

CHRISTMASTOWN

by Megan Orr

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CHRISTMASTOWN

A One-Act Christmas Play

by Megan Orr

SYNOPSIS: Nobody despises Christmas more than mean ol' Margaret Mulroney! She makes the Grinch look like a snow angel. But on the night of her yearly escape to warmer weather, Margaret gets lost in a blizzard and ends up in... *Christmastown*?? In this village where a reformed Ebenezer Scrooge reigns as mayor, it's Christmas Eve 365 days a year... which just happens to be Margaret's worst nightmare! A Christmas play reminiscent of *The Wizard of Oz* but with all of your favorite Christmas characters. And candy canes. Lots and lots of candy canes.

DURATION: 55 minutes.

TIME: Present-day; late November.

SETTING: A small Midwestern town; Christmastown, its outskirts, Candy Mountain, and a cave inside Candy Mountain.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 females, 1 male, 10 either, 4-16 extras)

MARGARET MULRONEY (f).....	A grouchy middle-aged dentist who despises Christmas and everything to do with it. <i>(191 lines)</i>
CAROLER (m/f).....	A cheerful child full of Christmas spirit, like Tiny Tim. <i>(4 lines)</i>
FROSTINE (f)	A snow person; protective mother of FLAKE. <i>(56 lines)</i>
FLAKE (m/f)	FROSTINE's snow baby; a bit of a flake but braver than the average snowman. <i>(44 lines)</i>
EBENEZER SCROOGE (m).....	Mayor of Christmastown; now reformed, he is overly jolly and ridiculously optimistic. <i>(22 lines)</i>
RUDY (m/f)	A retired reindeer; a bit gruff, practical, and matter-of-fact. <i>(24 lines)</i>

HAPPY (m/f)	One of Santa's elves; extremely energetic, sickly sweet, and highly distractible. <i>(48 lines)</i>
COCOA (m/f)	One of Santa's elves; extremely energetic, sickly sweet, and highly distractible. <i>(33 lines)</i>
MRS. CLAUS (f)	Santa's wife who runs the workshop while Santa is on his nightly toy run; highly efficient, practical, and cheery. <i>(32 lines)</i>
SUGAR PLUM FAIRY (f)	A fairy who runs the local clothing store and dreams of becoming a fashion designer; often sounds like a bored teenage girl. <i>(40 lines)</i>
LITTLE DRUMMER BOY (m/f)	A persistent young drummer who works at the local grocery store and dreams of becoming the next rock legend. <i>(52 lines)</i>
CORNELIUS (m/f)	The grouchy old elf who runs Christmastown Comestibles; the LITTLE DRUMMER BOY's boss. <i>(17 lines)</i>
ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN (m/f)	The monster who has been terrorizing Christmastown; speaks in a growly, sometimes sarcastic voice (similar to the Beast in Beauty and the Beast). <i>(17 lines)</i>
ELF 1 (m/f)	Part of the Christmastown crowd. <i>(1 line)</i>
ELF 2 (m/f)	Part of the Christmastown crowd. <i>(1 line)</i>
EXTRAS (m/f)	Carolers (<i>Singers</i>), Santa's Elves <i>(1 group line)</i> .

CASTING NOTE: For marked either-gender characters, pronouns in the script can be updated by the Director to match the gender of the actor portraying that character.

SET

All scenes can occur on the main stage or on wings, as suggested below. Scenes can occur with or without a backdrop. Instead, a few key props are used to suggest the set. Suggestions for each have been included below:

SCENE 1: OUTSIDE MARGARET'S HOUSE; LATE NOVEMBER.

Can occur in front of the main curtain; an exterior door

SCENE 2: INSIDE MARGARET'S HOUSE; THE NEXT MORNING.

Can occur in front of the main curtain; a chair and a coffee table can be used to suggest a living room

SCENE 3: OUTSIDE NEAR CHRISTMASTOWN.

Can occur on a wing or in front of the main curtain; a snow-covered tree downstage right and snowdrifts

SCENE 4: MAIN STREET, CHRISTMASTOWN.

Should occur at center stage; a highly-decorated small-town Main Street; lamp posts wrapped in Christmas lights, decked-out Christmas trees, festive wreaths

SCENE 5: CHRISTMASTOWN CLOTHING STORE.

Can occur on a wing or in front of the main curtain; racks of holiday sweaters and coats are placed downstage left and right; a counter is at center stage

SCENE 6: CHRISTMASTOWN COMESTIBLES GROCERY STORE.

Can occur on a wing or at center stage; a shelf of boxed goods stands at stage left

SCENE 7: SIDE OF CANDY MOUNTAIN.

Should occur at center stage; a mostly bare stage; large rocks and snowdrifts to suggest the side of a mountain

SCENE 8: INSIDE THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN'S MOUNTAIN.

Can occur on a wing or at center stage; dim; a mostly bare stage; rocks of all sizes

SCENE 9: MAIN STREET, CHRISTMASTOWN.

Should occur at center stage; a highly-decorated small-town Main Street; lamp posts wrapped in Christmas lights, decked-out Christmas trees, festive wreaths

LIGHTS

Standard outdoor lighting can be used throughout most of the play (standard indoor lighting for Scene 2.) Lights fade and rise between scenes. If available, a spot may be used for scenes in which characters run through the audience and to identify the spot of Flake's "death."

COSTUMES

MARGARET MULRONEY – bland business casual: khaki pants, cardigan, loafers in dull, dark colors; needs a wool coat for scene 2 and a puffy winter coat and hiking boots for scene 6

FROSTINE – a snowperson costume (available on ebay.com or Amazon)

FLAKE – a little snowperson costume (available on ebay.com or Amazon)

EBENEZER SCROOGE – suit coat and pants, shirt and tie, top hat, dress shoes

RUDY – reindeer costume (available on walmart.com, target.com, or Amazon)

HAPPY – red-and-white striped tights or socks; T-shirt and leggings; red sparkly tutu

COCOA – green-and-white striped tights or socks; T-shirt and leggings; green sparkly tutu

MRS. CLAUS – red velvet skirt; red fur-lined top; black boots, red mop hat (available on Amazon)

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY – pale purple ballerina leotard and tutu OR ankle-length gossamer purple dress

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY – jeans and a rock-and-roll T-shirt; leather jacket and a knit hat for outdoor scenes

CORNELIUS – an ugly Christmas sweater OR flannel shirt and khaki pants or skirt

ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN – abominable snowman costume (available on Amazon) OR white sweatshirt and sweatpants; animal paw mittens (available on Amazon)

CAROLERS – Christmas sweaters or flannel shirts, jeans; winter coats, winter hats or earmuffs, scarves, gloves

SANTA'S ELVES – red-and-white or green-and-white or red-and-green striped tights or socks; T-shirt and leggings OR red or green shorts; red, green, or white sparkly tutu (optional)

PROPS

SCENE 1

- Basket of candy canes

SCENE 2

- MARGARET's rolling carryon suitcase
- MARGARET's coat
- MARGARET's cell phone

SCENE 3: NONE

SCENE 4

- Brightly wrapped packages
- SCROOGE's top hat
- Elves' baskets of mini candy canes

SCENE 5

- Racks of holiday sweaters and coats
- Red-and-white or green-and-white striped knee socks
- SUGAR PLUM FAIRY's glossy fashion magazine
- SUGAR PLUM FAIRY's sketch pad with fashion designs

SCENE 6

- Metal rack of boxed goods
- Large cardboard box
- LITTLE DRUMMER BOY's drum sticks
- MARGARET's puffy winter coat
- MARGARET's hiking boots
- HAPPY's earmuffs
- COCOA's winter hat
- SUGAR PLUM FAIRY's winter scarf
- Elves' baskets of mini candy canes

SCENE 7

- HAPPY's backpack containing a large bag of candy
- Elves' baskets of mini candy canes

SCENE 8

- MARGARET's backpack with travel dental tools

SCENE 9

- Elves' baskets of mini candy canes

SOUND EFFECTS

- doorbell
- telephone ring
- wind
- Christmas bells
- upbeat Christmas song
- store door chimes
- drum solo
- winter storm
- roar/roaring (far off and close by)

DIRECTORS' NOTES

For the opening scene, consider reaching out to your school's music department. The carolers can be played by your school's choir.

With the large number of mini candy canes that will be used for this performance, I recommend talking to a local grocery store. Some stores may provide merchandise in exchange for advertising in the play program.

For scenes involving snow drifts, white sheets and crumpled-up newspapers padding furniture, buckets, and boxes work wonders. Check out your local Goodwill or Salvation Army for reasonably priced white sheets that you won't worry about getting dirty. You can top with flame retardant quilt batting for a softer effect.

Holiday costuming can seem daunting at first, so make sure to get started early! Elf, reindeer, Mrs. Claus, snowmen, and abominable snowmen costumes can be found online, both for purchase or as how-to videos to create your own (YouTube, Pinterest.)

If your theater department has access to concessions, hot chocolate, coffee, and Christmas cookies make a wonderful pre-play snack (and fundraiser!).

SCENE 1**OUTSIDE MARGARET'S HOUSE; LATE NOVEMBER**

AT START: *Lights rise dimly on the stage. From the back of the house, a group of CAROLERS begin singing a Christmas carol. After a few moments, they begin slowly walking down the center aisle of the audience toward the stage, still caroling. The group stops at the stage but continues to sing quietly. One young CAROLER with a basket of candy canes breaks off from the group and runs up on stage, feigning ringing a doorbell at center stage. SFX: Doorbell. Suddenly, a spot lights up center stage as MARGARET enters.*

MARGARET: What's all this racket?!? Who do you all think you are, disturbing the peace?? Don't you know it's after dark??

CAROLER: But Mrs. Mulroney! We're Christmas caroling!

MARGARET: That's *Doctor* Mulroney to you, if you don't mind!

CAROLER: Doctor Mulroney? But... you're a dentist.

MARGARET: Yes, I'm a dentist. I'm surprised you remember that, young lady. And when's the last time I saw you for a checkup?

CAROLER: Uhhhhhhhh...

MARGARET: I'm sure there's all sorts of candied pecans and pumpkin gunk entrenched in those molars of yours. Hold on a minute. I have a bag of travel tools around here somewhere. Let's take a look!

CAROLER: We were just leaving!

CAROLER hands MARGARET a candy cane and scurries offstage back to the rest of the group.

MARGARET: *(To the CAROLERS.)* And what about the rest of you? Doesn't anybody want to get their teeth cleaned anymore? Of course not. You're all going to wait until after the New Year and then make it the dentist's problem. Well, I've had it!

The CAROLERS exchange uneasy looks, turn around, and walk back up the center aisle, resuming their Christmas carols.

MARGARET: That's right. Get out of here, all of you! Ought to be ashamed of yourselves! Christmas caroling the day after Thanksgiving! I'm still digesting my turkey and you already want to shove cavity-inducing candy canes down my throat! What next? Fruitcake?? You all may be dreaming of a white Christmas, but I'd be happy with one silent night!

MARGARET slams the door. Lights fade.

SCENE 2

INSIDE MARGARET'S HOUSE; THE NEXT MORNING

AT START: *Lights rise. This scene can be played in front of a closed stage curtain. MARGARET is just closing her suitcase. She extends the handle on the suitcase and grabs for her coat. SFX: Telephone rings. MARGARET sighs.*

MARGARET: Now who could that be bothering me first thing in the morning? I've got a plane to catch.

MARGARET answers the phone.

MARGARET: Hello? Yes, this is Margaret Mulroney.... Canceled? What do you mean my flight's been canceled?! (*Looking out toward the audience.*) Blizzard? What blizzard? It's just a little snow! I demand that you reschedule my flight immediately! ... No, I can't wait until after the storm! I've got to get out of this madness now! ... Fine. If you won't do anything about it, I guess I'm driving to Florida for the holidays! ... Merry Christmas?? Merry Christmas?!? Yeah, and a happy New Year to you too, pal!

MARGARET slams down the telephone. She pulls on her coat, hat, and gloves.

MARGARET: A day after Thanksgiving and already everyone's got eggnog for brains! I've got to get out of here before all this holiday spirit kills me. It's just a little snow! How bad could it be?

MARGARET grabs her suitcase by the handle and storms offstage toward the back of the audience. Lights fade.

SCENE 3

OUTSIDE NEAR CHRISTMASTOWN

AT START: *Lights rise dimly on a full-blown blizzard. SFX: wind. MARGARET stumbles down the center aisle toward the stage, trying to drag her suitcase by the handle and hang on to her hat. Eventually she gives up on the suitcase and stumbles onto the stage. She collapses at the base of a tree at downstage right and huddles against the trunk. The storm dies down and the lights slowly brighten. FLAKE stands near the tree, unmoving. SFX: Christmas bells. MARGARET stirs.*

MARGARET: What happened? Am I dead? Everything is so... white. Have I died and gone to dentist heaven? I knew it! I knew Christmas would eventually kill me!

MARGARET stands, brushing herself off.

FLAKE: Don't be ridiculous. Christmas can't kill you.

MARGARET spins around.

MARGARET: Is somebody there? Who said that?

FLAKE: I did.

MARGARET turns to FLAKE. She then checks behind FLAKE.

MARGARET: I must be hearing things. I could have sworn—but snowmen can't talk.

FLAKE: I can.

MARGARET jumps and lets out a shriek.

MARGARET: You! Y-You can talk!

FLAKE: Yep! I'm Flake.

MARGARET: This cannot be happening.

FLAKE: (*Calling out.*) Hey, Mama! Guess what! I found a person!

FROSTINE enters, stage left.

FROSTINE: Flake! What have I told you about running off without telling me? And now you're talking to strangers??

MARGARET: Oh, good heavens. Another one. I am hallucinating!

FLAKE: She's not a stranger, Mama! She's a person!

FROSTINE: Flake, sweetheart, a stranger is a person. A person we haven't met yet, remember?

FLAKE: Oh! Then it's okay, Mama! I introduced myself! (*To MARGARET.*) Remember me? I'm Flake!

MARGARET: I must have frostbite. In my brain. That's it. Is it possible for your brain to get frostbite?

FLAKE: That depends. What's a brain?

MARGARET: (*To herself.*) Why am I having this conversation with a snowman?

FROSTINE: Flake, honey, maybe you should take a step back. This person seems a bit... unstable.

FLAKE: She seems nice. What's your name, lady?

MARGARET: It's not lady; it's Doctor.

FLAKE: Oh. Okay. What's your name, Doctor Lady?

MARGARET: No, I meant, my name is Doctor Margaret Mulroney.

FLAKE: Mama, this is Doctor Baloney!

MARGARET: Not Baloney! Mulroney!

FLAKE: Oh. Sorry. You know I don't have any ears?

MARGARET: If you don't have any ears, then how are you—? You know what? Never mind. (*Turning to FROSTINE.*) Excuse me, ma'am?

FLAKE: That's my Mama!

MARGARET: Uh... okay.

FROSTINE: (*Coolly.*) I'm Frostine. Welcome to Christmastown.

MARGARET: Thank you, but I really—Wait a minute. Welcome to where??

FROSTINE: Christmastown. Well, the outskirts of Christmastown anyway. Flake tends to wander.

MARGARET: Imagine that.

FROSTINE: If you like, we can show you the way into town. Introduce you to the mayor.

MARGARET: The mayor of Christmastown? Let me guess. Would that be Santa Claus?

FROSTINE: Flurries, no. Santa is far too busy with deliveries to run the town. No, our mayor is none other than the illustrious Ebenezer Scrooge.

MARGARET: Ebenezer Scrooge? You've got to be kidding me.

FROSTINE: Not at all. It's Mayor Scrooge's fifteenth consecutive term as mayor. All of Christmastown loves him!

MARGARET: And who ran the town before him? The Abominable Snowman?

FLAKE: (*Fearfully.*) The Abominable Snowman?!? Where???

FLAKE dives behind FROSTINE to hide.

FROSTINE: It's all right, Flake. It's all right. He isn't here. Right, Doctor Baloney?

MARGARET: Actually, it's not Baloney.

FLAKE: The Abominable Snowman is here?!?

MARGARET: What? No! I was just.... Never mind. Look, kid. There's no Abominable Snowman here. You're safe.

FLAKE: Really?

FROSTINE: Really.

FLAKE uneasily comes out from behind FROSTINE.

FLAKE: Mama? I think I'm ready to go home now.

FROSTINE: Okay, Popsicle. Let's just figure out what to do with this nice doctor lady, okay?

MARGARET: Don't worry about me. I just need to find my way back to my car. It got caught in a snow drift somewhere back that way during the storm.

FROSTINE: Well now, I don't know. It certainly doesn't seem like a smart idea to let you go wandering off in the snow by yourself.

MARGARET: Not a smart idea? I thought snowmen didn't have brains.

FLAKE: We should take her to Mayor Scrooge, Mama. He'll know what to do.

FROSTINE: You're right, Frosted Flake. He would know what to do.

MARGARET: Okay, fine. Let's go see Ebenezer Scrooge. At least I know we'll have one thing in common.

FROSTINE: What's that?

FLAKE: That you're both people?

MARGARET: Uh... yes. That's it. That we're both people.

FLAKE: Come on! I'll lead the way!

FLAKE runs offstage left.

FROSTINE: (*Coldly.*) You know, Doctor Baloney—

MARGARET: Mulroney!

FROSTINE: —we snow people may not be warm-blooded with brains and lungs and such like you... but we still have feelings!

MARGARET: I'm... sorry? I never meant—

FLAKE runs back on, stage left.

FLAKE: Come on, Mama! I wanna say goodbye to Santa before he leaves tonight!

FROSTINE: Okay, Gumdrops. We're coming.

MARGARET: Tonight?

FROSTINE: Yes. Santa leaves tonight. But I'm sure the mayor can explain it all to you. He's a person.

FROSTINE exits stage left after FLAKE. MARGARET stares after her a moment open-mouthed before following.

MARGARET: Hey! Hold on a minute. Wait for me! (*To herself.*) So much for Frosty the Snowman being a holly, jolly soul! Ice Queen is more like it!

MARGARET exits stage left. Lights fade.

SCENE 4*MAIN STREET, CHRISTMASTOWN*

AT START: *Lights rise on Main Street decked out for Christmas. ELVES run to and fro carrying brightly wrapped packages. RUDY, an old reindeer, hangs out beside the post office at downstage right. And at stage left EBENEZER SCROOGE, dressed smartly in a suit and top hat, stands directing something going on just offstage left. FLAKE, FROSTINE, and MARGARET enter, stage right. MARGARET looks around in disgust.*

MARGARET: Whoa. This is absolutely...

FROSTINE: Beautiful, right?

MARGARET: Actually, I was going to say disgusting. It looks like Christmas threw up. I take it this must be...

FLAKE: It's Christmastown! I'm gonna go find Santa. Bye!

FLAKE runs off upstage left.

FROSTINE: I don't know what is the matter with you, Dr. Macaroni—

MARGARET: It's Mulroney.

FROSTINE: —but I do know one thing. If there's anyone who can fix a Grinchy heart, it's—

MARGARET: The Grinch?

FROSTINE: The Grinch?? Don't be ridiculous. The Grinch isn't real! It's not like childhood holiday characters can actually come to life!

MARGARET: You would think not, but then again...

FROSTINE: No, I was going to say, it's our wonderful mayor Ebenezer Scrooge!

At the sound of his name, SCROOGE looks over at them.

SCROOGE: Somebody called? Ah! Frostine! So good to see you again! And where has little Flake run off to this time?

MARGARET: This time? So even the mayor recognizes he's a flight risk.

FROSTINE: (*Ignoring MARGARET; to SCROOGE.*) Flake went to visit Santa before he leaves for deliveries, Mister Mayor. (*Turning to MARGARET.*) But I brought you someone you really need to meet. For her sake. Mayor Scrooge, this is Doctor Margaret Macaroni.

MARGARET extends her hand.

MARGARET: Mulroney, actually. How do you do?

SCROOGE: (*Shaking MARGARET'S hand.*) A doctor? Well! It certainly is nice to welcome another doctor to Christmastown! It's been ages!

MARGARET: Uh, sorry, but that would be a dentist doctor, not a doctor doctor.

SCROOGE: Oh. Pity. We have plenty of those around here. All the same, welcome to Christmastown!

MARGARET: Thanks.... I think.

SCROOGE: (*To FROSTINE.*) And as far as your little Flake is concerned, I'm afraid he's too late. Santa left about half an hour ago.

FROSTINE: Oh, that's too bad. Well, there's always tomorrow.

MARGARET: Excuse me. Did you say Santa left on deliveries? What day is it?

SCROOGE: Why, it's December twenty-fourth, of course. Christmas Eve!

MARGARET: Christmas Eve?? But... how?? When I left home, it was still November!

SCROOGE: Let me guess... first time in Christmastown?

MARGARET: Yes?

SCROOGE: Then your confusion is understandable. Here in Christmastown, time works a little bit... differently.

MARGARET: What? Did I stumble across some sort of time warp?

SCROOGE: If it is, then it's the greatest time warp in history! You see, in Christmastown every day is Christmas Eve!

FROSTINE: Hence the name Christmastown.

MARGARET: WHAT?!?

SCROOGE: It really is quite a magical thing to experience.

MARGARET: You've got to be kidding me! This is a nightmare!!!

FROSTINE: Christmas? A nightmare? I think you may be confusing Christmas with another holiday.

MARGARET: No! I mean Christmas! Christmas is the worst time of year! All the fake cheer, the sugary treats, the ridiculous expectations, the shameless commercialism! And now I'm stuck in a place where Christmas never ends?? I'd rather endure a root canal every day for the rest of my life!

FROSTINE: (*To SCROOGE.*) I told you she really needed to meet you.

SCROOGE: Yes, I can see that. (*To MARGARET.*) Doctor Mulroney, you may not appreciate Christmas just yet—

MARGARET: And probably never will!

SCROOGE: Yes, well, let's give Christmastown a chance to work its magic, shall we?

MARGARET: (*After a long pause.*) You are not at all what I expected.

SCROOGE: What can I say? Christmas changes people. Now if you don't mind, I must get back. I've got a team of elves about to set up a sixty-foot tree and believe you me, elves can do precious little without precise instruction.

FROSTINE: Of course. Thank you for your time, Mister Mayor.

SCROOGE: My pleasure. Doctor Mulroney? I hope to see you again soon. Merry Christmas.

SCROOGE exits downstage left.

MARGARET: Hey, wait a minute! What about me?? Am I just stuck in this Christmas wasteland??

FROSTINE: (*Coldly.*) It's called Christmastown.

MARGARET: Yeah, well, whatever. I guess I'm going to have to figure out my own way out of here.

RUDY speaks up from downstage right.

RUDY: Kind of a slow learner, isn't she?

MARGARET whirls around to face RUDY.

MARGARET: Who said that?

RUDY: That would be me.

FROSTINE: Doctor Mulroney, meet Rudy. He's one of Santa's reindeer.

RUDY: Retired now, actually.

MARGARET: Rudy. A talking reindeer. Why am I not surprised?

RUDY: Seems like very little surprises or amazes you.

MARGARET: Excuse me? You don't even know me!

RUDY: I know you're a dentist, not a doctor, who doesn't believe in Christmas and is trying to get back home. That about covers it, right?

MARGARET: Well... yes. Mostly.

RUDY: And I can tell you something else I know that even you might find surprising. You're not getting out of Christmastown. Not now, not ever.

MARGARET: What are you talking about?

RUDY: There's only one way out of this town, and that's with Santa when he leaves on his nightly deliveries. Trust me. I should know. Made that run myself for years.

MARGARET: Can't I just leave the way I came in?

RUDY: You could. If you want to spend the rest of your life wandering through a snowstorm.

MARGARET: (*Shivering.*) I think I'll pass.

FROSTINE: Come now, Rudy. There must be some way to get her out of here! ...I mean, to get her home.

RUDY: There is. With Santa.

MARGARET: Ugh. Gag me with a candy cane.

FROSTINE and RUDY react nervously.

FROSTINE: Shhhhhhhh! Not so loud! They'll hear you!

MARGARET: What? What did I say?

RUDY: (*In an exaggerated whisper.*) We don't use the "c" word around here.

MARGARET: If by "c" word you mean "Christmas," I'm all for it! Although I think you might need to rename your town.

FROSTINE: No, not that "c" word. The double "c" word.

MARGARET: Double "c" word? You mean... "candy cane"?

FROSTINE: No!

RUDY: She didn't.

At least a dozen ELF heads pop out from the curtains on all sides, all grinning eagerly.

HAPPY: Did somebody say "candy cane"???

SFX: An upbeat Christmas song plays. ELVES flood the stage, each carrying a basket filled with miniature candy canes. Not only do they pass out candy canes to the characters on stage, but they move into the audience, passing out candy canes at random as they make their way throughout the house. They exit the auditorium when finished. HAPPY and COCOA stay on stage.

MARGARET: Ugh! Not candy canes! Anything but candy canes!

RUDY: Well, now you've done it. It looks like you've summoned every elf in Santa's workshop. Now how is he supposed to get any toys made?

MARGARET: Who cares about toys?! Do you have any idea how bad candy canes are for your teeth?? This is basically a stick of pure sugar!

FROSTINE: Then why on earth did you ask us to gag you with one?

MARGARET: I didn't mean it! I was being sarcastic!!

FROSTINE: Sarcastic?

RUDY: In other words, she would rather choke than get a ride home from Santa.

FROSTINE: Oh.... Well, that's not very nice.

RUDY: You sound surprised.

MARGARET: Now I get why you guys need so many dentists around here!

MARGARET throws down her candy cane. HAPPY runs over to her.

HAPPY: Oh dear! What's the matter? Is that one spoiled? Here! Have another!

HAPPY shoves another candy cane at MARGARET.

MARGARET: Uh, thanks, but no thanks. I can't—

HAPPY: And another! And another! And another!

HAPPY continues shoving candy canes at MARGARET.

MARGARET: Can somebody turn off this crazy elf??

COCOA runs over.

COCOA: Here! Let me help!

MARGARET: Oh, thank heavens.

COCOA: No problem! You can never have too many candy canes!

COCOA begins helping HAPPY shove candy canes into MARGARET'S arms.

MARGARET: Actually, you can. Wait! That's not what I—Stop! ...Help!

RUDY: Winky! Blinky! Cool it with the candy.

HAPPY: (*Playfully.*) Rudy! You know our names aren't Winky and Blinky! I'm Happy!

COCOA: And I'm Cocoa!

MARGARET: And I'm going to be sick.

FROSTINE: (*Frostily.*) Too much sugar, dear?

MARGARET: Something like that.

RUDY: (*To HAPPY and COCOA.*) Don't you two have Christmas toys you should be making?

HAPPY: Yes, of course. We'll get back to that soon. We're just spreading a little Christmas cheer!

COCOA: To young and old, both far and near!

MARGARET: Have you two considered a career in cheesy greeting cards?

HAPPY: Do you mean Christmas cards?? I love Christmas cards!

MARGARET: Imagine that.

MRS. CLAUS enters from upstage left and stands watching the scene, hands on hips.

COCOA: I've been collecting Christmas cards since I was a wee lil' elfling. Do you want to know how many Christmas cards I have now?

MARGARET: I don't. But I have a feeling you're going to tell me.

COCOA: Wait right here. I'll run home and count them!

MRS. CLAUS: Happy! Cocoa!

HAPPY: (To RUDY.) See? Now those are our names!

COCOA: Uh oh. I think we're in trouble.

MRS. CLAUS crosses downstage to HAPPY and COCOA.

MRS. CLAUS: So. Here are all my industrious employees. Passing out candy canes when they ought to be back in the workshop meeting our quota for tomorrow.

RUDY: I tried to tell 'em, boss.

MRS. CLAUS: Rudy, stop it. You don't have to call me that. I haven't been your boss for at least the last five years.

RUDY: Pardon me for disagreeing, but you will always be "boss" to me, Mrs. Claus. No matter how many years I've been retired.

MARGARET: Mrs. Claus?

MRS. CLAUS: (Turning to MARGARET.) Yes? And who do we have here?

FROSTINE: Mrs. Claus, this is Doctor Margaret Rice-a-Roni.

MRS. CLAUS: That's quite a last name. Are you from San Francisco?

MARGARET: Uh, no. She's not saying it right. Again. I'm Doctor Margaret Mulroney.

FROSTINE: She's a dentist.

MARGARET: Thanks. Thanks for clearing that up for us.

MRS. CLAUS: Let me guess. You somehow accidentally stumbled into Christmastown and have learned that there is only one way to get out.

MARGARET: Actually, yes. How did you know?

MRS. CLAUS: Oh, it's happened a time or two.

MARGARET: Great! So you can help me!

MRS. CLAUS: Certainly. Just as soon as you help me.

MARGARET: You... need me to help you?

MRS. CLAUS: Honey, I'm a businesswoman. Nothing is free. Well, except Christmas presents. You get rid of the Abominable Snowman, and I'll make sure that Santa gets you home for Christmas. The real Christmas.

MARGARET: The Abominable Snowman?

HAPPY: Abominable Snowman?! Where??

COCOA: Take cover!

HAPPY and COCOA dive for hiding spots.

MRS. CLAUS: Yes. The Abominable Snowman. That beast has been terrorizing this town for the last several weeks and no one knows why. Comes down here from his cave on Candy Mountain, devours our gingerbread homes, and then storms off, leaving a wake of destruction and cookie crumbs behind him.

MARGARET: And you expect me to get rid of him??

RUDY: Good luck.

MRS. CLAUS: Yes. You take care of our... unwanted visitor, and I'll get you a first-class ticket out of here.

FROSTINE: Hope you can stand the smell of reindeer.

RUDY: Hey!

MARGARET: I guess I don't really have any other choice, do I?

RUDY: There's nothing wrong with the smell of reindeer!

MARGARET: Okay. I'll do it.

FROSTINE: You will??

RUDY: You will??

HAPPY and COCOA: You will?

MARGARET: Yes. I can't stand the thought of being stuck in everlasting Christmas. It's like being stuck in the seventh circle of— Well, you know. I'll take my chances with the snow beast.

MRS. CLAUS: Excellent!

HAPPY: Wait! She can't go off into the mountains by herself! She could get lost!

COCOA: We could go with her!

MRS. CLAUS: Oh no you don't! I won't have you disappointing little boys and girls tomorrow because you two decided to shirk your responsibilities today!

MARGARET: Uh, correct me if I'm mistaken, Mrs. Claus, but if every day in Christmastown is Christmas Eve... won't it still be Christmas Eve tomorrow?

MRS. CLAUS: Of course.

MARGARET: Then why are you having your elves make Christmas presents for a Christmas Day that will never come?

MRS. CLAUS: *(After a beat; to RUDY and FROSTINE.)* She just doesn't understand Christmastown, now does she?

FROSTINE: Clearly not.

MARGARET: *(Under her breath.)* Good thing I'm getting out of here.

FLAKE enters running in from upstage left.

FLAKE: Mama! Mama!

FROSTINE: Flake! There you are, my darling!

FLAKE: I missed him, Mama. I missed Santa.

FROSTINE: I know, dear. There's always tomorrow.

MRS. CLAUS: *(To MARGARET.)* Now if you're going to make it up that mountain, you're going to need a few supplies...

FLAKE: You're going up the mountain?? But... but the Abominable Snowman lives up there!

FROSTINE: Hush, Flake. She'll be fine.

MARGARET: Apparently, going up there and taking out the Abominable Snowman is the only way I get to ride in Santa's sleigh. *(After a beat.)* Words I never thought I would say.

FLAKE: *(Awed.)* You get to ride in Santa's sleigh?? Can I come??

FROSTINE: Flake! Don't be ridiculous! Of course not! It's far too dangerous. For young snow people, I mean. Perfectly safe for grouchy dentists.

FLAKE: It's a mountain covered in snow. I'll be much safer than she is.

MRS. CLAUS: Flake makes a good point. Happy. Cocoa. Take the good doctor over to the outdoor shop and get her suited up in something a little warmer. We don't want her freezing to death on the way up the mountain! Then make sure to stop and get her those supplies.

While MRS. CLAUS is talking, FLAKE sneaks off, stage right.

HAPPY: Right! Supplies! ...Supplies for what?

MARGARET: What's wrong with her? Does she have gumdrops for brains?

COCOA: Ooh! Gumdrops! (*To HAPPY.*) Maybe we could take her to the candy shop!

HAPPY: And let her lick the lollipops??

MARGARET: Clothes! I need warm clothes! And hiking boots!

HAPPY: Oh, right! Clothes! I know just where to take you! Follow me!

HAPPY grabs MARGARET by the hand and drags her off stage left. COCOA follows, skipping.

MRS. CLAUS: (*Shaking her head.*) Elves. Some of the most distractible creatures you'll ever meet. It's a wonder we get anything done in the workshop.

FROSTINE: Honestly, Mrs. Claus, I really don't know how you deal with elves on a daily basis. They are so flighty and unreliable and—Hey!! Has anyone seen Flake??

RUDY, MRS. CLAUS, and FROSTINE'S heads swivel as they look around for FLAKE. Lights fade.

SCENE 5

CHRISTMASTOWN CLOTHING STORE

AT START: *Lights rise on the Christmastown Clothing store. Racks of holiday sweaters and coats are placed downstage left and right. A bored SUGAR PLUM FAIRY stands behind the counter at center stage, leafing through a glossy fashion magazine. SFX: Chimes signal someone's entrance. SUGAR PLUM FAIRY straightens. HAPPY drags in MARGARET from downstage right. COCOA follows, skipping.*

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: (*Bored.*) Hello. Welcome to Christmastown Clothing. What can I help you find today?

HAPPY: Hi! I'm Happy!

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Happy. I already know who you are. We're first cousins.

HAPPY: Oh, yeah! (To MARGARET.) This is my first cousin, the Sugar Plum Fairy! She runs the clothing store!

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Yes. Lucky me. Running a clothing store in a land of zero fashion sense. Is there something I can help you find today? Some ugly striped knee-high socks perhaps?

MARGARET: Is it just me or is she the worst salesperson ever?

HAPPY: We're here for some clothes. Warm clothes. Margaret here is climbing up the mountain!

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Ew. Why?

MARGARET: Because your dictator Mrs. Claus is a manipulative overlord.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Excuse me??

COCOA: She's going to get rid of the Abominable Snowman in exchange for a sleigh ride with Santa out of here!

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: (Perking up.) Out of here? As in, out of Christmastown? Where are you going?

MARGARET: Does it matter? Hopefully somewhere so warm and sunny that people completely forget about Christmas.

COCOA: Forget about Christmas?? Impossible!

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Wow. All my life all I've ever wanted was to get out of here. Visit the fashion capitals of the world. Milan, Paris, the Big Apple!

HAPPY: (To MARGARET.) She wants to be a fashion designer someday. She's very good. Show her your sketches, Sugar Plum!

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY pulls a sketch pad out from below the counter and tosses it onto the countertop.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: What does it matter? It's not like anyone could ever become a fashion designer around here.

MARGARET picks up the sketch pad and flips through it half-heartedly.

MARGARET: Very nice. Now... about those clothes?

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Take me with you!

MARGARET: I'm... sorry??

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: There's no future for me here. Let me go with you!

MARGARET: Did you miss the part about me having to get rid of the Abominable Snowman??

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Whatever. I'm not afraid. I can help!

MARGARET: I'm really not looking for any help. Or company.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Then I guess you're not really interested in any clothes either.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY swivels away, turning her back to MARGARET.

MARGARET: *(To HAPPY.)* Seriously? Is she allowed to do this?

HAPPY: I told you. She runs the clothing store!

MARGARET: *(With a mighty sigh.)* Fine! You can come up the mountain with me.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY swivels back around eagerly.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: And on the sleigh ride out of here?

MARGARET: And on the sleigh ride out of here.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Great! Let me hook you up with our mountain climbing starter's kit. Just one question.

MARGARET: What's that?

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: What size hiking boots?

Lights fade.

SCENE 6

CHRISTMASTOWN COMESTIBLES GROCERY STORE

AT START: *Lights rise on the Christmastown Comestibles grocery store. A shelf of boxed goods stands at stage left. THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY is opening a large cardboard box and restocking the shelf. He places the last boxed food item on the shelf and pauses, studying the box thoughtfully. He shoots furtive glances stage left and right. Then he flips the cardboard box over. After a dramatic pause, he whips drum sticks out of his back pocket and begins a wild drum solo*

on the bottom of the box and the nearby shelf. SFX: Drum solo. After a few seconds, an intimidating voice bellows from offstage.

CORNELIUS: DB!!!!

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY instantly jumps up, pockets his drum sticks, and begins cleaning up the boxes as CORNELIUS storms in from upstage left.

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Mr. Cornelius!

CORNELIUS: DB! Was that you making all that noise again? You're scaring away all the elderly elves. And they're the majority of our customers!

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Probably because they're the only ones who understand the store's name. Christmastown Comestibles? What is that?

CORNELIUS: I'll have you know that this supermarket has been called Christmastown Comestibles since my great-great-great-grandfather Cornelius named it so!

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Yeah, but what is it?

CORNELIUS: For you, it's the difference between a paycheck and the unemployment line! Now clean up this mess and get back to work! Quietly!!!

CORNELIUS storms off, upstage left.

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: You know, I hear they're looking for an understudy for the Grinch over at Elf Elementary. You should audition.

CORNELIUS: *(From offstage.)* I heard that!

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Shoot! I forgot about those enormous elf ears!

MARGARET enters from downstage right in a puffy winter coat and hiking boots. HAPPY follows wearing new earmuffs and COCOA is wearing a new hat. SUGAR PLUM FAIRY follows them in wearing a new scarf.

MARGARET: Excuse me. Could you help us?

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Uh... if you're looking for some kind of winter weather fashion show, you're in the wrong place.

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY: Aren't you a sweet boy! We do look amazing, I agree!

HAPPY: Sugar Plum styled us!

MARGARET: Yes, I'm sure we're all impressed with her ability to pick out clothes. But let's stay focused here.

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: One last question?

MARGARET: (*Sighing.*) Fine.

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Why are you the only one wearing a coat?

MARGARET: Apparently people from Christmastown are much more acclimated to the cold than I am. Now. Could we get some service please?

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: Wait a minute. One more question.

MARGARET: That's what you said last time. Is this going to turn into twenty questions?

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY: No. I promise. You said "people from Christmastown." Are you not from around here?

MARGARET: Fortunately, no. I'm from the real world.

COCOA: This isn't the real world??

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