

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

A Christmas Playlet

ADAPTED BY PANCITA FLORES

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

JUAN, twelve years old

PEDRO, age five or six

CRISTETA, age ten

ANA, nearly eight years old

CHRISTMAS SINGERS

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The children wear everyday clothes. The singers wear choir vestments of black gowns and white surplices. The Christmas Spirit is neatly dressed and is always smiling.

SETTING

The children are in the *sala* of their home wrapping Christmas presents. It is not a grand room, and the furniture has been used a long time. There is a litter of colored paper, ribbon, and little cards for labeling gifts. A Christmas tree stands in an important place in the room.

THE PLAY

JUAN (*carefully tying a bow on the top of a large package*): Blue paper and a yellow ribbon! I like that best of all for tying Christmas presents. It makes me think of stars and the sky.

PEDRO: I want blue paper for one of my packages, too, Juan. Help me tie a package with blue paper and a yellow ribbon.

CRISTETA: Wait a minute, brother Pedro. Sister will help you tie your packages. Come here and let me see what you have. (*Cristeta drops her work and begins to help her small brother.*)

ANA: See, Teta! I'm wrapping mine in green. Green paper for Christmas trees! And white ribbon for the Christ-

mas Spirit which our teacher told us about.

PEDRO: I want to wrap Grandmother's present in red. I like red best of all. Red with a silver bow!

CRISTETA: All right, brother. One in blue, one in red, and one in yellow!

JUAN: Hurry, Ana. We are all finished but you. Here! Write your cards and then we're through.

CRISTETA: Now we will pile them under the tree so that they will be all ready when Daddy and Mother and Grandmother come home.

ANA: This is the most beautiful tree we ever had in all our lives.

CRISTETA: We've never had one so lovely as this!

PEDRO (*clapping his hands and running around the room*): Oh, the Christmas tree! The Christmas tree!

JUAN (*arranging the wrapped presents about the bottom of the tree*): They look pretty nice! Don't they?

CRISTETA (*clapping her hands in joy*): Oh, beautiful!

JUAN: I can just see Daddy's eyes shine when he opens his presents.

CRISTETA: And Mother's, too!

ANA: I made the picture frame for Mother all myself.

PEDRO: My package for Mother has a beautiful gold ring in it.

JUAN: A gold ring! Why, that's—

CRISTETA (*stopping him with a sisterly look of warning*): Of course, brother. Of course you have a gold ring for Mother. A gold ring is the most beautiful present in all the world for a lady.

ANA: Sometime I'm going to buy

Mother a beautiful silk dress for Christmas. And I'll buy a new dress for Grandmother, too.

JUAN: And for Dad a big automobile.

PEDRO: And a fire engine! (*Older children burst into laughter.*)

ANA: Pedro! What would Father want with a fire engine?

PEDRO: Well—

CRISTETA (*with another sisterly look of warning*): Daddy would just love a fire engine, Pedro. But he'll like the little book you made for him just as well.

JUAN: Of course!

PEDRO (*skipping about the room*): I made it all myself. Really and truly!

JUAN (*jumping to his feet*): We almost forgot the Christmas candle. The Christmas singers will be here before we know it. If there is no light in the window they will pass us by.

CRISTETA (*running to help*): Oh, we must not forget the Christmas candle. (*The children place a large lighted candle in the window. As they do this, singing is heard in the distance, growing louder as they listen. They are singing a Christmas song.*)

ANA: We were just in time.

JUAN: They're coming nearer every minute. They'll soon be here.

ANA: Oh, I love the Christmas singing almost the best of all the Christmas things!

PEDRO: I'm going to be a Christmas singer, too, when I'm big.

(*The singers can be heard very plainly, singing outside. The singing continues for a few moments. The children listen quietly until it ceases.*)

CRISTETA: Go and invite them to

come in, Juan. That's the way Mother does. I'll get some cakes.

(*CRISTETA leaves the room. Juan goes to the door.*)

JUAN: Won't you all come in? Your singing was beautiful.

(*The Chorus of Christmas Singers*

enter. With them is a tall, neatly dressed, smiling youth. His manner is extraordinarily gay and joyous, and his face fairly shines with smiles. He keeps constantly in the background, and seems to be unnoticed by all.)

JUAN (*to the Singers*): Won't you sing us a Christmas song?

ONE OF THE SINGERS: 'Yes, indeed. (*The Chorus of Christmas Singers form a group and they sing "When Good Old Kris Comes 'Round," page 460 of this is-*



Wherever there is Christmas joy, there is the Christmas Spirit.

sure of THE YOUNG CITIZEN. *The children listen carefully.*)

JUAN (*after the song is finished*): Thank you very much. That is a real jolly Christmas song. It makes me think the Christmas Spirit is right here with us. (*The young man—the Christmas Spirit—smiles and then chuckles to himself.*) Now, won't you all sit down and eat some cakes. Do you like cakes? I like them best of all the Christmas treats.

ONE OF THE SINGERS: Indeed we do like cakes. Thank you very much.

(*Cristeta passes a plate of cakes to the singers, who stand or sit around the room while eating.*)

ANOTHER SINGER: My! these cakes are good!

CRISTETA: And so was your song!

JUAN: I do wish Mother and Father and Grandmother were here to hear you sing. They have gone down to the village to do some last minute Christmas shopping.

ANOTHER SINGER: We are sorry they are not here. We would love to sing for them. (*Everybody smiles and looks happy, especially the Christmas Spirit.*) And now we must be on our way. We have to go many places to sing.

(*The Christmas Singers all go out, but the Spirit of Christmas remains.*)

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Good evening, children. Good evening, and Merry Christmas to you all!

(*The children start in astonishment as they see, for the first time, the young man—the Spirit of Christmas—in their midst.*)

JUAN: Why-er-why—who are you?

CRISTETA: Good evening, sir. We—

ANA: We didn't see you until this very minute.

PEDRO (*running to the young man and*

pulling him gently into the center of the room): Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! This is Christmas eve, and tomorrow is Christmas morning. Did you know that?

JUAN (*half laughing*): Would you mind telling us where you came from, please, sir?

CRISTETA: We are very glad you are here, sir, but we really would like very much to know how you came.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: I came here with the Christmas singers. I was led here by your Christmas candlelight. And your Christmas packages and Christmas tree caused me to want to stay here. Merry Christmas!

JUAN: Thank you very much.

ANA: We are so happy about our Christmas presents for Mother and Grandmother and Daddy!

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: That is just why I am here.

PEDRO: I have a gold ring for Mother.

CRISTETA: It isn't really and truly gold, sir, but Pedro is just as happy as though it were.

ANA: We are glad you are here. Please stay with us.

PEDRO (*running to the young man with a cake in his hand*): Here is the nicest cake on the plate. It is for you!

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: How nice it is to be here! But, of course, I knew what I would find. It has never failed.

JUAN: What do you mean? I don't understand.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Why, it's like this, my young friends. Every Christmas Eve I go out into the night to listen for the call of Christmas joy. I listen and I follow. Into places high and places

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CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

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lowly I go. Into the midst of riches and poverty. And the thing I find is always the same. It fills my heart with happiness.

CRISTETA: Surely you did not find anything so very wonderful here, sir.

ANA: We were only wrapping Christmas presents. What could you find here to make you happy?

CRISTETA: We were so happy about our presents for Mother and Grandmother and Daddy, that we couldn't think of anything else.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: And what are these Christmas presents which give you so much joy?

JUAN: A holder for Dad's neckties. I made it at school.

ANA: And I made a little red pincushion for Mother.

PEDRO: And a gold ring for Mother!

CRISTETA: They are wonderful presents, aren't they?

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Of course they are. And it all goes to prove what I say. I never knew it to fail. Automobiles or pincushions, it is always the same.

JUAN: What do you mean?

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST-

MAS: I mean just this. Wherever there is love, there is joy. And wherever there is Christmas joy, there is the Christmas Spirit. That is why I am with you children. Merry Christmas!

ALL: Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! And may the Christmas Spirit always remain with us!

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS

1. What do you think is the meaning of this playlet?

2. Is there a lesson to be learned from it? What is the lesson?

3. Is the opening of this playlet a happy scene?

4. Could such a scene be found almost anywhere in the Philippines?

5. Did these children belong to a happy family? Why do you think so?

6. Were they rich?

7. Were the two brothers and the two sisters loyal to each other?

8. At what point in the story did the Christmas Spirit enter.

9. Why did the Christmas Spirit not leave with the singers?

10. Were the children's presents costly?

11. What makes a Christmas present worth while?

12. Why do we give presents at Christmas?

THE WIFE OF RIZAL

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5. Of what nationality was Miss Taufer?

6. Why did Rizal not marry Miss Taufer in Dapitan?

7. What official order did Rizal receive?

8. Tell of his departure from Manila.

9. What accusation was made in Spain against Rizal?

10. Where was he sent? Why?

11. Where was Rizal imprisoned?

12. Can his prison cell still be seen? (Yes)

13. What request by Miss Taufer was refused?

14. Who visited Rizal in his prison cell on December 27, 1896?

15. What agreement did Rizal and Miss Taufer then make?

16. When were they married? How long before Rizal's execution?

17. What did Rizal tell about the alcohol lamp at his last meeting with Miss Taufer?

18. Did Mrs. Rizal witness the execution of her husband?

19. How did Rizal act at his execution?

20. What request did Mrs. Rizal make at the gate of Paco cemetery in Manila?