

SARA FINDS CHRISTMAS

by

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

SARAgirl age 9-12
JOHNSara's brother, also age 9-12
MOMSara and John's mother
DADSara and John's father
CAROLERSfour children of various ages and two adults
BETHhomeless girl
THREE CHILDREN and THREE ADULTSextras in homeless shelter scene

COSTUMES

- SARA: Casual clothes with Christmas theme (Christmas sweater or tee)
- JOHN: Casual clothes
- MOM: Casual clothes
- DAD: Casual clothes
- CAROLERS: Casual clothes, coats, scarves, and gloves/mittens, perhaps in similar colors or patterns so they look cohesive
- BETH: Casual clothes that are worn and don't fit well such as a thin tee and pants that are too short; old sneakers
- PEOPLE AT SHELTER: Casual clothes that don't fit well and appear old and worn

SETTING AND SCENES

This play has two settings: Sara's home and a homeless shelter

SCENE 1 (located STAGE RIGHT): Sara's bedroom with a small bed, nightstand, and lamp.

SCENE 2 (located STAGE LEFT): Sara's living room with couch, chair (optional), end table, and decorated Christmas tree. A doorway (can be made of wood or cardboard) stands to one side.

SCENE 3: Still in Sara's living room.

SCENE 4 (located STAGE CENTER): Homeless shelter with a long table surrounded by chairs and a small, decorated Christmas tree sitting on a table and a chair next to it. There should also be a smaller table set up to one side.

PROPS

- Box containing boy's present (for John) such as building blocks or video game, wrapping paper, scissors, and tape (Scene 1)
- A wrapped diary with attached pen (Scene 2)
- Plate of Christmas cookies (Scene 3)
- A doorbell sound (Scene 3)
- Faux snow (Scene 3)
- Paper plates, paper cups, and plastic utensils (Scene 4)
- Mashed potatoes (buy pre-made or make from a box – very little is needed) and one rotisserie chicken or turkey (Scene 4)

APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME

30 minutes

MUSICAL SELECTIONS

- *Deck the Halls*
- *White Christmas*
- *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*

SCRIPT

Scene 1

(Lights come up and Sara is sitting on her bed STAGE RIGHT. She is holding John's unwrapped Christmas present and a roll of wrapping paper is on the bed next to her.)

Sara: (Wrapping John's Christmas present and sighing) It doesn't feel like Christmas this year. I don't feel excited at all. It's usually the best time of the year but nothing has gone right the last few weeks. I missed decorating the Christmas tree because I had to study for a really hard test at school, and I got a bad grade. Grandma went to visit Uncle Brian for the holidays so we couldn't bake cookies together. And I found out my best friend is moving to another town right after the holidays. (Says sarcastically) Some Christmas this is. (Stops wrapping and sits in thought for a few seconds.) I wish I could find the Christmas spirit. I've tried and tried, but I just can't feel it this year. Where is it?

Mom: (Calling from STAGE LEFT): Sara! Come into the living room so you and John can exchange gifts.

Sara: Hold on, Mom. I'm not finished wrapping his present yet! (She finishes wrapping the present). I'm usually done wrapping at least a week before Christmas. (She slowly gets up, holding the wrapped gift). I'm not even looking forward to our Christmas Eve gift exchange. (She walks slumped and defeated STAGE LEFT to living room. Lights go down on Sara's bedroom.)

Scene 2

(Lights follow Sara and come up STAGE LEFT on living room as Sara arrives. Dad is standing next to the Christmas tree arranging ornaments, and Mom and John are sitting on the couch. A plate of Christmas cookies sits on the end table. John is holding a wrapped gift.)

John: (Excited) C'mon, slowpoke! Aren't you excited to exchange gifts?

Sara: (Slumps onto the couch and shrugs) I guess so.

Mom: What's wrong, Sara? Exchanging presents with your brother every Christmas Eve is one of your favorite traditions.

Sara: I don't know. It just doesn't feel like Christmas this year. I don't have that special feeling I usually get. I keep trying to find it, but I can't. I just feel blah.

John: Well, while you're looking, let me open my present!

Sara: (Hands John his present) Here you go. At least someone has the Christmas spirit around here.

John: (Opens his gift) Wow! Thanks, Sara! I really wanted this! Here's your gift. (Hands Sara her gift)

Sara: You're welcome. (She opens her gift and stares at it.)

John: Why are you staring at it? Don't you know what it is?

Sara: (Replies with little emotion) Of course. It's a diary. Thanks, John. I really wanted one.

John: (Moves to the floor to play with his gift) Well, you sure aren't acting like it.

Sara: (Taking a Christmas cookie and nibbling on it) Sorry. I just don't feel that Christmassy feeling. (She puts the cookie back on the plate.) Even the cookies don't taste right. They're not the same ones Grandma and I usually make.

Mom: Cheer up, Sara. Even though you've had some rough days, you can still have a great Christmas.

Sara: I want to have a good Christmas. I really do, but I don't feel happy inside. (Mom and Dad look at Sara with concern).

Scene 3

(A doorbell rings STAGE LEFT. Dad opens the door (if cardboard door is functional, he can literally open the door; if not, he'll pretend to open the door) and finds the carolers standing there. Carolers move to the side so they are visible and begin singing *Deck the Halls*. Mom, Dad, and John walk towards the carolers and sing with them. Sara stays on the couch and remains silent.)

John: (When first song ends) Sara, don't you want to sing with us?

Sara: (Walking to Christmas tree) Nah, that's okay.

Dad: But you love to sing. C'mon, give it a try.

Sara: I don't want to! (Mom looks at Sara with perplexed look and shakes her head).

John: Let's sing another song. (Everyone except Sara sings *White Christmas*. As song ends, "snow" falls outside doorway.)

John: Look! It's snowing! It really is a white Christmas! Sara, come see the snow. That will give you the Christmas spirit.

Sara: (Walks over and peeks through the door at the snow and shrugs) It's pretty I guess.

Mom: I hope you're in a better mood when we get to the homeless shelter.

Sara: I don't think going to a homeless shelter is going to make me feel better. In fact, it sounds like a pretty depressing way to spend Christmas Eve.

Mom: Helping others is a great way to spend Christmas Eve. Why don't you bring your diary so you can write about it?

Sara: I guess I can.

Dad: (Speaking to the carolers) Thank you! That was fun. Merry Christmas!

Carolers: Merry Christmas!

John: Merry Christmas! Sara, aren't you going to wish them a Merry Christmas?

Sara: (Half-heartedly) Merry Christmas. (Turns away) But what's so merry about it? (Lights go down on living room and cast members exit STAGE LEFT.)

Scene 4

(Lights come up STAGE CENTER. Food is set up on smaller table; John, Mom and Dad are behind the table serving food. Mom puts a slice of poultry on each plate, Dad a scoop of mashed potatoes, and John hands each person a cup (cup can be empty since audience won't know the difference). Homeless people are in line receiving food. As they are served, they take their food and sit at long table and begin to eat. Beth is sitting on a chair next to the Christmas tree. Sara is standing near her parents, but not serving food.)

Homeless Person: (As s/he receives food) Thank you! Merry Christmas!

Mom, Dad, and John: You're welcome. Merry Christmas!

John: (Turns to Sara) Aren't you going to help?

Sara: Maybe later. Besides, it looks like you have everything under control.

Mom: Why don't you write in your diary?

Sara: I left it in the car.

Sara: (Noticing Beth sitting alone, Sara walks over to her) What are you doing? Aren't you hungry?

Beth: I'm always hungry, but I don't feel like eating right now.

Sara: Why not?

Beth: (Rolling her eyes) I guess because it's Christmas Eve, and I'm living at a homeless shelter! What would you know about it, anyway?

Sara: Well, you don't have to be rude! I'm not having the best Christmas either.

Beth: What do you mean? You have a home, plenty of food, nice clothes, and I'm sure you'll get lots of presents. I have to spend Christmas with strangers and will be lucky to get a pair of gloves or some socks. It's not that I'm ungrateful, but I'll never get what I really want like other kids do.

Sara: What do you want?

Beth: Paper and something to write with.

Sara: (Sarcastically) Paper? Who wants paper for Christmas?

Beth: I do! (Looks at floor) I get pretty lonely. I don't have any friends and we move from place to place all the time. So I like to write down my feelings. It helps me feel less alone.

Sara: I like to write too. Can't your parents buy you some notebooks and pencils? They're not expensive.

Beth: They are when you barely have enough money for food.

Sara: I guess I never thought of it like that. (She stares in the distance for several moments.) Wait here. I'll be back. I have to run out to the car and get something.

Beth: I'll be here. Where else am I going to go? (Sara exits STAGE RIGHT and returns a few moments later STAGE RIGHT carrying her new diary.)

Sara: (Handing the diary to Beth) Here. Merry Christmas!

Beth: (Stands up and smiles) This is for me?

Sara: Yes, the pen is attached so it won't get lost, and there are plenty of blank pages to write on. There's even a lock so no one can open it but you.

Beth: (Holding the diary to her chest) Thank you! Thanks a lot!

Sara: You're welcome. (She stands still and shakes her entire body.)

Beth: (Touching Sara's arm) What's wrong? Are you okay?

Sara: (Clasping her hands together with excitement) Yes! I'm perfect! I just felt the Christmas spirit!

Beth: I'm sorry I don't have a present for you.

Sara: (Grabbing Beth's hand) But you gave me a present. You helped me find Christmas!

Beth: (Laughing) Was it lost?

Sara: (Smiling) For a little while. But thanks to you, I found it. Now, are you ready to get some food?

Beth: Yes! Suddenly, I'm starving! (Sara walks with Beth to the food line and then stands behind the table with her parents and brother, smiling).

John: You look happy.

Sara: I finally found the Christmas spirit. It was there all along, but I was looking in the wrong places.

John: I'm glad to hear it. You aren't much fun when you're missing the Christmas spirit. Merry Christmas, Sara.

Sara: Merry Christmas, everyone!

Dad and Mom: Merry Christmas!

Homeless People and Beth: Merry Christmas! (Everyone sings *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. When song is over, lights go down STAGE CENTER.)