

THE TOO-TOO SYNDROME

by Joanne Owen



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PRODUCTION NOTES

No props or costumes are required. All “TOO-TOO” characters stand to one side at an angle facing the MINISTER on the opposite side. The NARRATOR and READER stand in the middle. The skit can be performed in about 25 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

4 men, 4 women, 3 optional

TEDDY, TIMOTHY, TODD, TOM

TANYA, TERESA, TILLIE, TINA

MINISTER, NARRATOR, READER

1 **READER:** *(Use any Bible translation you prefer; the follow-*
 2 *ing quotes are from the Revised Standard Version.)*

3 ‘‘For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his
 4 servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave
 5 five talents, to another two, to another one, to each accord-
 6 ing to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received
 7 the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he
 8 made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents
 9 made two talents more. But he who had received the one
 10 talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money
 11 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and
 12 settled accounts with them. And he who had received the
 13 five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying,
 14 ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made
 15 five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good
 16 and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I
 17 will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.’
 18 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying,
 19 ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made
 20 two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good
 21 and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I
 22 will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.’
 23 He also who had received the one talent came forward,
 24 saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where
 25 you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow;
 26 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground.
 27 Here you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him,
 28 ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap
 29 where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not
 30 winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money
 31 with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received
 32 what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him,
 33 and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to every one
 34 who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but
 35 from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

1 **READER:** *(contd)* And cast the worthless servant into the
 2 outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'
 3 — Matthew 25:14-30 *(Reader continues)*

4 But he said to him. "A man once gave a great banquet, and
 5 invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his
 6 servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all
 7 is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The
 8 first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out
 9 and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said,
 10 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them;
 11 I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have
 12 married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant
 13 came and reported this to his master. Then the householder
 14 in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets
 15 and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and
 16 blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you
 17 commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And
 18 the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and
 19 hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may
 20 be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited
 21 shall taste my banquet.' " — Luke 14:16-24

22 **NARRATOR:** Once upon a time there was a church filled with
 23 very nice members who had taken some important
 24 vows. The day these people joined the church they
 25 promised to be loyal and to uphold the church
 26 with their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and
 27 their service. Unfortunately as time went by, the
 28 church members began to suffer from an insidious
 29 malady that affected, among other things, their
 30 memory. Not only did this disease cause them to
 31 forget their vows, it gave them symptoms such as
 32 apathy, laziness, self-centeredness, and ignorance.
 33 The disease was diagnosed as the TOO-TOO
 34 SYNDROME. Let's meet some of the victims of
 35 the TOO-TOO SYNDROME to see how it affected

- 1 NARRATOR: (*contd*) them. First, there's Tillie Too-Old. Like
2 most people, Tillie was sincere and well-meaning
3 when she united with the church. On that day
4 the minister said to her . . .
- 5 MINISTER: Tillie, do you promise to be loyal to the church,
6 to uphold it with your prayers, your presence,
7 your gifts, and your service?
- 8 NARRATOR: And Tillie answered in all sincerity . . .
- 9 TILLIE: I do.
- 10 NARRATOR: Tillie did support the church by helping in the
11 Sunday school when her children were young,
12 but that was many years ago. Now her only
13 involvement is attendance at the Sunday morning
14 worship service. Tillie's church is in desperate
15 need of volunteers to keep the nursery so young
16 parents can attend worship services, and she was
17 asked to be a volunteer nursery worker.
- 18 TILLIE: Who me? Work in the nursery? Not on your life.
19 My kids are grown, and I did my part years ago.
20 Now it's time for someone else to do that. Those
21 babies make me nervous anyway. Why don't they
22 just hire someone for that job? I'm no babysitter,
23 and I certainly don't intend to get stuck in the
24 nursery at my age. I'm too old for that — just too
25 too old!
- 26 MINISTER: But Tillie, you promised.
- 27 NARRATOR: Another member of the church is Tina Too-Young.
28 Tina came into the church on profession of faith
29 when she was a teenager and an active member of
30 the youth fellowship group. When Tina joined the
31 church the minister asked . . .
- 32 MINISTER: Tina, do you promise to be loyal to the church,
33 to uphold it with your prayers, your presence,
34 your gifts, and your service?
- 35 NARRATOR: With obvious earnestness, Tina replied . . .

- 1 **TINA:** I do.
- 2 **NARRATOR:** Now Tina has grown up, married, and has a
3 masters degree in elementary education. She
4 teaches in the local public school. Tina was asked
5 to teach the sixth grade Sunday School class.
- 6 **TINA:** Well, I'll tell you, when you teach school all week,
7 you certainly don't want to teach on Sunday
8 mornings. You know, my husband and I don't
9 have children yet, and we often go out of town
10 on weekends. We have season tickets to the ball
11 games over at the university, and in warm weather,
12 we enjoy going to the lake. I'm just not ready to
13 be tied down every Sunday. Why don't some of
14 the people who have children that age teach the
15 class? I'm still young and footloose on weekends,
16 and I really don't want to be obligated. I'm too
17 young — just too too young.
- 18 **MINISTER:** But Tina, you promised.
- 19 **NARRATOR:** Let me introduce you to Tom Too-Dumb, a local
20 businessman. Tom became a church member along
21 with his communicants' class when he was twelve
22 years old. To the young boy, the minister said . . .
- 23 **MINISTER:** Tom, do you promise to be loyal to the church,
24 to uphold it with your prayers, your presence,
25 your gifts, and your service?
- 26 **NARRATOR:** Tom dutifully and politely said . . .
- 27 **TOM:** Yes sir, I do.
- 28 **NARRATOR:** Through the years Tom and his family have
29 attended many services and activities of the church,
30 but he has never accepted any positions of
31 leadership. Tom read a notice in the church
32 newsletter about an urgent need for additional
33 youth fellowship counselors. He thought about
34 it and then said . . .
- 35 **TOM:** I suppose I should volunteer for that job, but I'm

1 TOM: (*contd*) not qualified. Those kids are so demanding,
 2 always wanting to have complicated projects and
 3 make trips, and besides, I don't have any training
 4 or experience in working with youth. Why doesn't
 5 the church hire a professional youth worker?
 6 Young people today are so sophisticated that I'm
 7 afraid I'm not capable of handling them. They're
 8 too smart for me, so I'd better not tackle that
 9 responsibility. I'm not qualified. I'm just too too
 10 dumb.

11 MINISTER: But Tom, you promised.

12 NARRATOR: Also suffering from the TOO-TOO SYNDROME
 13 is Todd Too-Busy. Todd meant to keep up with
 14 his responsibilities at church. He had good
 15 intentions when the preacher inquired . . .

16 MINISTER: Todd, do you promise to be loyal to the church,
 17 to uphold it with your prayers, your presence,
 18 your gifts, and your service?

19 NARRATOR: With the best of intentions, Todd responded . . .

20 TODD: I do.

21 NARRATOR: But because Todd is talented, capable, and a
 22 go-getter, he has too many irons in the fire. He
 23 is a dynamic and successful salesman as well as a
 24 leader in civic and social affairs. Todd has a rich
 25 tenor voice, so the choir director invited him to
 26 sing in the choir which is woefully short of tenors.

27 TODD: I appreciate being asked, but I simply can't make
 28 it to choir practice every week. I'm in several
 29 civic clubs, and my wife and I play in a couples
 30 bridge club that we've belonged to for years.
 31 I have meetings or prior commitments almost
 32 every night of the week, and sometimes I see
 33 clients in the evening. Why don't they just hire
 34 some professional singers. That would really help
 35 the choir — which I must admit could use some

- 1 TODD: (*contd*) help. As for me, my schedule is full, and
2 I couldn't possibly add one more thing. There's
3 absolutely no time for the choir — I'm just too
4 too busy.
- 5 MINISTER: But Todd, you promised.
- 6 NARRATOR: Teresa Too-Sad is also a member of the church.
7 When she joined, she really meant to do what was
8 right. She never wavered when the minister
9 questioned her . . .
- 10 MINISTER: Teresa, do you promise to be loyal to the church,
11 to uphold it with your prayers, your presence,
12 your gifts, and your service?
- 13 NARRATOR: With great assurance, Teresa said . . .
- 14 TERESA: I do.
- 15 NARRATOR: The years flew by, and now Teresa is a homemaker
16 whose children are in school and whose husband
17 travels. Teresa has a lot of time on her hands and
18 was therefore asked to help with a special sewing
19 and crafts project at the local nursing home.
- 20 TERESA: Oh, I know I should get involved. Sometimes I
21 feel so guilty because I seldom do anything for
22 others, but honestly, it depresses me to go to that
23 nursing home. When I see all those elderly people,
24 I imagine myself using a walker or in a wheelchair,
25 and it really gets me down. Anyway, visiting is
26 the preacher's job. We pay him to look after the
27 sick and shut-ins who need visits. I just don't want
28 to do it. It's so depressing and sad, and I don't
29 enjoy being unhappy. No I really wouldn't like to
30 work with those old people. It's just too too sad.
- 31 MINISTER: But Teresa, you promised.
- 32 NARRATOR: Another victim of the TOO-TOO SYNDROME is
33 Timothy Too-Poor. Timothy and his family moved
34 to town last year and joined the church. At that
35 time the preacher asked . . .

- 1 MINISTER: Timothy, do you promise to be loyal to the
2 church, to uphold it with your prayers, your
3 presence, your gifts, and your service?
- 4 NARRATOR: Without batting an eye, Timothy
5 promised . . .
- 6 TIMOTHY: I do.
- 7 NARRATOR: A few months later during stewardship emphasis
8 week, some members called on Timothy and invited
9 him to make a financial pledge to the church.
- 10 TIMOTHY: Tithe? You've got to be kidding! Do you realize
11 what groceries cost? Listen, I make a house
12 payment and two car payments, and I've got
13 three kids. Can you imagine what it takes to keep
14 them in clothes, straighten their teeth, give them
15 piano lessons, and pay their doctors' bills? Then
16 there's insurance, taxes, and our annual vacation.
17 And that's not the worst part — next year one
18 will be in college! Don't talk to me about tithing.
19 I'd like to, but there's no way at this time. I just
20 can't possibly afford it. With spiraling inflation
21 and the sky-rocketing cost of living, it's out of
22 the question. In spite of the fact that I make a
23 decent salary, I'm still too poor — just too too
24 poor!
- 25 MINISTER: But Timothy, you promised.
- 26 NARRATOR: And now, let's meet Teddy Too-Shy. Although
27 a quiet fellow, Teddy is sincere and wanted to
28 keep his promise when the minister said . . .
- 29 MINISTER: Teddy, do you promise to be loyal to your church,
30 to uphold it with your prayers, your presence,
31 your gifts, and your service?
- 32 NARRATOR: Teddy quietly and gravely vowed . . .
- 33 TEDDY: I do.
- 34 NARRATOR: Teddy's church is located in an area into which
35 many new families are moving. The committee on

- 1 NARRATOR: (*contd*) evangelism sponsored a visitation
2 program to welcome newcomers to the
3 community and invite them to attend church
4 services. Teddy was asked to be one of the
5 visitors.
- 6 TEDDY: To tell the truth, it's not easy for me to meet
7 new people. I'm basically a shy person, and I just
8 couldn't stand the thought of going into homes of
9 strangers. They might not like me. They might not
10 want me to visit them. Anyway, we pay the
11 preacher to call on newcomers. I say let him get
12 out and recruit new members. I can't do it — I'm
13 too too shy.
- 14 MINISTER: But Teddy, you promised.
- 15 NARRATOR: Tanya Too-Tired is an afflicted church member
16 who belonged to the church for a number of
17 years before the TOO-TOO SYNDROME struck
18 her. The day she joined the church, she was
19 asked the very same question.
- 20 MINISTER: Tanya, do you promise to be loyal to your
21 church, to uphold it with your prayers, your
22 presence, your gifts, and your service?
- 23 NARRATOR: She answered confidently . . .
- 24 TANYA: I do.
- 25 NARRATOR: Tanya is a career woman with a good education
26 and a great deal of organizational ability. She
27 was asked to be chairperson of the committee on
28 missions.
- 29 TANYA: Oh, I thought you realized, I work! Why don't
30 you ask someone who doesn't work to do that.
31 By the time I go to the office five days a week,
32 I just don't feel like doing anything else. There's
33 a lot of pressure and irritation in my job, and
34 sometimes it's extremely tiring. The rat race of
35 the business world really gets me down! I get so

1 TANYA: (contd) tired that when I come in at night I don't
 2 want to think about a thing. I used to attend
 3 committee meetings, and I'll admit, we did
 4 accomplish a lot of good things, but now, I'm
 5 worn out. No, I couldn't serve as chairperson
 6 of anything. No, I'm tired — just too too tired.

7 MINISTER: But Tanya, you promised.

8 NARRATOR: You have met a few members of a devitalized
 9 church that might have become completely
 10 enfeebled. But the story is not over. Fortunately,
 11 the TOO-TOO SYNDROME is not terminal.
 12 Although it is a debilitating and frustrating
 13 disease, it can be cured. Once the TOO-TOO
 14 SYNDROME was diagnosed, a careful regimen
 15 was prescribed, consisting of diet, exercise,
 16 medication, and therapy. The patients' diet
 17 included daily feeding on the Word of God
 18 through private and group Bible study. Their
 19 program of exercise involved stretching
 20 their minds through conscientious reading and
 21 study to become better informed. It also called
 22 for stretching their hearts and souls through the
 23 spiritual enrichment of regular prayer and
 24 worship, both corporate and individual. The
 25 ailing church members were medicated with
 26 massive doses of Christian love and fellowship.
 27 For their therapy, they got involved in the
 28 programs of the church and accepted their
 29 tasks, taking them one day at a time, believing
 30 that God was with them as they endeavored to
 31 do His will. With their convalescence came a new
 32 understanding of the responsibilities of church
 33 membership. They realized that the church is
 34 all its members — not just the minister, the
 35 staff, or the building. All these ordinary people

1 NARRATOR: (*contd*) learned that Christ did not seek
2 professional clergymen to do His work, but He
3 called regular, everyday folks. For those
4 recovering from the TOO-TOO SYNDROME,
5 the healing process continues on a daily basis.
6 As members recover from the disorder, they
7 must continually be on their guard to prevent
8 a relapse. Happily, they now enjoy the benefits
9 of good health and no longer suffer from apathy,
10 self-centeredness, ignorance, and laziness.
11 Cheerful and robust, they delight in their
12 vitality, enthusiasm, devotion, and commitment.
13 The more they serve, the more they experience
14 the joys, rewards, and feelings of accomplishment
15 that come with service to God and fellowman.

16 MINISTER: Do you recall when you took the vows of church
17 membership? Do you remember that you
18 promised to support your church with your
19 prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your
20 service? Be on your guard, for there have been
21 rumors of suspected cases of the TOO-TOO
22 SYNDROME close by. Watch out for it, and
23 don't forget — you promised.

24 READER: "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and
25 all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious
26 throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he
27 will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates
28 the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his
29 right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say
30 to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father,
31 inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation
32 of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I
33 was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you
34 welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick
35 and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'



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