

**DIAN:** Can you get it for me please?

**DIEGO:** You know mom...normal people usually wait till the battery is dead or near dead to charge their phone.

**DIAN:** I don't remember asking you for a lesson in phone maintenance. I just need you to go to the laundry room and bring my cell phone to me. Am I asking too much?

**DIEGO:** Not at all.

**DIAN:** After all...I did...

**DIEGO:** ...Carry me for eight and a half months and went through eight very painful hours of labor to bring me into this world. Yes mom. I get it.

*Diego exits.*

*Dian continues to set the table and rearrange a few furniture. She still momentarily stops and look at The bible not quite over the thought.*

*Diego returns and hands Dian her cell phone.*

**DIEGO:** You have fifty six missed calls.

**DIAN:** What?

**DIEGO:** Auntie Juliet alone called you eighteen times.

*The phone starts to ring.*

**DIAN:** I guess this makes nineteen (*answers the phone*) Yes my big sister (*waves Diego to return to his room – Diego salutes and exits*) What are you talking about? (*listens*) What do you mean Ravine just disappeared? (*listens*) Well maybe she went on the road with your husband (*listens*) Oh, tell him I said hi. People don't just vanish Juliet she is probably playing hide and go seek with you guys, just keep loo...No I haven't seen the news. You know we don't watch or listen to the news. (*another call is coming in*) Juliet I will call you back. I'm getting another call (*switches call*) Hello. Hi Pappa...how did you get my number (*listens*) Right. (*listens*) No she and Lee went to church this morning...I haven't seen them return as yet (*listens*) Yes I'm sure she is not out with some guy. She is sixty eight years old Pappa. You need to cut out this rubbish and think before you speak (*pause*) Hello. Hello! (*Removes the phone from her ears*) He hung up. Silly man.

Johnny rushes in.

**JOHNNY:** Baby, something is wrong...terribly wrong.

**DIAN:** What are you talking about?

**JOHNNY:** There is a huge pile up on the streets...cars, trucks, bikes...keys are still in the ignitions even some of the cars are still running, but there is no one in the cars.

*Pause.*

**DIAN:** Ok. That does sound a little weird...but I'm sure there is a reasonable explanation.

**JOHNNY:** Well we need to find out what is going on because I went by the church and the doors were wide open but the church was empty and the parking lot was full of cars. Empty cars.

*Pause.*

**DIAN:** Are you playing with me right now darling?

**JOHNNY:** Look carefully at my face baby. Does this face look like I am playing?

*Dian suddenly feels a rush of anxiety.*

**DIAN:** Where is LeeAnn? Where is my baby? We need to call the police.

**JOHNNY:** Already tried. The lines are jammed. I can't get through. I can't get my mother on the phone either.

**DIAN:** DIEGO!!!

**DIEGO:** Mom.

**DIAN:** Put your clothes on. We need to go. Now!

**DIEGO:** Do I have to go?

**DIAN:** You have five minutes to get down here!

**JOHNNY:** Where are we going?

**DIAN:** To the police station of course.

*At this point the panic in Dian's voice and actions is evident. The concern on Johnny's face For his pregnant wife is also hard to conceal.*

*Paul runs in frantic and nervous.*

**PAUL:** Guys, I dunno, but something's wrong.

**JOHNNY:** We know.

**PAUL:** What's going on man? I ain't ready to die. It's like someone planted a bomb in Burlington man. There are clothes everywhere.

**JOHNNY:** We are going to the Police.

**PAUL:** How you plan to get there, man. The streets are jammed.

*Diego appears nonchalant.*

**DIAN:** Let's go.

**PAUL:** Yeah, so I'm with you guys.

*They exit.*

**LIGHTS OUT**

**SCENE CHANGE** – *The set has to be changed from a living room to the front desk of a police station. All that is necessary will be a kind of high rise desk wide enough to accommodate having about three people stand behind it. Also have some waiting chairs and a few plants and bring all this to the fore front pushing all other props to the back and screen off this section if possible.*

#### **SCENE 4**

**SETTING CHANGE: Police Station**

**CAPTION: CHRISTMAS DAY – Afternoon**

**LIGHTS UP**

*It's a very busy room.*

*There are people everywhere all talking at the same time.*

*From time to time Officer White crosses the stage with or without a clipboard trying to keep up with The volume of reports coming in.*

*There are about two or three policemen standing behind the desks writing as people talk but It seems very overwhelming.*

*In the back ground there is a constant sound of sirens.*

*Dian enters with Johnny not far behind. At this point everyone knows that something is terribly Wrong.*

*Paul enters. He's not sure what to do with himself.*

**PAUL:** The world has gone mad, I tell you. Look at this place. This is going to take forever.

**JOHNNY:** You have a better idea?

**PAUL:** Maybe, I wonder if Mrs. Blanch is here.

*Paul exits.*

*Diego comes in and quickly finds an available seat. He pulls his video game from his pocket and Begins playing.*

*Dian and Johnny are trying desperately to get through the crowd to the front desk.*

*Officer White is crossing the stage again. Dian sees an opportunity and grabs him.*

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**OFFICER WHITE:** Lady, I am an Officer of the Law. I can charge you for that.

**DIAN:** Please sir. My daughter and mother are missing.

**OFFICER WHITE:** So is hers (points to someone in the crowd) and hers (points to someone else) and his.

**DIAN:** What is going on?

**OFFICER WHITE:** That I don't know...and I'm real busy so if you will excuse me.

*Dian holds onto his shirt even tighter.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** Lady, I will not ask you twice to let me go.

*Dian releases him.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** Now, please excuse me. As you can see I have my hands full.

*He goes to attend to the line.*

*Paul enters with a Female Officer appears, and goes to Dian.*

**PAUL:** Guys, this is Mrs. Blanch. We used to be neighbors.

**MRS. BLANCH:** Lady, you shouldn't be here in your condition.

**DIAN:** Please...Just tell us what's going on.

*Mrs. Blanch takes them aside.*

**MRS. BLANCH:** Its Christmas Day. There are fifteen cops on duty in this precinct that cannot go home. We are frustrated but still doing our jobs. The world has changed overnight. Ten million people have been reported missing worldwide in less than four hours and some of us, like Officer White there, have spouses who are not answering the phone and we have to be here trying to calm everyone else who is missing someone. Do you understand what I am saying to you?

**DIAN:** With all due respect...people don't just disappear.

**MRS. BLANCH:** If you told me that yesterday I would have backed you on that a hundred percent. But there are thirty cops assigned to this precinct last night and today we can only account for fifteen.

**JOHNNY:** There has to be some explanation.

**MRS. BLANCH:** Sir, the facts are people have disappeared, but as it stands that's just about all we know.

**DIAN:** Thank you!

*Mrs. Blanch nods and exits.*

**PAUL:** None of this is making any sense.

*Dian's eyes suddenly fill with tears.*

*Johnny tries to brace her.*

**JOHNNY:** We have to try and keep it together until we figure out what's going on.

**DIAN:** The last conversation I had with my mother. I told her I didn't want to hear what she has to say. I need to apologize to her Johnny. I have to apologize!

**JOHNNY:** I know baby.

*They are approached by one of the more calmer members of the crowd.*

**SAM:** Are you missing someone?

**DIAN:** *(with the hope of getting some answers)* Yes. My mother and daughter.

*There are tears in Sam's eyes.*

**SAM:** I need to ask you something...and please think about the answer you give because it's very important that you tell me the truth.

**DIAN:** Ok.

**SAM:** Your daughter...your mother...were they both Christians?

*Dian looks at Johnny before responding.*

**DIAN:** Yes they were...but so am I...I was just a little bit distracted since of late.

**SAM:** Me too. *(smiles painfully)* We thought we had our whole life ahead of us and God could wait...but we were wrong.

**DIAN:** What are you saying?

**SAM:** It seems the only thing those who disappeared had in common was Jesus Christ.

*Pause...*

*Dian is getting more upset than convicted by the truth.*

**DIAN:** You are crazy. Crazy! When are we gonna stop blaming everything on the bible? The bible does not have an answer for everything.

*Sam pulls out a bible.*

**SAM:** Can I show you?

**DIAN:** Noooo! I don't want to see or hear anything else from you. I think you have said enough. Diego...come, we're leaving.

**PAUL:** I think she's right.

**DIAN:** I don't want to hear it, okay.

*Dian storms offstage. Johnny waits for Diego to catch up then they exit.*

*Sam looks at the open bible in her hand...the tears flow freely down her cheeks. She falls to her knees as the chaos around her erupts.*

**LIGHTS FADE**

**SCENE 5**

**SETTING CHANGE: Police Station**

**CAPTION: CHRISTMAS DAY – A little later**

**LIGHTS UP**

*Sam is alone on stage.*

*She sits with the bible looking at it...opening and closing it...looking up and shaking her head still fighting back the tears forcing itself to the surface of her eyes.*

*Enter Officer White.*

*He's totally drained thinking he's alone he finds himself slamming his head and fists against the desk.*

**SAM:** Tell me if that helps so I can join you.

*Pause.*

*Officer White recovers from his tantrum*

**OFFICER WHITE:** What are you still doing here?

**SAM:** This is one of the few places I have no memory of her.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Who?

**SAM:** My daughter Chloe. She was an angel. Would have been ten next week.

**OFFICER WHITE:** You have a ten year old daughter?

**SAM:** Yes. I was one of the statistics.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Where is she?

**SAM:** Same place the other ten million people went I guess.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Well, it's actually ten point five million now. *(hits his head)* It drives me insane not knowing what happened.

*Pause.*

**SAM:** How do I process this? It goes against everything I know...everything I believed..It's like a nightmare but I just can't wake up.

**OFFICER WHITE:** I know. I usually have an answer for everything...and the ones I don't have, I find a way to get it. But this one is a complete mystery to me. I don't know where to begin.

**SAM:** *(holds up the bible)* This seems like a good start.

**OFFICER WHITE:** The bible is a history book.

**SAM:** Yet it seems to be the only thing with an explanation of what took place here.

**OFFICER WHITE:** I don't understand.

*Sam opens the bible.*

**SAM:** Matthew 24:37-42 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

**OFFICER WHITE:** The bible is open to several interpretations.

**SAM:** Even so...I went to bed with my daughter last night. We talked about our plans for today and how we would have one of the best Christmas Days ever...and this morning she was gone.

**OFFICER WHITE:** She could have left or be taken from you without you even knowing.

**SAM:** You need to understand something, sir. From the day Chloe was born we have slept in the same bed every single night. If she even scratches her head, I would know. I felt ever movement she makes on that bed. She wasn't taken, sir. She disappeared.

**OFFICER WHITE:** And you think it's some bible prophecy?

**SAM:** Luke 12:39-40 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. 1 Thessalonians 5:2-4 For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Like a thief in the night. I still don't buy it.

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**SAM:** You will. I guarantee it.

**OFFICER WHITE:** How can you be so sure?

**SAM:** The only thing constant in this life is truth. Nothing we do, think or say can change it...as God has once again demonstrated.

*Pause.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** If you were one of them, a bible quoting Christian. Why are you still here?

**SAM:** Like so many others who have been left behind...I was playing church. I took the time out to show my daughter a path that I myself was not walking. I introduced her to a man I never met. I taught her the truth that I myself did not believe. I gave her a life that I myself had rejected.

**OFFICER WHITE:** It all seems to make sense in theory but I am positive there is an explanation that has nothing to do with that bible. In any case, It has been a long day and I need to get home to my wife.

**SAM:** Was she saved?

**OFFICER WHITE:** Excuse me!

**SAM:** Your wife...was she a Christian.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Yes...I believe she was.

**SAM:** Then, you will look for her and not find her.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Whatever you say miss. I'm closing up. Do you want me to drop you off somewhere?

**SAM:** No sir. I will find my own way.

*Sam exits leaving the bible behind.*

*Officer White is about to exit when he sees the bible...he takes it up from off the chair and Stares at it. He shakes his head.*

*Mrs. Blanch enters. She looks just as drained as he does.*

**MRS. BLANCH:** Do you believe?

**OFFICER WHITE:** Believe what?

**MRS. BLANCH:** That book? In your hand?

**OFFICER WHITE:** It doesn't make sense.

**MRS. BLANCH:** My husband was a Christian. He used to talk about this, I don't even remember what he called it.

*Pause.*

**MRS. BLANCH:** Your wife, my husband. They are gone. And that's the only thing that makes sense.

OFFICER WHITE: If that is true, then everything else in this book is also true.

MRS. BLANCH: That's the worst part.

OFFICER WHITE: No. *(throws down the Bible)* There has to be another explanation. I'm gonna go find my wife.

*He exit*

*Mrs. Blanch watches him go. She takes up the bible. She looks at it, and then looks up.*

**LIGHTS FADE**

**SCENE CHANGE:** Living room/ Kitchen setting again. Rearrange furniture to suggest someone else's home may be similar but has some obvious differences from the setting used in Scene 1.

**SCENE 6**

**SETTING CHANGE:** Pappa's home.

**CAPTION:** CHRISTMAS DAY – A little later

**LIGHTS UP**

*Pappa is watching television when an exhausted Dian, Johnny and Diego enter.*

*Johnny seats his pregnant wife.*

**JOHNNY:** Hey Pappa.

**DIEGO:** Pappa!

**PAPPA:** Merry Christmas. Have you all seen the news?

**DIAN:** No Pappa.

**PAPPA:** Must be a new reality TV program because they are saying some crazy stuff. *(Looks beyond them to the entrance)* Where's my wife?

*Pause.*

*Pappa doesn't wait for an answer he goes to the door and look out.*

**PAPPA:** Is she still in the car? Where is the car?

**DIAN:** We had to walk here Pappa. The streets are jammed. What you see on television is really happening. It's not reality TV.

**PAPPA:** *(not hearing a word)* Where's my wife?

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** She's gone off with some guy hasn't she? I knew it. Thirty five years of marriage and this is the thanks I get.

**JOHNNY:** Calm down Pappa. Don't bother start. Half your heart has already stopped working.

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**PAPPA:** You'll are always pretending you don't know what is going on. I don't know if I can live like this anymore.

*Pause.*

**DIAN:** Maybe it was a bad idea for us to come over.

**PAPPA:** No no. Its Christmas Day and I don't really feel like being alone today.

**DIAN:** You are never alone Pappa. That's just your problem. You don't leave the house and you want Mom to stay locked up with you and she's just not like that.

**PAPPA:** I just want her to come home. That's all.

**DIAN:** And when she is here you tell her to leave.

**PAPPA:** I don't mean it. I just get very emotional sometimes and say a lot of stuff I don't mean. She knows that.

**DIAN:** Fine Pappa. You never own up to anything you say anyway.

**PAPPA:** Are you gonna tell me where your mother is or what?

*Pause.*

**JOHNNY:** We don't really know Pappa. Seems a lot of people have just vanished into thin air.

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** A lot of people just vanished into thin air?

**JOHNNY:** Yes Pappa.

**PAPPA:** You sound just like those idiots on this new reality show on TV.

**DIAN:** It's not a reality show Pappa.

**PAPPA:** Sure aint real. People don't vanish into thin air. I have been on this earth for seventy six years and no one has ever vanished into thin air. Just tell me the truth, I can handle it.

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** Diego.

**DIEGO:** Yes sir.

**PAPPA:** You wouldn't lie to your grandfather by law would you?

**DIEGO:** No sir.

**PAPPA:** Where's your grandmother?

**DIEGO:** Don't know where she or my little sister is sir.

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** What is going on?

**DIAN:** We're trying to find that out ourselves.

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** So this is for real. Millions of people have just...vanished.

**DIAN:** Yes Pappa.

**PAPPA:** On Christmas Day?

**DIAN:** It doesn't even feel like Christmas Pappa.

**PAPPA:** Someone has gone too far this time to pull a prank of this magnitude. Is this some extra terrestrial sick idea of a joke? I thought alien abduction was just a myth.

**JOHNNY:** Aliens Pappa?

**PAPPA:** Well, if there is a Santa Claus and God's Son was born on this day...why not aliens? We humans have always thought we had it all figured out but when we say peace and safety sudden destruction will come upon us. I read that in the bible this morning.

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** *(realization dawns)* No. *(Gets up with his hand stroking his jaw)* No, no, no, no!

**DIAN:** What is it?

**PAPPA:** This doesn't make sense...yet it is the only thing that does.

**DIAN:** What?

**PAPPA:** The rapture.

*Pause.*

**DIAN:** Are you kidding me?

**PAPPA:** Think about it. There would be more questions than answers but it's a theory. You have an innocent life growing in your stomach. Why would that innocent child be left behind huh? I am a Christian. Why would I have been left behind? You are a Christian sometimes. Why would you be left behind?

**DIAN:** I really don't need a guilt trip right now so can we get our heads out of the bible please?

**PAPPA:** Don't you see what is happening? Ignoring God doesn't make Him non-existent or change who He is. Every one of us will face Him at some point or the other. It has always been about God. How else can you even begin to explain all this without Him?

*Pause.*

*A loud but brief rumbling sound is heard.*

*Diego jumps under a table.*

*Pappa dives under the same table pushing Diego out. Diego quickly squeeze in beside Pappa.*

*Johnny holds his wife tight.*

*Silence. They listen.*

**DIAN:** What was that?

*They listen.*

**PAPPA:** I think it was an earthquake.

**DIEGO:** I smell fire.

**JOHNNY:** Me too.

*The rumbling starts again.*

**THE LIGHTS FADE**

*Dian screams...as the rumbling increases.*

**LIGHTS OUT**

**SCENE CHANGE:** Setting now suggest inside a church. This setting will remain for the entire duration of the play. There are church benches, a podium, kneeling pads, etc. The benches should all be facing the audience.

**SCENE 7**

**SETTING CHANGE: Church.**

**CAPTION: CHRISTMAS DAY – Evening**

**LIGHTS UP**

*Sam is sitting on one of the front benches. The bible is sitting right next to her.*

*She thinks to herself and momentarily start smiling. She repeats this a few times.*

*Dian enters holding her stomach. Johnny is by her side supporting her.*

*They sit on the front bench opposite the one Sam is on.*

*Sam now realizes she is no longer alone.*

*Diego and Pappa follow. They sit in another row.*

**SAM:** I thought this would have been the best Christmas Day ever. Who would have thought that Jesus would come on Christmas Day?

*Pause.*

**PAPPA:** I haven't been in this church in months. How could a building this old survive an earthquake measuring 8.6 on the Richter scale?

**SAM:** On this rock I will build my church. And the gates of hell will not prevail.

**DIAN:** Let me guess...another Christian wanna-be who was left behind.

**SAM:** I wasn't ready. Just like you guys.

**DIEGO:** Is someone going to explain to the ignorant teenager what is going on?

**SAM:** Have you ever read the bible son?

**DIEGO:** Why? It's just a bunch of stories.

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**SAM:** You believe that because someone told you so right?

**DIEGO:** Well...I guess so.

**SAM:** The person who told you was wrong so technically you believed a lie but accepted it as the truth. What we failed to realize is that there is one truth and there is not one human being who have walked this earth which can avoid meeting that truth.

**DIEGO:** I am lost.

**JOHNNY:** Me too.

**SAM:** Well, at least you are listening this time.

**JOHNNY:** Considering I just saw four blocks leveled by a massive earthquake and we survived...I am wide open to just about any explanation of these events right about now. I think I am in a total suspension of belief.

**SAM:** Thus my point. The bible says every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. All roads lead to Him and it don't matter which road you take at some point in your life you will stand before this man as your savior or as your judge. Your choice.

**PAPPA:** We are here because we made the wrong choice?

**SAM:** Or we made a partial choice...or we waited too long to make up our minds...or we simply just wanted a sign from God to help us decide. Everyone who falls into any one of these categories now has seven years of hell on earth to endure.

**DIAN:** How can I believe what you are saying? I have an innocent life growing inside me. Why would Jesus just leave an innocent child behind?

**SAM:** I used to think about that too. Unfortunately it's a question I have no answer for.

**JOHNNY:** You seem to have a whole lot of answers.

**SAM:** I knew the truth. I simply wanted a reason to believe it.

**DIAN:** I cannot accept any of this.

**SAM:** Have any of you found a better explanation of what has taken place here?

**DIAN:** Not yet. But I know there is one.

**SAM:** And still you would continue to harden your heart...simply because you are too stubborn or too afraid to face the truth.

**DIAN:** Lady I don't know you. You have no right to talk to me like some child.

**SAM:** I'm trying to get you to understand.

**DIAN:** I didn't ask you anything.

*Pause.*

**SAM:** Fine. But keep your eyes and ears open because there are other prophecies still to be fulfilled. Maybe when you see the bible coming to life before your very eyes you will choose to believe.

**PAPPA:** What other prophecies are you talking about?

**SAM:** The rise of the anti-christ. The devil incarnate. He will usher in a new era for everyone left behind. He will claim to be God but he will bring nothing but terror unimaginable.

**JOHNNY:** Sounds like a myth.

**SAM:** The first thing he will do is sign a peace treaty with Israel.

*Pappa starts to laugh.*

**PAPPA:** You are crazy. Israel has been at war for ages. There is no way they will ever sign a peace treaty.

**SAM:** Laugh all you want. It's just a matter of time.

*More people come pouring into the church... adult males, females and teenagers. Some of them are rugged and worn...appearing hungry, confused and extremely tired.*

*Officer White is the last one in.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** Amazing how this old building survived that earthquake. *(sees Sam)* Well, well...you didn't go very far.

**SAM:** This used to be my place of refuge.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Now it's a home for the homeless. That was some earth shake. The town is almost flat out.

**SAM:** For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

**OFFICER WHITE:** Still quoting bible scriptures huh. Well, keep the faith. Maybe Jesus will come back for you. *(starts laughing...a few others laugh too...including Dian)*

**SAM:** Did you find your wife?

*Officer White stops laughing.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** You're nuts.

**DIAN:** Glad to know I'm not the only one who thinks she's a nut case.

**SAM:** Further on the bible says "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!"

*Dian's smile turns to anger. She lunges at Sam but Johnny holds her back.*

**JOHNNY:** Baby, this is neither the time nor the place.

*Pause.*

**DIAN:** *(calms down)* Officer, have you learnt anything further about the disappearances.

**OFFICER WHITE:** I'm afraid not. It's still a mystery...but there is one man who offers some hope. He practically came out of nowhere and from what I see...if anyone is gonna put this world back together. Its gonna be him.

**PAPPA:** Who is this man?

**OFFICER WHITE:** I don't know. But he made an announcement a few hours ago on national television that tomorrow he will be flying to Israel to sign a peace treaty. Can you believe it? The land of war will be at peace.

*Pause.*

*The colour fades from Dian's, Johnny's and Pappa's face...even Diego shows some sign of Enlightenment...and fear.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** I would not be surprised if this man is some God.

*Pause.*

**OFFICER WHITE:** Why all the long faces? That's actually some really good news considering all that has happened today. We needed some good news. I will check on you guys later. Duty calls.

*Officer White exit.*

**SAM:** All these are the beginning of sorrows.

*Paul enters.*

**PAUL:** Guys, there's some guy on the television claiming to be god.

**SAM:** And so it begins....2000 years ago Christ came as a baby. Today He has returned. And we have been left behind.

**BLACKOUT**