

DESTINATION:



Christmas

SAMPLE

A One Act Play

By

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DESTINATION CHRISTMAS: SYNOPSIS

It's Christmas Eve. A bus leaves Dallas, Texas with a few passengers bound for New York City. With stops in Little Rock, Nashville, and Roanoke, the bus picks up characters going to the Big Apple, too. When the blizzard of the season hits, all travel plans are re-arranged and the whole bus load of passengers spend Christmas in...where else...Bethlehem, Pennsylvania! The tender message of the production is finally brought out in the words of the beloved Christmas carol... "The hopes and fears of all the years/Are met in thee tonight."

Fourteen characters with some doubling.

A One-Act Play.

Running time: 45 minutes

PERFORMANCE LICENSING AGREEMENT

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CAST

(in order of appearance)

BUS TERMINAL ANNOUNCER – (offstage voice, may be pre-recorded)

*BUD – driver from Dallas to Nashville; a nice, sweet country gentleman

MOTHER – (in 20's or 30's) a gentle, kind woman

ELIZABETH- a child (five or six years old)

FLOYD SAPP – a bum

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (F.A.) – helpful, but with a “sing-song” tone to her voice

SOCIALITE – pretentious, only concerned with appearances

OLD WOMAN – feisty, but sweet

DJ – (offstage voice, may be pre-recorded)

BOBBY JOE BAKER – an aspiring country singer

*SPIKE – a relief driver in Nashville who looks like he could be in a motorcycle gang

*DRIVER – relief driver in Roanoke

MECHANIC

INNKEEPER

DIRECTOR/NARRATOR (if optional ending is used)

SAMPLE

* May be played by the same actor

SCENE 1

(Before lights up...)(SFX: bus sounds)

BUS TERMINAL ANNOUNCER: Attention Greyhound passengers. Calling bus number 2381 for Little Rock, Nashville, Roanoke, and New York. All ticketed passengers for bus 2381 may board at this time.

(Lights up; enter Bud, crossing to bus)

BUD: All aboard. *(enter mother and Elizabeth)* All right now. Right this way. Watch your step. Don't want no broken bones right here on Christmas Eve now, do we? Ticket please, ma'am. *(Mother gives ticket to driver)* Thank you. *(to Elizabeth)* Well, howdy there, lit'l bit. What's Santa go'n be bringing you, darlin'?

MOTHER: She can't hear you. She's...deaf.

BUD: Oh...uh...pardon me, ma'am. *(speaking very loud)* I didn't mean...

MOTHER: *(interrupting)* Mister, I'm not deaf...she is.

BUD: Oh yeah. Sorry.

MOTHER: It's okay. *(signs to daughter "What do you want for Christmas?")*¹ *(daughter signs back "New ears") (to driver)* She says that she wants new ears for Christmas.

BUD: *(laughing nervously)* New ears? Oh...well...

MOTHER: You see, we're goin' to New York City to this big hospital up there. There's this doctor...a specialist they call it....they tell us he might be able to help Elizabeth hear.

BUD: Well now, that's some trip...from Dallas all the way to New York...specially right here on Christmas Eve.

MOTHER: Oh, we don't mind. We've been waitin' for a long time just to see this doctor and, well, his office called and said they had an opening...if we could be there the day after Christmas.

BUD: Oh...that's nice.

MOTHER: And then our church in Boonsville...that's where we're from, Boonsville, Texas. They all got together and took up 'nough money for bus fare and for a hotel and for the

¹ See production notes for signs

doctor's visit. 'Course, I don't know 'bout money for surgery. We're prayin' the Lord'll take care of it.

(enter Floyd singing obnoxiously)(Mother and Elizabeth "board" bus)

FLOYD: It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas/Everywhere I go..., etc.

BUD: *(grabbing Floyd)* Hold on there, Buddy. Where do you think you're goin'?

FLOYD: *(indignantly)* Hey man, don't wrinkle the merchandise. This is my good suit.
(laughing obnoxiously)(tries to board bus)

BUD: You can't get on this bus without a ticket.

FLOYD: Well....don't get all bent out of shape. *(takes ticket out of pocket)* Read 'em and weep, Mr. Bus Drivin' Man.

BUD: Where did you get this ticket? Who'd you steal it off of?

FLOYD: *(gasps)* Well, sir..I am cut to the quick. I have you know I am not a thief. I come from a good family. My mother was a notary public!

BUD: Then where did you get this ticket?

FLOYD: From the Baptist Church...Just so happens that this man down there called up the bus station and says, *(pretends to talk on phone)* "Hello, Greyhound. I have this transient," *(to Bus Driver)* that's me. Transient means "bum". *(pretending to talk on phone)* "And I would like for you to issue him a one way ticket to New York City. Thank you." *(“hanging up phone”)* Click.

BUD: Here, gimme that ticket. *(looking at ticket)* Hmmm, Floyd Sapp.

FLOYD: Oh, so you've heard of me....

BUD: I need some I.D.

FLOYD: *(fumbles around, looking for wallet. Finally finds it.)* There ya go.

BUD: Yeah, well...okay. What are you gonna do in New York anyway? Don't they have 'nough vagrants up there?

FLOYD: I got family there. My brother's a big city doctor, ya know.

BUD: You have a brother who's a doctor?

FLOYD: He was the one with the brains. *(laughing obnoxiously)* I got all the looks!

SCENE II

(music fades)

(Lights up. Elizabeth is asleep in Mother's lap. Old Woman is asleep sitting up, head on chest. Floyd is asleep, head on Old Woman's shoulder.)

BUD: *(into microphone)* All right, folks! Greyhound 2381 has arrived at the terminal in Little Rock, Arkansas. We'll be takin' on a few passengers here and refueling. If you'd like to get off the bus and stretch your legs, feel free. We'll be leaving for Nashville in about....18 minutes.

(Bud, Mother and Elizabeth exit)

OLD WOMAN: *(wakes up and notices Floyd on her shoulder)* Oh! Oh! What are you doing? You pervert!

FLOYD: *(wakes up, looks at Old Woman, jumps)* AAGH! *(looks away, catching his breath)* Oh...oh...for a minute there I thought I'd died and gone to....*(looking at Old Woman again, jumps)* AAGH! What do you mean...what am I doin'? What are you doin'? I was sittin' here first.

OLD WOMAN: I beg your pardon. I was here first...you musta staggered up here while I watn't watchin'. Get back there where you belong, you smelly thing.

(Floyd moves back a row)

(enter Flight Attendant and Socialite, sit in front row)

SOCIALITE: You'll hear from my lawyers about this, I assure you.

F.A.: *(to lady)* Ma'am, the airline is really sorry about the inconvenience to our travelers. It's just that the weather report doesn't look good and they'll be closing the airport soon. We're putting as many people on ground transportation....maybe you can catch another flight in Nashville.

(enter Mother and Elizabeth)

MOTHER: It's getting really cold and snowy looking. Did you say something about a weather report?

F.A.: There's a winter weather advisory out. *(using typical flight attendant hand gestures)* A major blizzard is heading this way. The temperature has already started to drop and it's snowing just west of here.

SCENE III

DJ: *(over music)* Here's the Lite 92 weather forecast...from the National Weather Service. If you've been wishing for a white Christmas, well...it looks like we've got one. Light snow's been falling in the Metro area for the past couple of hours. Looks like it's gonna be getting heavier on into tomorrow. There's a travelers' advisory tonight and tomorrow...especially for those of you heading off to the northeast. Currently, here in Nashville, we have snow and 31 degrees. It's 4 o'clock on this Christmas Eve afternoon. Hope you've gotten all your shopping done!

(music fades)
(lights up)

BUD: *(into mic)* Welcome to Music City, ya'll. Want to let you know I'll be leaving ya now. It sure was a pleasure servin' ya. Hope you'll choose Greyhound again. Happy holidays now...*(exits)*

(Socialite starts to exit)

F.A.: Where are you going?

SOCIALITE: To see if I can get a flight to New York.

F.A.: Didn't you hear the weather report? I'm sure you won't find any flights out of Nashville. Try the Smyrna Airport.

(Socialite exits)
(Floyd moves down to front row)(Old Woman wakes up and sees Floyd)

OLD WOMAN: *(jumps)* AAGH! What are you doing back up here? *(hitting Floyd with her purse)* Get back...Get back....

FLOYD: *(standing)* Hey, you can't save seats. I got rights, ya know.

OLD WOMAN: Yeah? Well, I got a can o' mace in my purse...*(starts "digging" in purse)* ...if I can find it. I don't know why I carry this thing...

(Floyd moves back to second row)

(enter Bobby Jo carrying a guitar, crosses to front seat)

BOBBY JOE: *(to Old Woman)* Howdy, ma'am. Anybody settin' here?

OLD WOMAN: *(looks back at Floyd)* Not anymore. *(looking at guitar)* Say, you a musician or

SCENE IV

(Lights up) (Everyone has frozen into a pose of fear!)

SPIKE: Hey people! We're in Roanoke. Deal with it!!

(exit Spike)

(everyone breathes a sigh of relief)

BOBBY JOE: Anybody gotta crowbar? I think my hands are froze in this position.

FLOYD: *(stands, wild-eyed)* Have you ever in your life seen such driving? Exhilarating!!

SOCIALITE: At least now we're getting somewhere. We've probably outrun that storm...which means I might be able to find an airport open. *(exits)*

OLD WOMAN: Well, I'd like to get there in one piece myself.

F.A.: *(crosses to driver's seat) (into mic)* Hello. Hello. *(blows into mic)* This thing on? May I have your attention please? Ladies and gentlemen, this is your flight attendant. I would like to take a poll here. How many of you think we ought to ask for another driver? *(all raise their hands)* That's good enough for me.

(F.A. exits)

OLD WOMAN: I'll go with you.

(Old Woman exits) (Floyd crosses to Old Woman's seat and smugly sits there)

BOBBY JOE: Me too. I could use a cup o' coffee anyway.

(Bobby Joe exits)

(Elizabeth crosses to Floyd and gives him a candy cane, signs "Merry Christmas")

FLOYD: Well, thank ya. *(signs)* And a Merry Christmas to you, too.

MOTHER: *(moves to front row)* You know sign language?

FLOYD: Uh, yeah. I'm a little rusty at it. I used to have a sister who was deaf. Me and my brother learned to sign to her. *(signs, "What do you want for Christmas?")*

(Elizabeth signs "New ears")

FLOYD: New ears?

SCENE V

(Lights up. Everybody's asleep, except Driver)
(Driver exits)

F.A.: *(waking up)* What's happened? We've stopped.

OLD WOMAN: *(waking up)* Where's our driver?

BOBBY JOE: Where are we?

MOTHER: This isn't New York, is it?

FLOYD: Doesn't look like it. It's so dark out there. I can't see a thing.

BOBBY JOE: Best I can tell, looks like farm houses and fences.

F.A.: Why have we stopped here?

OLD WOMAN: Wait a minute. Do you hear that? Sounds like a hissing noise.

MOTHER: A leak of some kind. Maybe a tire leaking air.

FLOYD: That's where the driver is...out there checking the tires.

OLD WOMAN: Oh sure. We've probably got a slow leak in the tire. Nothing to worry about.

F.A.: Yeah. Nothing to worry about. Probably checking it right now.

MOTHER: Nothing to worry about.

(pause)

OLD WOMAN: *(to Bobby Joe)* Well, are you gonna go check it out or not?

BOBBY JOE: Me? Why me?

OLD WOMAN: 'Cause you're a man.

FLOYD: Hey, what do I look like back here?

OLD WOMAN: Good question.

BOBBY JOE: I'll go....*(exits)*

OPTIONAL ENDING:

(Director or Narrator steps to center stage. One by one characters “break character” and step down stage and address the audience)

DIRECTOR OR NARRATOR: The characters in this drama endured quite a long, difficult, and disappointing journey. They started out heading for one place...a city of excitement and hope and opportunity. Yet through no fault of their own, they ended up near Bethlehem, Pennsylvania... in the middle of nowhere with people they hardly knew.

Though we hope you enjoyed the performance of the journey tonight, we really came here to tell you about another journey...

OLD WOMAN: *(Luke 2:1)* And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed...

SOCIALITE: *(Luke 2: 4-5)* And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem...to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

FLOYD: *(Luke 2: 6-7)* And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And (Mary) brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: *(Luke 2:8)* And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

BUD: *(Luke 2:9)* And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were so afraid.

BOBBY JOE: *(Luke 2:10)* And the angel said unto them, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

MECHANIC: *(Luke 2:11)* For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

DRIVER: *(Luke 2:12)* And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

SPIKE: *(Luke 2:13)* And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

ELIZABETH: *(Luke 2:14)* “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”

Production Notes

Set: The “bus” may be a wooden platform with two rows of eight chairs. Each row needs four seats with a center aisle down the middle. The driver may sit in another chair down on the stage level. You may build a free-standing “dashboard” with steering wheel and microphone.

Props: bus tickets
suit cases
wallet
purse
bus microphone (could be only a prop or it may be a functional mic)
guitar
candy cane
dark glasses
white cane
picnic basket
food

Costumes: Bud, Spike, Driver - bus driver uniform (variations for each character)
Mother - very plain winter clothes, heavy coat
Elizabeth - very plain winter clothes, heavy coat
Floyd - shabby clothes
Socialite - pretentious clothes (large sparkling jewelry, fur coat, etc.)
Old Woman - print dress, hat, stockings rolled down to knees, orthopedic shoes, etc.
Bobby Joe - cowboy hat, boots, vest (country music wanna-be)
Mechanic - coveralls
Innkeeper - warm “country” costume

Special Effects and Notes:

Sound effects (bus moving) may be used. There are sound effects CD's that may be found at many music stores.

Bus Terminal Announcer lines may be pre-recorded or may be offstage.

DJ may be pre-recorded or offstage.

OR Bus Terminal Announcer and DJ may be played by the same actor on stage. As announcer, the actor sits at a desk, dryly speaking into microphone. As DJ, the actor changes the charter to fit the music and mood.

Elizabeth must learn a few words in sign language: “Merry Christmas”, “new ears”. The signs for these may be found from several sources. One source is Joy of Signing, Lottie L. Riekehof, Gospel Publishing House, 1987.

Mother and Floyd must learn to sign “What do you want for Christmas?”

Music suggested for segues should be pre-recorded and be only excerpts (20-30 seconds).