Scene 4 - Decorating the living room

(Time: Monday, December 20. Setting: inside the Miller family living room on upper stage. There is a chair and wood stove in the center and a telephone off to stage right. Curtain opens. ARNOLD is hanging up a wreath on the wall. Lights fade on.)

ARNOLD: Hey, Rob, did you find the rest of the decorations?

ROBBIE: *(from off stage)* Well, kind of.

ARNOLD: What do you mean?

ROBBIE: I don’t know if I found them or if they found me.

ARNOLD: Well, bring them out.

*(ROBBIE enters tangled up in flashing Christmas lights.)*

ARNOLD: Hey, we don’t need to decorate any more. We just have to hang you on the wall.

ROBBIE: Hardy-har. Was it just me, or were those girls acting sort of strange?

ARNOLD: Girls always act strange. That’s what makes them girls.

ROBBIE: Yeah, I guess so.

*(Phone rings)*

ROBBIE: Can you get that Arnold?

ARNOLD: Sure thing.

ROBBIE: And if its for me, take a message. I’ll call them later when I get untangled.

(ARNOLD picks up the phone. CONSTANCE is sitting in chair on lower stage off to stage right. Light fades on her as ARNOLD picks up phone.)

ARNOLD: Hello?

CONSTANCE: Hello, is this the Miller home?

ARNOLD: Yes, it is, but I’m not one of them.

CONSTANCE: Is Robbie there?

ARNOLD: Yes, I mean no. He’s here Constance, but he’s kind of tied up at the moment.

ROBBIE: Is that Constance?

ARNOLD: Yes it is. *(In phone)* Can I take a message?

ROBBIE: Don’t take a message! I’ll talk to her now.

ARNOLD: Just a minute, Constance. Rob is going to try to make it to the phone.

(ROBBIE tries to make it to the phone and falls down. He crawls the rest of the way)

ROBBIE: Hello?

CONSTANCE: Hi, Robbie.

ROBBIE: *(giggles)* Hi. What can I do for you?

CONSTANCE: Robbie, there's something I wanted to ask you about.

ROBBIE: Sure, Constance, we can talk sometime. What are you doing tomorrow?

CONSTANCE: Well, I was going out shopping with my mother tomorrow afternoon...

ROBBIE: Boy, Constance, that sounds swell! I'd love to go with you guys!

CONSTANCE: But... *(sighs)* Okay.

ROBBIE: Sounds like a plan! And afterwards we can go to the drugstore and get some hot chocolate.

CONSTANCE: But...

ROBBIE: Oh, and Constance...

CONSTANCE: Yes, Robbie?

ROBBIE: My sister is having a Christmas party here Friday night after the program at church. I didn't know if you wanted to come as my guest.

CONSTANCE: Uh... I guess so.

ROBBIE: That’s grand, Constance! Oh, and one more thing.

CONSTANCE: Yes?

ROBBIE: Constance sounds so formal. Can I call you Connie?

CONSTANCE: If you have to.

ROBBIE: Boy! Good bye, Connie.

**CONSTANCE: Good bye.**

(Light on CONSTANCE fades out. **MR. MILLER enters stage right**.)

**MR. MILLER**: Who was that on the phone?

ARNOLD: Hi, Mr. Miller.

ROBBIE: Hello, grandfather. That was Connie Marshal. I'm going out Christmas shopping with her and her mother tomorrow and then we're going to get some hot chocolate and maybe even help decorate her house!

**MR. MILLER**: But don't you have practice with the choir tomorrow evening?

ROBBIE: I'm sure we'll be back early enough so it won't get in the way.

**MR. MILLER**: Just make sure you don't get too busy with these festivities that you loose your focus on the program at the church. It's such a great cause and I would hate to see this opportunity wasted.

ROBBIE: Don't worry, it's just one afternoon. How could that hurt the Christmas program?

**MR. MILLER**: I just know how teenagers are, I was one, a long time ago. Someone gets caught up in a party and another is so worried about what presents they are going to get, and the next thing you know, many people forget that Jesus Christ our Lord is the real reason for Christmas.

ROBBIE: I'm sure that won't happen with us, grandfather.

(JANNEY enters stage left.)

JANNEY: I heard the phone ring. Was it for me?

ROBBIE: No, it was Constance.

JANNEY: What did she want.

ROBBIE: Oh, she wanted to know if I could go shopping with her tomorrow, and I asked her to the party.

JANNEY: What!?

ROBBIE: I said I asked her to the party.

JANNEY: You didn’t! I can’t believe you! You horrible creature!

(JANNEY exits stage left.)

**MR. MILLER**: What was Janney so upset about?

ROBBIE: I don’t know. She’s just a girl I guess.

*(Lights fade off. Curtain closes.)*

Scene 13 - Mr. Miller’s advice

(Time: Thursday evening, December 23. Setting: Miller family den on lower stage right. There is a couch, telephone, and radio. ROBBIE is on stage sitting down talking into a telephone. ROBBIE is wearing a robe. Lights fade on.) ROBBIE: Hello, Stan, this is Robbie. (Pause) Uh, yeah, that Robbie. Wait a minute, I’m just calling to tell you I’m sorry for the fight the other day. Uh huh... No, no, You’ve got it all wrong! Yes, really. Uh huh. So, maybe you’d still be willing to sing in the choir tomorrow night. Hello? Hello? I guess that means no.

(ROBBIE hangs up phone. **MR. MILLER enters**.)

**MR. MILLER**: There you are, Robbie.

ROBBIE: Hello, grandfather.

**MR. MILLER**: How’s everything going the night before the big event?

ROBBIE: Absolutely lousy.

**MR. MILLER**: I heard. Janney told me all about the practice.

ROBBIE: I tried calling a whole bunch of people to see if they would change their mind, but no one wants to do it.

**MR. MILLER**: So what are you going to do?

ROBBIE: I guess I’ll have to call people tomorrow and tell them that we’ve canceled. Pastor Reid will sure be disappointed.

**MR. MILLER**: Are you positive that’s what you want to do?

ROBBIE: I don’t see that I have any other choice.

**MR. MILLER**: You haven’t considered going on with the program?

ROBBIE: With only three people?

**MR. MILLER**: Robbie, let me ask you a question. Why did you originally want to help with this Christmas program?

ROBBIE: Well... Because I wanted to help people remember the real reason for the Christmas season. We fill up our schedules with so many things and sometimes we forget all about Bethlehem and how Jesus came.

**MR. MILLER**: That’s a very good reason. Has that purpose changed now that everyone has quit?

ROBBIE: Well, no.

**MR. MILLER**: I would say that people need to hear it now more than ever.

ROBBIE: Yes, but... But it will be so hard.

**MR. MILLER**: Yes, it will be, but where in the Bible does God say that things will never be hard?

ROBBIE: I don’t know...

**MR. MILLER**: Well, I’ve studied that book for many years and I can tell you that it doesn’t say that it will never get hard. In fact, Psalm 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

ROBBIE: *(Sighs)*

**MR. MILLER**: I won’t tell you what to do, but I hope you think and pray long before you make any decision. Good night.

ROBBIE: Good night, Grandfather.

(**MR. MILLER exits**. ROBBIE sits quietly for a few moments and then gets down on his knees to pray. Lights fade off.)