

# ONE MAGICAL CHRISTMAS EVE

Written by Michele L. Vacca

*(An original play inspired by the works of Charles Dickens and O. Henry)*

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## ONE MAGICAL CHRISTMAS EVE PRODUCTION NOTES:

### CHARACTERS:

EBENEEZER PINCHE – A Scrooge-like character, the local pawnbroker and postmaster.

DAVID WAKEFIELD – A young lad who works for Pinche out of economic necessity. David is temporarily out of school because his mother is ill, and he has to help support himself.

EMILY – David's best friend, who is a gentle and giving person with a fine sense of humor

ROSIE – Another one of David's friends. She is athletic and smart.

SAM – Another of David's friends, and Rosie's best buddy, even though they do argue at times. Sam is good-natured and funny, but not as bright as Rosie.

MISS GOODWIN – The schoolteacher, and David's temporary guardian. David's mother Clara is Miss Goodwin's dearest friend.

KRIS KRINGLE – Who might be you-know-who, although he never does admit it. He looks a lot like a certain famous person, but he certainly doesn't seem to be in a big hurry to get anywhere on this Christmas Eve.

NICKIE – An elfin person who accompanies Kringle into the town. Nickie is a lively sprite, who never heard of the word "shyness." This role can be played by a man or a woman.

### SET/COSTUMES

The set for this play is basically two areas within a "village green" or town square. Stage right is a "park" area with a bench and perhaps old-fashioned street lamps. Stage left is the front of Pinche's shop, which opens to reveal the inside of the shop. If technical resources are limited, then the inside of Pinche's can be in place. Upstage can be Dickensian styled buildings, trees, etc., as a backdrop.

Costumes can be generically "turn of the last century" in style or any other style that isn't "modern."

### PLEASE NOTE:

If you are performing this play with an ensemble of actors who double (play more than one role), the following would apply:

In Act II Pinche has a dream. In his dream, he sees Emily as the Spirit of Christmas Past; Miss Goodwin as the spirit of Christmas Present and as his old nanny; Rosie as his young sister Becky; Sam as his young self; Kringle and Nickie as the Spirits of the Future; and David as the clown toy, Chelsea. The characters are not “disguised” in any way; everyone is the same person throughout the play. The name designations in the Act II script are simply a convenience for the actors.

If you are not doubling performers (each actor has one role within the play) then the name designations can be taken literally, i.e., simply a role being played by another actor.

### SPECIAL

The use of music live or taped greatly enhances the production of this play.

# ONE MAGICAL CHRISTMAS EVE

By Michele L. Vacca

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## ACT I

(DURING THE ANNOUNCEMENT SOUND EFFECTS BEGIN; SOUNDS OF A VERY BUSY AND VERY CHEERFUL WORKSHOP. LOTS OF HAMMERING, GIGGLING, AND TOY SOUNDS, SUCH AS TRAINS TOOTING, MUSIC BOXES PLAYING, DOLLS TALKING AND SO ON. THE FOLLOWING MAY HAPPEN IN VERY DIM LIGHT ON THE STAGE, OR IT MAY BE DONE AS A VOICE OVER . . . )

NICKIE: There's your map, sir.

KRINGLE: Excellent.

NICKIE: And your check off list, sir.

KRINGLE: My, it's a long one.

NICKIE: Yes, sir. As usual.

KRINGLE: My, I love Christmas Eve.

NICKIE: Yes, sir. We all do, sir.

KRINGLE: I wonder how the folks in Merryville are doing.

NICKIE: Where's that, sir?

KRINGLE: Right here. You see?

(THE WORKSHOP SOUNDS HAVE FADED AWAY, AND MUSIC PLAYS. IF THE CURTAIN IS STILL DOWN, THEN THIS IS WHEN IT WILL BEGIN TO RISE. IF CURTAIN IS ALREADY UP THEN THE LIGHTS BEGIN TO COME UP VERY VERY SLOWLY.)

NICKIE: Why are you wondering about Merryville, sir?

KRINGLE: We haven't had any letters from them this year.

NICKIE: How strange, sir.

KRINGLE: I hope they're all right.

NICKIE: Let's take a look, sir.

KRINGLE: Good idea.

(THE CURTAIN IS NOW UP FULL, AND THE STAGE IS

STILL QUITE DIM. A BIT OF FOG SWIRLS AROUND.  
THE GLOW OF STREETLAMPS CAN BE DISCERNED.  
BELLS CHIME SOMEWHAT MOURNFULLY.)

KRINGLE: Can you see anything?

NICKIE: It's a bit foggy, sir.

KRINGLE: Keep trying.

NICKIE: Look! There it is!

(MUSIC PLAYS AND THE LIGHTS COME UP  
GRADUALLY TO FULL. AS THE MUSIC PLAYS THERE  
ARE PERHAPS A FEW CROSSOVERS OF SOME  
TOWNSPEOPLE. AS THE MUSIC FADES DOWN IN  
VOLUME DAVID ENTERS. HE CARRIES A LARGE  
BOOK, AND WRITING MATERIALS. SHORTLY  
AFTERWARD, MR. EBENEEZER PINCHE ENTERS.)

DAVID: Good morning, Mr. Pinche.

PINCHE: Bah!

DAVID: Merry Christmas, Mr. Pinche.

PINCHE: Humbug!

(PINCHE CROSSES TO HIS SHOP, WHICH HAS A SIGN  
READING; "EBENEEZER PINCHE; POSTMASTER AND  
PAWNBROKER." HE "OPENS" THE SHOP, WHICH  
CONTAINS A MOTLEY COLLECTION OF ITEMS, ALL  
OF WHICH HAVE BEEN PAWNED INTO HIS  
MERCENARY HANDS. THE SHOP ALSO CONTAINS A  
NUMBER OF ODDLY SHAPED LARGE BAGS, WHICH  
HE FURTIVELY INSPECTS WHENEVER NO ONE ELSE  
IS NEARBY. HE IS VERY SECRETIVE ABOUT THESE  
BAGS, AND AS THE ACT PROGRESSES, IT BECOMES  
VERY APPARENT THAT THEIR CONTENTS ARE  
KNOWN ONLY TO HIM, AND THAT IS THE WAY HE  
WANTS IT TO BE. DAVID FOLLOWS PINCHE  
TOWARD THE SHOP.)

DAVID: Mr. Pinche?

PINCHE: (SHARPLY) What?

DAVID: Any mail today?

PINCHE: No!

DAVID: I'm expecting a letter from my mother.

PINCHE: Bah!

DAVID: She usually writes to me every week.  
PINCHE: So?  
DAVID: And I haven't heard from her all this month.  
PINCHE: So?  
DAVID: I just wondered, sir...  
PINCHE: Well, Mr. Wakefield, there is no mail for you.  
DAVID: Yes, sir.  
PINCHE: (ASIDE) Nor – for anyone else.  
DAVID: Pardon, sir?  
PINCHE: Bah! Let me remind you, Mr. Wakefield, you are due for work in this shop – promptly at eight o'clock.  
DAVID: Yes, sir. I know.  
PINCHE: That is precisely ten minutes and forty-two seconds from now.  
DAVID: Yes, sir.  
PINCHE: And don't be late!  
DAVID: Yes, sir – I mean – no, sir.  
PINCHE: Humbug!

(DAVID WALKS AWAY SADLY, AND PINCHE RESUMES HIS FURTIVE ACTIVITIES WITH THE BAGS. DAVID PULLS OUT HIS WRITING MATERIALS.)

DAVID: I guess I have time to finish this letter . . .

(MUSIC PLAYS – DAVID'S LETTER IS A SAD VERSE OR TWO OF A SONG . . . AS THE SONG ENDS, PINCHE BARGES INTO DAVID'S REVERIE . . . )

PINCHE: Well, Mr. Wakefield – scribbling AGAIN?  
DAVID: Uh – yes, sir.  
PINCHE: A letter to Santy Claus? (SNORTS WITH CYNICAL AMUSEMENT)  
DAVID: No, sir. To my mother.  
PINCHE: Bah!  
DAVID: I'm – ah – telling her all about my – uh – wonderful job in your shop.  
PINCHE: Bah!  
DAVID: And how very – uh – kind you are –  
PINCHE: Humbug!  
DAVID: Yes, sir.  
PINCHE: (CHECKING HIS WATCH AGAIN) I remind you, Mr. Wakefield, that you now have eight minutes and thirty-seven seconds to report for your “wonderful” job in my shop.

DAVID: Thank you, sir.  
PINCHE: Bah! (STOMPS AWAY)  
DAVID: (BACK TO HIS LETTER) Well, Mother, I know you don't like Mr. Pinche, and you didn't want me to leave school and work for him while you're away, but I'm really learning about all kinds of things from Mr. Pinche, things like – like –  
PINCHE: Eight minutes!  
DAVID: – Like punctuality! Besides, your friend, Miss Goodwin, really needs the money I make to support me...

(HE CONTINUES WRITING. MISS GOODWIN HAS ENTERED AS HER NAME IS MENTIONED. SHE APPROACHES PINCHE.)

GOODWIN: Any mail today, Mr. Pinche?  
PINCHE: No! Why does everyone keep asking me that?  
GOODWIN: You're the Postmaster. Remember?  
PINCHE: Bah! (TURNS HIS BACK)  
GOODWIN: Oh, "bah" yourself, you old humbug!  
DAVID: (WRITING) Miss Goodwin is just fine, and she takes good care of me.  
GOODWIN: Well, David.  
DAVID: Yes, Miss Goodwin?  
GOODWIN: You left without your lunch today. AGAIN.  
DAVID: Oh. I guess I forgot.  
GOODWIN: No, you didn't forget. You saw that we had only one piece of bread, and one piece of cheese, and you left them both for me.  
DAVID: Well, I –  
GOODWIN: Don't bother with your excuses. Here's your lunch.  
DAVID: But – what about YOUR lunch?  
GOODWIN: Never mind about me. You're still growing. Besides – (LOOKING IN HER HANDBAG) – I think I still have a penny in here somewhere –  
DAVID: But –  
GOODWIN: But don't worry, David. I'll be paid after school today, and I'll buy some food on the way home.  
DAVID: But –  
GOODWIN: No more "buts," young man. I promised your Mother, my dear friend, Clara, I would take care of you, and that is what I intend to do.  
DAVID: Even if you go hungry?  
GOODWIN: Who's hungry? Not me.  
DAVID: Not me, either.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh. Here's your lunch.  
DAVID: Yes, Miss Goodwin.  
GOODWIN: And be sure you eat it.  
DAVID: Yes, ma'am.  
PINCHE: (CALLING OUT) Six minutes!  
GOODWIN: (TO DAVID) Does he always do that?  
DAVID: Every day.  
GOODWIN: (TO PINCHE) Bah!  
PINCHE: (TO HER) Humbug!

(MISS GOODWIN GOES OFF. EMILY ENTERS.)

DAVID: (WRITING) Of course, Emily is still my best friend –  
EMILY: Hi, David!  
DAVID: Hi, Emily!  
DAVID: (WRITING) She just loaned me a wonderful book –  
EMILY: (TO PINCHE) Good morning, Mr. Pinche.  
PINCHE: Bah!  
EMILY: Any mail today?  
PINCHE: No!  
EMILY: Are you sure? I'm expecting a package.  
PINCHE: No mail!  
EMILY: I see. (HER EYE IS CAUGHT BY . . . ) Oh, what a pretty music box!  
PINCHE: Don't touch that!  
EMILY: Oh. (CROSSES TO DAVID) David, did you like the book?  
DAVID: It's great! Can I keep it a bit longer? I want to read it again.  
EMILY: You do? Well, of course you can keep it. Oh, look, there's Sam and Rosie! (SHE WAVES)  
DAVID: (WRITING) Sam and Rosie are still the best of friends –  
SAM: (TO ROSIE, WHO IS TEASING HIM) Rosie! Cut it out!  
DAVID: (WRITING) – and they still argue all the time –  
ROSIE: Come on, Sam, be a good sport. Let's play.  
SAM: No! You cheat!  
ROSIE: Do not!  
SAM: Do too! (SHE DOES)  
ROSIE: Hey, Mr. Pinche!  
PINCHE: Hey, yourself, you little hooligan.  
ROSIE: Any mail today?  
PINCHE: No!  
ROSIE: But I'm expecting a package!  
SAM: (TO ROSE) Me, too! (TO PINCHE) Not any mail at all?  
PINCHE: I said – NO!



SAM: But – it's Christmas!

PINCHE: Humbug! There is no mail. Do you hear me? No mail! Why does everyone keep asking me about the mail????

ALL: BECAUSE YOU'RE THE POSTMASTER!

PINCHE: Bah!

ALL: Humbug!

SAM: What a grouch.

PINCHE: Right. (HE TURNS AWAY)

ROSIE: (TO EMILY) I saved all summer to buy a gift for Sam, and I finally had enough to send for it. That was eight weeks ago!

EMILY: (TO ROSE) I know what you mean. I ran errands for months so I could send for a wonderful music book for David, and it still hasn't come. And he's MY best friend!

SAM: What's happening with the mail, David?

DAVID: Your guess is as good as mine, Sam.

SAM: I mean – tomorrow is Christmas! – and I sent for away for a gift for Rosie ages ago. I worked really hard all summer to pay for it, too. Rosie's my best friend. She's gonna kill me if I don't give her a present.

ROSIE: (TO EMILY) I mean – Sam is my best friend. He's gonna kill me if I don't give him a present.

DAVID: (TO SAM) I know what you mean, Sam. I've been trying to save enough to buy a gift for Emily. After all, she's my best friend.

ALL: (SIGH)

ROSIE: Hey, David, whatcha writing?

DAVID: Uh –

EMILY: (PEEKING) He's writing a song.

SAM: Great!

ROSIE: Is it a HAPPY song, David?

DAVID: I hope so, Rosie.

SAM: Great. I love happy songs.

ROSIE: Me, too!

EMILY: Me, too!

SAM: Let's hear it, David.

DAVID: Well, it's not quite ready yet –

EMILY: Please, David!

ALL: Pleeeeeeeease?

SAM: Come on, David.

EMILY: We NEED a happy song.

DAVID: Very well.

ALL: (REACTIONS)

DAVID: – This is a happy song –

ALL: Yay!  
PINCHE: Five minutes and twenty seconds!  
DAVID: (TO OTHERS) A FAST happy song.  
PINCHE: Five minutes and ten seconds!  
DAVID: – And it's all about Christmas!  
PINCHE: Bah!  
DAVID: (LOUDER) – And it's all about Christmas –  
ALL: Yay!  
PINCHE: Humbug!  
SAM: I love Christmas! It makes me feel good.  
ROSIE: Me, too!  
EMILY: Go ahead, David.

(THE SONG INTRO BEGINS. THE VOICES OF NICKIE  
AND KRINGLE ARE HEARD.)

NICKIE: Sir! Oh, sir!  
KRINGLE: What is it?  
NICKIE: A signal is starting to come thru from Merryville!  
KRINGLE: Excellent!  
NICKIE: The signal is very faint, sir. But it's definitely there.  
KRINGLE: Good work, Nickie.

(NOW WE HAVE DAVID'S SONG. IT IS INDEED  
CHEERFUL, AND MAY EVEN INVOLVE KRINGLE AND  
NICKIE ON THE SIDELINES. MISS GOODWIN ALSO  
RE ENTERS AND BECOMES INVOLVED IN THE SONG.  
THEN THE SONG ENDS. EVERYONE IS HAPPY, BUT  
THEN PINCHE BARGES INTO THE PICTURE AND  
YELLS.)

PINCHE: I hate Christmas! Christmas is nothing but an excuse for a lot  
of humbug! Do you hear me??? Christmas is a Humbug!!!  
ALL: (REACTIONS)

(THE LIGHTS DARKEN, AND DURING THESE NEXT  
LINES BRIEFLY BLACKOUT.)

NICKIE: Sir! Oh, sir! Merryville just disappeared from your map!  
KRINGLE: How can that be?  
NICKIE: Look!  
KRINGLE: It's gone! We have to find them!  
NICKIE: Yes, sir!

KRINGLE: Hurry, Nickie! It's Christmas Eve!

NICKIE: Yes, sir!

(LIGHTS COME BACK UP ON THE TOWN.)

PINCHE: What's the meaning of all this racket? What do you think you're doing?

DAVID: Sir, we were just singing.

PINCHE: WHAT-ing?

DAVID: Singing.

PINCHE: Bah! What good is singing?

GOODWIN: It put a smile on their faces.

PINCHE: A what?

ALL: A smile.

PINCHE: Bah!

GOODWIN: (SPELLING BEE STYLE) Smile. S-M-I-L-E. Smile.

PINCHE: Never heard of it.

GOODWIN: I'm not surprised.

PINCHE: Bah! (STOMPS AWAY)

SAM: What a grouch.

EMILY: I liked your song, David.

ROSIE: Me, too.

SAM: It even made me forget about school.

DAVID: Sam, everything makes you forget about school.

ALL: (LAUGH)

ROSIE: And your homework.

ALL: (LAUGH)

SAM: I don't always forget my homework.

ALL: (LAUGH)

ROSIE: You NEVER do your homework.

SAM: What do you mean? I do it sometimes.

ALL: (LAUGH)

SAM: Well, I do.

ALL: (LAUGH)

SAM: I did some homework just – uh – last week.

ALL: (LAUGH)

SAM: Well, I did.

ALL: (LAUGH)

SAM: And Emily helped me.

ROSIE: (TO EMILY) Is that true?

EMILY: (TEASING SAM) Did I? I don't remember.

SAM: Come on, Emily. Whose side are you on?

ROSIE: Why don't we just ask our teacher, Miss Goodwin?

SAM: No! Don't do that.  
ROSIE: Why not?  
SAM: Well, because – because – because – because – because –  
EMILY: (RELENTING) You know, Sam, now that you mention it, I think I do remember helping you last week.  
SAM: (TO ROSE) There! You see?  
EMILY: Wasn't it on Tuesday?  
SAM: (TO ROSE) See?  
ROSIE: Aw, Emily's just acting like Miss Nicey – nice – the way she always does. Come on, Emily.  
EMILY: But I did help him, Rosie. Truly, I did.  
SAM: (TO ROSE) See?  
ROSIE: Hmph!  
DAVID: (TO EMILY; THIS IS OBVIOUSLY A ROUTINE THAT HE AND EMILY GO THRU OFTEN) Poor Sam.  
EMILY: Rosie's always picking on him.  
SAM: (RIGHTEOUSLY) That's right.  
ROSIE: Humph!  
DAVID: (TO EMILY) It's hard to believe sometimes that they're the best of friends.  
EMILY: (TO DAVID) It certainly is.  
SAM: (RIGHTEOUSLY) That's right.  
ROSIE: Hmph!  
DAVID: Come on, you two.  
EMILY: Shake hands and make up.  
SAM: I will, if SHE will.  
ROSIE: I will, if HE will.

(THEY SHAKE HANDS AND THEN START TO WRESTLE.)

ALL: (LAUGH)

(THE FOCUS SWITCHES TO PINCHE'S SHOP. MISS GOODWIN ENTERS. SHE CARRIES AN UNIDENTIFIED OBJECT LOVINGLY IN HER ARMS.)

– **END OF E-MAIL SEGMENT** –

**There are 55 pages in the total playscript.**

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