A PLACE CALLED CHRISTMAS
By Whitney Ryan Garrity

SYNOPSIS: The Holiday Toy Store closes its doors on Christmas Eve leaving five toys behind. The four older toys befriend the freshly-painted puppet, Woody. Woody learns about Christmas and Santa Claus from the others and the toys embark on an adventure to find Christmas, believing it to be a real place. (The Toy Maker's been saying that Christmas is just around the corner since Thanksgiving!) With the help of two quarreling elves and a flighty Good Fairy, Woody and the toys discover the true meaning of Christmas.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(4 MEN, 6 WOMEN, 5 EITHER, DOUBLING POSSIBLE)

JINGLE (m/f).............................A very efficient, business-like elf.
                               (65 lines)
JANGLE (m/f)...........................A very mischievous, childlike elf.
                               (63 lines)
JACKY (m/f)..............................A jolly, colorful Jack-in-the-Box.
                               (46 lines)
SOLDIER (m).............................A handsome, but somewhat nervous, tin soldier. (60 lines)
DOLLY (f).................................A very pretty doll, prone to tears.
                               (59 lines)
TOY MAKER’S WIFE (f).............A warm-hearted, chatty woman.
                               (12 lines)
TOY MAKER (m).........................A kindly old man. (10 lines)
WOODY (m/f).............................A brand-new wooden puppet. (45 lines)
TEDDY (m/f)..............................A grumpy old teddy bear. (59 lines)
GOOD FAIRY (f)..........................A beautiful but scatterbrained woman.
                               (17 lines)
CAROL-ANN (f)..........................A lovely young girl in her teens.
                               (26 lines)
NICHOLAS (m)...........................A cute little boy. (18 lines)
HOLLY (f).................................An adorable little girl. (16 lines)
TOMMY (m) ............................A troubled boy in his teens. (20 lines)
AUNT CORA (f) ..........................A mean old woman. (18 lines)

SETTING

The action takes plays in the Holiday Toy Store, The Forest and an Orphanage.

TIME: A very long time ago.

AUTHOR’S NOTE

A Place Called Christmas has been written to accommodate very flexible casting. Although in the script, the roles of JINGLE, JANGLE, TEDDY, JACKY and WOODY are denoted as “he,” that doesn’t mean they cannot be successfully played by women (almost all of these roles have been in different productions.)

Also, doubling roles is possible. The same actress can play the GOOD FAIRY and AUNT CORA or the TOY MAKER’S WIFE or all three. The playwright once appeared (with some very fast costume changes) as JANGLE, the TOY MAKER and TEDDY all in the same production.

When at all possible, the roles of the ORPHANS should be played by children or young people. CAROL-ANN and TOMMY can be played by teens; NICHOLAS and HOLLY should be younger. More ORPHANS and TOYS can be added as extras, provided that they are all paired off at the end, leaving WOODY for AUNT CORA.
PROLOGUE

AT RISE: A Light fades up DSC, revealing JINGLE. The curtain is closed behind HIM. JINGLE addresses the audience in a business-like fashion.

JINGLE: Hello, Boys and Girls. Welcome to our production of A Place Called Christmas. My name is Jingle and I - -

JANGLE appears suddenly. HE joins JINGLE at CS, angrily.

JANGLE: Wait, stop, hold everything!

JINGLE: Jangle, can’t you see that I’m --

JANGLE: Why is it that you always get to say hello to the Boys and Girls, while I have to wait back there, all alone in the dark? Huh? Answer me that! Huh?!

JINGLE: Well . . . that’s just the way that we always start the play. You see, the lights come up and I say, “Hello, Boys and Girls. Welcome to - - “

JANGLE: Wait, stop, hold everything! This time, I want to say hello to the Boys and Girls.

JINGLE: (Dubious.) Well, I don’t know . . .

JANGLE: (Falling to HIS knees and wrapping HIMSELF around JINGLE’s legs.) Oh, please, please, please! I’ll be your best-est friend in the whole wide world!

JINGLE: (Annoyed.) You already are my best friend, Jangle!

JANGLE: (Getting to HIS feet happily.) Oh! (Suddenly angry again.) Wait, stop, hold everything! If I’m your best friend, then what kind of a best friend wouldn’t let his best friend say hello to the Boys and Girls if that’s what his best friend wanted to do? Huh? Answer me that! Huh?!

JINGLE: Oh, all right! You can say hello to the Boys and Girls.

JANGLE: You mean it?

JINGLE: Yes.

JANGLE: Really and truly?

JINGLE: Yes!

JANGLE: Cross your heart, stick a needle in your - -
JINGLE:  (Annoyed.) Jangle!
JANGLE:  Okay, okay!

JANGLE prims HIS costume, clears HIS throat and stands in a pose.

JINGLE:  Well?  What are you waiting for?
JANGLE:  You’re in my light!

Exasperated, JINGLE steps out of the light.

JANGLE:  Okay, okay!  I’m ready to say hello to the Boys and Girls.
(Starts to speak, then panics.) What do I say?
JINGLE:  (Stepping back into the light, prompting impatiently.) “Hello, Boy and Girls . . .”
JANGLE:  (Shoving JINGLE away.) Okay, okay!  (Addressing the audience.) Hello, Boys and Girls. Welcome to our production of A Place Called Christmas. My name is Jingle and - -
JINGLE:  (Joining JANGLE again.) No, no, no! I’m Jingle, you’re confused!
JANGLE:  Well, if you’re Jingle, doesn’t that make me Jangle?
JINGLE:  Yes!
JANGLE:  Then why did you just call me “confused”?
JINGLE:  I didn’t mean that your name was “confused,” I meant that you confused your name and . . . oh! Now, I’m confused!
JANGLE:  I thought your name was Jingle.
JINGLE:  (Angrily.) It is! And if you don’t get on with the introduction, you’re name is going to be mud!
JANGLE:  What?
JINGLE:  Mud!
JANGLE:  What?
JINGLE:  MUD!
JANGLE:  (Contrite.) Oh. (Addresses the audience.) My name is Jangle. And this is my best friend, Jingle.
JINGLE AND JANGLE:  We’re elves!
JINGLE:  We work for Santa Claus in the North Pole.
JANGLE: Incidentally, Santa Claus is a great boss! *(Pointedly, to JINGLE.)* He . . . unlike some people I could mention . . . never yells! *(Thinking.)* Well . . . there was that one time when I accidentally --

JINGLE: Never mind about that, Jangle. Poor Rudolph! He still flickers nervously whenever you’re around! Anyway, Christmas is our busiest time of the year.

JANGLE: *(Robotically.)* Time to make the toys, time to make the toys.

JINGLE: But it’s also my favorite time of the year.

JANGLE: Mine too!

JINGLE: The snow, the sound of sleigh bells . . .

JANGLE: The presents!

JINGLE: The children caroling . . .

JANGLE: The presents!

JINGLE: The trees all lit up and decorated . . .

JANGLE: The pres - -

JINGLE claps HIS hand over JANGLE’s mouth.

JINGLE: *(Releasing JANGLE.)* Today, we are taking time out of our busy Christmas schedule to tell you all a story.

JANGLE: Ooh, I like stories!

JINGLE: Yes, well . . . this story is about some toys.

JANGLE: Ooh, I like toys too!

JINGLE shoots JANGLE a look, then turns back to the audience.

JINGLE: These toys were sad because they were left behind on Christmas Eve. You see, they . . . well, let’s start at the beginning, It all starts at the Holiday Toy Store, a tiny little shop in a tiny little village, owned by --

JANGLE: *(Chiming in.)* A tiny, little Toy Maker!

JINGLE: *(Annoyed.)* No, the Toy Maker was regular size.

JANGLE: Then how did he fit into that tiny little toy store in that tiny little village? Huh? Answer me that! Huh?!
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JINGLE: (Angrily.) Do you want to wait all alone back there in the dark? (JANGLE shakes HIS head.) Then just be quiet, all right?

JANGLE nods HIS head. JINGLE turns HIS attention back to the audience.

JINGLE: Our story begins on a Christmas Eve a very long time ago. The dark evening sky was glittering with bright stars as the Toy Maker and his Wife - -

JANGLE: (Tapping JINGLE on the shoulder.) Um . . . I hate to interrupt, you’re doing a great job with the story, really you are! But . . . well, you mentioned stars, and frankly, I don’t see any stars. So I ask you, where are the stars?

JINGLE: (Angrily brandishing HIS fist.) Oh, you’re going to see stars all right! (Calms HIMSELF and addresses the audience.) The Toy Maker and his Wife were just about to close up shop when . . . Well, why don’t we look in and find out?

JINGLE and JANGLE exit on opposite sides as the Curtain and the lights fade up . . .

SCENE 1

AT RISE:
The Holiday Toy Store is revealed. A backdrop depicting a pyramid of children’s building blocks is USC. Several 3-dimensional blocks are scattered about for sitting. A SOLDIER stands at attention in front the pyramid. A pretty DOLLY is posed DSR and a colorful Jack-in-the-Box {JACKY} is posed DSL.

The TOY MAKER’S WIFE enters from L, busily arranging HER winter apparel. SHE calls back to off L.

WIFE: Orville . . .? Orville! Quit fussing around back there and help me close up the shop. It’s Christmas Eve, for goodness sake!

TOY MAKER: (Off.) Just give me . . .

WIFE: (Overlapping.) I know, I know . . .
TOY MAKER AND WIFE: Five more minutes!

WIFE: (Muttering to HERSELF.) Seems like I’ve spent the last 40 years of my life waiting for that man . . . five more minutes at a time! (Looks around the shop and sighs.) Well, I guess we didn’t do too badly this year. Sold nearly every toy in the shop. All except these three or four. (Moves to DOLLY.) Like this doll . . . such a pretty one! But, “What does she do?” they always ask me. “What does she do?” And I tell ‘em, she doesn’t do anything. She just stands there, looking pretty. Oh, but that won’t do nowadays! Now they want dolls that do this and that and I don’t know what all! Things you wouldn’t want to watch a person do, let alone a doll! But it does seem a shame. I’m sure this pretty little doll would have made some good little girl very happy!

WIFE: (Cont’d; moving to the SOLDIER.) And this brave-looking soldier . . . he would have been perfect for some good little boy. Poor little thing, his entire regiment up and disappeared without him. (Looking around.) Speaking of disappearing . . . there’s an adorable teddy bear around here somewhere. He’s been here forever! Probably crawled off somewhere to hibernate for the winter. (Laughs to HERSELF.) As if a toy could do such a thing! (Moving to JACKY.) I must admit that I’m glad we didn’t sell this Jack-in-the-Box this year. I would have missed him too much! Still, it would have been nice to see him find a nice home for Christmas. (Sighs.) Well, there’s nothing to do about these leftover toys now. It’s Christmas Eve and . . . (Looking around.) That reminds me. (Calling.) Orville, your five more minutes ran out five minutes ago!

TOY MAKER: (Entering from L.) Just hold on to your little white apron, woman! I got something to show you. Help me bring it out here.

The TOY MAKER exits L again. The WIFE follows HIM off.

WIFE: What on Earth . . .?! Orville, have you any idea how much I have to do to get ready for this holiday? (Exiting L.) Potatoes to peel, ham to baste, pies to bake . . .
As soon as the WIFE is out of sight, DOLLY, SOLDIER and JACKY come to life. THEY stretch and yawn. When THEY hear the WIFE again, THEY resume THEIR poses. The TOY MAKER and WIFE re-enter from L. THEY push a stool on castors. What is seated on the stool is covered by a large white sheet.

WIFE: Linens to wash, gifts to wrap, silverware to polish - -

The TOY MAKER removes the sheet with a proud flourish. Seated on the stool is WOODY, a puppet without strings.

WIFE: Oh my! Now, isn’t he the cutest thing!

TOY MAKER: Just finished him, haven’t even put on his strings yet.

I’m just sorry I didn’t have him ready in time for Christmas.

WIFE: Don’t fret about that, dear. He’ll be among friends here and that’s really what Christmas is about anyway. Don’t you think?

TOY MAKER: Yes, Elmira. I guess you’re right about that. Good-bye, little puppet. (Looking around.) Good-bye to all our little friends. (Turns to WIFE.) Well? What are you lollygaggin’ around here for, woman? It’s Christmas Eve, and there’s lots to do!

WIFE: (Dryly.) You don’t say!

The TOY MAKER gives the WIFE a hug and leads HER off R. The jingling sound of the shop door closing is heard. DOLLY, SOLDIER and JACKY start to come to life again.

JACKY: Are they gone?

SOLDIER: (Nervously.) I . . . I think so!

WOODY: (Coming to life suddenly.) Hey! You can move and talk! Wait a minute . . . so can I! (Spinning on the stool.) I can move and feel and . . . (Stops spinning, queasily.) Oh! What I feel now is dizzy!

DOLLY: Of course we can move and talk. But only at night when the shop is closed and no people are about. Then we can sing and dance and . . . anything we want! I don’t believe I’ve seen you in the shop before . . .
SOLDIER:  (Making HIS way to WOODY.) Yes, who exactly are you?

WOODY: Well, I’m a puppet. The Toy Maker calls me Woody, I guess ‘cause I’m made of wood!

JACKY: Well, Woody, welcome to the Holiday Toy Store. Jacky’s my name, and jokes are my game! I’m a Jack-in-the-Box . . . which is why I’m wearing such a “square” outfit! (Laughs.) Get it? Box . . . square! (Stops laughing abruptly.) Never mind.

DOLLY: I’m Dolly. I’m afraid I really don’t do anything.

SOLDIER: (Smitten.) But you sure are pretty. (Turns to WOODY quickly.) I’m the Soldier. If you run into any trouble at all, tumbling blocks, runaway choo-choos . . . (Glaring at JACKY.) Or one of Jacky’s terrible jokes . . . you just come to me.

WOODY: Well, maybe you can answer something for me.

SOLDIER: (Smugly.) Of course I can!

WOODY: I’ve heard the Toy Maker and his Wife talk about something called “Christmas.” What is that?

JACKY: (Incredulous.) What . . .?!

SOLDIER: (Overlapping.) You’ve never heard of Christmas?!

DOLLY: Oh, leave him alone! Can’t you see he’s brand-new? Poor little thing, his paint’s not even dry yet! (Taking WOODY by the hand.) Now, the first thing you need to know about Christmas is that it isn’t a “what,” it’s a “where.”

WOODY: Christmas is a place?

DOLLY: Oh, yes! It’s a beautiful place where Santa Claus brings all of the toys to good little girls and boys. There’s laughter and singing and joy!

WOODY: Wow! I never dreamed that such a place existed! To think that someone like Santa Claus would . . . (Pause.) Who’s Santa Claus?

SOLDIER: (Bursts into laughter.) Who’s Santa Claus? (Elbowing JACKY.) Are you hearing this, Jacky? He doesn’t even know who - -

DOLLY cuts off SOLDIER with a glaring look.
JACKY: (To WOODY.) Santa Claus is a jolly old soul. He has a long beard as white as snow and a great big belly that shakes when he laughs, like a bowl full of jelly! (Demonstrating.) Ho, ho, ho! Every year, Santa Claus gathers up all the toys and brings them to this place called Christmas. There, they find homes with all the good little boys and girls all over the world!

DOLLY: (Sadly.) Santa gathers up all the toys . . . except us!

SOLDIER: Oh, now Dolly, don’t . . .

JACKY: (To WOODY.) She does this every year!

DOLLY: Well, I can’t help it! I think of all of those lucky little toys waking up in the arms of all those good little girls and boys . . . and then I think of us in this dark, lonely, tiny little toy store and I . . . (Sobs.) And I . . . (Bigger sob.)

SOLDIER AND JACKY: We know . . . you cry!

DOLLY: (Wailing.) Yes!

TEDDY: (Appearing grumpily from behind a block.) Oh! Cry, cry, cry, cry, cry! That’s all I ever hear, all night, once a year, this noisy waterfall with the rooted hair starts in a-weepin’ and a-wailin’ about something or nothing or everything! I ask you, how is a bear supposed to get any sleep around here?

DOLLY: Oh, Teddy! How can you sleep at a time like this?

TEDDY: It’s easy! I fold my arms . . . (Demonstrates.) Like this. And I close my eyes . . . (Demonstrates.) Like this. And before you know it . . . (TEDDY imitates snoring, then stops abruptly and addresses DOLLY.) But I can’t do it with you crying all the time!

DOLLY: Well, I can’t help it, Teddy! I think of all of those lucky little toys waking up in the arms of all those good little girls and boys . . . and then I think of us in this dark, lonely, tiny little toy store and I . . . (Sobs.) And I . . . (Bigger sob.)

TEDDY, SOLDIER AND JACKY: We know . . . you cry!

DOLLY: (Wailing.) Yes!

TEDDY: Well, I’ve heard enough. I’m going back to bed.

WOODY: (Rushing to TEDDY.) Oh, wait! Don’t leave. They were just telling me about this place called Christmas.

TEDDY: (Sizing WOODY up.) And just who are you?

WOODY: My name is Woody. The Toy Maker just finished me. (Beaming.) I’m brand new!
TEDDY: *(Dryly.)* Yeah? Well, we’re all that . . . once! Now, get this straight, Splinter-breath. I am a bear, and bears sleep. That’s what we do! And just for the record, I’m not particularly fond of puppets - - always getting me tangled up in their annoying little strings!

JACKY: Teddy, that’s no way to talk, especially tonight of all nights.

TEDDY: Why? What’s so special about tonight?

WOODY: *(Beaming.*)* It’s Christmas Eve!

TEDDY: *(Annoyed.*)* Oh, Christmas this and Christmas that! I’m so sick of hearing about it! *(Pulling WOODY in close.*) Just between you and me and the lamppost, kid . . . I seriously doubt that this place called Christmas even exists!

DOLLY: *(Shocked.*)* Teddy!

WOODY: You don’t believe in Christmas?

TEDDY: Well, what’s believing in Christmas ever done for me . . . for any of us? I’m the oldest toy here. I’ve sat here, year after year, watching the toys leave the store, heading to this place called Christmas. So long, kites and yo-yos and pogo sticks. Drop me a line, blocks and balls and barrels of marbles. And now, look at me, just look at me! My fur’s all faded, my ribbon’s all crumpled and torn and my belly button’s hangin’ by a thread! I ask you, next to a shiny new car or a flashy rocking horse, what chance do I have of finding Christmas this year or next year or *any* year?

WOODY: Well, I like you, Mr. Bear. And I’d like you even if your belly button fell off!

TEDDY: *(Dryly.*)* Gee, thanks, kid! My stuffing’s all a-tingle inside!

JACKY: Teddy, please stay and help us celebrate.

TEDDY: Celebrate? Celebrate what? Being left behind?

DOLLY: *(Starting to cry.*)* Oh . . .

SOLDIER: *(Pulling TEDDY aside.*)* Quiet, Teddy! We’re trying to keep our minds off of that.

TEDDY: Yeah? And how’s that workin’ out for you?

SOLDIER: So far, we’ve had to explain to Woody about Christmas *and* Santa Claus . . . and Dolly’s cried twice!

TEDDY: Sounds . . . festive! But I gotta go! Sorry, gang, but I already have plans for this time of year . . . big plans!

SOLDIER: Oh? And what might they be, Teddy?
TEDDY: Sleeping! You interrupted me smack-dab in the middle of my holiday hibernation. So, if you'll excuse me, I've got a date with some dancing sugarplums!

WOODY: (Tugging at TEDDY.) Please don’t leave, Mr. Bear!

TEDDY: (Freeing HIMSELF from WOODY.) Careful, son . . . you'll crease the fur!

JACKY: Teddy’s right, though. This isn’t much of a celebration.

DOLLY: (Brightly.) Oh, I have an idea! Do you know what I like to do when I’m feeling sad and blue . . . (Sobs.) And depressed . . . (Sobs.) And like it’s the end of the - -

TEDDY: Oh, just tell us, before you have us all crying!

DOLLY: (Suddenly bright.) Okay! I like to pretend that I’m someone else. Sometimes I like to pretend that I’m a ballerina.

DOLLY executes a pretty dance step.

WOODY: And I could pretend that I’m a cowboy! (Pretending to ride a horse.) Git along, doggies!

SOLDIER: I like to pretend that I’m a pirate. (Pretending to slash the air with a sword.) Avast, ye maties!

JACKY: Sometimes, I like to pretend that I’m oval instead of square. (The TOYS stare at JACKY.) Hey, I can dream, can’t I?

TEDDY: Well, I like to pretend that you all went away and I went back to bed!

JACKY: Oh, Teddy! You’re not helping. Now, let’s try to think of things that we like, things that make us happy!

DOLLY: You mean, like thinking about the sunshine streaming through the toy store window, bright and warm?

TEDDY: Think about sleeping!

SOLDIER: Think about bold adventures!

TEDDY: Think about slumbering!

JACKY: Think about the laughter of children!

TEDDY: Think of dozing!

WOODY: (Excited.) Think about Christmas! (The TOYS stop and look dejected.) Oh . . . sorry!

DOLLY: That’s all right, Woody. It almost worked.

SOLDIER: Yeah, I was almost starting to feel better.
TEDDY: Oh, what are you talking? Feeling better?! We're toys, remember? We can't feel anything, not really! We're just cloth and stuffing and . . . (Raps WOODY on the head.) Wood!

WOODY: Hey!

JACKY: Oh, Teddy. You know better than that! A toy can be so much more. A toy can be a friend and a playmate. A toy can be something you can tell all your hopes and dreams to, something that won't tell them to anyone else. But first, a toy must be loved. Without love, a toy is just cloth and stuffing and . . . (Raps WOODY on the head.) Wood!

DOLLY: (Sadly.) And no one loves us.

SOLDIER: (Sincerely.) I love you, Dolly . . . (Embarrassed.) I mean, I do, if everyone else does!

JACKY: Of course, I love you, Dolly!

WOODY: Me too!

The TOYS look at TEDDY expectantly.

TEDDY: (Begrudgingly.) Oh, all right, all right! I love you, too! Count me in!

DOLLY: Well, thank you. And I love all of you. But maybe it's not enough for toys to love each other. Maybe we have to be loved by people . . . children. And we're not. I guess that's why we're still here instead of that place called Christmas. Oh, when I think about it, I just want to . . . (Sobs.) Want to . . . (Bigger sob.)

TEDDY, JACKY, SOLDIER AND WOODY: We know . . . to cry!

DOLLY: (Wailing.) Yes!

TEDDY: Well, this is where I came in, so I think I will just - -

SOLDIER: Hold on, Teddy. You're not going anywhere, and that's an order!

TEDDY: An order? Who was sold and left you boss?

SOLDIER: Need I remind you that I am a decorated officer of the military?

TEDDY: (Laughs.) Ha! I've seen more impressive decorations on a birthday cake!

SOLDIER: (Nonplussed.) And that is why I volunteered to stay behind . . .
JACKY: Excuse me, Soldier. I hate to be disagreeable - - I’m not made that way. But if I remember correctly, when your fellow soldiers marched out of the store, you were hiding . . .

TEDDY: *(Teasing.)* Cowering behind Betsy Wetsy!

SOLDIER: *(Indignant.)* I beg your pardon. I was not hiding. I was . . . merely . . . seeking a vantage point to overlook the proceedings. Truth be told, the entire maneuver was *my* idea!

DOLLY: *(Moving to HIM.)* Really? I must say, it was quite a display!

SOLDIER: *(Melting.)* Did you really think so? *(Coughs to regain HIS composure.)* I mean, would you like for me to recreate the moment for you, dear?

DOLLY: Oh, yes . . . *(Taking HIS arm coquettishly.)* General!

SOLDIER: *(Reciting.)* The night was dark,
   The air was still
   Not a sound was heard until . . .

*SOLDIER takes DOLLY’s arm and leads HER in a march. The other TOYS fall in behind."

SOLDIER: They went march, march, march
   All around the room . . .

SOLDIER AND TOYS: They went left-right-left-right . . .

TEDDY: The trumpets sounded . . .

JACKY: The drums went “boom, boom, boom”!

SOLDIER AND TOYS: They march, march, march . . .

DOLLY: Right across the floor!

SOLDIER AND TOYS: They went left-right-left-right . . .

SOLDIER: And they marched, marched, march right out the door!

WOODY: Out of the store?

SOLDIER: *(Nodding.)* Right out the door!

TEDDY: And left you behind.

DOLLY: Left us all behind! Oh dear, now I’m sad again.

JACKY: Come on, guys! We’ve got to figure out a way to get some Christmas spirit around here. Otherwise our celebration doesn’t stand a ghost of a chance! *(Laughs.)* Get it? Spirit . . . ghost? *(Stops laughing abruptly.)* Never mind!
DOLLY: Wait, I know something that we can do to get into the Christmas spirit. We can sing some Christmas songs. And maybe we could decorate . . . (Eying JACKY.) Something!

DOLLY moves DS to address the audience. TEDDY, SOLDIER and WOODY open the top of one of the blocks and produce some decorations, ornaments, garland, etc.

DOLLY: (Addressing the audience.) I know some great Christmas songs. I bet you know them too. Will you sing with me?

DOLLY leads the TOYS and the audience in some traditional Christmas songs. TEDDY, SOLDIER and WOODY tack the ornaments onto JACKY’s box, decorating HIM like a Christmas tree. DOLLY joins THEM, producing a star from the block. SHE hands it to WOODY. SOLDIER and TEDDY lift WOODY and HE places the star on JACKY’s head, completing the look.

DOLLY: Oh, Jacky! You look wonderful!
JACKY: Really? ‘Cause I feel pretty silly! But I must say I am feeling better about being here tonight.
WOODY: (Excited.) Wait a minute! That’s it! We’re here!
TEDDY: You just figured that out? You are new!
WOODY: No, I mean, maybe the best way to find Christmas spirit is to find Christmas!
SOLDIER: (Frightened.) You mean, leave the Holiday Toy Store?
JACKY: Why not? Christmas can’t be far. Ever since Thanksgiving, the Toy Maker and his wife have been saying that Christmas is just around the corner!
DOLLY: That’s right!
SOLDIER: (Frightened.) You mean, leave the Holiday Toy Store?
DOLLY: You’re not afraid, are you?
SOLDIER: (Nervously.) Well, no . . . of course not! I just . . . well, I mean . . .
TEDDY: Where’s Betsy Wetsy when you need her?
DOLLY: I hope you will come with us, Soldier. Finding Christmas just wouldn’t be the same without you.
DOLLY gives the SOLDIER a kiss on the cheek.

SOLDIER: Really? Well, what are we waiting for? I'll lead the way! Follow me . . .

The SOLDIER leads the TOYS in a march.

TOYS: Left-Right-Left-Right . . .
SOLDIER: And we march, march, march right out the door!
WOODY: Out of the store?
SOLDIER: (Nodding.) Right out the door!

The SOLDIER and the TOYS march off R. The lights dim and JINGLE is discovered in a spotlight, DSL. HE addresses the audience.

JINGLE: Meanwhile, upstairs over the Holiday Toy Store, the Toy Maker heard a noise . . .

The lights fade up to reveal the TOY MAKER, in a nightgown and stocking cap.

TOY MAKER: I heard a noise!
JINGLE: (Annoyed.) I just said that! (Addresses the audience.) The Toy Maker peered out the window . . .
TOY MAKER: (Peering.) It’s so dark out tonight!
JINGLE: Oh . . . sorry! First, the Toy Maker opened the shutters, and then he peered out the window!

The TOY MAKER pantomimes opening the shutters and peers out the “window” again.

TOY MAKER: That’s better. Oh, my heavens! Elmira, come quick! The toys are marching down the street . . .
JINGLE: The Toymaker watched as the toys marched down the street . . .
TOY MAKER: (Annoyed.) I just said that!

JINGLE exits L haughtily. The TOY MAKER’S WIFE enters, wearing a nightgown, mop cap and robe.

WIFE: (Sleepily.) What is it, Orville?
TOY MAKER: The toys have escaped!
WIFE: That’s impossible. I saw you lock the door with my own two eyes. How on earth could they get out? (Pulling the TOY MAKER.) Now, come back to bed, you silly old man!

After the TOY MAKER and WIFE are gone, JANGLE peeks HIS head out and looks around cautiously. HE enters, holding a very large skeleton key. JANGLE skips gleefully across the stage with the key and exits on the side as the lights . . .

BLACK OUT.

SCENE 2

AT RISE:
The lights fade up to reveal a wooded area. Three stylized plywood trees are in position. A brown bench, representing a log, is set DSL.

SOLDIER leads the TOYS on, still marching. THEY have grown a bit weary. JACKY no longer wears HIS decorations.

SOLDIER AND TOYS: Left-right-left - -

The TOYS look around warily.

JACKY: Gee . . . I never realized it was so big outside of the Holiday Toy Store.
SOLDIER: (Nervously.) And so dark!
TEDDY: (Shivers.) And so cold.
SOLDIER: And so dark! (TEDDY and JACKY give SOLDIER a look.) Not that I’m afraid of the dark!
WOODY: Dolly, what are all these big brown things with the green stuff on them?
DOLLY: I believe that those are called trees, Woody.
WOODY: Trees? What are trees?
TEDDY: (Dryly.) Puppets waiting to happen!

A cheerful female VOICE is heard from off stage.

GOOD FAIRY: Yoo-hoo! Hello? Anyone there!
SOLDIER: (Racing around in a panic.) Someone’s coming! Quick! Sound the alarm! Man your battle stations! Call out the Army!!
JACKY: You are the Army!
SOLDIER: (Stops abruptly, embarrassed.) Oh.
TEDDY: (Sarcastically.) Captain Scaredy-Cat to the rescue!
DOLLY: Whoever it is, they sound friendly enough.
SOLDIER: Well . . . you never can tell. We best hide anyway . . . just to be on the safe side.
GOOD FAIRY: Hello?! The TOYS rush to hide behind the trees. A GOOD FAIRY enters. SHE is a beautiful woman dressed in a sparkling, flowing gown with wings and a tiara. SHE carries a wand.

GOOD FAIRY: Well, that’s odd! I could’ve sworn that I heard voices. But I guess I’m all alone here - - except, of course, those five frightened toys hiding behind the trees! (Calling.) Ollie-ollie-oxen-free! Come out; come out, wherever you are!

The TOYS appear from behind the trees timidly. THEY band together and move as a group to join the GOOD FAIRY.

SOLDIER: Who . . . who are you?
GOOD FAIRY: Please permit me to introduce myself . . . (Producing a business card from HER bodice.) My card.

The GOOD FAIRY hands the card to JACKY. The TOYS pass the card as THEY each take a turn reading it.
JACKY: “All purpose Good Fairy . . .”
DOLLY: “Wishes granted . . .”
SOLDIER: “Curses reversed . . .”
TEDDY: “Spells misspelled”?
GOOD FAIRY: (Taking back the card.) Dispelled! “Spells dispelled”!
(Replaces the card in HER bodice.)
WOODY: Wow! A real, live, honest-to-goodness Good Fairy? Can you fly?
GOOD FAIRY: Well, of course I can! But believe you me, flying is not all it’s cracked up to be, my dear! Especially in winter weather like this! First, I developed ice on my wings! Then, there was the turbulence! Not to mention nearly being broadsided by some crazy man driving a sleigh . . . weaving and dodging around eight flying reindeer! And then, I was stuck in a holding pattern over Newark Airport for almost two hours! (Sniffs at HERSELF.) I can still smell it! (Suddenly bright.) But enough about me! What can I do for you? That’s my job, you know. Helping the helpless . . . healing the hapless . . . guiding the lost . . . making sure that everyone gets to live happily ever after! (Moves to DOLLY.) Wait a minute, don’t tell me! (Putting HER arm around DOLLY’s shoulder.) Sweetheart, if you can round up a big pumpkin and a couple of white mice, I’ll see to it that you get off to the Prince’s ball in no time flat!
DOLLY: That’s very kind of you, I’m sure. But I think you have me confused with Cinderella. Besides she already landed her prince!
JACKY: We all knew she would, of course! She was a shoe-in! (Laughs.) Get it? A shoe-in?! (Stops laughing abruptly.) Never mind.
GOOD FAIRY: (Moving to WOODY.) Oh, of course! How silly of me! Now, I’ve got it. If you stop telling lies, you nose will stop growing, and I can turn you into a real-live boy!
WOODY: (Hurt.) What’s wrong with my nose!
DOLLY, TEDDY, JACKY AND SOLDIER: That’s Pinocchio!
GOOD FAIRY: Oh, sorry, dear! It was an honest mistake. Well, let me . . . I don’t suppose any of you has recently swallowed a poisoned apple?
TOYS: No.
GOOD FAIRY: Well then, I give up! How can I help you?

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