



Christmas Stories

Book by:

Tom Anastasi

Lyrics

Tom Anastasi &
Peter Bridges

Music by:

Peter Bridges



NH Theatre Award
Best Original Play

Act I. The Christmas Prayer

Cast

Jocelyn -- 10-year old daughter of John and Lisa
Lisa – Married to John for twelve years, mother of three, non-practicing accountant
Abby (ANDY) – 6 year-old daughter (SON) of John and Lisa
John – Production control engineer, married to Lisa
Father Rohan – John and Lisa’s Parish Priest.
Marta – Owner of “Fish and Fern,” who we find out has another job.
Chris – Salvation Army Santa, who is featured in Act III

Act II. The Toothbrush

Cast

Ashley – Daughter of Clark and Maria.
Clark – Advertising Manager who finds the true meaning of Christmas
Maria – Ashley and Briana’s mom and Clark’s wife.
Briana (Billy) – Daughter (Son) of Clark and Maria
Ronny – Gas station attendant
Chris – Salvation Army Santa, featured in Act III
Mary Ellen – Travel Agent
Tracy – Friend of Maria
Morgan – Car Repair shop owner
Becca – Dentist’s office receptionist
Ken – Salesperson in the TV Department of Waltons.
Janet – The crazy gerbil lady
Heather – Salesperson at Bridges Bikes
Eric – Clark’s co-worker

Act III. The Bell Ringer

Cast

Chris – Salvation Army Santa, who is also a Rabbi – has a big secret.
Clark – Featured in Act II
Maria – Clark’s wife, Featured in Act II
Kevin – Loud shopper
Father Rohan – Parish Priest – Featured in Act I
Len – Unemployed Shopper who needs to find the “hot toy of the season.”
Gina – Hated shopper who cut her line
Shoppers
Scott – Warehouse employee at Waltons
Marta – Featured in Act I now in her “other job.”

*Book by Tom Anastasi
Lyrics by Tom Anastasi and Peter Bridges Music by Peter Bridges
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CHRISTMAS STORIES

Act I – The Christmas Prayer

Scene 1: John and Lisa house, December 22nd, 7:50 a.m.

Scene 2: John and Lisa house, December 22nd, 8:40 p.m.

The Hardest Words

Scene 3: John and Lisa's house, December 23rd, 7:50 a.m.

Scene 4: John and Lisa's house, December 24th, 10:30 p.m.

The Hardest Words (Reprise)

Scene 5: John and Lisa's house, December 25th, 9:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS STORIES, ACT I, SCENE I – THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Scene: The children are getting ready for school. John's getting ready for work.

LISA

Okay, kids, 7:54. Pre-bus checklist time. Jocelyn. Permission slip.

JOCELYN

Check.

LISA

Spelling homework.

JOCELYN

C-h-e-c-k

ABBY

L-O-S-E-R

LISA

Skiing gloves.

JOCELYN

I don't need them.

LISA

Yes, it's December 22nd. The gym classes are going skiing.

JOCELYN

I forgot. I'll get them.

LISA

Wait. Books, scarf, and note for play practice. Get the gloves. Abby. You have your Permission slip. (*Jocelyn gets her gloves*)

ABBY

Check.

LISA

Homework, gloves and note?

ABBY

Check. Scarf, boots and I remembered my mittens.

LISA

Okay girls. Why don't you go to the bus stop and relax for a couple of minutes.

ABBY

Bye Mommy.

JOCELYN

Bye, Mommy.

ABBY

(THEY start to leave)

(*To Joce*). I can't believe you forgot your mittens. Loser.

JOCELYN

At least I don't fall down all the time when I ski. You're so young.

ABBY

You're 10 minutes older than me.

JOCELYN

Best 10 minutes of my life.

(THEY EXIT)

JOHN

Lisa, thanks for breakfast. Sorry about the dishes, I got home late last night. I'll clean them when I get home.

LISA

Okay. John. Abby and Joce [NOTE: Rhymes with "Floss"] have their final dress rehearsal tonight at 6:30. Will you be home by 6:20 to watch Saddle [Rhymes with "Lady"]?

JOHN

Sure.

LISA

That's a huge help. Thank you. I have to go to (*checks list*) six stores in two hours plus about 10 minutes tonight and can't do it with Saddle. We're going to have dinner at 5:50 tonight so they can get ready.

JOHN

I think I can make it. But I'll definitely be here by 6:15.

LISA

(*Checks list*) John, the Visa bill is due today. Did you pay it?

JOHN

I'll be at the bank during lunch. I'll pay it then.

LISA

Thank you. After today there's a \$25 late fee.

JOHN

Wait. I have to get my suit at the cleaners.

LISA

I can get it (check list) late morning. But will you be able to return the florescent pony at Waltons?

JOHN

Yes. I'll get the roller blades, too.

LISA

Are you sure? They just came and won't be there long.

JOHN

I'll do that on my way to work.

LISA

Great. Another huge time saver. Are you sure you have time? Because I can get them.

JOHN

I promise.

LISA

So, you'll get the roller blades and return the florescent pony on the way to work, and pay the Visa bill during lunch. And I'll get your dry cleaning.

JOHN

I promise. See ya tonight.

(SADDIE CAN BE HEARD OFFSTAGE CRYING)

LISA

Saddie's up. See you tonight.

(JOHN LEAVES. Lisa checks her list and then goes to check on Saddle.)

CHRISTMAS STORIES, ACT I, SCENE II – THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Scene: Lisa and John's Living room. Lisa's dressed and ready to go out, and her coat, keys, and shopping list are preset on the counter. She is getting very aggravated and keeps looking at her watch while decorating the Christmas Tree. Jocelyn and Sddie are playing a game.

LISA

Ok, kids. I let you stay up a little late because it's your last day of school. Time for bed.

JOCELYN

Can we please stay up? We're almost done with our game.

ABBY

Please.

LISA

You don't have to put it away tonight. Keep it right on the kitchen table so Sddie doesn't eat the candlestick or the knife or the revolver.

JOCELYN

I'll win tomorrow.

ABBY

Shut up.

JOCELYN

Mommy, my little sister said shut up.

ABBY

We're the same age, you loser.

LISA

Abigail and Jocelyn. Do not wake up Sddie. Or you are going to have a very unhappy mom. You do not want that.

(Abby and Jocelyn bring the game to the kitchen table.)

ABBY

Mommy. Are my gingerbread cookies in my backpack?

LISA

Ah-huh. I made one for everyone in your class. You'll know whose is whose because I wrote their names in frosting for each one. There's one for Mrs. Baier, too.

ABBY

Thank you..

LISA

That's OK, Sweetie. Now, go to sleep.

JOCELYN

Mom – are our New Year's Eve party invitations done?

LISA

Yes. I hand drew them with calligraphy. They're in your back-pack.

JOCELYN

We're staying up all night, you know.

LISA

Of course. It's New Year's Eve. It's a sleepover.

ABBY

Mommy.

LISA

Yes, my other sweetie.

ABBY

Is my Christmas Wizard costume done?

LISA

Yup. I just finished it.. It's ironed and in a box in your backpack. I don't want it to get wrinkled, so just give it to Miss Katie as soon as you get to school. Joce. Your costume is already there.

ABBY

Is daddy going to be at my play?

LISA

He would not miss the Christmas Wizard, starring.

ABBY

Me, as the Christmas Wizard.

JOCELYN

And me as Rudolph!

LISA

The whole family is going. Saddle's going, too. I'll make sure I wake her up from her nap 20 minutes later so she won't be tired. . .Okay, everyone. Time for bed.

ABBY

Good night.

JOCELYN

Good night.

(THEY EXIT)

LISA

It's me. The store closes in 15 minutes. I see you. (*Lisa gets her coat on and gets ready to go the moment John walks in the door.*)

JOHN

(*Enters through the cellar door.*)
(*Trying to act charming*) Hey.

LISA

Hey? I thought you were going to be home at 6:20.

JOHN

Sorry. I got held up with year-end stuff. I had to work late. I'm sorry.

LISA

I am trying to be patient. Really, really hard. I have to go shopping and get as much done as I can. I called Target and they're holding some of the toys that Joce and Abby want. All right. If I hurry, I'll make it. We don't have time to talk about this now. They close in 14 minutes. Did you get the roller blades?

JOHN

Sorry. We still have a couple days. Hey, Walton's is open to midnight on Christmas Eve. I'm sure we'll find something.

LISA

Did you return the florescent pony?

JOHN

I was going to do it at the same time. Hey, I was busy at work today.

LISA

Oh, and raising three children isn't work? I've got to go.

(LISA EXITS)

JOHN

(To himself)

Great. Another night of marital bliss. Where's food?

(John goes into the kitchen and takes out several things from the refrigerator to make himself dinner. The kitchen is spotless now, and will need to be an absolute mess in a few minutes.)

(Jocelyn stirs from the couch. She is 10 years-old and in her pajamas. She is half asleep and goes over and hugs him.)

JOCELYN

I had a bad dream.

(John stops his meal preparation to give his complete attention to her.)

JOHN

You know what helps bad dreams? Brownies with chocolate sauce and whipped cream.

JOCELYN

OK!

(John begins to prepare her snack – it's important that he makes as big a mess as possible, though unintentionally. Abby wakes up, too.)

ABBY

Hi daddy. I missed you!

JOHN

I missed you, too. Just a few more nights of late work and then I'm all done. You want a snack?

ABBY

Sure. Joce called me stupid.

JOHN

Jocelyn, don't call you sister stupid.

JOCELYN

Stupid. She got 2 wrong on her spelling test. I just got one. Spell "canine"

ABBY

S-t-u-p-i-d.

JOCLYN

You're so...daddy. Abby took my drink.

JOHN

Abigail. Give her her drink back.

ABBY

(Intentionally spills it on the counter.)

Oops it spilled!

JOHN

(Very parental sounding.)

Cut it out. Don't wake up the baby. Do you guys want to fight or do you want a snack?

ABBY AND JOCELYN

Snack.

JOHN

OK. What should we have? Brownies and Whipped cream? With chocolate sauce?

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: The songs in this show can be done two ways. One way is to have the actors and actresses sing their own songs, as is done in most musicals. A second way is to have others sing the songs for the actors and actresses so they can concentrate fully on acting. If the second method is chosen, then the actors on stage will be unaware of the music as the singers will be "singing" their thoughts.]

Let's Have Some Fun Tonight.

CHORUS

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT! LET'S BREAK SOME RULES
LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT! WHERE'S OUR BAKING TOOLS?
LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT, BUT TOMORROW WE HAVE SCHOOL,
SO LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT. DAD IS REALLY COOL.

END CHORUS

ABBY

Let's make some pie!

JOHN

There's a great idea! All we need is some crust. (Gets it from the fridge.) Some apple filling (Gets it from the counter) A pie plate (Gets it) and some flour (from the counter.)

TOO MUCH TIME AT THE OFFICE
I HAVEN'T SEEN MY KIDS FOR DAYS
I'M STARVING, I'VE BEEN WORKING HARD
LET'S START COOKIN' UP A STORM

THEY HAVE SCHOOL TOMORROW,
THEY MIGHT BE A HAZE.
BUT I REALLY WANT TO SEE THEM NOW,
TO SEE THEIR CHILDLIKE WAYS.

CHORUS

Let's preheat the oven to...(check's crust package) 425 degrees (does). Ok...All we need now is a rolling pin (gets it.)

OK, guys. Now, take the flour and put it all over the counter.

OUR DAD IS HERE - IT'S TIME TO PLAY
WE SHOULD BE CATCHING Z'S.
MOM'S OUT SHOPPING, BUYING STUFF,
SHE THINKS WE ARE SO SWEET

WHEN DAD'S AROUND, WE HAVE A BLAST
WE'RE ALWAYS LATE FOR SCHOOL.
WE HAVE THE COOLEST DAD TONIGHT
HE LOVES TO BREAK THE RULES.

ALL

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT! LET'S BREAK SOME RULES
LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT! WHERE'S OUR BAKING TOOLS?
LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT, BUT TOMORROW WE HAVE SCHOOL,
SO LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT. DAD IS REALLY COOL.

KIDS

MOM IS THINKING WE'RE BOTH ASLEEP
HAVING REALLY SWEET DREAMS

BUT WE WON'T TELL WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW,
WE'RE HAVING PIE AND ICE CREAM.

ALL

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT! LET'S BREAK SOME RULES
LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT! WHERE'S OUR BAKING TOOLS?
LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT, BUT TOMORROW WE HAVE SCHOOL,
SO LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT. DAD IS REALLY COOL.

(Abby starts and Jocelyn helps. They like the clouds of flour that are formed and flour the counter much more than is needed. They both put their hands in the bag of flour and it rips.)

JOCELYN

Good job, loser.

ABBY

You're a loser.

JOCELYN

You are. (Throws flour at him.)

ABBY

Loser. (Returns throw of flour on her. John tries to break it up. They both throw flour on him. They start laughing and throw flour up in the air. Then they begin having a food fight with the apple filling for the pie.)

JOHN (WHILE CHORUS IS BEING SUNG)

Ok, kids let's get his mess cleaned up. Mommy should be home...

KIDS

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT! LET'S BREAK SOME RULES
LET'S MAKE SOME PIE TONIGHT! WHERE'S OUR BAKING TOOLS?
LET'S HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT, BUT TOMORROW WE HAVE SCHOOL,
SO LET'S.

(ABRUPT STOP WHEN LISA ENTERS.)

(LISA enters right at the end of John's line and the song. She sees the mess and is fuming.)

JOHN (CONTINUES RIGHT AFTER SONG ENDS.)

Now! I thought you were going shopping?

LISA

Jocelyn Marie and Abigail Amanda get to bed. Right now.

ABBY

I have to clean this up.

LISA

Now!!

JOCELYN

(*On her way to bed.*) It's your fault.

ABBY

It's your fault. Loser.

LISA

Move it! *(We can now hear the one and a half year old daughter crying. To John)* See what you did?

JOHN

I didn't do anything. You woke her up.

LISA

It took me fifty minutes to get everyone to sleep – everyone's wide awake now! Because of you!

JOHN

You go off with Abby and Joce. I'll bring Saddle her bottle.

LISA

(Puts her arms up in disgust.)

What's wrong with you? Joce, Bring Saddle her bottle.

(John takes a bottle out of the fridge and puts it in the microwave for 10 seconds and shakes it and gives it to Jocelyn. Lisa begins to clean the mess. A few seconds after John arrives, we can hear happy baby sounds in the monitor and he comes out. Lisa and John continue to clean through the following dialogue, though Lisa is very efficient and cleans most of it. When John tries to clean, he usually makes matters worse – e.g. using a bath towel or oven mitt to clean the couch, or just brushing the flour on the floor with his hand. Lisa is aghast at his "helping" methods.)

Are you trying to piss me off?

JOHN

I'm sorry. I completely lost track of time.

LISA

Track of time? Do you even know what the words mean? Didn't you notice that it's been dark out for four-and-a-half hours? Even you must know the difference between dark and light. Didn't that give you a clue that it was past 6:20?

JOHN

I'm sorry.

LISA

What is this giant mess? How does Whipped cream and brownie get on a couch?

JOHN

I haven't seen the kids in days. We were having fun. (Lisa points to the walls. Even John realizes how silly this sounds and says it somewhat sheepishly.) Remember fun? Brownie fight.

LISA

Brilliant. You figured -- no problem. Lisa will clean it up for you.

JOHN

I was going to clean up.

LISA

Please. When, in the ten plus years we've been married, have you ever cleaned anything? Stop helping clean. You're not helping. I'll finish this up. Then I'm going to go to bed.

JOHN

Why are you telling me that?

LISA

Telling you what?

JOHN

That you're going to bed.

LISA

That's what polite people do.

JOHN

It's bad enough that you've been sleeping in the guest room all year. You don't have to remind me every night.

LISA

Fine. (Goes back to cleaning. John checks his computer.)

LISA

John, that Visa bill isn't 30 days late -- it's 60 days late. You didn't pay it last month either. It will be on our credit report, and we're going to have a \$50 late fee.

JOHN

I'm sorry. I forgot.

LISA

I know it's three days before Christmas. But...this whole marriage thing isn't working out. It's hard enough taking care of three children, but I can't handle a--having you around used to be a net positive because you'd help with the kids. But now that you're working every night, I think it would be better for all of us -- if you weren't here anymore.

JOHN

(The full impact hits him after a while.)
But, Lisa. Don't you love me...I still love you.

LISA

Let's not make this harder than it has to be.

JOHN

Considering we've been in separate bedrooms all year, I supposed it shouldn't be a huge shock, but somehow it's – hard to hear the words you don't want to be married anymore.

LISA

I don't.

LISA

Listen. With Christmas just a few days away and with Abby and Joce's play tomorrow night, let's not ruin Christmas for them. We'll tell them at lunchtime on the 26th. I think in the long run they'll much happier that way.

JOHN

(Doesn't know what to say and thinks for a while.) Merry Christmas.

The Hardest Words

THOSE WERE THE HARDEST WORDS I'VE EVER HAD TO SAY.
I KNOW I'LL NEVER HAVE A WORSE NIGHT THAN I DID TODAY.
I'M REALLY NOT UP FOR ANOTHER FIGHT
BELIEVE ME I KNOW THAT WHAT I DID WAS NOT RIGHT

A FAMILY, A HOME, WAS ALL I DESIRED
HAVING ALL THESE THINGS AND YOU MADE ME FEEL INSPIRED.
THE WORLD IS ON MY SHOULDERS -- I'VE HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO GIVE.
PLEASE GOD, PLEASE JOHN, PLEASE KNOW THAT ALL I WANT TO DO IS LIVE

I'VE TRIED SO MANY TIMES TO TELL YOU, BUT I COULDN'T FIND THE WORDS
BUT THERE ARE NO WORDS TO TELL YOU, THAT I JUST DON'T FEEL THE SAME.
THE WORLD IS ON MY SHOULDERS, THE BURDENS ARE TOO MUCH.
THREE CHILDREN AND A HUSBAND. I JUST DON'T FEEL THE SAME.

JOCELYN (OFF)

Dear God. My parents are always fighting and I don't want them to get a divorce. Can you please help.

ABBY (OFF)

Dear God. I want my parents to stop fighting. I'm worried they'll get a divorce. I just want to be a family again. Merry Christmas. Abby.

WE'RE DIFFERENT PEOPLE. YES, OPPOSITES ATTRACT
WHEN I FIRST MET YOU, YOU MADE UP, JOHN, FOR WHAT I LACKED.
YOU WERE CUTE AND CHARMING, AND ALWAYS SWEET
BUT NOW I DON'T NEED YOU TO SWEEP ME OFF MY FEET.

WITH ALL MY HEART I WANTED TO BE TRUE.
SOMEDAY YOU WILL KNOW I AM NOT THE WIFE FOR YOU.
I HOPE SOMEDAY YOUR HEART AND MIND AND BODY WILL BE FREE.
PLEASE REALIZE YOUR LIFE WILL BE BETTER WITHOUT ME.

(The full impact of her decision hits her during the song, and by the end is emotionally distraught. She is very different from the logical, efficient, person we've seen so far, crumpled up on the couch. After the applause...)

(FADE OUT)

(After the applause...)

(ON VOICEOVER)

(Phone rings.)

MARTA (Voiceover)

Fish and Fern. Marta...Gabe, how are you?...John and Lisa Angelli? I know, I know...You know that's my specialty...I'll see what I can do. All right, already...Of course, I know the rules. .

(BLACKOUT)