

SCRAWNY LITTLE CHRISTMAS TREES

By Marla Schwartz

Copyright © 1999 by Marla Schwartz, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 1-931000-11-5

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

SCRAWNY LITTLE CHRISTMAS TREES

by
Marla Schwartz

PROPS

Santa suit

Several branches (to represent small trees) Bag with three presents inside

Hat

Baseball

Marbles

CAST: NICK, ROBBY, BILLY, MATT, SANTA (also played by MATT)

SETTING: In the slums, several generations ago.

AT RISE: NICK, ROBBY, and BILLY are off-stage, singing. These boys are juvenile delinquents. The first three lines (of singing) are optional, but they set the tone for the negative attitude of the boys.

NICKY: **(voice-over)** 'Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells. Santa Claus is drunk. All I got was socks with holes. My brother got a skunk.'

ROBBY: **(voice-over)** 'Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Santa Claus is stoned. He couldn't read my letter. I guess I should have phoned.'

BILLY: **(voice-over)** 'Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Santa Claus is crocked. He went out to buy more booze, the liquor store was locked.'

(All three boys laugh.)

NICKY: **(voice-over)** Hey look – there's Fat Matt!

NICKY, BILLY & ROBBY: **(voice-overs)** Fat Matt! Fat Matt! Fat Matt!

(NICKY, BILLY, and ROBBY walk onto the stage while tossing around a black hat. The boys are from poor families and their clothes reflect this fact.)

NICKY: Hey Fat Matt! We have your ha-at! Hah, hah, hah, hah, hah!

(The boys continue to throw MATT'S hat amongst themselves for a minute longer.)

Scrawny Little Christmas Trees – Page 3

(ROBBY grabs the hat and stops throwing it to the other boys.)

NICKY: What's wrong? Why are ya' stoppin'?

ROBBY: It's time to give it back.

BILLY: Why? Because Christmas is only four days away, or somethin'?

ROBBY: Yeh – or somethin'. – ***(HE throws the hat off-stage)*** Take your hat back, Fat Matt. ***(HE takes a baseball or softball out of his coat pocket.)*** Play with this if you need somethin' to throw around. ***(HE throws the ball to NICKY and HE catches it. The boys play with the ball as they start walking toward center stage.)*** Nick, get your mother anything yet?

NICKY: No. No money. How 'bout you?

ROBBY: Same thing. How 'bout you, Billy?

BILLY: Only thing I can afford is what I want to give my old man.

ROBBY: What's that?

BILLY: Something I get every time the old drunk sees me – a kick in the pants.

NICKY: Come on guys, think of somethin'. There's gotta be a way we can make money.

BILLY: We can steal Christmas lights and sell 'em instead of breakin' 'em.

NICKY: Sell 'em? But I like to throw 'em on the street 'cause they sound like firecrackers. It's even better than tipping trashcans or soaping windows.

ROBBY: But we'd have to steal so many of 'em. People would get suspicious. Not a good idea.

BILLY: At least I came up with somethin'.

ROBBY: Hey – Nicky. Remember last year when you lit that Christmas tree on fire and then we ran around the block and came back and knocked on that lady's door to call the firehouse?

BILLY: Yeh. She gave us a reward for bein' heroes!

ROBBY: Let's do that!

NICKY: Yeh, right. Where are your brains? We lit the tree last year *after* Christmas. We need the money now! ***(The boys are quiet for a moment.)*** Hey, I got an idea. Let's get some scrawny lookin' trees and sell 'em cheap.

ROBBY: Who's gonna buy scrawny trees?

BILLY: My old man.

NICKY: No, listen. We can dress up in old, poor-looking clothes – Billy, you can wear your regular stuff – we'll make a sign that says 'Scrawny Trees for Sale Cheap'. People will feel sorry for us and buy our trees.

ROBBY: They'll probably buy 'em and throw 'em away once we're gone.

Scrawny Little Christmas Trees – Page 4

NICKY: Good, then we can go get 'em once they're out of sight, and we can sell 'em again.

ROBBY: How we gonna get trees to sell?

BILLY: We can steal 'em after the tree places close.

NICKY: Nah. Too risky. And we're not allowed out that late, anyway.

ROBBY: Then how are we gonna ever get any money?

NICKY: **(pause)** Wait! I've got another idea. We can go around to a couple of places and ask 'em to sell us their worst trees for a dollar each, 'cause that's all we have to spend. Someone'll do it. And if we act real good they might even give 'em to us.

ROBBY: Great idea! Then we can sell those trees at a profit and buy more trees to sell at a profit until we have enough money for Christmas presents.

BILLY: Now all we need is one dollar to start with.

NICKY: Everyone put up your money! **(The boys all dig through their coat pockets.)** I've got a quarter.

ROBBY: I have fifteen cents and some... **(HE keeps digging into his pocket and pulls out a handful of marbles)** marbles!

NICKY: Marbles? We can't buy Christmas trees with marbles! What're ya' doin' with 'em anyway? Nobody plays with marbles anymore!

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from SCRAWNY LITTLE CHRISTMAS TREES by Marla Schwartz. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011

www.brookpub.com