

**DON'T LET THE GROUCHES
STEAL YOUR CHRISTMAS**

by Christine Ferguson



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Don't Let the Grouches Steal Your Christmas

An Advent comedy on holiday stress

by Christine Ferguson

CAST OF CHARACTERS*

NARRATOR

GROUCH #1

(Grouch of Christmas Gifts)

GROUCH #2

(Grouch of Christmas Decorations)

GROUCH #3

(Grouch of Christmas Parties)

GROUCH #4

(Grouch of Christmas Memories)

GROUCH #5

(Grouch of Christmas Cards)

GROUCH #6

(Grouch of Holiday Baking)

GROUCH #7

(Grouch of Gift Wrapping)

GROUCH #8

(Grouch of Christmas' True Meaning)

- * Although there are female gender references throughout the script, all roles may be played by either males or females.

PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPS: A wrapped Christmas gift, a shiny Christmas garland, a gaudy ornament, a small plate of snacks, a photo album, a stack of Christmas cards, an apron, oven mitts, a roll of wrapping paper, a Nativity set with baby Jesus, a gift bag.

COSTUMES: Eight Santa hats for the Grouches.

STAGE DIRECTIONS: This play is easily performed in a church sanctuary or fellowship hall, as elaborate scenery or lighting is not required. If available, special lighting could be used to spotlight the Grouches as they enter. The Narrator takes Center Stage, and the Grouches enter from backstage, one by one, as they are introduced. If performed in a church setting, the Grouches could be hidden in an area behind the sanctuary, or they may simply stand in the rear of the church, coming forward as they are called. The narrator stands beside a small table, where the Grouches may place their props as they perform their parts. After Grouch #1 speaks, he stays On-stage, moving to an area at Stage Left, to be joined by the other Grouches in turn, after they perform.

NOTE: It is recommended for reasons of parody that the Grouches be familiar with the video of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (cartoon version). They should parody a “Boris Karloff” voice, grimacing and smiling sarcastically, like the Grinch in the video. The hammier the better! Grouch #8 is the most evil Grouch, and should “out-Grouch” them all.

1 (*NARRATOR enters and stands at Center Stage, beside a*
 2 *small table.*)

3 **NARRATOR:** If you've ever been a child, no doubt you're
 4 familiar with the story *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*,
 5 written by Dr. Seuss. The Grinch, a mean, Christmas-
 6 hating grouch, decides to steal Christmas from the town
 7 of Whoville. He takes all the Whos' decorations, their
 8 presents, their food, and all the trappings of the
 9 holiday, and then sits and waits to hear the Whos
 10 crying and wailing on Christmas morning because their
 11 Christmas has been stolen. Instead, the Grinch is
 12 amazed when at dawn he hears the sound of singing
 13 and rejoicing. Even though they had nothing else, the
 14 Whos had each other, and Christmas came anyway.
 15 Finally realizing that Christmas is not a matter of the
 16 gifts and trappings but a matter of the heart, the
 17 Grinch repents of his wicked ways and returns
 18 everything to the Whos, even joining in their
 19 celebration.

20 In our celebration of Christmas, we certainly don't
 21 lack for any of the trappings! Christmas trees,
 22 Christmas lights, Christmas presents, Christmas
 23 cookies, Christmas shopping, Christmas bills, and on
 24 and on. In all the activity, we have to make a conscious
 25 effort to remember that Christmas is all about Jesus:
 26 his miraculous birth as God in human form, sent to
 27 show the greatness and glory of his love for us. The
 28 real Christmas is so amazing and wonderful, how could
 29 it ever be overlooked? I'll tell you how. It's because of
 30 the Grinch.

31 Yes, the Grinch is still out there, trying to steal your
 32 Christmas! In fact, the Grinch comes in many forms and
 33 disguises, so we don't always recognize him. Tonight, by
 34 way of warning we've created a parody version of our
 35 own, *Don't Let the Grouches Steal Your Christmas*. We've

1 invited Grouches in various forms so you'll know how
2 to recognize them. Here comes one of them now!

3 *(GROUCH #1 enters carrying a wrapped gift. She places the*
4 *gift on the table and stands behind it to speak.)*

5 **GROUCH #1:** Good evening. I am the Grouch of Christmas
6 Gifts. How many gifts did you have to buy this year?
7 Don't leave anyone out! Buy, buy, buy! Spend, spend,
8 spend! They all expect it, you know. What would
9 Christmas be without presents to open and bills to pay?
10 You'll have to run back and forth to the mall and all
11 over town looking for special gifts for loved ones. Oh
12 yes! And you even have to buy gifts for people you
13 don't like very much — you know, those obligatory gifts
14 for people who expect it of you, but who never
15 appreciate anything you give them.

16 And what about the gifts people give *you*? Did you
17 really like that WaterPik® you got last year, or were
18 you just pretending? Remember that awful sweater in
19 that horrible color that you had to wear because your
20 mother-in-law made it for you? Wasn't that *fun*? You'll
21 have even more fun after Christmas when you get to go
22 back to all the stores to return all those unwanted gifts!
23 Don't you feel annoyed, just thinking about it? Go
24 ahead — grumble and complain — that's the spirit!
25 That's the way the Gift Grouch will steal your
26 Christmas! *(GROUCH #1 takes her gift and moves to Stage*
27 *Left.)*

28 **NARRATOR:** That Grouch was awfully grinchy! But look!
29 Here comes another one! *(GROUCH #2 enters and stands*
30 *behind the table. She has shiny garlands wrapped around her*
31 *and carries a gaudy Christmas ornament.)*

32 **GROUCH #2:** Good evening. I am the Grouch of Christmas
33 Decorations. Holiday decorating sounds almost
34 pleasant, doesn't it? Trimming the tree and lighting the
35 candles ... but that's not all there is to it. Maybe it

1 started out small, but it gets bigger and bigger every
 2 year! All the stores are decorated to the hilt by October.
 3 Lights and tinsel are stuffed down your throat, and you
 4 can't escape it anywhere! You'll see so much red and
 5 green that by December twenty-fifth, you'll be sick of
 6 it!

7 But, sick of it or not, you still have to decorate your
 8 house, and preferably the outside of your house, too, if
 9 all your neighbors do. You wouldn't want to be the only
 10 house on your block without Christmas lights and a
 11 plastic Santa in your front yard! And you'd better have
 12 it all done by the day after Thanksgiving, or you'll be
 13 hopelessly behind. So drag those dusty boxes out of the
 14 attic one more time so you can set it all up, get sick of
 15 it, and take it all down again. How tiresome! I just love
 16 to make you feel weary and fed-up with it all. I am the
 17 Grouch of Christmas Decorations, and I'm ready to
 18 steal your Christmas! (*GROUCH #2 joins GROUCH #1.*)

19 NARRATOR: That Grouch comes earlier and earlier every
 20 year, doesn't she? (or "he") Uh-oh! I think I see another
 21 Grouch! (*GROUCH #3 enters carrying a plate of snacks and*
 22 *nibbling from it.*)

23 GROUCH #3: Good evening. I am the Grouch of Christmas
 24 Parties. It seems that everyone has to have a party this
 25 time of year. Oh, yes ... your workplace, your children's
 26 classes at school, your bridge club, and every group
 27 you belong to will have a Christmas party, not to
 28 mention all your family members, who you'll have to
 29 visit and entertain.

30 And you know that lots of parties mean lots of
 31 FOOD! Turkey, stuffing, ham, gravy, sausage, cheese
 32 balls, mixed nuts, sweet rolls dripping with butter, all
 33 kinds of rich, gooey desserts, and ... cookies! Gobs and
 34 gobs of Christmas cookies! And you have to eat them
 35 *all!* You mustn't offend your hostess by refusing a

1 chunk of cheesecake after an eight-course meal. After
 2 all, Christmas comes but once a year. It just wouldn't
 3 be Christmas if you didn't go to party after party and
 4 overindulge until you're up to your eyeballs in eggnog!
 5 Ha, ha, ha!

6 After the parties are over, I do my best work. I'll
 7 make all those poor, starving people all over the world
 8 come and haunt you when you throw away that stale
 9 tray of cookies nobody wanted. Such waste! And, after
 10 you've stuffed yourself again, I'll be there to laugh
 11 when you step on the scale! It's depressing, isn't it? But
 12 it happens every year. Beware of the Grouch of
 13 Christmas Parties! (*GROUCH #3 joins the others.*)

14 NARRATOR: That Grouch is a bad one! Let's try to stay
 15 away from her. (or "him.") Let's see ... there's another
 16 Grouch coming! (*GROUCH #4 enters carrying a photo
 17 album. She stands behind the table and places the album on
 18 it.*)

19 GROUCH #4: Good evening. I am the Grouch of Christmas
 20 Memories. Ah, yes! (*Opens the album and begins paging
 21 through.*) Christmas memories, days of yore. Yuletide
 22 memories of the good old days. But were they really
 23 that good, hmmm? We all have those Christmases we'd
 24 rather forget. (*Stops paging and points at a photo.*) Oh ho!
 25 Here's one! Over the river and through the woods, to
 26 Grandmother's house we go! But you made the trip to
 27 Grandma's in a big old station wagon over the
 28 interstate. Remember? But the trip was so long, and in
 29 all the excitement, you wet your pants! Your special
 30 outfit was ruined. Your mommy told you not to worry,
 31 you could just change clothes and no one would know
 32 ... he, he, he! But that evening at Grandma's, as you and
 33 all your cousins got ready for bed, someone noticed that
 34 your "days of the week" underwear was the wrong day!
 35 Then *everybody* knew! Oh, the embarrassment, the

1 ridicule you had to endure! And, worse yet, you're *still*
 2 enduring it! Every year somebody remembers the
 3 Christmas when you wet your pants, and presto! There
 4 you are, eight years old again, reliving that awful time
 5 that scarred you for life! Did you ever wonder why you
 6 get the urge to run to the bathroom every time you see
 7 a pine tree? Ha! You'll never forget! The Grouch won't
 8 let you forget any negative memories associated with
 9 the season, and that's the way I'll steal your Christmas!
 10 (*GROUCH #4 takes the album and joins the others.*)

11 NARRATOR: Well, folks, I don't know what to say about
 12 that one. Moving right along ... Here comes another
 13 Grouch!

14 (*GROUCH #5 enters, stands behind the table, and places a*
 15 *stack of Christmas cards on it.*)

16 GROUCH #5: Good evening. I am the Grouch of Christmas
 17 Cards. Everybody loves to get Christmas cards, don't
 18 they? Oh, the anticipation! We rush to the mailbox each
 19 December and happily pull out handfuls of season's
 20 greetings. What could be more fun?

21 Ah, but there's a catch! In order to *receive* Christmas
 22 cards, you have to *send* them! That means yet another
 23 drain on your time and money, both of which are in
 24 *excruciatingly* short supply. How many cards do you
 25 send? Fifty? One hundred? Don't leave anybody out!
 26 Oh, I get writer's cramp just thinking about it!

27 And if you think you'll take the easy way out by
 28 printing up a ream of Christmas newsletters, think
 29 again! Does anyone actually tell the truth in those
 30 braggy epistles? Or is there a tendency to ... shall we
 31 say ... *sugarcoat* reality? Maybe you wouldn't do such a
 32 thing, but — my gracious! Everybody else does! I've
 33 seen you reading those newsletters, rolling your eyes
 34 and making snide comments. Nothing can take away
 35 your Christmas spirit quite the way a pompous, show-

1 offy holiday newsletter can! Watch out, or the
 2 Christmas Card Grouch will steal your Christmas!
 3 (*GROUCH #5 takes the cards and joins the others.*)

4 NARRATOR: What a nasty Grouch! Could any Grouch be
 5 worse than that one? But look! They just keep coming!
 6 (*GROUCH #6 enters wearing an apron and oven mitts.*)

7 GROUCH #6: Good evening! I am the Grouch of Holiday
 8 Baking. What's your specialty? Is it nut roll, sweet
 9 bread, or that old standby, fruitcake? Every family has
 10 its favorite holiday pastry. It just wouldn't be
 11 Christmas without it. Is it gingerbread, date bars, or
 12 old-fashioned shortbread? Better yet, it could be an old
 13 family recipe, replete with tradition, like Italian
 14 pizzelles, German pfefferneusse, or Mexican cinnamon
 15 cakes. Just think! Generations of bakers have made
 16 your family's specialty each and every Christmas for
 17 countless generations. Even if you don't know the
 18 difference between a pie pan and an eggbeater, far be
 19 it from you to break the tradition! Why, your Great-
 20 Great Aunt Gertrude would spin in her grave if you
 21 didn't bake a batch of crescent horns in her honor.
 22 (*Puts hand over heart.*) But then, maybe you don't have
 23 a great aunt to guilt you into baking. Maybe it's your
 24 children who beg for homemade Christmas cookies.
 25 And, of course, they want to help! Especially the pre-
 26 schoolers! Can't you just *see* it? Pudgy fingers in the
 27 batter, shortening in the hair, and flour, flour
 28 everywhere! Some of you are breaking into a cold
 29 sweat just *thinking* about it! And who gets to clean it all
 30 up? Ha, ha, ha! You know who! And that's how the
 31 Baking Grouch will steal your Christmas! (*GROUCH #6*
 32 *joins the others.*)

33 NARRATOR: That Grouch is a sly one! Let's see what the
 34 next grouch has to say. (*GROUCH #7 enters and places a*
 35 *roll of wrapping paper on the table.*)



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