

A CRICKET COUNTY CHRISTMAS CAROL

by Eddie McPherson



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

Copyright Notice

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Christian Publishers. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Christian Publishers. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Christian Publishers. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Christian Publishers.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Christian Publishers.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Christian Publishers.

A Cricket County Christmas Carol

A country take on Dickens

by Eddie McPherson

CAST OF CHARACTERS

City Bunch:

MIMI TIPPENHEIMER: Selfish and lives a diva-like existence.

PETUNIA TIPPENHEIMER: Is frustrated with her sister's self-centeredness.

OSWALD TIPPENHEIMER: Mimi's brother who is the leader of this group.

PETE TIPPENHEIMER: Another brother who usually goes along with Oswald.

MAID: Works for the Tuppenheimers.

MOTHER: A caroler who is attempting to raise money for her sick daughter.

MS. SMITH: A Sunday school teacher in Mimi's past.

LITTLE GIRL: Mother's sick daughter (nonspeaking role).

OTHER CHILDREN: Extras for Ms. Smith's Sunday school class and the carolers.

Note: Maid, Mother, and Ms. Smith may be played by the same actress if needed.

Country Bunch:

ELKIN: Head of the country clan. He's levelheaded, but still simple and naive. (He plays the Spirit of Christmas Future.)

FESTER: Elkin's cousin. He may be played as a big, burly type or small, meek-looking fellow. Either way, he's a loveable country bumpkin who is fond of his axe. (He plays the Spirit of Christmas Present.)

GLENDA MAE: One in a set of highly energetic twins. (She plays one of the Spirits of Christmas Past.)

BRENDA MAE: The other twin. These girls are happy-go-lucky but will stand up for themselves at the drop of a hat. (She plays the other Spirit of Christmas Past.)

YOUNG GLENDA MAE: A little girl version of Glenda Mae.

YOUNG BRENDA MAE: A little girl version of Brenda Mae.

UNCLE ZEKE: The spirit of their deceased rich relative.

5
PRODUCTION NOTES

SYNOPSIS

Hillbillies past, present, and future take the stage in this version of Dickens' classic tale. Entrepreneur Mimi is the proud owner of a dress shop. Problem is, the more money she makes, the more money she wants. Greed prompts her to spend Christmas Eve at home alone, counting her day's take instead of celebrating with her Country Cousins. At midnight Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae appear as the Spirits of Christmas Past. Then Fester with his ever-present axe shows up as the Spirit of Christmas Present. Finally Elkin draped in a long, black robe (the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come) reveals to Mimi what her selfish future holds — and it ain't pretty. Materialistic Mimi wakes from her dream, wondering what in the Dickens is going on. She actually shares the gifts she'd bought for herself — a true Christmas miracle!

COSTUMES

Scene 1 — Mimi and Petunia wear nice clothes and jewelry (including watches) that they would wear in the dress shop. Everyone has coats, scarves, hats, etc.

Scene 2 — The hillbillies wear clothes they think would look nice at a fancy city party: overalls with bright, colorful wide ties for Fester and Elkin, or polyester pants pulled way up almost to their chests with a rope for a belt. Brenda Mae and Glenda Mae wear gingham dresses with patches. For the Christmas party, the city boys wear starched white shirts with ties (and jackets, if you wish) and nice slacks. Mimi needs a watch. The maid wears a traditional maid uniform throughout the play.

Scene 3 — Spirit of Uncle Zeke: White robe and straw hat.

Spirits of Christmas Past: When Brenda Mae and Glenda Mae play these spirits, it would be fun to have them wear gingham robes with patches on them. Of course white robes would work as well. They will need to change back to their party clothes after this part is through, or else wear the robes over their clothes.

Spirit of Christmas Present: Fester can keep his initial costume on and wear his robe over it. This robe could be anything from a regular green robe to a bedspread or patchwork quilt. He wears either a wreath of holly or kudzu on his head.

Spirit of Christmas Future: Elkin wears an oversized black hooded robe. It's OK if his face is visible.

If there's enough time to change, the girls should wear black dresses to the funeral service. If not, something to suggest mourning clothes would suffice.

Carolers wear coats, scarves, hats, earmuffs, etc.

PROPS

Fake money; cash box; coats, hats, scarves; jar; tray of snacks; axe; purses; CD stereo (portable or full size); magazine, blanket, fireplace poker; plastic chains; portrait of Uncle Zeke; flashlight; clock on wall; Bibles; small mirror and makeup; Bible in a frilly pink cover; bottle of perfume; various wrapped packages; candy bars that are wrapped; glasses or paper cups; larger crudely wrapped box holding a rag doll wrapped in tissue paper, a small shepherd from a Nativity set, a toy rifle, and a small ceramic or porcelain angel; bouquet of flowers with a large ribbon draped across it saying “Rest in Peace, Mimi” and covered with a light cloth; tissue; blank sheet of paper and pen; single flowers, different types of dresses that have been gift-wrapped; telephone.

SET

There is the permanent set of the Tippenheimer’s living room in the city. There’s a door Stage Right that leads to outside. Another door Stage Left leads to the closet. You will need a sofa, end table, and lamp in this room.

For Scene 1, racks of nice dresses are set in front of the living room set. These racks represent Mimi’s Dress Shop. You will need a small counter or table for Mimi to use while counting her money. An optional cash register may sit on the counter.

For the country club, you’ll want to make some simple, subtle changes to the set to represent a new location. For example, put a nice throw over the sofa or turn the pictures around to show different prints, etc. Be sure to take down Uncle Zeke’s portrait for this scene.

For the Sunday school room, push out a chalkboard on wheels and set out a few chairs and a small podium.

For the funeral scene, the set should be changed back to the original living room while Mimi is speaking to the Spirit of Christmas Present and the Spirit of Christmas Future. You will need a stand or rolling cart to hold the bouquet of flowers covered with a cloth.

Make sure you have a plan for scene changes so they run smoothly and will not distract from what’s happening On-stage.

SOUND EFFECTS

Chimes, Christmas music, wind howling, clock chiming, organ music.

LIGHTING

Although the lighting is not complicated, it would be helpful to designate a stagehand for this, as there are various places in the script when the lights suddenly go off and on.

- 1 *(At Rise: MIMI's dress shop nestled in the heart of the city.*
 2 *It's Christmas Eve and time to close up for the holiday. MIMI*
 3 *is counting her drawer for the day.)*
- 4 **MIMI:** *(Laying bills out on the counter)* Three thousand thirty-
 5 seven, three thousand thirty-eight, three thousand
 6 thirty nine, three thousand forty ...
- 7 **PETUNIA:** *(Entering from the back room and putting on her*
 8 *coat)* Come on, Mimi, or we'll be late to the Christmas
 9 party.
- 10 **MIMI:** I was just counting the drawer again. Did you know
 11 I earned my largest profit in the history of Mimi's Dress
 12 Shop?
- 13 **PETUNIA:** Yes, Mimi, you've told me three times already.
 14 Now, put the money in the safe, and let's go.
- 15 **MIMI:** *(Continuing to count her money)* Oh, didn't I tell you?
 16 I'm not going to that boring Christmas party this year.
- 17 **PETUNIA:** *(Crossing to MIMI)* What do you mean? Our
 18 Country Cousins came all the way from Cricket County
 19 to celebrate with us.
- 20 **MIMI:** That's just it. I refuse to spend one more Christmas
 21 with those awful hillbillies.
- 22 **PETUNIA:** Those "hillbillies," as you call them, are part of
 23 our family.
- 24 **MIMI:** Fester's always carrying around that termite-infested
 25 axe of his, Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae follow me
 26 around sniffing my perfume, and then there's Elkin ...
 27 Well, I'm just tired of them, that's all.
- 28 **PETUNIA:** You're just mad because Uncle Zeke left all his
 29 oil fields and diamond mines to them and not to us.
- 30 **MIMI:** Are you forgetting those oil fields and diamond
 31 mines are worth millions?
- 32 **PETUNIA:** No, I'm not forgetting. But we are forced to face
 33 the facts: Uncle Zeke wanted *them* to inherit his wealth
 34 and not *us*.
- 35 **MIMI:** *(Covering her ears)* Uncle Zeke, Uncle Zeke, Uncle

1 Zeke ... I never want to hear that name again. Now, run
 2 along and have fun at the party. I want to count my
 3 money again before I lock up.

4 PETUNIA: They'll be so disappointed if you're not there.
 5 They think the world of you.

6 MIMI: You're right, I *am* the life of the party. At any rate,
 7 one Christmas without me will not make a difference.
 8 Make my excuses for me, won't you, Petunia dear?

9 PETUNIA: OK, but Oswald's not going to like it.

10 MIMI: Like I'm afraid of what my brother will think. Why
 11 should I care if he's mad? (*OSWALD and PETE enter*
 12 *from outside wearing coats, scarves, and hats.*)

13 OSWALD: Hey girls, we were driving by and thought we
 14 would pick you up in the limo and take you to the
 15 Christmas party.

16 PETUNIA: (*Heading to the door*) Good, we'll drive by the
 17 house and pick up the Cricket County bunch. They
 18 should've arrived by now.

19 PETE: Come on, Mimi.

20 PETUNIA: Uh, Pete? Mimi isn't going.

21 OSWALD: Of course she's going. (*Turns back to MIMI.*) Now
 22 stop playing around, and let's hit the road.

23 MIMI: (*Continuing to lay her money out*) Do you mind? I'm
 24 trying to count my money.

25 PETUNIA: Come on, Oswald. I'll explain in the limo.

26 PETE: (*To PETUNIA*) She's not planning to skip out on the
 27 party, is she?

28 MIMI: Would you please go and leave me in peace?

29 OSWALD: Mimi, I can't believe one person could be so
 30 selfish.

31 MIMI: I am *not* selfish. I'm only trying to be a good
 32 businesswoman. (*Annoyed*) Look what you did — I lost
 33 count.

34 PETUNIA: Let's go, Oswald. We'll leave Scrooge with her
 35 precious money. (*OSWALD throws up his hands and exits.*)

1 **PETE:** *(To PETUNIA)* Is she really not coming?

2 **PETUNIA:** Mimi, please come with us.

3 **MIMI:** Shhhh. *(She continues to count her money silently.*
 4 *PETUNIA drops her head in disappointment as she and*
 5 *PETE exit.)* Oh, Petunia, please lock the door on your
 6 way out. Petunia? *(She looks up from her money and sees*
 7 *that EVERYONE is gone.)* Finally. I thought they'd never
 8 leave. *(MIMI crosses to the door to lock it when she hears*
 9 *singing.)*

10 **CAROLERS:** *(Off-stage)* God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let
 11 nothing you dismay. Remember, Christ, our Savior was
 12 born on Christmas day. *(MIMI opens the door and sees the*
 13 *CAROLERS.)* To save us all from Satan's power when
 14 we were gone astray. O tidings of comfort and joy,
 15 comfort and joy, O tidings —

16 **MIMI:** *(Interrupting their singing)* Excuse me — I appreciate
 17 your enthusiasm for the season and all, but as you can
 18 see, I'm very busy.

19 **MOTHER:** We're sorry to bother you, but my little girl is
 20 very sick and needs some expensive medicine. *(Holding*
 21 *out a jar)* Any amount you can spare would be helpful.

22 **MIMI:** Haven't you people ever heard of insurance? Let me
 23 guess — your husband's out of work and they have
 24 canceled your policy.

25 **MOTHER:** My husband left us three years ago.

26 **MIMI:** Look, in these days and times, I just don't know who
 27 to believe anymore. If you're really in trouble, there are
 28 shelters all over the city that are there especially for
 29 people like you.

30 **MOTHER:** We're staying in one now, but they don't have the
 31 financial means to help us with the medicine.

32 **MIMI:** *(Pretending to hear someone call her)* I'll be right there.
 33 *(Turning back to the MOTHER)* Look, I'm sorry I don't
 34 have time to invite you in for coffee, but my friend is
 35 calling me. Merry Christmas to you, and I'll keep you

1 in my prayers.

2 **MOTHER:** Thank you for your time. *(The CAROLERS wish*
3 *MIMI a merry Christmas as they exit.)*

4 **MIMI:** *(Anxious to get rid of them)* Yes, yes, merry Christmas.
5 *(Turning away and shouting)* Coming! *(Back to the*
6 *CAROLERS)* Well, good night! *(She closes the door.)*
7 Goodness gracious, people have gotten so pushy these
8 days. *(Crosses back to her money.)* Now, where was I? I'll
9 just have to start over. One, two, three, four ... *(The*
10 *lights fade to a blackout.)*

11

12

13

SCENE 2

14 *(At Rise: It's the house in the city. ELKIN, FESTER,*
15 *BRENDA MAE, and GLENDA MAE are standing and*
16 *sitting about.)*

17 **BRENDA MAE:** I wonder where our City Cousins are, Cousin
18 Elkin.

19 **ELKIN:** I reckon they must be on their way. *(MAID holds out*
20 *a tray of snacks to FESTER.)*

21 **MAID:** Would you like a snack while you wait?

22 **FESTER:** *(Taking the whole tray)* Don't mind if I do. Much
23 obliged.

24 **MAID:** I'm sorry, but those are all I had.

25 **FESTER:** Don't apologize, this will do me just fine 'til we eat
26 supper.

27 **ELKIN:** Fester, them ain't all for you. I declare, boy — I
28 can't take you nowhere.

29 **FESTER:** *(Taking a closer look at the snacks on the tray)* But
30 they ain't nothin' but little crackers with some kind of
31 black stuff on 'em.

32 **MAID:** That's caviar.

33 **FESTER:** Sorry. They ain't nothin' but caviars with some
34 kind of black stuff on 'em.

35 **MAID:** The black stuff *is* the caviar.

- 1 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Crossing to FESTER and grabbing the tray)*
 2 Fester, give the nice lady back her tray. Here you go.
 3 **FESTER:** *(After taking a bite)* I don't mean to be rude, ma'am,
 4 but maybe you should try throwin' 'em in the deep
 5 fryer next time.
 6 **ELKIN:** Fester, she's just tryin' to be neighborly. She can't
 7 help it if she can't cook worth a flip. *(To MAID)* Forgive
 8 him, ma'am. All he thinks about is food.
 9 **BRENDA MAE:** He's what you call a do-it-yourself taxidermist.
 10 Ever' night at supper he stuffs himself.
 11 **FESTER:** Be nice to me. It's Christmas.
 12 **MAID:** Peace on earth, goodwill to men. *(She pinches*
 13 *FESTER's cheek. FESTER becomes embarrassed and crosses*
 14 *to ELKIN.)*
 15 **FESTER:** Elkin, Elkin, did you see that? She's a-flirtin' with
 16 me. What should I do?
 17 **ELKIN:** Flirt back, dummy. *(FESTER spits on his hands, then*
 18 *slicks back his hair and crosses to MAID who is setting down*
 19 *the tray.)*
 20 **FESTER:** Excuse me, ma'am, but you look like my first wife.
 21 **MAID:** How many times have you been married?
 22 **FESTER:** None. *(He giggles, turns to ELKIN, and gives him a*
 23 *thumbs up.)*
 24 **GLENDA MAE:** Fester, would you please hush up? *(To MAID)*
 25 Bless his heart, he ain't never been too good with
 26 women.
 27 **FESTER:** Glenda Mae, I've had all kind of girlfriends. When
 28 the county fair was here last year, I took Mary Sue
 29 through the tunnel of love.
 30 **ELKIN:** You did, Fester? I didn't know that. How was it?
 31 **FESTER:** I didn't like it a bit. It was dark and cold, and we
 32 got all wet.
 33 **MAID:** Was there a leak in the boat?
 34 **FESTER:** There's a boat?
 35 **ELKIN:** Bless his heart. *(Pats FESTER on the back.)* Bless his

1 ever-lovin' heart.

2 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Looking at FESTER*) The wheel's turnin', but
3 the hamster's dead.

4 **BRENDA MAE:** (*To MAID*) Excuse me, ma'am, but do you
5 know when our cousins are goin' to be here?

6 **MAID:** They just called and said they'd arrive any moment.

7 **ELKIN:** I can't wait to see our cousins. It's been months.

8 **BRENDA MAE:** It just ain't Christmas without our wonderful
9 City Cousins to sing carols with.

10 **FESTER:** To drink eggnog with.

11 **GLENDA MAE:** To sit around the Christmas tree with.
12 (*OSWALD enters.*)

13 **OSWALD:** Hello, everyone. Sorry I'm late. The country club
14 isn't far from here.

15 **ELKIN:** Is ever'body else already at the Christmas party?

16 **OSWALD:** They're waiting for us in the limo. Everyone, that
17 is, except Mimi. I'm afraid she won't be able to make it
18 this year.

19 **GLENDA MAE:** Cousin Mimi won't be at the party?

20 **BRENDA MAE:** She ain't took sick, did she?

21 **OSWALD:** Not exactly.

22 **GLENDA MAE:** But I won't get to smell Mimi's sweet-smellin'
23 perfume.

24 **BRENDA MAE:** And I won't get to touch her dangly earrings.

25 **FESTER:** And I won't get to square dance with her none.

26 **OSWALD:** You can square dance, I mean *dance* with Petunia.

27 **FESTER:** But Cousin Petunia is always trippin' over my feet.

28 **OSWALD:** Then dance with the twins. (*He points to GLENDA*
29 *MAE and BRENDA MAE.*)

30 **FESTER:** I'd rather have my feet stepped on.

31 **OSWALD:** (*Noticing what the COUNTRY BUNCH is wearing*) I
32 don't suppose you brought your party clothes with
33 you ...

34 **ELKIN:** Of course we brought our party clothes.

35 **OSWALD:** Good.

1 ELKIN: It's a little hard to leave 'em behind when you're
2 wearin' 'em. (*PETUNIA enters running.*)
3 PETUNIA: Oswald, we're going to be late.
4 OSWALD: We're coming.
5 PETUNIA: Did you tell them about Mimi?
6 BRENDA MAE: He told us.
7 FESTER: Don't fret, Cousin Petunia. I'll dance with you
8 tonight.
9 PETUNIA: (*Trying to be nice*) Oh ... goody.
10 FESTER: And don't worry none about bein' clumsy. You
11 can't help it. Bless your heart.
12 PETUNIA: I hope you won't allow Mimi's absence to ruin
13 your evening.
14 ELKIN: To be honest, we are a mite disappointed.
15 GLENDA MAE: Mimi has always been my favorite City
16 Cousin. The prettiest, brightest, most glamorous ... Oh,
17 sorry, Cousin Petunia.
18 PETUNIA: (*Her feelings are hurt.*) That's all right.
19 ELKIN: Glenda Mae, you and your big mouth.
20 GLENDA MAE: But I didn't mean that a-tall.
21 PETUNIA: (*Putting on a fake smile*) It's OK, really.
22 FESTER: Gee, Glenda Mae, you sure know how to
23 embarrass a feller.
24 GLENDA MAE: All I meant to say was that Cousin Mimi is
25 soooo sophisticated and Cousin Petunia is ... well,
26 she's ...
27 ELKIN: That's enough, Glenda Mae.
28 FESTER: Yeah, just hush up.
29 OSWALD: Shall we go? (*He opens the door as EVERYONE files*
30 *out with their coats and scarves. FESTER stays behind.*)
31 PETUNIA: (*Now she's a little upset*) What's Mimi have that I
32 don't have?
33 FESTER: I wouldn't worry none, Cousin Petunia. Ever'body
34 can't be as suave as Cousin Mimi. But don't fret
35 none ... we all still think you're real ... sweet.

PETUNIA: Sweet? *(She bows her head and heads to the door.)*
They think I'm sweet?

FESTER: *(To MAID)* See you later, you little heifer you. And
 don't worry about that there food you cooked up. With
 a little practice, you'll be cookin' cornbread and turnip
 greens in no time flat — and we'll help you. Merry
 Christmas. *(He exits.)*

MAID: Merry Christmas. *(To herself)* Cornbread and turnip
 greens? Yuck. *(Blackout.)*

SCENE 3

(At Rise: MIMI's living room is dark except for a solitary lamp which gives the scene a lonely, eerie look. MIMI is sitting on the sofa holding her money box. She is wearing her pajamas and a big, fluffy bathrobe.)

MIMI: Hello? Is anyone here? Alone at last. Just me and my
 money. *(She speaks to her money box.)* I couldn't very well
 keep you locked in that lonely safe over Christmas.
 You'll be better guarded by me. Perhaps I'll count you
 again before bed. That will be fun. *(She sets the money
 box on the end table beside the sofa.)*

I must admit this is the perfect way to spend a
 Christmas Eve. Nice and quiet. No domestic servants,
 no silly Christmas carols, and best of all, no hillbillies
 smelling my perfume or wanting to *(With a hillbilly
 accent)* dance a jig with me. *(She stands and crosses to and
 switches on the stereo and a Christmas carol plays. She picks
 up a magazine and sits again on the sofa, putting her feet
 up on the coffee table. After a few seconds there's a noise that
 comes from inside the closet. MIMI looks nonchalantly toward
 the closet and listens for a moment, then shrugs and goes
 back to her magazine. A few seconds pass and the sound is
 heard again, but this time it's louder.)* Hello? Is anyone
 there? *(Her music goes silent, and then the noise from the*

1 *closet grows. It's a loud knocking sound at the closet door.*
 2 *MIMI jumps up off the sofa and throws her magazine down.*
 3 *She runs over to the light switch, but the lights won't come*
 4 *on. She rushes over and picks up a fireplace poker.) Who's*
 5 **there?** *(The knock occurs more calmly. MIMI, with poker in*
 6 *the air, slowly crosses to the closet and swings the door open,*
 7 *revealing no one.) Come on out, whoever you are! I warn*
 8 **you, I'm armed and dangerous!** *(There is silence.)*
 9 **Perhaps I'm hearing things.** *(She closes the closet and*
 10 *there stands the ghost of UNCLE ZEKE. MIMI screams and*
 11 *runs to the other side of the sofa.)*

12 **UNCLE ZEKE:** Just settle down there, little lady. I ain't
 13 **goin' to hurt you none.**

14 **MIMI:** Who are you, and how did you get in my house?

15 **UNCLE ZEKE:** Don't you recognize me, little Mimi? I'm your
 16 **dearly departed Uncle Zeke Taylor.**

17 **MIMI:** You can't be Uncle Zeke; he died years ago. And how
 18 **did you get in our closet?**

19 **UNCLE ZEKE:** Well, to be honest with you, I'm just his
 20 **spirit. I ain't had much practice comin' through walls.**
 21 *(He moves into the room, rattling the chains he's holding.) Oh*
 22 **yeah, I think I'm supposed to moan a lot, too. Oooooo.**

23 **MIMI:** I must be dreaming.

24 **UNCLE ZEKE:** You ain't a-dreamin,' and you ain't in Kansas
 25 **no more neither.**

26 **MIMI:** Perhaps if I splashed some water in my face.

27 **UNCLE ZEKE:** Now, just settle your nerves long enough for
 28 **me to tell you what I'm here for.**

29 **MIMI:** *(Still holding the fireplace poker out in front of her)* If
 30 **you're Uncle Zeke, prove it.**

31 **UNCLE ZEKE:** Dang it. OK, I'll prove it, little lady. *(He*
 32 *crosses to a picture of himself and stands beside it.) There*
 33 **you go. See? It's me.** *(He smiles like the man in the picture.)*

34 **MIMI:** *(Lowering the poker)* Why did you scare me like that?
 35 **I have a very sensitive nervous system. Besides, I was**

- 1 hoping to be alone for once on Christmas Eve.
- 2 UNCLE ZEKE: When I was alive on this here earth, I felt
- 3 the same way, child. I just wanted to be all by my
- 4 lonesome and count all my money day after day.
- 5 MIMI: Speaking of money, and since you *are* the late Uncle
- 6 Zeke, why did you leave the country bunch all your
- 7 money and us city folks with nothing?
- 8 UNCLE ZEKE: I left you and the other city dwellers one
- 9 hundred thousand dollars apiece. I wouldn't hardly call
- 10 that nothin'.
- 11 MIMI: I went through that measly amount in a matter of
- 12 months.
- 13 UNCLE ZEKE: Well, child, it's like this: Elkin and his clan
- 14 never had nothin'. Livin' in that broke-down cabin all
- 15 them years. No floors, an outhouse for a bathroom. But
- 16 your side of the family already had ever'thing you
- 17 could ever want.
- 18 MIMI: That wasn't enough. I wanted more! Besides, if you
- 19 were so concerned with the country bunch, why didn't
- 20 you take care of them when you were still alive?
- 21 UNCLE ZEKE: Because I was so all-fired selfish, that's why.
- 22 *(Holds up his chains.)* That's why I wear these here
- 23 chains. Each one of them links represents a selfish year
- 24 I lived here on this earth.
- 25 MIMI: And you're telling me all this because ... ?
- 26 UNCLE ZEKE: I don't want you to suffer the same plight as
- 27 I did when I was walking the earth. I'm here to warn
- 28 you of the dangers of greed and selfishness.
- 29 MIMI: OK, so you warned me. Good night.
- 30 UNCLE ZEKE: I declare, I can see you're the same stingy
- 31 gal I remember back when. You're goin' to need more
- 32 convincin' than just me. So here's the deal. Are you
- 33 ready?
- 34 MIMI: I'm not sure.
- 35 UNCLE ZEKE: You're goin' to be visited by three spirits

- 1 **tonight.** *(He makes his ghostly moan.)* **Oooooo.**
- 2 **MIMI:** Am I supposed to be scared now?
- 3 **UNCLE ZEKE:** It would help. How about this? *(Suddenly the*
 4 *lamp goes out and the stage is illuminated only by the*
 5 *flashlight* **UNCLE ZEKE** *is holding up to his face.)* **Oooooo.**
- 6 **MIMI:** OK, OK, I'm officially scared. Could you please turn
 7 the lights back on?
- 8 **UNCLE ZEKE:** *(In a more serious tone)* Tonight you will be
 9 shown how your selfishness and your spite toward
 10 your friends and family affect ever'body around you
 11 who you love and who love you.
- 12 **MIMI:** *(Pleading)* I get the point. I'm a selfish human being.
 13 Now, can you please turn the lights on, run along, and
 14 forget all this spirit stuff?
- 15 **UNCLE ZEKE:** It's too late, little angel. The spirits are
 16 already on their way. There ain't no way to stop 'em.
 17 They'll be visitin' all through the night. *(He begins*
 18 *heading back to the closet.)*
- 19 **MIMI:** All night? But I won't get any beauty sleep at all, and
 20 tomorrow is Christmas.
- 21 **UNCLE ZEKE:** The first visit will happen around midnight.
- 22 **MIMI:** Midnight? No, you don't understand.
- 23 **UNCLE ZEKE:** 'Bye now, and merry, merry Christmas.
 24 **Oooooo!** *(As he enters the closet with his flashlight, he*
 25 *reaches out and closes the door. As soon as the door closes,*
 26 *the lamp switches on and the stereo plays the song it was*
 27 *playing before. MIMI crosses to the sofa and grabs a blanket.*
 28 *She sits and pulls the blanket up to her nose.)*
- 29 **MIMI:** This is a dream. This is only a silly dream, and I will
 30 wake up at any moment. *(The clock begins striking twelve.*
 31 *As the clock continues to chime, MIMI sinks deeper into the*
 32 *couch until she finally covers her head with her blanket. The*
 33 *music goes out again. A noise that comes from the closet*
 34 *sounds like falling objects. Suddenly BRENDA MAE comes*
 35 *through the door quickly, stumbling. She's wearing a*

- 1 *gingham robe.*)
- 2 **BRENDA MAE:** Howdy there, young lady. (*Shouting back*
3 *through the door*) I found her! (*There is more noise from*
4 *the closet as BRENDA MAE calls out to someone.*) Over
5 here! Walk toward my voice! (*GLEND A MAE enters,*
6 *frazzled. She also wears a gingham robe.*)
- 7 **GLEND A MAE:** Thank goodness! I thought I would never
8 find that there door.
- 9 **MIMI:** (*Jumps up.*) Glenda Mae? Brenda Mae?
- 10 **GLEND A MAE:** Who?
- 11 **BRENDA MAE:** I'm afraid we don't know anybody by them
12 names.
- 13 **MIMI:** But you are ... I'm sorry. You look like someone I
14 know.
- 15 **BRENDA MAE:** Well, ain't that nice.
- 16 **MIMI:** But if you're not who I thought you were, who are
17 you?
- 18 **GLEND A MAE:** We are the Spirits of Christmas Past.
- 19 **MIMI:** You are?
- 20 **BRENDA MAE:** Yes ma'am, of *your* past. Ain't that
21 somethin'?
- 22 **MIMI:** Well ...
- 23 **GLEND A MAE:** Are you ready to go?
- 24 **MIMI:** Go? Go where?
- 25 **GLEND A MAE:** We're takin' you on a little trip. You'd better
26 wrap up good. It's pretty cold out there.
- 27 **MIMI:** But it's too late to go out tonight.
- 28 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Helping her on with her coat*) No it ain't. It's
29 juuust right.
- 30 **GLEND A MAE:** 'Cause like we say in the spirit realm, "It's a
31 real small world, but I wouldn't want to clean it." (*They*
32 *place MIMI between them.*)
- 33 **BRENDA MAE:** Now, hold on to our hands.
- 34 **MIMI:** (*Crossing to the door*) But I protest! I object! I oppose!
- 35 **GLEND A MAE:** Good. We was afraid you wouldn't want to go.

1 **BRENDA MAE:** Now hold on reeeecal tight! (*Wind sound is*
 2 *heard along with some chimes. The TWINS push her out the*
 3 *front door and Off-stage as a chalkboard on wheels is*
 4 *pushed On-stage, along with a few chairs. Some CHILDREN*
 5 *enter holding Bibles and take a seat in the chairs. Among the*
 6 *CHILDREN are YOUNG GLENDA MAE and YOUNG*
 7 *BRENDA MAE. As soon as this is set up, Mimi and the*
 8 *TWINS re-enter.*)

9 **GLENDA MAE:** (*To BRENDA MAE*) Hey, Spirit, you got us
 10 here real good.

11 **BRENDA MAE:** Thank you, Spirit. I'm beginnin' to get the
 12 hang of this floatin'-around-in-space thing.

13 **GLENDA MAE:** Good, 'cause like we say in the spirit realm,
 14 "It don't matter if you win or lose — until you lose.
 15 Then you feel real lousy 'cause you lost, and sometimes
 16 it makes you want to cry."

17 **BRENDA MAE:** We ain't never said that in the spirit realm.

18 **GLENDA MAE:** Yeah, I think I messed that up.

19 **MIMI:** Where are we?

20 **GLENDA MAE:** Look around. Don't you recognize it?

21 **MIMI:** It looks a little like ... (*MS. SMITH enters carrying a*
 22 *Bible.*)

23 **MS. SMITH:** Good morning, boys and girls.

24 **CHILDREN:** (*Together*) Good morning, Ms. Smith.

25 **MS. SMITH:** (*Looking around*) Has anyone seen Mimi this
 26 morning?

27 **MIMI:** (*Raising her hand and taking a step forward*) I'm right
 28 here, Ms. Smith.

29 **BRENDA MAE:** Shhhh! She can't hear you, silly. She's just
 30 a shadow.

31 **GLENDA MAE:** Then why did you tell her to shhhh?

32 **BRENDA MAE:** (*With hands on hips*) Are you tryin' to tell me
 33 how to do my job?

34 **GLENDA MAE:** Somebody needs to!

35 **A CHILD:** Ms. Smith, Mimi was outside putting her makeup

- 1 on a minute ago.
- 2 **MS. SMITH:** Makeup? But she's only in the third grade.
- 3 **MIMI:** I can't believe it. It's Ms. Smith, my old Sunday
- 4 school teacher. She was such a precious lady.
- 5 **BRENDA MAE:** You sure didn't take a likin' to her back
- 6 then. (*YOUNG MIMI enters primping as she looks at herself*
- 7 *in a small mirror.*)
- 8 **YOUNG MIMI:** (*Pointing at YOUNG GLENDA MAE and*
- 9 *BRENDA MAE who sit with a single chair between them.*)
- 10 Ms. Smith, I refuse to sit beside *them*.
- 11 **MS. SMITH:** But Mimi, that's the only chair left. Please have
- 12 a seat.
- 13 **YOUNG MIMI:** I won't. (*She crosses her arms.*)
- 14 **YOUNG GLENDA MAE:** Hey there, Cousin Mimi. Remember
- 15 us? We're your cousins from Cricket County. I'm
- 16 Glenda Mae.
- 17 **YOUNG BRENDA MAE:** And I'm Brenda Mae.
- 18 **YOUNG GLENDA MAE:** (*Patting the seat of the chair between*
- 19 *them*) Come take a load off right here betwixt us, you
- 20 little heifer.
- 21 **YOUNG BRENDA MAE:** 'Cause like we say in the country,
- 22 "If you want to forget your troubles, wear tight shoes."
- 23 **YOUNG MIMI:** (*Embarrassed that they are talking to her,*
- 24 *pretending she doesn't know them*) Why are you two
- 25 talking to me? I've never seen you before in my life.
- 26 **MS. SMITH:** Mimi, please take your seat.
- 27 **MIMI:** Well, OK — but just so we can get this boring lesson
- 28 over with.
- 29 **MS. SMITH:** It's good to have guests visiting us from Cricket
- 30 County. Class, this is Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae
- 31 Taylor.
- 32 **YOUNG GLENDA MAE:** (*Cheerily, as she stands and waves*)
- 33 Howdy, ever'body!
- 34 **YOUNG BRENDA MAE:** (*Also standing*) We're Mimi's cousins
- 35 from the country. (*YOUNG MIMI covers her face.*)

- 1 MIMI: I'm so embarrassed.
- 2 GLENDA MAE: *(To MIMI)* You didn't treat your poor little
3 cousins very good, now did you?
- 4 MIMI: That was a dreadful thing I said.
- 5 BRENDA MAE: But they still loved you so much.
- 6 MS. SMITH: Today, children, we're going to be looking at
7 Philippians 2:3. Listen to what it says: "Let nothing be
8 done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of
9 mind let each esteem others better than themselves"
10 (KJV). Do we know what the Bible is telling us here?
- 11 CHILD: *(Raising his hand)* That we shouldn't be conceited,
12 and that we should look at others as being better than
13 we are.
- 14 MS. SMITH: That's right.
- 15 YOUNG MIMI: Hogwash. Are you trying to convince me I
16 should consider those hillbillies as better than myself?
- 17 MS. SMITH: Yes. You see ...
- 18 YOUNG MIMI: But look at their clothes. Their Bible is even
19 worn out. *(She holds up her Bible that's in a frilly pink*
20 *cover.)* Now *this* is a Bible.
- 21 MIMI: Someone should say something to that little brat's
22 parents.
- 23 GLENDA MAE: But remember; that little brat is *you*.
- 24 BRENDA MAE: Look at how you treated 'em. *(YOUNG MIMI*
25 *is spraying perfume on YOUNG BRENDA MAE and*
26 *GLENDA MAE.)*
- 27 GLENDA MAE: And all they ever wanted to do was spend
28 a little time with their cousin who lived in the city.
- 29 MS. SMITH: Before we get into the Bible lesson, I thought
30 we would have a little Christmas party since this is the
31 Sunday before Christmas. *(YOUNG GLENDA and*
32 *BRENDA MAE clap excitedly.)* We'll start, though, by
33 singing a Christmas carol. Everyone stand. *(As the*
34 *CHILDREN sing, YOUNG MIMI stands off by herself doing*
35 *her makeup in a mirror. She yawns a couple of times.)*

- 1 **MS. SMITH and CHILDREN:** (*Singing*) Silent night, holy
 2 night. All is calm, all is bright. Round yon virgin
 3 mother and child. Holy Infant so tender and mild. Sleep
 4 in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.
- 5 **MS. SMITH:** Very good, boys and girls. (*Picks up a stack of*
 6 *small wrapped packages.*) Now, have a seat. I have a little
 7 surprise for all of you.
- 8 **YOUNG MIMI:** (*Runs back to her seat.*) Gifts for me? Now *this*
 9 is a Christmas party.
- 10 **MS. SMITH:** Mimi, could you come take these gifts, please?
- 11 **YOUNG MIMI:** (*Grabbing the stack of presents*) All of these are
 12 for me? I don't know what to say.
- 13 **MS. SMITH:** No, Mimi, I just wanted you to help me hand
 14 them out to the rest of the class.
- 15 **YOUNG MIMI:** (*Greatly disappointed*) Oh. Very well. (*She*
 16 *literally pitches the gifts to each of the children.*) Here's
 17 yours and yours and yours. And most importantly,
 18 mine. (*She hugs her gift.*)
- 19 **MS. SMITH:** Go ahead, children, and open them up. (*The*
 20 *children begin tearing into their gifts.*)
- 21 **YOUNG GLENDA MAE:** (*Excited*) Look — it's a candy bar!
- 22 **YOUNG BRENDA MAE:** Mine is too! (*The other CHILDREN*
 23 *also receive candy bars and are excited.*)
- 24 **YOUNG MIMI:** (*Holding up her own*) A candy bar? What kind
 25 of gift is this? And even worse than that, I received the
 26 same gift as everyone else. (*Pouts.*) This is the worst
 27 Christmas of my whole entire life! (*Everyone in the past*
 28 *freezes.*)
- 29 **MIMI:** What a terrible, terrible thing to say to such a sweet
 30 lady. She was just trying to do something nice for us.
- 31 **GLENDA MAE:** That was the year Ms. Smith's husband
 32 passed away, and money was very tight for her.
- 33 **BRENDA MAE:** Do you recall what you did with that there
 34 present she gave you?
- 35 **MIMI:** I don't want to see any more. Please, take me home!

- 1 **GLENDA MAE:** Hold your horses just a minute. Look. *(She*
 2 *points to the OTHERS from the past as they unfreeze.)*
- 3 **YOUNG MIMI:** Ms. Smith, at least you could have put a
 4 little thought into your gifts. Well, here is what I think
 5 of your candy bar. *(She throws the candy on the ground*
 6 *and storms out.)*
- 7 **MIMI:** Please don't make me watch. Please! *(MIMI still holds*
 8 *the blanket from the sofa. She covers her face with it as the*
 9 *chalkboard and chairs are taken off and the CHILDREN,*
 10 *MS. SMITH, GLENDA MAE, and BRENDA MAE exit. The*
 11 *lamp returns as the only light. MIMI is left alone on the*
 12 *stage. She lowers the blanket and looks around. All is quiet.)*
 13 It's too much to bear. Do you hear me? It's too much! I
 14 want to go home. Hello? Spirits? *(There is no answer.)* A
 15 dream. It was all a nasty dream. I wonder what time it
 16 is. *(She looks at her watch.)* Almost one o'clock. I'm
 17 certainly glad that's over with. *(The clock chimes one.*
 18 *Suddenly FESTER pops up from behind the sofa and leans*
 19 *over the back of it. He holds an axe over his shoulder and*
 20 *wears an oversized robe and a wreath of holly on his head.)*
- 21 **FESTER:** Surprise! *(MIMI screams, stands, and runs toward the*
 22 *door.)* And you are surprised, ain't you? I could tell by
 23 your scream.
- 24 **MIMI:** You scared me to death. Fester, how long have you
 25 been hiding back there?
- 26 **FESTER:** Sorry, ma'am, but I don't know nobody named
 27 Fester. I'm just the Spirit of Christmas Present, that's
 28 all.
- 29 **MIMI:** Why is it that all you spirits look familiar to me?
- 30 **FESTER:** I reckon we just got them kind of faces. Anyway,
 31 I'm happier than a hog wallerin' in a mud hole. You
 32 know why? 'Cause it's Christmas time! *(He starts dancing*
 33 *about the stage as he sings.)* Christmas time's a-comin'!
 34 Christmas time's a-comin'! Christmas time's a-comin', so
 35 I come to visit you!

- 1 **MIMI:** You certainly are in a good mood, Spirit of Christmas
 2 **Present.**
- 3 **FESTER:** That's 'cause it's the greatest time of the year! The
 4 star shined. Jesus was born. And he changed the world
 5 forever. It's a time to celebrate! (*Sings.*) Christmas
 6 time's a-comin'! Christmas time's a-comin'! Christmas
 7 time's a-comin', so we'll take a little trip.
- 8 **MIMI:** (*Pointing to the front door*) You mean I must wrap up
 9 again?
- 10 **FESTER:** You'll freeze if you don't. It's so cold my
 11 grandma's teeth chattered all night, and they don't even
 12 sleep together.
- 13 **MIMI:** But where are we going?
- 14 **FESTER:** You'll see just as soon as we get there. Come on,
 15 it'll be fun! (*They exit out the front door as FESTER sings*
 16 *"Christmas Time's a-Comin'."* The lights return as **ELKIN**,
 17 **GLEND A MAE**, and **BRENDA MAE** — who are now back
 18 in their party clothes — and **OSWALD**, **PETE**, and
 19 **PETUNIA** enter the stage. Some sit on the sofa. Some stand
 20 behind the sofa or sit on other chairs. **OSWALD** holds up a
 21 glass of eggnog.)
- 22 **OSWALD:** To Christmas and family!
- 23 **ELKIN:** To Christmas and family!
- 24 **ALL:** (*Together*) Here, here! (*Everyone takes a drink.*)
- 25 **GLEND A MAE:** This sure is a dandy Christmas party, Cousin
 26 Oswald.
- 27 **BRENDA MAE:** It sure is. This is a whole lot better than
 28 any old barn dances we have back in Cricket County.
- 29 **ELKIN:** I just wish Cousin Mimi could be here with us.
- 30 **GLEND A MAE:** Yeah, it just ain't the same without her. It's
 31 like tryin' to rope a heifer, and you turn around and
 32 the heifer ain't there. (*ALL talk in pantomime as MIMI*
 33 *and FESTER re-enter through the front door.*)
- 34 **FESTER:** Here we go, right in here. Ain't this nice and cozy?
- 35 **MIMI:** But all we did was walk outside, turn around, and

- 1 walk back inside.
- 2 **FESTER:** Well, that's what the directions say. See? *(He holds*
3 *a map up to MIMI.)*
- 4 **MIMI:** But look, we're somewhere else.
- 5 **FESTER:** Yep, we're at that there Christmas party you
6 didn't want to go to.
- 7 **MIMI:** It sure looks as if everyone is having a good time.
8 *(EVERYONE is celebrating in pantomime and slow motion.)*
- 9 **FESTER:** Your families always have a good time when they
10 get together. See how happy ever'body is?
- 11 **MIMI:** How can they be having fun when I was always the
12 life of the party?
- 13 **FESTER:** Just watch and listen for a minute.
- 14 **PETUNIA:** Hey, I know what we can do. Let's play a game.
- 15 **FESTER:** *(To MIMI)* Excuse me, I've got to be part of this.
16 Now be sure you watch reeeeee close. *(He slings off his*
17 *robe and crosses to the sofa.)*
- 18 **MIMI:** But —
- 19 **PETE:** Fester, you're just in time to play charades.
- 20 **FESTER:** Well, hot dog! I get to go first. Are you ready?
21 *(Taking his axe, he mimes chopping down a tree.)*
- 22 **ELKIN:** You're choppin' down a tree with an axe.
- 23 **FESTER:** Gol-lee, Cousin Elkin, you're real good!
- 24 **GLENDA MAE:** Fester, you do the same thing ever' time we
25 play this game.
- 26 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, it ain't hard to guess what it's goin' to
27 be.
- 28 **FESTER:** I don't neither! Sometimes I do a grizzly bear. Hey,
29 I got another one! OK, ready? *(He holds his hands up in*
30 *the air.)*
- 31 **BRENDA MAE:** Grizzly bear!
- 32 **FESTER:** You're real good, Brenda Mae!
- 33 **PETE:** Hey, why don't we play twenty questions? I have one.
- 34 **OSWALD:** Is it a person?
- 35 **PETE:** Sort of.

- 1 **PETUNIA:** Is it an animal?
- 2 **PETE:** Oh, yes.
- 3 **GLENDA MAE:** A pig?
- 4 **PETE:** Sometimes.
- 5 **BRENDA MAE:** Does it live close by?
- 6 **PETE:** Unfortunately.
- 7 **MIMI:** *(Standing off to herself, raising her hand)* I know! I
- 8 **know! Mrs. Applegate over on Fourteenth Street; she**
- 9 **can be a real pig sometimes! *(She laughs at this.)***
- 10 **FESTER:** *(Running to her)* Cousin Mimi, you can't play.
- 11 **You're not even really here, remember? *(He runs back to***
- 12 ***the group.)* I know! A grizzly bear!**
- 13 **PETE:** *(Points to FESTER.)* On certain days she can be very
- 14 **grizzly!**
- 15 **OSWALD:** Wait a minute, a person who is sort of like a pig,
- 16 **unfortunately lives close by and, on days, can be a real**
- 17 **grizzly bear. I got it — it's Mimi!**
- 18 **PETE:** That's it! *(The CITY BUNCH applauds wildly.)*
- 19 **PETUNIA:** *(Laughing)* That was a good one!
- 20 **MIMI:** *(Claps her hands, smiling, then realizes)* Me? Wait a
- 21 **minute, that's not very nice.**
- 22 **GLENDA MAE:** Cousin Pete, I don't think that's very funny
- 23 **a-tall.**
- 24 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, that was mean!
- 25 **ELKIN:** She ain't even here to defend herself.
- 26 **MIMI:** *(To herself)* Listen to how my Country Cousins are
- 27 **taking up for me.**
- 28 **PETE:** I'm sorry; I guess I just got carried away. *(He looks*
- 29 ***at OSWALD as they both snicker.)***
- 30 **MIMI:** I should say that you did! *(No one acknowledges her. A*
- 31 ***little girl enters and takes a seat away from everyone as the***
- 32 ***rest freeze Onstage.) Fester?***
- 33 **FESTER:** Who's Fester?
- 34 **MIMI:** I'm sorry — I mean, Spirit, who's that pitiful little girl
- 35 **over there?**

- 1 FESTER: Oh, her. You remember them carolers who came
2 to your dress shop earlier?
- 3 MIMI: Yes, I remember.
- 4 FESTER: And they was raisin' money to buy their little girl
5 some real important medicine?
- 6 MIMI: Yes.
- 7 FESTER: That's the little girl.
- 8 MIMI: She looks so weak.
- 9 FESTER: That's 'cause she is. If she don't get the proper
10 medical treatment soon, the poor little thing ain't goin'
11 to make it a-tall.
- 12 MIMI: But why didn't someone tell me?
- 13 FESTER: They tried to tell you, but you was too busy
14 countin' your money.
- 15 MIMI: All I wanted them to do is leave me alone. Be honest
16 with me, Spirit — is the little girl goin' to die?
- 17 FESTER: If these shadows remain unaltered, then yes
18 ma'am, I'm afraid she will pass on.
- 19 MIMI: The poor little thing. *(The little GIRL exits.)* Wait, little
20 girl. *(But she's gone. ALL unfreeze as ELKIN holds up a*
21 *crudely wrapped box.)*
- 22 ELKIN: Here you go, Cousin Oswald. From our humble little
23 family to yours. Merry Christmas.
- 24 MIMI: Look at that large gift. Open it! Open it! I wonder
25 what it could be.
- 26 OSWALD: Elkin, you shouldn't have. *(He pulls something*
27 *wrapped in white tissue from the large box. BRENDA MAE*
28 *crosses and takes the item and hides it behind her back as*
29 *she approaches PETUNIA.)*
- 30 BRENDA MAE: Cousin Petunia, you know how you have
31 always dreamed of ownin' your very own rare diamond
32 necklace?
- 33 PETUNIA: *(Excited)* Yes!
- 34 BRENDA MAE: *(Hands her the gift.)* Well, here's a rag doll.
- 35 PETUNIA: Oh. A rag doll. *(She unwraps it and holds it up.)*

- 1 **BRENEDA MAE:** I made it with my own two hands. Can
 2 you tell who it is? It's you. I call her Petunia Two.
- 3 **PETUNIA:** You made this? Brenda Mae, I don't know what
 4 to say. That took a lot of precious time.
- 5 **BRENEDA MAE:** Yes ma'am, but I wanted it to be just right.
- 6 **PETUNIA:** I'll treasure it always. (*Hugs BRENEDA MAE.*)
 7 Thank you, Brenda Mae.
- 8 **FESTER:** I'm next. (*He takes a wooden statue from the box.*)
 9 Here, Cousin Pete, this is yours. (*He hands him the figure*
 10 *carved from wood.*) You know how I always dress up like
 11 a shepherd at Christmas time?
- 12 **PETE:** Yes, you do it every year.
- 13 **FESTER:** Well, I took my carvin' knife and a piece of oak
 14 and carved this here little shepherd myself, just for
 15 you.
- 16 **PETE:** You carved this? Fester, I didn't know you could do
 17 things like that.
- 18 **FESTER:** Shucks, it wasn't nothin'. Jesus was a wood
 19 carver, you know.
- 20 **PETE:** I'll set it on my desk at the office so everyone can
 21 see it. (*FESTER returns to MIMI and slips his spirit robe*
 22 *back on.*)
- 23 **ELKIN:** Cousin Oswald, this is yours. (*Hands him a rifle.*)
 24 This here rifle was passed down from my granddaddy
 25 to my daddy, and my daddy gave it to me.
- 26 **OSWALD:** Elkin, I can't accept such an heirloom.
- 27 **ELKIN:** Oh, it ain't no heirloom, it's a Remington. (*Or any*
 28 *other brand.*) My daddy gave me three guns, so I've still
 29 got plenty to pass down to my boy when I have one.
- 30 **OSWALD:** I'll cherish it always, Cousin Elkin.
- 31 **GLENDA MAE:** We got somethin' else, but it's for Cousin
 32 Mimi. (*She holds up a small porcelain angel.*)
- 33 **PETUNIA:** What a beautiful angel.
- 34 **GLENDA MAE:** It's pure porcelain. (*Holds it up for everyone*
 35 *to see.*) We ain't sure how long it's been in the family,

- 1 but I know for sure it's been a long time.
- 2 **BRENDA MAE:** We wanted to give it to Cousin Mimi because
- 3 she's like our own little angel in our family.
- 4 **MIMI:** Did you hear that, Spirit? I'm like the little angel in
- 5 the family. That's the sweetest thing I ever heard in my
- 6 life. I think I might cry. And you know what I got my
- 7 hillbilly cousins for Christmas? Nothing. I didn't buy
- 8 them one present this year, because I was so busy
- 9 making money.
- 10 **OSWALD:** Cousin Elkin, we'll give you your gifts when we
- 11 get back to the house.
- 12 **ELKIN:** Aw, Cousin Oswald, y'all didn't have to do that.
- 13 **BRENDA MAE:** But we're sure glad you did.
- 14 **GLENDA MAE:** Yeah, 'cause like we say in the country, "If
- 15 the pen is mightier than the sword, you'd better have
- 16 an awful big pen."
- 17 **PETE:** For now, we should all pile into the limo and drive
- 18 around looking at Christmas lights on the way back to
- 19 the house.
- 20 **OSWALD:** Good idea. Everybody grab your coats and follow
- 21 me. *(After getting their coats, they file out singing "Joy to the*
- 22 *World" as FESTER turns to MIMI. BRENDA MAE remains*
- 23 *Center Stage holding the porcelain angel.)*
- 24 **BRENDA MAE:** Little angel, I sure wish Cousin Mimi could
- 25 have been here tonight. It just don't seem like
- 26 Christmas without her smilin' face. *(She sets the angel on*
- 27 *the coffee table, grabs her coat, and runs out.)*
- 28 **MIMI:** Did you hear that, Spirit? Though I've been nothing
- 29 but selfish, always snubbing my Cricket County
- 30 cousins, they still love me. They really, really love me.
- 31 **FESTER:** Life goes by pretty darn fast. Our friends and
- 32 family are gave to us for a short little time. I think we
- 33 should treasure them while we've got 'em, don't you?
- 34 **MIMI:** You're right, Spirit. I didn't mean to be so hateful. I
- 35 was just trying to build a successful business. *(As she*



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

*Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:
CRICKET COUNTY CHRISTMAS CAROL
by Eddie McPherson.*

*For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script,
please contact us at:*

CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS
P.O. Box 248 - Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406
Toll Free: 1-844-841-6387 - Fax (319) 368-8011
customerservice@christianpub.com