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Dramatic Publishing

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Miracle on 34th Street, the Play

A young girl with long blonde hair, wearing a dark dress with a floral pattern, is looking towards Santa Claus. Santa Claus is shown from the chest up, wearing his traditional red suit with white fur trim and a white beard. The background is a soft, warm glow. The entire scene is framed by an ornate, gold-colored decorative border with floral and scrollwork patterns. In the top right corner, there is a small holly leaf with three red berries.

Based upon the
Twentieth Century Fox
motion picture *Miracle on 34th Street*

Comedy/Drama adapted by
Mountain Community Theater
from the novel by
Valentine Davies

Miracle on 34th Street, the Play



Comedy/Drama. Adapted by Mountain Community Theater from the novel by Valentine Davies. Based upon the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture Miracle on 34th Street. Cast: 3m., 2w., 1 girl, 14 m. or w., many extras, including children. "This is a tale that we want to believe in, that creates a world we seem to desperately desire, free of the blatant commercialism that surrounds us, where love and decency and generosity of spirit are their own rewards. What we want Christmas to be all about, really." So writes the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* of this most heartwarming holiday story. By chance, Kris Kringle, an old man in a retirement home, gets a job working as Santa for Macy's. Kris unleashes waves of good will with Macy's customers and the commercial world of New York City by referring parents to other stores to find exactly the toy their child has asked for. Seen as deluded and dangerous by Macy's vocational counselor, who plots to have Kris shanghaied to Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital, Kris ends up in a court competency hearing. Especially at stake is one little girl's belief in Santa. In a dramatic decision, the court confirms Kris as the true Santa, allowing Susan and countless other children to experience the joy of childhood fantasy. *Area staging. Code: M96.*

*Cover photo: Mountain Community Theater, Ben Lomond, Calif., featuring Gwendolyn Troxell and Peter Gelblum. Photo: Timothy Jordan.
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Miracle on 34th Street, the Play

From the novel by
Valentine Davies

Based upon the Twentieth Century Fox motion
picture *Miracle on 34th Street*

Adapted by
MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY THEATER
of Ben Lomond, California
by
Peter Troxell, Rita Wadsworth,
Paul Sampson, Kathie Kratochvil, Ron Montana,
Phyllis Macy, Diana Troxell,
Lyle Troxell, Peter Gelblum
and
the many actors and crews who have
participated in the play



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(MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET)

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of *Miracle on 34th Street, the Play* must give credit to Mountain Community Theater as the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of Mountain Community Theater must also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title and must appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois”

In addition, all producers of the play must include the following acknowledgment on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and on all advertising and promotional materials:

“Based upon the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture
Miracle on 34th Street.”

This credit must appear immediately following the name of Mountain Community Theater and must appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Such billing need not be accorded on marquees and need not be accorded in ABC or teaser ads, radio or television ads or print ads of less than one-quarter (1/4) page if only the names of the title of the play, the name of the theater, and/or critics' quotes appear in such ads.

Comment

The story in this play is completely faithful to Valentine Davies' book, printed in 1947. The characters and their names are taken from the book. A few changes are as follows:

Either men or women may be cast in most of the roles, depending on actors available. Shellhammer, for instance, could be either a man or a woman. Only the roles of Kris Kringle, Doris Walker, Fred Gayley and Susan should remain as they originally were. Short scenes can be managed by using a small section of the stage, with limited lighting. Thus the set for the main scenes (e.g., Santa's dais in Macy's toy department or the courtroom) can remain undisturbed and darkened in the background.

A group of singers caroling during scene changes may provide an effective break that pleases audiences.

This play, like Valentine Davies' book and the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture, continues to be a delightful "twentieth century Christmas carol" (as it is called on the dust jacket of the book). We hope that groups presenting this play, and their audiences, will find the joy and spirit of Christmas so charmingly advocated here by the undaunted Kris Kringle.

Miracle on 34th Street, the Play was adapted from the 1947 novel by Valentine Davies by Mountain Community Theater, a non-profit, volunteer group of theater lovers, located in the town of Ben Lomond in the Santa Cruz Mountains of central California. The first production of *Miracle* occurred in November-December of 1982, the year that MCT was founded. Written by Peter Troxell and Rita Faye Wadsworth with Wadsworth directing, the play was highly successful and helped establish the group as a popular source of family entertainment in Santa Cruz County. The principal players in the first production were:

Kris Kringle	Joseph Callaway
Doris Walker	Kathie Kratochvil (Umstead)
Fred Gayley	Paul Sampson
Susan Walker	April Dawn McCaffery
Shellhammer	Diana Wright Troxell
Sawyer.	Karen Solomon
Doctor Pierce	Jerry Sheldon
Judge Harper	Peter Troxell
Halloran	Roy Wittrup
Finley.	John Cunningham
Mara	Marilyn Painter
Macy	Lencho Wehrmann
Gimble (Bloomingdale)	Albert Kent
Mara Jr.	Tabitha Altamirno
Al.	Andrew Schiller
Lou	Randy Birch
Duncan	David Jansen

Mountain Community Theater produced *Miracle* seven more times in 1983, 1984, 1987, 1992, 1994, 2002 and 2010, each time changing and adding action and dialogue to make the play more interesting. Writing for subsequent versions were: Paul Sampson, Kathie Kratochvil, Ron Montana, Phyllis Macy, Diana Troxell, Lyle Troxell and Peter Gelblum. It is the final 2010 version that is published here by Dramatic Publishing Company.

Miracle on 34th Street, the Play

A Play in Two Acts

For 3 men, 2 women, 1 girl, 14 men or women,
many extras including children

CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

DOCTOR PIERCE (m/w) physician at Maplewood Home
KRIS KRINGLE (m) Santa Claus
BAG LADY (w) at Thanksgiving Day parade
RICH PERSON (m/w) at Thanksgiving Day parade
SHELLHAMMER (m/w) Mrs. Walker's assistant
DORIS WALKER (w) personnel manager at Macy's
SUSAN WALKER (g) Doris' daughter, aged 7
FRED GAYLEY (m) a lawyer, neighbor and friend to
Doris and Susan
DRUNKEN SANTA (m) employee of Macy's
MACY (m/w) . . . owner and manager of Macy's Department Store
SAWYER (m/w) Macy's vocational guidance counselor
BLOOMINGDALE (m/w) owner and manager of
Bloomingdale's Department Store
JUDGE HARPER (m/w) of the New York State court
FINLEY (m/w) bailiff in Judge Harper's court
MARA (m/w) prosecuting attorney
HALLORAN (m/w) . . . Judge Harper's political campaign manager
DUNCAN (m/w) antelope keeper at the Central Park Zoo
MARA JR. (b/g) prosecuting attorney's child
AL & LOU (m/w) postal employees
TEENAGERS (3), CHILDREN (3), ELVES (4 to 8), PARENTS
(3)
PEDESTRIANS, SHOPPERS, POSTAL BAGGERS (3 or more
with doubling possible)

Note: Change names accordingly to fit male or female players.

Suggestions for Directors:

- (1) Have cast members bring in their junk mail throughout re-hearsals to fill the bags of “Santa Claus mail” that get poured on the judge’s bench in Act Two.
- (2) Add music, particularly when Kris is walking with carolers, and with kissing scenes. Carolers during scene changes add a nice holiday touch.
- (3) If “Elf Theater” (Act One, Scene Six) is included, it will provide an opportunity for local talented young people to display their skills. Or if that is not possible, this interlude can be a bit of simple choreography or acrobatics, giving young people a chance to entertain.
- (4) Elves can be used for changing scenes as their costumes would add to the atmosphere.
- (5) Stagehands (other than elves) can be used to carry in the bags of mail in the court scene; also as shoppers walking through the store and pedestrians on the street.
- (6) If the production uses carolers during scene changes, these persons may double as an on-stage “audience” during the court scene.

SCENE FIVE

SCENE: *Living room in Doris' apartment. That evening.*

DORIS, KRIS and SUSAN are sitting. Glasses of milk and plate of cookies are on coffee table.

KRIS. I enjoyed our dinner very much. Thank you for inviting me. I thought the milk and cookies for dessert was an especially nice touch. And I liked spending the evening with you and Susan.

SUSAN (*obviously delighted with the guest*). Mr. Kringle, could you speak to me in that language you spoke in the store the other day?

DORIS. Susan, I think Mr. Kringle is tired.

KRIS. Not at all. I'd love to talk to her. Susan, come here.

DORIS. Excuse me. I've got to call Ms. Shellhammer. (*She exits to another room.*)

KRIS. Do you have a lot of friends in the building, Susan?

SUSAN. Yes, but I don't see them very much. The games they play are so childish. Today they were being animals. They asked me what kind of animal I wanted to be, but I didn't want to be an animal. It's so dumb.

KRIS. Why didn't you tell them you were a lion or a bear?

SUSAN. Because I'm not a lion. I'm a girl!

KRIS. But the other children weren't animals, either. They were just pretending.

SUSAN. That's what makes the game so silly.

KRIS. Do you know what imagination is, Susan?

SUSAN. That's when you see things that aren't really there.

KRIS. Yes, but it's more than that. Imagination is a place you can go to. A very wonderful country. You've heard of nations like England and Russia and Japan? (*SUSAN nods.*)

Well, imagi-Nation is a place like that. And the wonderful thing about that country is, once you get there, you can do anything you want.

SUSAN. Not *anything*...

KRIS. For instance. How would you like to fly to Mars and be back by dinner time?

SUSAN. Oh, *that* wouldn't be possible.

KRIS. Or be the Statue of Liberty in the morning and fly south with a flock of geese in the afternoon? (*SUSAN smiles and nods in spite of herself.*) It's very simple. Want to give it a try?

SUSAN. Well, I guess I could try.

KRIS. Okay. Let's start with something easy. How would you like to be a bird flying in the sky?

SUSAN. I wouldn't know how to do that, Mr. Kringle.

KRIS. Sure you would! Now, stand up. Spread your arms out. That's right. And wave them up and down like wings... Fine. Now tilt sideways and turn. Keep on flapping your wings. That's it! Now you are *soaring* like a bird!

SUSAN (*running to him when the experiment is finished*). I did it, Mr. Kringle. That was fun!

KRIS (*pause*). Now tell me, if you were to believe that I was really Santa Claus, what would you ask me to bring you for Christmas?

SUSAN. Can you bring *big* presents?

KRIS. Since we are in the land of imagination, it could be any size.

SUSAN. I want a real house for Mother and me...and a real father to live in it with us.

KRIS (*jolted*). You're right. That *is* a tall order, indeed.

SUSAN. Well, if you're really Santa, you can do it. And if you can't, then you're just a nice man with a white beard like Mother said.

KRIS. Susan, not everyone always gets her wish. That doesn't mean there isn't a Santa Claus. Some children wish for things they can never use—like a real locomotive, for example. And little girls sometimes wish for baby brothers or sisters, even though their parents wouldn't be able to care for them properly... Sometimes a person has to learn something, like how to love or how to behave better before Santa can grant the wish.

SUSAN. But I've wished for a father and a house for such a long time, Mr. Kringle.

KRIS. And the more you have wished for it, the more it will mean to you when it comes. If everyone got what he or she wanted right away, life wouldn't be half as much fun. So you see, Susan, there are a lot of reasons why a child's wish can't always come true.

SUSAN. A father and a house are really all I want—not toys.

(FRED knocks, enters.)

FRED. Hi there, Susan. How's my favorite girl? *(SUSAN runs to hug him. To KRIS.)* I'm Fred Gayley. I live in the next apartment.

KRIS. It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Gayley. I'm Kris Kringle.

FRED. Yes, I know.

(DORIS enters.)

DORIS. Susan, it's time for bed... Oh, hi, Fred. Have you two met?

KRIS. Yes, we just introduced ourselves.

DORIS. Mr. Kringle. I've found you a place to stay tonight. *(KRIS nods. Phone is heard ringing.)* Oh, there's my phone. Please wait a minute. *(She exits.)*

FRED (*to KRIS*). You're looking for a place to stay?

KRIS. No, I'm staying at the zoo.

SUSAN. I've never met anyone who lived at the zoo before.

FRED. The zoo is no place to stay. Why don't you stay with me. I've got an extra bed in my apartment, and I could use some company.

KRIS. Well, thank you, Mr. Gayley. That's very nice of you... Susan, maybe you should go and tell your mother that we have made an arrangement. I don't want her to worry about me.

SUSAN. Okay, Mr. Kringle, I like the idea of your staying with Fred. He's my friend, and it's right next door.

KRIS & FRED. Good night, Susan. (*SUSAN exits.*)

KRIS. I like the idea, too, Mr. Gayley.

FRED. Call me Fred, please.

KRIS. All right, Fred. Staying so close by will give me more opportunity to work on Susan's Christmas gift.

FRED. I'm really very fond of that little girl.

KRIS. I can see that... And how about her mother?

FRED (*pauses, sighs*). I really like her, but I'm afraid she feels that being neighbors, and baby sitter with Susan, is as close as she wants me to get.

KRIS. Have you ever invited her out?

FRED. I've tried. But Doris won't socialize since her divorce. She just concentrates on Susan and her career. I don't think she trusts love anymore.

KRIS. An old, sad story... But it's one that maybe you and I can do something about, Fred.

FRED (*cheers up*). Oh, yeah? How do we start?

KRIS. It's simple. Just keep showing your interest in her, and be aware of her feelings. Above all, you must have faith in her.

FRED. I've tried all that. It hasn't done any good so far.

KRIS (*smiling brightly*). Things will work out. I'll see to that.

(*DORIS re-enters.*)

DORIS. Mr. Kringle, Ms. Shellhammer has a place for you to stay. And she lives right near the store, so you can get to work easily. Is that okay? I'll call a cab, and you can go right now.

KRIS. That's very thoughtful of her. But I've just accepted Mr. Gayley's offer to stay with him.

DORIS. Mr. Gayley? (*FRED nods innocently.*) I see.

KRIS. I hope you don't mind. (*DORIS doesn't know what to say.*) Well, then, if you'll excuse me, I'll go and get my things from the zoo. I'll be back soon... (*Starts to exit.*)

DORIS. Wait, I'll get you a cab.

KRIS. Oh, don't bother. There will be one right outside, thank you.

DORIS (*after KRIS is gone*). I should tell you about him, Fred. I don't suppose you realize he's been diagnosed as suffering from delusions. Kris's doctor has asked me to keep an eye on him. He should not be left unsupervised.

FRED. Aside from the fact that I think he's quite capable of handling himself, he'll only be next door. Between the two of us, we should have the situation covered.

DORIS. Well, that's not quite all.

FRED. Oh?

DORIS. The Santa Claus bit. I don't want Susan influenced. I thought I had made that clear to you.

FRED. I understand your concerns, Doris. But I like Kris. Why not try it out for a couple of days, and if the arrangement doesn't work, we'll find another place for him. In the meantime, I'll take responsibility for him. Trust me, Doris... Deal? (*He holds out his hand.*)

DORIS (*reluctantly, realizing she's stuck*). Well...okay.

(They shake. Blackout to indicate passage of time. A group of CAROLERS enters singing. KRIS enters carrying a suitcase, sees the CAROLERS and joins in. He moves away with them at the end of the song. Lights up again in Doris' apartment. A knock on the door. After a moment DORIS opens. FRED enters.)

DORIS. Hi. Is everything all right?

FRED. Did Kris come back here?

DORIS. No. Isn't he with you?

FRED. When he didn't show up, I went to the zoo to find him. The man told me he had already been there to get his things and left over an hour ago.

DORIS. Oh, heavens, Fred! Something's happened to him!

FRED. It's all my fault. And after I told you you could trust me.

DORIS. I don't want to blame you.

FRED. I shouldn't have let him go get his things by himself.

DORIS. The important thing now is to find out if he's all right. I'd never forgive myself if something happened to him.

FRED. I'm surprised. I didn't think you liked Kris.

DORIS. It's not a matter of like.

FRED. I was hoping this was a sign that what he stands for was getting to you.

DORIS. No. But this is New York City, you know.

FRED. Come on, Doris. Who's going to mug Santa Claus?

DORIS (*looks at him a moment*). I'm calling the police.
(Picks up phone.)

FRED. Look, Doris, if Kris can get here from the North Pole, then New York shouldn't be any problem for him.

DORIS. I'm serious, Fred. If he was all right, he would have called by now. He must know I'd be worried.

(She starts to dial. SUSAN enters from bedroom, sobbing, holding blanket. DORIS puts phone down.)

DORIS. Why, what's wrong, sweetheart?

SUSAN. I dreamed that Mr. Kringle went away and there wasn't any more Christmas.

DORIS. Susan, you know that dreams aren't real.

FRED *(has taken SUSAN beside him on the sofa)*. It was only a dream, Susan. Mr. Kringle will be fine. And we'll never lose Christmas as long as we have each other. *(He sings a lullaby or soothing Christmas carol, and SUSAN falls asleep.)*

DORIS *(watching the peaceful scene)*. I don't know what I would have done without you tonight, Fred. I don't think I have ever shown my appreciation for your friendship and the way you care for Susan... Please forgive me for...getting so upset with you... *(She breaks up.)*

FRED *(pulls her down on the sofa with him and SUSAN)*. Thank you. Thank you for opening up to me.

DORIS. I...uh... *(Sob.)*

FRED. Thanks for recognizing that I'm right here with you. *(They lean toward each other in anticipation of a kiss.)*

(KRIS opens door, stops on seeing them.)

KRIS. Oh, excuse me. I'll come back at a more convenient time.

DORIS *(jumps up)*. Kris! You're back. *(She runs to hug him.)*

FRED. Where were you? We've been very worried. *(Gets up from sofa, SUSAN wakes up.)*

KRIS. Just singing carols with some of my friends. I just came by to say good night.

DORIS. I'm so relieved!

SUSAN. Then my dream was true. Santa really did go away.

FRED. But he came back because your mother cared about him.

DORIS. That's a nice thought, anyway. Everything is all right now, Susan. Come on, I'll tuck you back in bed.

FRED. Good night again, Susan. (*DORIS and SUSAN exit.*)

KRIS (*with significance to FRED*). Did you enjoy my absence?

FRED. What do you mean? Doris was nearly crazy with worry.

KRIS. Didn't it bring the two of you closer together?

FRED. Well, yes.

KRIS. That's exactly what I hoped would happen.

FRED. You old fox! You worried us on purpose! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!

KRIS. Not a bit. Now, let me get out of here so you can finish putting her worries to rest.

(*DORIS re-enters.*)

FRED (*handing KRIS the key to his apartment*). Here. It's the next door on the right. I'm really happy that you're staying with me, Kris. But I confess, I have an ulterior motive.

KRIS. Oh? What's that?

FRED. I'm finally going to learn the answer to the question that has plagued the world for centuries: Does Santa sleep with his whiskers inside or outside the covers?

KRIS (*laughs*). I always sleep with 'em out. Cold air makes 'em grow... Now, I'll find my way, thank you. (*Exits with a wink to FRED.*)

DORIS. Believe it or not, I'm glad he's staying at your place.

I feel better about having him safe and near. I'm glad you're near too.

FRED. Me too. (*Coming close, they kiss.*)