

Playstage

Junior

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'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS



A Christmas play with songs

Written by
Lynn Brittney

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

NARRATOR

HAROLD ELF – HEAD OF ECPAT

EDWIN MOUSE

FLORRIE MOUSE

MICK MOUSE

MITZI MOUSE

PATSY (ELF)

DAISY (ELF)

CAT

DOG

CHRISTMAS TREE FAIRY

DOLL

TEDDY BEAR

ACTION MAN

MRS SANTA

SANTA

THE BIGGINS FAMILY: FATHER, MOTHER, SON, DAUGHTER

20 speaking characters. Singers could be added by having a choir seated in front of the stage who participate in the songs.

APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME OF 35 MINUTES.

MUSIC

Backing tracks can be purchased and downloaded for a modest fee from various sources, as shown below. Or, you could source the original artist's recording from amongst parents/grandparents and just have the children sing along to it, as many schools do. If you cannot source them from amongst the school community, then Amazon sell very cheap downloadable MP3 tracks for hundreds of thousands of songs. These can be purchased, downloaded on to a computer and then burnt on to a CD for performance. Below we give the song title and source of backing tracks. Where it says "Traditional" or "Disney", this means there is no backing track we know of, but it may be in sheet music form in your school or on a children's school music compilation CD.

Suggested songs:

1/ WE NEED A LITTLE CHRISTMAS (*from the Musical MAME also performed by GLEE*) Can be listened to on You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hsSmeCDjjA>

Backing track can be purchased here: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Need-Little-Christmas-From-Karaoke/dp/B00M0M629E>

2/ O CHRISTMAS TREE! (*modern secular words for O Tannenbaum*)

Music can be downloaded free from

http://www.carols.org.uk/0_christmas_tree.htm

3/ THE CHRISTMAS SONG (*Michael Buble*) Backing track can be purchased from here:

http://www.ameritz.co.uk/search_backing_tracks.asp?search=The+Christmas+Song

4/ THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL (*DAISY Parton & Kenny Rogers*) Listen to the complete song here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1tn6NhH7_s

Purchase the backing track here:

http://www.ameritz.co.uk/search_backing_tracks.asp?search=The+Gift

5/ IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR (*Andy Williams*)

Backing track can be purchased here:

http://www.ameritz.co.uk/search_backing_tracks.asp?search=Andy+Williams

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

The scene is The Biggin's family living room. Two armchairs, a fireplace and an undecorated Christmas tree. (SEE PRODUCTION NOTES) There are some cardboard boxes scattered around the tree, with some decorations spilling out. Everything looks cold and gloomy. The NARRATOR enters with a book. He/she stands to one side of the stage, opens the book and begins to read.

NARRATOR**'Twas the night before Christmas****And all through the house****Not a creature was stirring****Not even a mouse....****LOUD VOICE OFFSTAGE****Wrong!****NARRATOR** *(looking around)***Who said that?***(HAROLD ELF enters.)***HAROLD****I did. Pleased to meet you. Harold is the name. I am Elf in charge of ECPAT.****NARRATOR****Pardon?****HAROLD****ECPAT – Emergency Christmas Preparations Action Team. It's a team put together by Mrs Santa – who will be along later to inspect our work, by the way – and we go into houses where there is an emergency and create Christmas for the family.****NARRATOR****What's the emergency here, then?**

HAROLD

Flu. The entire family has flu and, as far as they are concerned, Christmas has been cancelled. Well we can't have that, can we?

NARRATOR

I suppose not.

HAROLD

No. Mrs Santa decided, long, long ago, that we would have a special team with special powers that would come in and help in such circumstances. Hence the birth of ECPAT.

NARRATOR

What special powers do you have then?

HAROLD

Allow me to show you. *(Calling)* Mouse family, you can come in now!

(The MICE enter. EDWIN is walking slowly and deliberately and he is holding up FLORRIE who looks a bit dizzy. MICK and MITZI are bounding around with pleasure)

NARRATOR

Are those giant mice?

FLORRIE

Oh I don't think I like being this large. I feel ever so dizzy.

EDWIN

It takes a bit of getting used to, doesn't it?

MICK *(bouncing up and down)*

I think it's great, Dad! I love being this big! Don't you, Mitzi?

MITZI *(also bouncing up and down)*

It's fabulous! I love it!

FLORRIE

Could you please stop doing that, children! It's making my vertigo worse!

(MICK and MITZI stop bouncing)

HAROLD *(to FLORRIE)*

Don't worry. This sensation you are feeling will wear off in a minute, trust me.

FLORRIE

I hope so. Edwin, help me over to that chair. I need to sit down for a minute.

(EDWIN helps FLORRIE over to an armchair and she sits down gratefully).

NARRATOR *(to HAROLD)*

So that's your superpower, is it, Harold? You can make small animals really big?

HAROLD

Oh I have other powers. You'll find out as we go along. *(Calling)* Can I have the whole team in here, please?

(Enter PATSY, DAISY, CAT and DOG)

MICK

Oh no! You've made the cat and dog into giants as well! Help!

CAT

Oh don't flatter yourself! I'm not interested in a great lump of a mouse like you!

Mice should be one mouthful! I can't possibly eat something as big as me. Yuk!

DOG *(happily)*

But I can still chase you!

(DOG barks and starts chasing MICK around the stage.)

HAROLD *(shouting)*

That's enough! Settle down now! We have too much work to do and no time for play, I'm afraid. We need a Christmas!

SONG 1. WE NEED A LITTLE CHRISTMAS

Haul out the holly;

Put up the tree before my spirit falls again.

Fill up the stocking,

I may be rushing things, but deck the halls again now.

For we need a little Christmas

Right this very minute,

Candles in the window,

Carols at the spinet.

Yes, we need a little Christmas

Right this very minute.

It hasn't snowed a single flurry,

But Santa, dear, we're in a hurry;

So climb down the chimney;

Put up the brightest string of lights I've ever seen.

Slice up the fruitcake;

It's time we hung some tinsel on that evergreen bough.

For I've grown a little leaner,

Grown a little colder,

Grown a little sadder,

Grown a little older,

And I need a little angel

Sitting on my shoulder,

Need a little Christmas now.

(Repeat the song if required)

HAROLD

Right! Let's get working! Mouse family start trimming the tree...Cat and Dog, start wrapping presents...Patsy and Daisy, start making the soup in the kitchen.

PATSY

We thought we'd make some porridge too, Harold. That's good for sore throats.

HAROLD

Good idea Patsy. The family can have porridge for breakfast and soup for lunch.

DAISY

What about Christmas dinner, Harold?

HAROLD

Mrs Santa doesn't think they will be feeling well enough to eat Christmas dinner but she's bringing some mince pies and eggnog when she comes along later.

Right, action please people! Er...and animals!

(PATSY and DAISY leave for the kitchen, the MICE, CAT and DOG start doing their various tasks.)

NARRATOR

Can I help, at all?

HAROLD

Can you decorate the fireplace?

NARRATOR

Oh, yes! I'm good at that!

HAROLD

There's a box over there with things for the mantelpiece.

*(The NARRATOR finds the cardboard box and starts to decorate the fireplace.
SEE PRODUCTION NOTES)*

FLORRIE (*putting tinsel on the Christmas tree*)

I wonder why people decorate trees at Christmas? I mean it's very nice – especially for us mice, when people put sweets and things on the tree. During the night we can come out and have a little nibble here and there!

NARRATOR

Oh I know that one! The tradition of decorated fir trees comes from Germany, where they have lots of fir trees and they say that a priest called Martin Luther decided to put lighted candles all over a tree and set it in the corner of his church, to remind people of the stars in heaven. That was a long, long time ago and now we decorate a tree with all sorts of things – not just lights.

HAROLD

Oh! That reminds me! (*He claps his hands and a FAIRY appears. (Musical effect – SEE PRODUCTION NOTES)*)

FAIRY

Is it time for me to get on top of the tree?

MITZI

You can't do that at the moment! You're too big!

FAIRY

Oops! So I am! Why am I this big, Mr Elf?

HAROLD

We thought we'd repair your dress before we make you small again and go up on the tree.

FAIRY

Oh thank you! There's a big hole just here... (*She points to the back of her dress.*)

(PATSY & DAISY ELF enter, wearing aprons. PATSY is carrying a sewing kit.)

DAISY

Yes, we know. And we've come to repair it.

PATSY

Now, if you would just stand still, Miss Christmas Tree Fairy, we'll have it sorted out in a jiffy.

(PATSY & DAISY kneel either side of the FAIRY and mime threading needles and beginning to sew the back of her dress.)

MITZI *(sighing)*

I'd love to have a pretty dress like that.

DAISY

We'll tell Mrs Santa and I'm sure she'll organise something.

MITZI

Really?

NARRATOR

Of course, some people just put a star on the top of their tree – or an angel.

MITZI

I prefer a fairy. They look so pretty.

FAIRY

Thank you. That's very kind.

SONG 2. OH CHRISTMAS TREE! *(modern secular words)*

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
 Your leaves are so unchanging;
 O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
 Your leaves are so unchanging;
 Not only green in summertime
 But also in the wintertime
 O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
 Your leaves are so unchanging!

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
 Much pleasure you can give us
 O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
 Much pleasure you can give us
 How often has the Christmas tree
 Been such a treat for us to see!