

Excerpt Terms & Conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

Family Plays

THE LOST AND FOUND CHRISTMAS

A Contemporary Christmas Play
from
THE PAPER BAG PLAYERS

Book by
JUDITH MARTIN

Music by
DONALD
ASHWANDER



THE LOST AND FOUND CHRISTMAS

A brightly modern miniplay about the Christmas giving-spirit, created by the Paper Bag Players.

Comedy. Book by Judith Martin. Music by Donald Ashwander.

Cast: 2m., 5w., 1 either gender, or up to 11+ (3m., 7w., 1 either gender) extras optional. Josephine Kindly, Christmas shopping on the last day, struggles to the bus stop with her many presents. While waiting for a bus, she cannot resist lending her presents to fellow shoppers in need. Forgetfully, she gets off the crowded bus, without collecting them again. All ends merrily in a surprise Christmas party in a tiny house. Everyone will heed the final cry: "Roll up the rugs. Pass out the cookies. Let's do 'The Christmas Squeeze,'" Donald Ashwander's irresistible song. Ideal for in-school performance. *Set of painted cardboard, a bus stop, a bus, a parlor, and a Christmas tree, all on a bare stage or in a classroom.* Contemporary costumes. Music in book.

Code: LG7



Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308

Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170

Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-87602-152-1

ISBN-10 0-87602-152-6



9 780876 021521 >

The Lost and Found
Christmas

The Lost and Found Christmas

A Contemporary Christmas Play from
The Paper Bag Players

by

JUDITH MARTIN

Music by

DONALD ASHWANDER

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

© Family Plays

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: www.familyplays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098. FAMILY PLAYS is a wholly owned imprint of THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.'

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©1977 by
ANCHORAGE PRESS, INCORPORATED

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(THE LOST AND FOUND CHRISTMAS)

ISBN: 978-0-87602-152-1

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to 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 the author *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. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
FAMILY PLAYS of Woodstock, Illinois.”

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JOSEPHINE KINDLY
TREE
BUS STOP
BUS DRIVER
MR. PUSH
MRS. SHOVE
MRS. PLUMP
MR. TALL
MR. SAD
MRS. GLAD
MRS. SLOW
MRS. FAST
LATE LATE BUS DRIVER
ERNESTINE KINDLY
PASSENGERS

There is a long list of characters, but if one is short on actors, it's easy to have some people play two or even three parts. There could be two passengers or lots of passengers. The DRIVER and passengers of the first bus could switch roles for the second bus; a change of hats would do it.

SETTING

OUTSIDE, a tree and bus stop.

INSIDE, two buses.

THE HOUSE OF ERNESTINE KINDLY, within and without.

COSTUMES

The costumes for all characters, except TREE and BUS STOP have the look of clothes found in the attic or thrift shop – slightly dated, slightly exaggerated and rather worn. Out-of-style hats for everyone.

SCENERY

The play is performed on a bare stage with only as much scenery as is necessary to help the action. For example, to show JOSEPHINE is walking down a road, a person holding up a piece of cardboard with a TREE painted on it moves in the opposite direction. BUS STOP is also a piece of painted cardboard with a person behind it. When TREE and BUS STOP are moving to show a change of place, it's a good idea to play "The Christmas Squeeze" music to strengthen the action and to help make the song an integral part of the play.

Also needed is a large piece of cardboard with a bus painted on it

(the exterior on one side, the interior on the other) and a door flap cut into it.

The House of ERNESTINE KINDLY is a large cardboard with the snowy exterior painted on one side and a cheery interior painted on the other side. A stage hand will hold it in place and turn it around when it is "entered."

(The curtain rises on JOSEPHINE KINDLY, an elderly lady loaded down with packages. She is walking in place, that is, she is taking two steps forward, then backward, as if she were on a treadmill, giving the illusion that she is hurrying down the road. TREE passes to give the effect emphasis. As JOSEPHINE walks, the music to "The Christmas Squeeze" is played.)

JOSEPHINE: I did it again! Left my Christmas shopping till the last day.

(During JOSEPHINE's walk she frequently stops to rest and rearrange packages which are very heavy.)

Whew! Wouldn't have had to carry these if I'd shopped earlier. Could have sent them. I better keep going or I'll miss that bus. These are heavy! But what's the difference! They're perfect. My sister, Ernestine, will certainly be surprised getting all these presents. Last Christmas there was nothing that Ernestine needed, but this Christmas with her new house, she needs everything. This year's shopping was easy. Maybe too easy. These house presents are as heavy as a house.

(A large cardboard with a painted sign BUS STOP comes on stage in the opposite direction of JOSEPHINE. Somebody, of course, is behind it holding up the sign. BUS STOP moves slowly toward JOSEPHINE helping to give the impression that she is walking down the road. BUS STOP reaches JOSEPHINE and stops.)

JOSEPHINE: I made it! I knew I would. After all that rush and fuss — it feels really good to just stand and wait for the bus.

(A bus horn is heard.)

There it is! I got here just in time.

(A large cardboard with a bus painted on it comes in. The windows are cut out and the DRIVER and PASSENGERS' heads can be seen in the windows. They are, of course, holding up the cardboard.)

BUS DRIVER: Move to the back of the bus, please.

MR PUSH: *I am* at the back of the bus.

MRS. SHOVE: I can't budge.

JOSEPHINE: I hope there's room for me.

BUS DRIVER: We'll find room for you, lady, but I don't know about that load of stuff you're carrying. You should have a truck for all those packages.

MR. PUSH: Breathe deep, everyone. Make room for one more passenger.

MRS. SHOVE: I can't breathe.

BUS DRIVER: Come on, lady. Hop on fast while everyone is holding their breath.

JOSEPHINE: Thank you, driver. Thank you, everyone. I can plainly see there's hardly room for me, much less my bundles.

MR. PUSH: She's right. I never saw so many bundles.

MRS. SHOVE: Come on, driver. Let's get going.

JOSEPHINE: There is another bus, isn't there?

BUS DRIVER: I'm the last regular bus. After this there's only the late Holiday Special and it's very irregular. It stops all over the place picking up the late late shoppers.

JOSEPHINE: I don't mind waiting. I couldn't bear squashing my presents. Please don't worry. Just go on.

BUS DRIVER: All right. If you say so. Here we go.

JOSEPHINE: Goodbye, all. Happy holiday!

PASSENGERS AND DRIVER: Goodbye. Happy holiday to you.

(The bus goes out. JOSEPHINE is left alone with BUS STOP. BUS STOP slowly turns around. On the other side of the cardboard is also painted BUS STOP, but now the background is dark blue with snowflakes on it. JOSEPHINE looks at cardboard.)

JOSEPHINE: It's getting dark and it's beginning to snow.

(In runs MRS' PLUMP.)

MRS. PLUMP: I haven't missed the last bus, have I?

JOSEPHINE: No. The Holiday Special is still coming.

MRS. PLUMP: Thank goodness! It's a long walk to Greenspot.

JOSEPHINE: Greenspot! That's close to where I'm going.

MRS. PLUMP: I'm so glad. I'll have company.

(In comes MR. TALL.)

MR. TALL: Are you ladies waiting for the bus?

JOSEPHINE and MRS. PLUMP: We certainly are!

MR. TALL: Do you mind if I keep you company?

LADIES: We'd love company.

(In comes MRS. GLAD, MR. SAD, MISS FAST and MISS SLOW and as many other characters as you would like to create.)

NEW ARRIVALS: We haven't missed the last bus, have we?

JOSEPHINE: No. The Holiday Special hasn't come yet.

MRS. GLAD: I hope they run it this year.

MR. SAD: That's the slowest, most unreliable bus in the world.

MISS SLOW: One year I got home just in time for breakfast.

MISS FAST: That's right. We waited all night.

MRS. PLUMP: I hope that doesn't happen this year. We'll be frozen-stiff.

MR. TALL: I'm frozen right now.

JOSEPHINE: Jump up and down. That keeps you warm.

MR. TALL: I'm too cold to jump.

MRS. PLUMP: Rub your hands together.

MR. TALL: It's all right for you plump ones to do all those tricks to keep warm, but when you're tall and skinny like me you really feel the cold. What I need is a blanket. (His teeth are chattering.) I might as well wish for the moon.

JOSEPHINE: Poor man. You know, I don't have a blanket, but how would you like a nice warm rug? I have it right here. I bought it for my sister Ernestine's new living room but I'm sure she wouldn't mind your borrowing it. (*Unties package.*)

MR. TALL: But it's such a pretty package.

JOSEPHINE: I can easily tie it again. Here you are.

(*Puts the rug around MR. TALL's shoulders.*)

MR. TALL: Does that feel good! It's the best Christmas present I ever got – even though it's only borrowed.

JOSEPHINE: I have another little rug here. Anyone else chilly?

MRS. GLAD: I could use something on my shoulders.

JOSEPHINE: How about this little throw rug?

MRS. GLAD: Just perfect.

JOSEPHINE: (*to MRS. PLUMP*): Sorry, that's all the rugs I have.

MRS. PLUMP: Don't worry, dear. I'm not a bit cold, but my feet are killing me. If the ground weren't so hard, I'd sit down right here. I'd give anything to get off my feet!

JOSEPHINE: (*as she unwraps the package*) I have just the thing! My sister loves to go for walks, but she gets tired so easily. I thought she could just carry this folding chair with her all the time. Do sit down. It won't hurt the chair a bit.

(*She unfolds it and MRS. PLUMP sits down.*)

MRS. PLUMP: My dear, you've made me the happiest woman on earth. If Ernestine loves this chair half as much as I do it will be her favorite present.

JOSEPHINE: (to MR. SAD) I do hope *your* feet don't hurt. I only have one chair.

MR. SAD: No, my feet are fine. It's just my ears. Maybe you didn't notice, but I have exceptionally big ears. Ordinary ear-muffs don't fit them and they feel the cold terribly.

JOSEPHINE (unwraps package): I do believe I have something that might help you. (Takes out a pillow.) How would you like some goose down ear muffs?

MR. SAD: That must be a pillow for Ernestine.

JOSEPHINE: You guessed it. Better try it on.

MR. SAD: The best ear muffs I've ever had.

JOSEPHINE (looking at MRS. SLOW and MRS. FAST): You look so left out. I wonder if there's something you'd like to have?

MRS. SLOW: I'm afraid you can't help us out. We rushed so to make the bus we didn't eat supper and we're both starving.

JOSEPHINE: But of course I can help out. (Holds up her biggest box.)

MRS. FAST: What's that?

JOSEPHINE: It's a twenty-five-pound box of cookies. Ernestine just loves cookies. (Unwraps the large box.) Help yourself.

MRS. FAST: I'd love to, but what about Ernestine?

JOSEPHINE: Ernestine won't mind! She always says she eats too many cookies, anyway. (She passes cookies around.)

GROUP: (As they accept cookies) Thank you.
Don't mind if I do.
Delicious.

JOSEPHINE: Have another.

GROUP: Didn't realize how hungry I was.
I feel so much better.

MRS. PLUMP: We're having our own Christmas party right here.

MR. SAD: I don't mind how late the bus is!

(Honk! Honk! is heard off stage. Enter the late, late bus, which is painted like the last one. This time the passengers are all singing the melody of "The Christmas Squeeze")

BUS DRIVER: Hop on, everyone. Sorry I'm late. Hurry up, please. Lots of people waiting down the road for this bus.

(JOSEPHINE'S Companions hurry to the bus, taking the wrappings of the presents along with them. JOSEPHINE, who is last, pauses as she is about to get on the bus.)

JOSEPHINE: Oh dear, this bus is as crowded as the last one.

(Now the words that the passengers are singing can be clearly heard. They sing to JOSEPHINE.)

PASSENGERS:

Come on in!
Sit on the floor.
Climb through the window.
If you can't find the door.

JOSEPHINE: But there doesn't seem to be room for one more person.

PASSENGERS:

Push, push, push
And bend your knees,
Come and join the Christmas Squeeze.

JOSEPHINE: You sound so jolly I can't resist! *(She gets on the bus.)*

PASSENGERS:

Come on, driver.
We're all here.
Let's go.

(Bus honks and exits with everyone singing.)

ALL:

Always room
For just one more,
And you're just the one
That we're waiting for.

So push, push, push
And bend your knees.
Come and join the Christmas Squeeze.

(BUS STOP goes out, again giving the sense of change of place. Then a cardboard with a house painted on it comes in. ERNESTINE is behind it. The bus re-enters and stops in front of the house. JOSEPHINE gets out from behind bus as if stepping off it. Bus leaves.)

JOSEPHINE: Goodbye, all. Happy holiday. *(She knocks, then cries out.)* Oh, my dear. I have no presents. I forgot to get them back!

(HOUSE turns around. It is the interior of Ernestine's tiny house and here is ERNESTINE.)

ERNESTINE: Dear sister, I'm so happy to see you. I was worried about you.

JOSEPHINE: *(Begins to cry)* Something awful happened. I started out with lots of lovely presents for you, and now I don't have a single one. I loaned them away. I was so excited when I saw your new house. I just jumped off the bus. How could I be so silly!

ERNESTINE: Dear Josephine, seeing you is present enough for me.

JOSEPHINE: But I had lots of lovely things for your new house! Oh, how could I be so forgetful?

ERNESTINE: Don't cry, Josephine. My house is so tiny. We'll be perfectly cozy and happy without a single extra thing!

(Enter MRS. PLUMP, breathing hard.)

MRS. PLUMP: I found you!

JOSEPHINE: Why, it's Mrs. Plump. And you've brought Ernestine's chair.

MRS. PLUMP: I noticed I still had the chair the minute you left the bus. I got off the next stop, and I've been running ever since.

JOSEPHINE: But your feet were killing you hours ago. How did you ever do it?

MRS. PLUMP: I couldn't bear to think of poor tired Ernestine without a new chair for Christmas.

ERNESTINE: Well, now you're more tired than I am. Please sit down. *(She unfolds the chair for MRS. PLUMP.)* Josephine, it's a beautiful chair.

(MRS. PLUMP sits down.)

MRS. PLUMP: I hope I'm not intruding.

JOSEPHINE: Of course not. Remember that song we were singing on the bus?
Come on in,
Sit on the floor.
Climb through the window
If you can't find the door.

(The three ladies sing the chorus. JOSEPHINE and ERNESTINE dance while MRS. PLUMP claps her hands.)

ALL:

Push, push, push
And bend your knees,
Come and join the Christmas Squeeze.

(Enter MR. SAD with a pillow on his head and holding a shopping bag.)

MR. SAD: Is this the home of Ernestine Kindly?

JOSEPHINE: Why, it's Mr. Sad!

MR. SAD: I walked all the way to my house before I realized I had your pillow.

ERNESTINE: But what about your ears? How will you get home?

MR. SAD: Your pillow made such good earmuffs, I brought my own pillow to wear on the way back home.

(He gives ERNESTINE her pillow and takes one out of his shopping bag to put on his head.)

ERNESTINE: What a lovely pillow! Thank you, Josephine. Thank you, Mr. Sad.

JOSEPHINE: Mr. Sad, please don't go yet. Stay and help us celebrate the holiday.

MR. SAD: But you weren't expecting me.

LADIES:

Always room
For just one more,
And you're just the one
That we were waiting for.

(They all dance to chorus.)

ALL:

So push, push, push
And bend your knees,
Come and join the Christmas Squeeze.

(Enter MR. TALL, MRS. SLOW, MRS. FAST and MRS. GLAD.)

MR. TALL: Anybody home?

ERNESTINE: Come in, come in.

MR. TALL: You must be Ernestine. Here's a rug from your sister, Josephine. Merry Christmas.

ERNESTINE *(Putting it on the floor)*: It's a beautiful rug.

MR. TALL: And a very good blanket.

MRS. GLAD: And here's a little rug.

MRS. SLOW and MRS. FAST: And some cookies.

ERNESTINE: Thank you. Thank you. Won't you all please stay?

MR. TALL: There's hardly room for all of us.

ERNESTINE and JOSEPHINE: Of course there is.

ERNESTINE, JOSEPHINE, MRS. PLUMP and MR. SAD:

Crowd is big,
The space is small,
Everyone's standing
'Cause there's no place to fall.

So push, push, push
And bend your knees,
Come and join the Christmas Squeeze.

MR. SAD: I'm so happy. I came to return a *lost* pillow. I didn't expect to *find* a party.

JOSEPHINE: I'm happy you're glad, Mr. Sad.

ERNESTINE: Roll up the rugs. Pass out the cookies. Let's do "The Christmas Squeeze."

(There are so many people in such a tiny space that arms, legs, heads and elbows get mixed up. The party squeezed in the tiny house gives a happy, jolly look. Everybody dances and sings the entire song.)

— THE END —

THE CHRISTMAS SQUEEZE

Words by
JUDITH MARTIN
DONALD ASHWANDER
Moderato

Music by
DONALD ASHWANDEI

Come on in_ sit on the floor_ climb thru' the win- dow if you can't find the door_

Push, push, push and bend your knees_ Come and join the Christ- mas squeeze.

Al- ways room_ for just one more,_ and you're just the one_ that we were

wait - ing for_ So push, push, push and bend your knees_

Come and join the Christ- mas squeeze. Crowd in big,_ the space is small_

Ev - ery - one's stand - ing 'cause there's no place to fall _ so push, push, push and

bend your knees _ Come and join the Christ - mas squeeze.