

COMFORT AND JOY

~~Up to page 7complete.....additional dialogue to be placed from page 8 on.....ready by
ecember 3~~

ENTRANCE OF PLAYERS

ORDER OF PROCESSION:

It's the most *wonderful time of the year*.
With the kids jingle belling,
and everyone telling you,
"Be of good cheer,"
It's the most wonderful time of the year.

It's the happiest season of all
With those holiday greetings and gay
happy meetings
When friends come to call
It's the hap-happiest season of all

There'll be parties for hosting,
marshmallows for toasting and
caroling out in the snow.
there'll be scary ghost stories and
tales of the glories of Christmases
long, long ago.

It's the most wonderful time of the year.
There'll be much mistletoeing
and hearts will be glowing,
when loved ones are near.
It's the most wonderful time of the year.

Haul out the holly;
Put up the tree before my spirit falls
again.
Fill up the stocking,
I may be rushing things, but deck the
halls again now.

For we need a little Christmas
Right this very minute,
Candles in the window,
Carols at the spinet.
Yes, we need a little Christmas
Right this very minute.
It hasn't snowed a single flurry,
But Santa, dear, were in a hurry;
So climb down the chimney;
Turn on the brightest string of lights I've
ever seen.
Slice up the fruitcake;
It's time we hung some tinsel on that
evergreen bough.
There'll be much mistletoeing
and hearts will be glowing,
when loved ones are near.
It's the most wonderful time of the year.

*The center curtain is closed as the singers
exit and go to their places.*

MUSIC CUE #1

*(Once the players are off the stage area, one
angel COMFORT and one elf JOY come to
the center of stage and are back to back.
Lights up on them)*

COMFORT: *(she bows to the audience*

and speaks gently... with her hands folded as if in prayer) Blessings on you, dear friends. This is a very special time in the calendar both here in heaven and there with you on earth. I have been given the name of COMFORT and pray that my presence here will bring you some peace and comfort at this time in your life.

My companion, JOY, is, obviously, not one of our elect...but merely a symbol of the frivolity of this season on earth.

JOY: (looking confused) Merely a symbol? That doesn't sound right. (She moves away and assumes a seated posture). Indeed, my name is JOY...and I do symbolize the mirth, glee and excitement of this Christmas season!

COMFORT: As we look back on the events of 2017, we are struck by the fact that we, both of us....have been overlooked to some degree. (To one audience member) How have YOU reached out in care and compassion to others?

JOY: When was the last time you did something for someone else...simply for the pure fun...or joy...of it?

FIDELIS: (enters from downstage) Herald and I have finished our mission, Comfort, and think we have found the perfect solution to offer Christmas greetings 2017.

HERALD: (enters between them as if refereeing the ladies). This will take a little imagination, Fidelis, but we thought that stressing the simplicity of

Christmas would do the trick.

FIDELIS: We have invited all the obvious signs and symbols of the season to join in sharing a unique Christmas vision...shepherds, wise men, angels...stars.....the holy family...

JOY: (cuts her off) Just remember that the reindeer, elves...even Santa Claus ...are every bit a major part of the real Christmas~

HERALD: (to the audience) Ladies and gentlemen....children of all ages....I, your herald angel, invite you to enter into the simplicity and wonder of a magnificent time....and along with my friends, offer you abundant COMFORT and JOY!

Music cue #2 WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

At stage right, a scribe (NICK) and an elf (REESE) are seated busily at work. At stage left is a small stool and music stand, with a musician (PAPA) and his assistant (WOLFIE) seeming to be getting inspiration. A group of Archangels take their place near the piano.

(HERALD, a white suited angel is seen at downstage center surrounded by FIDELIS, COMFORT and ANGELO who appear to be taking inventory, writing notes and jingling a large set of keys.

HERALD: (to the audience) Now this is

quite a picture! Christmas is only one week away, and there seems to be some anxiety in the air. By this time, there should be much more excitement!

COMFORT: There is excitement, Herald, but this year the news has not been good. Earthlings everywhere have been faced with economic worries, political questions, and some disappointing stories about high-profile celebrities.

FIDELIS: Not to mention all the natural disasters! ((to the audience)....It has certainly made us aware of the power of earth, wind, fire and water!

HERALD: Well, we are simply going to have to do something to engender some spirit! The Christmas season gives us reason to that every year.

FIDELIS: (musing) I remember that during my time on earth, there was great spirit and a down home feeling as people traveled to be home for Christmas. Maybe we could find some Christmas spirit that way:

(She moves toward the scribe who is writing at his desk)

Group begins to sing (Fidelis, Herald, Comfort, the Archangels)

'Twas the night before Christmas
When all through the house
Not a creature was stirring
Not even and Mouse

(**HONEY and GEPETTO** are seen downstage center)

ALL: and there were carols in the square, laughter everywhere,
Couples kissing under the mistletoe;
(*Nick and Reese join in*) I can't help reminiscing, knowing I'll be missing Christmas Eve in my home town.

(A few other characters enter stage left near Papa: Holly, Ivy, Clipper and Clash)

Nothing can erase the mem'ries I embrace,
Those familiar footprints upon the snow.
There's so much to remember, no wonder I remember
Christmas Eve in my home town.

SOLO: I'd like to be there, trimming the tree there
And there's a chance that I might!
I can hear singing, steeple bells ringing
Noel and Silent Night.

ALL: Wise men journeyed far, guided by a star,
But though I'm not a wise man, this I know:
Through dreams and just pretending,
I'm there and I'll be spending
Christmas Eve in my home town

(*As the song ends, lights up on stage left:*)

JOY (an elf) *enters pulling the lead on Clipper and Clash.*) C'mon dear reindeer buddies, they will be needing us to carry some of their packages. Toy stores are always special places to visit to try to find Christmas spirit.

Resume #2 WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

as the scene opens

(SCENE OPENS INTO THE TOY

Sleigh bells ring, are you listening,
In the lane, snow is glistening
A beautiful sight,
We're happy tonight.
Walking in a winter wonderland.

Gone away is the bluebird,
Here to stay is a new bird
He sings a love song,
As we go along,
Walking in a winter wonderland.

In the meadow we can build a
snowman,
Then pretend that he is Parson Brown
He'll say: Are you married?
We'll say: No man,
But you can do the job
When you're in town.

Later on, we'll conspire,
As we dream by the fire
To face unafraid,
The plans that we've made,
Walking in a winter wonderland.

HERALD AND HOLLY come out into
the center.

HOLLY: (to the audience) This is your
turn, dear friends. Leave your cares
outside and join in the singing. She
leads them:

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas,
just like the ones I used to know

*SHOP...FAMILIES, ETC) There are toys
in place, along with a row of puppets as the
shoppers enter, some with gifts and
shopping bags)*

Where the treetops glisten and children
listen
to hear sleigh bells in the snow

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas,
just like the ones I used to know
Where the treetops glisten and children
listen
to hear sleigh bells in the snow

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas,
with every Christmas card I write
May your days be merry and bright,
and may all your Christmases be white

Sleigh bells ring, are you listening,
In the lane, snow is glistening
A beautiful sight,
We're happy tonight.
Walking in a winter wonderland.

(Many of the shoppers leave the stage
area and exit through the audience,
while COMFORT, JOY and FIDELIS
move upstage surveying the toy store.
(The puppets stay in place, along with a
group of toys.

Lights up on NICK and REESE who
have been joined by GEPETTO, a doll
maker)

REESE: I am having a very hard time
this Christmas, Nick. Correct me if I am
wrong.....but....shouldn't people be nice

to each other all the time?...Not just at holiday time!"

NICK: Right you are, little man! There seems to be a little disconnect this year! Even as I try to write out the Christmas lists, I am very distracted...scattered if you will!

RUDY: *(a smaller elf who has been lying on the stage...sits up and yawns)* I heard what you said, Nick...Reese.....and think I may understand what you mean....(He stands up). It's all about values.....dignity.....good manners.....

REESE: Basic respect!

NICK: Let's see how we can weave a Christmas tale that will meld all the beauty that seems to be in the background! We can do that!

GEPETTO: *(moving toward the center)* There's just too much pressure this year! All the advertising.....Black Friday....Cyber Monday....free shipping....deep discounts. And nobody really seems to understand that Christmas is NOT about electronics and really cool jeans

REESE: But what you do is CRAFTSMANSHIP, Gepetto. How many people really Respect your craft?

GEPETTO: Few, I am afraid, Reese!

IVY *(a Rockette)* walks over to him. Do you need some help here? The strings don't seem to be tangled.

GEPETTO: I can use all the help you can give me. Puppetmaking is a lost art!

(Lights up on center where the group of marionettes are hanging. IVY, REESE, RUDY, and NOEL try to help him...in the background)

#3 CAROL OF THE BELLS PUPPETS

(Close curtain)

(Lights fade out on them and come Up on Papa and Wolfie)

PAPA: I think I finally have the melody, Wolfie! I may have been trying too hard to be unique. The melodies I needed have been there all the time.

HONEY: *(enters from stage left and looks at Papa's music.)* Too hard, indeed! What we need is sweet music....true Christmas carols...not all that nonsense about trivia!

WOLFIE: Papa and I have really tried, but those angelic choirs are a little too much!

HONEY: Angels are spirits, Wolfie. They can only sing in the movies!

WOLFIE: I don't agree, Honey! Have you looked around you?

(Two groups of singers approach....the ARCHANGELS and the TROUBADORS who begin to sing:

Have you heard the sound of the angel voices
ringing out so sweetly, ringing out so clear?
Have you seen the star shining out so brightly
as a sign from God that Christ the Lord is here?

Have you heard the news that they bring from heaven
to the humble shepherds who have waited long?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Hear the angels sing their joyful song.

Hark the herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled"
Joyful, all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

HERALD: That was so nice of Papa to name a song for me...It had a nice ring to it...HARK....THE **HERALD** ANGELS SING.....I hope my mom heard that one!

(The curtain opens and we find a small group of musicians. PAPA and NICK have joined the group)

GEPETTO: (scratching his head and looking quizzically at Reese) I'm really

confused, Nick. I've seen a lot of concerts in my day...Most of them have musicians all decked out on tuxedos....but...what is this? An elf.....a tree.....a reindeer?

REESE: Again...remember, that Christmas is a very special time when EVERYONE becomes simple.....it is all about signs and symbols....how we SEE the celebration.

STRING ENSEMBLE MEDLEY

(As the group finishes, lights back up where IVY, HOLLY are joined by CLIPPER and CLASH and REESE and RUDY)

HOLLY: Respect for the spirit of Christmas has so many facets! There are many beautiful pictures and cards that depict the Madonna and Child, the traditional figures of shepherds and kings

CLASH: There are also quite a few with reindeer, sheep, camels. Don't forget us!

JOY (runs across the stage bearing a piece of music) Wait, wait.....Papa wrote something for me, too! That is just so cool! Listen!

HOLLY: (Looking at the music) You are right, Joy! This one is for you....and for all those beautiful parts of nature that rejoice at this special time...the poinsettias, the holly, the ivy.....

ANGELS AND TROUBADORS:

Joy to the world! The Lord is come.
Let earth receive her King
Let every heart
Prepare Him room
And Saints and angels sing
And Saints and angels sing
And Saints and Saints and angels sing

Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns
Let Saints their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, Repeat, the sounding joy

(Lights back up on center COMFORT is holding a large tablet.)

COMFORT: The Christmas narrative is about all of us...every man, woman, rich poor, tall, short, famous and simple folk.

FIDELIS: The Christ Child really only came once...in history...It is the **REMEMBRANCE** of that time that gives us cause to celebrate.

ANGELO: Adeste, Fidelis! (to the audience) that means, "Come here, faithful one". There needs to be a simple way of telling the story in a way that everyone can understand.

COMFORT: Regardless of the language, the simple pastoral is read year after year in homes, churches, on stage and screen. The message is the same.....tidings of great JOY!

TIDINGS OF JOY #4

In terra pax (Archangels)

(Scene depicts a small shepherd in the field and a group of shepherds who approach him: (The entrance of the shepherd and magi bands)

(As the music softens, the narrators come to the front where NOEL holds a giant book)

(Music cues will be given to the speakers)

GEPETTO: While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

NICK: Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear.

REESE: The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you:

you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

ANGELO: And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

(As the story finishes, the lights go down on the scene, while Comfort and Fidelis move to stage center)

COMFORT: The traditional Christmas story is filled with wonder, yet the beauty of those simple words is the greatest statement ever uttered.

FIDELIS: One central figure emerges each Christmas in our creches and on our Christmas cards...Mary, the woman....Mary, the mother...Mary, the central figure whose YES started the story in the first place.

COMFORT: It is so easy to get caught up in the glory of angelic choirs and the gifts of the wise men..but, the story of the first Christmas night cannot be understood without looking closely at the Mother whose Child would change the world.

(ARCHANGEL AND ANGEL CHOIRS
move into the light: Mary and Gabriel dance to their song)

Amid the roses Mary sits and rocks her Jesus child,
While among the tree tops, sighs a breeze so warm and mild.
And soft and sweetly, sings a bird upon the bow
Aaahh baby, dear one, slumber now.

Happy is thy laughter,
Silent is thy holy rest
Lay thy head in slumber,
Soft upon thy mother's breast
aaahh baby dear one, slumber now

(The lights dim down to a soft blue hue as Mary moves to the side -stage right and then exits)

(From out of the darkness, the lights come up on a small group of angels. Follow the dancers and cues as the music swells" small angels, bigger angels, shepherd, magi, big angels, the Mary and Joseph. As Mary and Joseph come downstage, the lights block out everyone else and focus only on the center. As Mary lifts the Child, only the small spotlight is in focus.)

Star of Bethlehem shining bright
Bathing the world in heav'nly light,
Let the glow of your distant glory
Fill us with hope this Christmas night.

Star of innocence, star of goodness
Gazing out since time began,
You who've lived through endless ages
View with love the age of man.

Star of beauty hear our plea,
Whisper your wisdom tenderly.
Star of Bethlehem set us free
Make us a world we long to see.

Star of Bethlehem, star up high,
Miracle of the midnight sky,
Let your luminous life of heaven
Better our hearts and make us fly.

Star of happiness, star of wonder
You see everything from afar,
Cast your eye upon the future
Make us wiser than we are.

Star of gentleness, hear our plea,
Whisper your wisdom tenderly.
Star of Bethlehem set us free
Make us a world we long to see.

(At the end of the Nativity scene,
FIDELIS comes forward.)

FIDELIS: (extending her arms over the audience) My dear ones, let us bow our heads in reverence and then proclaim in a loud voice the song that has survived the ages.

ANGELO: The words should be familiar!

ALL: O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
o come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the King of angels;

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
o come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God, Glory in the highest;
o come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,

It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth.

Long lay the world in sin and error pining.

Till He appeared and the Spirit felt its worth.

A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!

O night divine, the night when Christ was born;

O night, O holy night, O night divine!

O night, O holy night, O night divine!

(There is a distinct black-out here as if to give chance to re-group)

(CLIPPER and CLASH moves across the stage, led by Reese and Noel. Ivy and Holly are at stage right standing with Nick)

JOY(runs to them excitedly) That took my breath away, Nick! I am really not used to all that drama!

CLIPPER: (wiping his eyes) Yes, that really got to me, too!

CLASH: (scratching his head) I am having a hard time understanding how the story of Christmas...the Baby, the Mother, the angels....How did that wind up with elves and reindeer?

HOLLY: (taking them aside) It is not as big a stretch as you may think. Remember..in that Christmas carol, (*she sings*) "Let heaven and nature sing"

JOY (from her seat at stage front) That was the carol they wrote for ME!

HOLLY: (looking directly at JOY) The Christmas mystery..the coming of the Savior...was a time when the stars aligned...when there was joy...new life in every form. The stars shone brightly.....the snow fell softly.....

IVY: People decked the halls with bows of Holly (*Holly bows*).....songs were written about the Holly and the Ivy (*they link arms*)....and one of the great carols, was called O CHRISTMAS TREE

CLIPPER: I do remind you, friend, that some special novelty songs were also written about Frosty the Snowman...and, of course, Rudolph the Fred Nosed Reindeer.

JOY: Let's not get too carried away here. There are so many songs out there! I know that people sometimes frown on all the red and the green.....and some of those very simple things at Christmas like elves and chimneys...

NOEL: Don't forget the gifts! Presents and lots of them!

HONEY: And let's remember the candy canes, ribbon candy, hot chocolate.....all the sweets that fill the stockings each year.

JOY: Time out everyone! There is too much going on at once! Let's take this step by step! (*pauses*) The central theme of Christmas is the birth of Christ. (*Comfort, Fidelis and Herald nod in agreement from stage left*)...He came to bring comfort to those who walked in darkness (or so the Scripture says). (*she walks toward the three angels*)

People choose to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child in whatever ways make them happy...

HONEY: You are beginning to get it, Joy! Giving gifts, enjoying the company of good friends, celebrating nature....that does, indeed, give comfort to many.....and joy to them as well!

COMFORT: Christmas is about a child...so what better way to spend the day, the season, than with the children...the toys...the candy...the fantasy that is Christmas?

(*The curtain opens and a group of candy canes, other sweets and toys are onstage as a group of toys come into view*)

(Youngest string players welcome them by playing) O Come Little Children

FIDELIS: Children are everywhere..even in

Heaven.....Tonight the stars shine for
them as well.

**(Little CHerubs enter singing
EMMANUEL)**

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
A child is born A child is born
Sing glory unto God on high
Joy to all the world this night
And to all people, peace
And to all people, peace
Remember Him, oh little star
Remember Him and shine
Around the world In every heart
On this holy night Lead us to His light

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
A child is born A child is born
Sing glory unto God on high
Joy to all the world this night
And to all people, peace
And to all people, peace

Remember Him, the angels sing
And do not be afraid
Into this world
Good news we bring
Love has overcome
Behold a Son

JINGLE BELLS- KINDERGARTEN

(At the close of the song, the little ones sit at the edge of the stage, while Santa begins to don his red jacket and leaves the area with Clipper and Clash. Gepetto approaches Herald

HERALD: You look confused, Gepetto. Is there something I can do for you?

GEPETTO: It's not a big deal...exactly.....but I do have one very special toy that I would like to give to you, Herald...and to all the baby-boomers in the audience. I've been thinking that they need a special smile right now. Can you give me a second? (He goes and pulls out a doll dressed *(At the end of the lip sync, the Troubadors join him on stage and sing)*

God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas Day;
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy!

(The toys, candy, dolls, soldiers remain in a freeze, while lights come up on the original group...Comfort, Joy, Fidelis and Herald.)

FIDELIS: My understanding of what just happened here is becoming much clearer now.

HERALD: Christmas is a special event...so special in fact, that it is commemorated every single year! It doesn't matter what our cards look like

like Elvis and places him on the stage front)

I'll have a blue Christmas without you
I'll be so blue just thinking about you
Decorations of red on a green
Christmas tree
Won't be the same dear, if you're not here with me

And when those blue snowflakes are falling
That's when those blue memories start calling
You'll be doing alright with your
Christmas of white
And I'll have a blue, blue Christmas

...or how much we spend on wrapping paper and decorations.

COMFORT: The essential thing this year...every year...is that we, all of us, look into ourselves and realize that know that we have so much joy that we should share with others. Parties, plays.....and simple family gatherings!

JOY: And, regardless of how much fun we want to have, we need to dig down and show respect for each other as well as for the earth and all that we have. Comfort and a genuine compassion for others is truly the Christmas spirit!

HERALD: In that spirit, let's celebrate!

FINALE JING A LING

ELVES, SKATERS, REINDEER, trees,
snowmen, Rockettes

On cue, Santa arrives with elves,
reindeer. The toys, angels, wise

men...entire cast moves into place on
cue as the finale ends.

