

The Best Christmas Ever
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Purpose:

This drama starts very grim, but life is often like that, is it not? At Christmas, it is even more noticeable. Because we want so badly for everything to be just right. So what do you do, when things are not going well, but are actually horrible? We know we have an advocate who feels our pain and frustrations. There is nothing we can experience He has not dealt with. He promised, "Lo, I am with you always..." Have we failed? God is the God of second chances. It's not too late to start again. And remember, we don't travel the path alone.

Characters:

Andy (just his voice) is the son of Eva and Tom Adamson, killed in a car accident just before Christmas

Eva Adamson is seriously injured and deformed in the accident. Although quite depressed at first, she finds reasons in her God and family to go on with life.

Voices 1-6, doctors, nurses, and other medical staff.

Jack is Eva's father. He is also a doctor on staff at the hospital where she is a patient after the accident.

Nurse

Tom Adamson is Eva's husband. Although supporting and accepting right after the accident, his struggles are more long term. They cause him to withdraw from his family and God.

Megan is the Adamson's child by adoption. Although already adopted, she did not come to live with them until after the accident. The visits and bonding before this already led her to accept Eva as her new mother. Tom's distance created barriers for his and Megan's relationship.

Props:

There are two basic scenes: the hospital room and a living room at their home. Actually having the bedroom visible is an option. If you choose to do this, set up the hospital room and a waiting room with a wall dividing them. These will then change to the child's bedroom and living room. Slight changes should be made to the living room in scene 5 to indicate the passage of time.

Medical equipment, baseball mitt and glove, presents, a Christmas tree.

The stage is set with one half as a hospital room / child's bedroom and the other half as a living room....

SCENE 1

Eva lays in the hospital bed w/ IV attached. With stage still dark, tape begins playing, fading in. All voices on tape with reverb to indicate distance

Andy: Hey Momma, I thought of a perfect present for Daddy

Eva: What is it, Honey?

Andy: A catcher's mitt. He's gonna teach me to pitch. He'll need it. So I don't hurt him.

Eva: O-o-oka-a-yy

Andy: I can't wait to get to the store. Can I get an ice fishing pole this year? And a tennis racket? Then I can really play with Daddy.

Eva: You and your Daddy are good friends, aren't you?

Andy: Yep! We'll always be best buddies.

Eva: I hope so, Honey.

Andy: You think he'll like Megan more than me? Why is she coming to our house tonight?

Eva: Well, she doesn't have a Mommy or Daddy. When she comes, she will have a family to make her happy. She gets a family for Christmas. You get a little sister.

Andy: That works! This'll be the best Christmas ever. Right, Mom? MOM! WATCH OUT!!! MOOMMEEEE!!!!

Sounds of blaring horns and screeching tires drowns out the last word. There is a crash and breaking glass as the tape fades outVoices fade back in with sirens in the background...

Voice 1: ...an IV in her. Get her stabilized. Quickly!

Voice 2: What about the boy?

Voice 3: Her face!

Voice 1: Can't help the boy now. Worry about Mom.

Voice 2: Let me look at her head.

Voice 1: No! Get her on the gurney. Need to get her into the

...Voices and sirens fade out Sound of voices and background machinery fades in ...

Voice 3: ...another 50 MLs. She's coming out of it.

Voice 4: Get out, Jack. I know it's your girl. You can't help here. Let us work.

Voice 5: Almost have the punctures sutured

Voice 3: Clean that up before we close.

Voice 5: I'll get started here. The facial lacerations.

Voice 4: Whatever you can do! Poor lady! As if she's not going to have enough

Voices fade out Light comes up slowly in the hospital room. Eva sits up suddenly in bed with both

arms around herself. Looks about wildly! Reaches up and claps a hand to her face. A livid scar pulls her mouth down to one side. She screams out the name "Andy." Then breaks down sobbing as a nurse opens the door and rushes in the room. She moves to Eva and takes her by the arms.

Nurse: Mrs. Adamson! You're okay now!

Eva: No! No, I'm not! Where's my boy? Is he okay? Where's Tom? Where's my boy? Answer me! What's wrong with my face? Is there a mirror in here?

Nurse: No, there...

Eva: Why isn't there a mirror in here? (*Touches face*) What's wrong with me? (*Getting quite hysterical*)

Nurse: (*Pulls hands down*) Calm down, Mrs. Adamson. You'll hurt yourself. (*Reaches for buzzer*)

Eva: Where's my boy?

Nurse: The doctor's coming, Eva. Your father and husband are here too. I'll let them talk with you.

The door opens. An older man steps in and hurries to bedside..

Jack: Honey, you're finally awake

Eva: (*Weeps*) Dad? I had this horrible dream. But it wasn't a dream, was it? Where's Andy?

Jack: (*Momentarily silent*) Honey, there was nothing anyone could do. I promise. He didn't feel a thing.

Eva: (*Struggles with father to get out of bed*) I have to go to him! I want to see my baby!!! (*Dad nods to nurse, who adds medicine to IV while father holds Eva in bed. She gradually subsides while talking. Room grows darker as she does*) Dad? What's wrong with my face? Why can't I see Andy? I can't feel anything. I want to see Tom.....

Eva fades into sleep. Room nearly dark and fades out as Jack replies...

Jack: I'm sorry, Honey! We did all we could. You have been out a long time.

SCENE 2

Light comes up on same room. Eva lays in bed, sort of reading, mostly staring into space. The sound of a song comes drifting in from hallway. She turns her face away from door as song ends and door begins to open. The scar is not so livid now, but still she hides her face. Her mouth is still drawn down. Door opens and a bouquet comes through first. No response. Flowers followed by Tom, Megan, and Jack.

Tom: (*Very cheerful*) Hey, Lady! Hope this is okay. I just had to see you. You can't keep me away forever. I brought Megan with me. She's worried about you too.

Eva: (*Dreamy*) Is there snow out today? I wonder if Andy's cold?

Tom: (Clears throat, looks at Jack) I am sure he's okay, Eva

Megan: Mommy? (Eva visibly stiffens and turns away a little more) Mommy? I want to see you.

Megan begins coming around bed. Eva begins to turn to other side, then lies still as Megan approaches.

Eva: Megan, I know this is scary. I look a different now, but...

She is interrupted by Megan reaching both hands up and pulling open Eva's eyelids. Megan slowly bends to look in Eva's eyes.

Megan: You're, Mommy. You still look the same.

Eva begins to cry and pulls Megan to her. Tom approaches her too. Eva looks up, frightened.

Eva: Tom? You didn't bargain for this! I won't hold you to anything...

Tom: Shhh!

Tom stands studying her face. Then, still looking at Eva, he addresses her father.

Tom: Jack! Can anything else be done?

Jack: Got the best surgeon I could call in. Too much time passed. The nerve is damaged. There will be one more surgery. To reattach muscles, but that's all. It'll always be a little lopsided. But she should be able to smile and laugh again.

Tom resumes his study of Eva and room gets very still. Suddenly Tom breaks into a smile.

Tom: I like it! Let's try something.

In full view of audience, Tom leans down and carefully gathers Eva into a hug. Then, with his face still to the audience, he contorts his face to match hers. Tom leans to kiss her. As he does, Jack turns away and the lights go down. All is dark as Tom speaks.

Tom: How'd that feel, Mrs. Adamson?

Eva: It felt like love.

SCENE 3

Same hospital room. Lights come up as Tom and Megan come through the door, carrying a small decorated Christmas tree.

Tom: Okay! Wake up! It's Christmas! I've decided you lazing around here just isn't good for the rest of us.

Megan: Since you can't come home for another week, we brought Christmas to you.

Tom: Honey, let me run to the car. I've got gifts for you and the girl.

Eva frowns slightly.

Eva: Her name is Megan.

Tom: (*Irritated*) I know that, Eva! Figured I'd better do something. She was getting into Andy's things. So I've got her toys of her own.

Eva: What'd you do with Andy's things?

Tom: Put them away. Up in the attic.

Eva: What's wrong with her playing with ...

Tom: (*Interrupts, really tense now*) They were boy toys, Eva. It's okay. She has toys of her own now. (*Begins pacing*) It'll be good to have you home, Honey. She needs a mom.

Eva: Tom? She needs us both!

Tom: Of course. I'll see if your Dad's on duty today. He might help us celebrate.

Tom leaves the room abruptly. Eva pulls Megan to her and frowns as the lights fade away.

SCENE 4

Hospital room has been changed into a child's bedroom (or living room - see props). Tom sits in living room with work spread around him on couch. Lights slowly come up as he works.

Megan: (*From offstage*) Mr. Adamson? Can you play catch with me?

Tom looks toward voice, then bows his head as tape begins to play and lights fade way down, but not out. Voices are heard with reverb to indicate distance.

Andy: Daddy? Can you play catch with me today?

Tom: Sure, Son. How else you gonna get famous enough to support me in my old age?

Andy: Can I be a famous snowman builder?

Tom: Nope! Too seasonal. All your work goes down the drain, sooner or later.

Andy: Okay! How about a race car driver?

Tom: Fast money in that, but you'll scare your Mom to death.

Andy: How about a preacher?

Tom: Maybe we better focus on playing catch. Okay, Buddy?

Andy: That's us! Buddies forever!

Voices fade and light comes up. Megan, holding ball, is just inside room..

Megan: Mr. Adamson? Can you throw the ball with me?

Tom: Not tonight, Girl. I'm really busy.

Megan leaves with head down, ball under arm as light fades away.

SCENE 5

A year passes. Megan and Eva are in living room as lights come up

Megan: Mom, why doesn't Mr. Adamson like me?

Eva: First of all, you can call him Dad ..

Megan: He never wants to do anything with me.

Eva: Honey, it'll be Christmas in a few weeks. He's really missing Andy now. He'll be okay in a while

Megan: Do you miss Andy too?

Eva: More than you'll ever know

Megan: I hope this Christmas is better than last year. I hope it's the best Christmas ever!

Eva whirls around...

Eva: (*Sharply*) Don't say that!!

Frightened, Megan begins to back away. Contrite, Eva goes to her and holds her.

Eva: I'm sorry, Honey. I want that too.

They're hugging when Tom comes in. He watches till they finish.

Tom: Personally, it might be best if we didn't celebrate Christmas this year.

Eva is suddenly very angry. Speaks tightly and controlled.

Eva: Megan, you need to go to your room for a while. Now, please!

Megan leaves, but stops just outside of door. Eva turns on Tom. A lot of frustration comes out.

Eva: All right. What's eating you, Mister?

Tom: I'm just not in the mood for this Christmas cheer nonsense.

Eva: Or this family nonsense? Or this house being a home nonsense? Time for your family nonsense? Or a little child you won't call by name nonsense? And of course it's nonsense that she's afraid to call you Dad. She's the only thing right in this house. You're for sure not a Dad. The question is, Tom, just what are you?

Tom: *(Dull)* I don't know, but it's not a father. My boy's dead.

Eva: You blame me for that, Tom? Is that why you've quit being a husband too?

Tom: No, you couldn't avoid it. It is just that...

Eva: What? What drives you to break that little girl's heart and mine?

Tom: I wish we hadn't gotten her.

Megan covers mouth with hands, flees to room, and throws herself on the bed.

Eva: It's a little late, Tom. She needs us. She needs you.

Tom: There's...nothing left inside me. I can't do it again. What if I lose her too? It's better this way.

Eva: *(Tears in eyes, turns to leave - pauses at door)* No pain or heartbreak? Just Megan's? *(She shakes head)* Hey, Tom? What about me? *(Eva runs out through audience with hand to mouth, leaving Tom alone.)*

Tom: Yeah, what about me? *(Bitter)* Hey, God? What about me? If you're listening, I don't think much of this Christmas. No peace on earth . No tidings of joy. You expect me to serve you? To just give and give? You got any idea what it's like to lose your son?

God: *(Softly)* Tom

Tom: *(Continues on, unmindful of God's voice)* To have to prove your love for someone? To constantly overlook the imperfection in your bride?

God: *(Softly)* Tom

Tom: I just feel like walking away from them and you. When do blessings come my way?

Tom and God proceed to speak together. Tom is down on knees by the end of the exchange.

Tom: What about me?

God: I gave my life for you

Tom: What about me?

God: I bled and died for you. Before you walk out through that door. Back to the life you led before. What do you think I died for? What about me?

Very long pause with Tom's head down

Tom: I'm sorry, Lord.

God: I do know what it is like to give and give. I gave up my power. Took up residence in a human body. Felt every human weakness, then let mortal men kill me. Do you know why, Tom?

Tom: No,.....Sir

God: That day in the hospital room? Why did you kiss your wife that way?

Tom: To show her that my love could adapt. That I was also willing to be scarred. If it helped her not be ashamed in my presen....

God: That's the same gift I gave the first Christmas. How else could you feel comfortable with me? Love is the only gift that makes this season special. Except now you think it's not worth receiving or giving. I choose to risk it. You too are scarred. And you might break my heart, but still I love you. Are you made in my image?

Light fades out as Tom kneels with face covered.

SCENE 6

The last scene opens with Tom in the living room, putting presents under a small decorated tree. Megan and Eva sit in the bedroom talking. Tom stands up and calls.....

Tom: Hey, Ladies! Can you join me in here?

Eva frowns, but takes Megan by the hand. She leads the reluctant child in the room. Both stop short at the sight of decorations.

Eva: What is this?

Tom: An apology, Honey. To my family and God. I need your forgiveness.

Eva: I don't know what to...

Megan: *(Moves forward and stares intently up into Tom's eyes)* Are you back, Mr. Adams? *(Tom shushes her)*

Tom: You don't have to call me that, Megan. If you will let me, I will try to be a Dad to you.

Megan: Are we going to have Christmas?

Tom: We are going to start a few days early, if you want. Would you open this present now? *(He hands her a present)* Couple of days of good weather coming. You might need it.

Eva moves to Tom's side, staring at him. Megan opens the present, only to find a ball mitt. She leaps up with it.

Megan: Does this mean you'll play catch with me?

Tom: *(Kneels down to her)* Any time I can. How else will you get famous enough to support me in my old age?

Eva kneels down beside them. Tom takes both in his arms.

Megan: Oh, Daddy! This has got to be the best Christmas ever.

Tom: *(Smiles)* No, that one was taken a long time ago. But the second best is sure nice.

Light fade. "O Holy Night" begins playing.