

a script from
skitguys.com

**“It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like a Mystery”
A Christmas Whodunnit**
by
Tracy Wells

Kelly: If that's true, then you'll let us look in your hat.

Donald: Be my guest.

Donald takes off his hat and hands it to Kelly, who feels around inside it, looks inside, tips it upside down, shakes it, etc.

Kelly: There's nothing in here.

Donald: I told you! All I ever wanted was to put on a good magic show for my family on Christmas Eve, but no matter how hard I've tried, I've never managed to make anything appear inside my hat. There's no way that baby Jesus was going to appear inside it now.

Kelly: We love your magic show!

Sarah: Well, some of us, anyway.

Kelly: We look forward to it every Christmas Eve, even if it doesn't turn out the way you want it to. Don't be so hard on yourself, Donald.

Donald: Thanks, Kelly. *(Thinking)* You know what, the real magic of Christmas isn't during my show anyway. *(Looks at nativity set)* Maybe it has something to do with what happened in those stables so long ago.

Kelly: Maybe you're right.

Annie: Well if it wasn't Donald, then who took the figurine?

Smart: We haven't proved it wasn't Donald. But I think there's another obvious suspect among us.

Jeff: Who is that?

Smart: When detectives look for suspects, one of the most important factors we have to consider is motive. *(Crosses to Glenda)* And who has a better motive than your good friend Glenda? *(Takes Glenda's arm and drags her to coffee table)*

Glenda: Hey! What's the meaning of this?

Smart and Glenda are now blocking the view of the "television" from Brad and Derek, who try and see around them. Smart takes Glenda's bag without looking away from the game and brushing the contents of the table onto the floor.

Kelly: *(annoyed)* Really?

Brad: Hey, man, get out the way!

Derek: Can't you see there's a game on?

Smart: And there's a mystery I'm trying to solve!

Brad: Ugh. Fine.

Brad and Derek each lean comically to opposite sides of the sofa in order to see the game. In between them, Smart takes Glenda's bag.

Smart: Glenda, you more than anyone here seem to have a fascination with nativity figurines, which makes you a suspect.

Glenda: I do love them. They are so pretty and fun to collect, but I would never take one that doesn't belong to me.

Smart: That remains to be seen, doesn't it? *(Turns bag over and carefully dumps the figurines onto the table)* I believe you said you had one hundred and thirty-five figurines in this bag?

Glenda: I have one hundred and thirty-six figures in my collection, but only ninety-two here in this bag.

Smart: Very well. *(Points down to the pile)* Count them.

Glenda: Count all of them? Right here? Right now?

Smart: Yes.

Glenda: But that will take forever!

Kelly crosses to Glenda and puts her arm around her.

Kelly: Glenda's right. Is this really necessary?

Smart: We will never know for sure unless we get an accurate count.

Annie: *(rushing over to the table)* You should line them up by type of figurine. *(Picks up a figure)* Shepherds over here. *(Places figurine as Lydia crosses over)*

Lydia: *(picks up another figurine and places it)* Josephs could go over here.

Annie: *(picks up figurine and places it)* And Marys over here.

Glenda: *(chuckling)* I feel like a census taker. *(Starts arranging figures)*

Lydia: What do you mean? *(Organizes figurines with Annie and Glenda)*

Annie: *(picks up figurines of Mary and Joseph and looks at them)* When Mary was pregnant with Jesus, Caesar Augustus decreed that everyone must

travel to their hometown to be registered for the census. That meant that Mary and Joseph had to make the long trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be counted.

Glenda: Oh! So that's why Jesus was born in Bethlehem? *(Looking at figure)* Who knew there was such a wonderful story behind all of these figures I've been collecting?

Kelly: That's right.

Glenda: That must've been a big job for the census takers to count all those weary travelers. I guess I can count these figures to clear my name. *(Starts to count)* One...two...three....

Lydia counts too.

Brad: Are you guys almost done here?

Derek: Yeah, it's hard to watch the game like this. All the plays are sideways.

Brad: Even the sidelines are sideways!

Derek: *(confused, scratches his head)* That makes my brain hurt.

Brad: *(rubbing his neck)* Sitting like this makes my neck hurt!

Glenda: *(finishes counting)* Eight-nine...ninety...ninety-one...ninety-two! *(Looks up, triumphantly)* There are ninety-two figures in my bag. I told you I didn't take it.

Lydia: She's right. I double checked her count.

Kelly crosses and looks at the figures.

Kelly: And my baby Jesus is not here.

Smart: That still doesn't prove Glenda didn't take it. But I'll move on for now. There are plenty more suspects to investigate right here in this room. Watch and learn.

During the next few lines, Smart starts walking around the room, looking at various people suspiciously, then walking to the next one. As he moves around the room, the following characters begin to follow him, one at a time, and subtly mimic his movements: Rocky, Carter, Jeff, Annie, and Lydia on the end.

As he does, Kelly cleans up any of the items Smart brushed off the coffee table and puts them back on the coffee table. Smart approaches Donald.

Smart: The baby Jesus may not have magically disappeared... *(Pauses to get close to Donald's face, giving him a suspicious look, which causes Donald to jump back. Smart then moves on to Glenda and does the same after he says the next line)*...or have become number one hundred and thirty-seven in a collection... *(Glenda shrinks away from his gaze. Smart starts walking in a wide circle while others follow him)* ...but one of you took that figurine and I'm going to find out who it was! *(Stops abruptly. Because they had been moving in a circle, Smart is now face to face with Lydia. She jumps, startled)* Let's start with you. Lydia, was it?

Lydia: Yes, but I didn't take the baby Jesus.

Others step back from Smart while Kelly crosses to Lydia.

Kelly: Lydia only found out about the tradition this year. *(Smirks at Lydia)* She usually finds a way to sneak out before we start passing around the box.

Smart: *(rubbing his chin, thoughtfully)* So what I'm hearing is...you are sneaky.

Lydia: *(nervously)* No I'm not...well, maybe... I don't know...I guess a little.

Annie: All she does is hang out by the door, lurking until it's time to leave.

Lydia: That's not true!

Jeff: Well, it's kind of true. I myself had to stop you from leaving a couple of times tonight.

Smart: I need to see this in action. *(Takes Lydia's arm and drags her to the door)* So she was standing at the door like so?

Jeff: *(getting caught up in the moment)* That's right. Although she would've had on her hat and scarf too.

Smart: Like this? *(Takes hat and scarf from coatrack and puts them on Lydia comically, covering her face)*

Lydia: Um. I can't breathe.

Smart: *(making a small opening)* Better?

Lydia: *(sarcastically)* Oh yes. Much better.

Smart: Then what happened?

Jeff: *(with increased excitement)* When I saw she was trying to make a break for it, I ran over and slammed the door shut.

Smart: *(building the excitement)* So she had the door open and everything?

Jeff: *(with increased excitement)* Oh yes! She had one foot out the door and everything!

Smart: *(practically shouting)* Like this?!

Smart flings the door open. Standing there is Mrs. Winters, document under her arm, and a cup up to her ear, clearly trying to listen at the door. Maybe she even falls into the room as the door opens, because she has been leaning at the door.

Jeff: Mrs. Winters?

M. Winters: *(sharply)* Hello again, neighbors.

Jeff: Were you using that cup to listen at the door, Mrs. Winters?

M. Winters: *(quickly hides cup behind her back)* Not at all. Besides, I wouldn't need a cup to listen—not with all the noise emanating from your party.

Jeff: Noise? We're not making any noise.

M. Winters: I beg to differ. *(Opens document and starts leafing through it)* As president of the Homeowner's Association I feel that it's my duty to inform you that you are several decibels over the allotted noise level allowed under Article H of section 196 of the Homeowner's Association Agreement. *(Holds out document, showing them a page)* See?

Jeff: Yes, I do see that, and I apologize. But let me ask...how exactly are you measuring the decibel level of my party? *(Tries to look around her)* With that cup?

M. Winters: My cup? *(Scoffing)* Well, that's just silly!

Jeff: *(smirking)* Yes, it is. *(Starts to close the door)* We'll do our best to keep down the noise, Mrs. Winters.

M. Winters: You'd better. *(Stops the door from closing)* And don't let it happen again!

Jeff shuts the door in Mrs. Winters' face, who pops back up in the window as Jeff turns back to Smart.

Jeff: Now, where were we?

Smart: Lydia was trying to escape.

Lydia: No I wasn't!

Smart: Then why were you standing by the door? *(Looking at her thoughtfully)*

Lydia: *(struggling to find an answer)* I was just...making sure everyone stayed inside.

Smart: So you were *keeping* everyone in?

Rocky: *(laughing)* That means Lydia's the innkeeper! *(Laughs hysterically)*

Annie: What's so funny?

Rocky: You know? Like the innkeeper in Bethlehem? The one who didn't have any room for Mary and Joseph?

Annie: Oh yeah! Once they arrived in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph looked for an inn to stay in, but all the rooms were full. They finally found an innkeeper who let them sleep in the stables out back.

Steven: Sleeping out in a barn with the horses and sheep. Can you even imagine?

Sarah: I won't even stay in a hotel that doesn't have at least one thousand thread count sheets.

Rocky: I'd love to sleep in a barn!

Annie: I'm sure you'd feel right at home, Rocky.

Rocky: Hey!

Annie: I believe the word you are looking for is, *neigh*.

Lydia: Okay fine, you got me. I *was* trying to leave. But I just wanted to hang out with my friends at a really cool party. Is that a crime?

Smart: No, but stealing is.

Lydia: So am I a suspect or not, seeing as I didn't even know about the figurine until tonight?

Jeff: *(proudly)* And I did thwart her many attempts to escape after all.

Smart: Your motive is unclear. I will admit that. *(Unwrapping Lydia from the scarf)* You are free to go—for now.

Lydia: Great! *(Wraps herself up and starts to open the door)* See everyone later.

Jeff: *(closes the door and stands in front of it with his arms crossed)* I don't think so.

Lydia: *(somewhat dramatically, as in earlier tone by Jeff and Smart)* Foiled again!

Smart: So if the figurine didn't simply "walk out the door" then it must be somewhere in this room. *(Starts to look around the room. As he does so, he moves people out of the way, throws pillows, lifts things up and hands them to others, etc., all in a very comical way. He does this as he says the next few lines)* Maybe it's over here?

Brad: *(standing up, mad)* Is he blind?

Smart: Or here?

Derek: That ref needs glasses.

Smart: *(looking behind Uncle Albert)* Maybe you're hiding it?

Brad: Look at all the defenders flock to the ball like a bunch of sheep!

Derek: *(standing)* Looks like we need some shepherds up in here! *(They give each other a high five without looking at one another)*

Smart: *(looking at Brad and Derek and approaching them)* Or maybe it's right in plain sight?

Brad: And the Bears have possession of the ball.

Brad and Derek: *(cheering loudly and pumping their fists in the air)* Hallelujah! *(They sit)*

Smart: Maybe just maybe this figurine has been right our noses...or your cousin, this entire time!

Grabs a sofa cushion and dumps Brad off the couch. In doing this, he also brushes everything off the coffee table again.

Kelly: *(more annoyed)* Really?

Brad: *(looks away from the game for the first time)* Hey! What are you trying to do?

Smart: Perhaps it's under this cousin.

Picks up sofa cushion and dumps Derek off the couch.

Derek: Not cool, dude.

Smart: *(looking in sofa)* I guess I was wrong. *(Puts cushions back on sofa)* Sorry, fellas. I guess I just heard all that talk about shepherds and sheep and

thought maybe you had more interest in this missing baby Jesus than you were letting on.

Brad: The baby Jesus is missing?

Derek: Shepherds and sheep?

Albert: You know, the shepherds who were out watching their flocks when the angels appeared to tell them of the birth of the Messiah.

Jean: *(with a disgusted look on her face)* Why anyone would choose to look after those filthy beasts all day, I'll never know.

Albert: The shepherds were out in the fields, tending to their sheep and minding their own business when suddenly a chorus of angels appeared and proclaimed the good news, singing, Hallelujah.

Polly: Squawk! Hallelujah!

Jean: *(jumping)* Ah! *(Upset)* I'll be singing Hallelujah when someone gets this bird away from me!

Brad: But what's all this about the baby Jesus being missing?

Kelly: We're missing the baby Jesus from our nativity set.

Derek: You have a nativity set?

Kelly: Yes of course. And every year, as part of our family tradition we pass around a box to see who gets to put the baby Jesus in the manger?

Brad: We have a family tradition?

Kelly: Haven't you guys been listening to anything I've been trying to say. Christmas is a lot more than a football game.

Derek: I thought football *was* our family tradition.

Brad: Heck yeah it is!

They high five and then sit and resume watching the game. Kelly crosses and puts items back on coffee table.

Annie: Annnnnndddd...we've lost them again.

Smart: That's alright. They weren't strong suspects anyway.

Carter: Then who is?

Smart: *(turns to Kelly, then paces with his arms behind his back)* Tell me this, Kelly, is there anyone here who you think would deliberately steal the baby Jesus?

Kelly: No, of course not! Who would do such a thing?

Smart: Perhaps someone who has long admired the nativity set? Someone who feels the same attachment to it as you do?

Kelly: The nativity set has been in my family for generations. The only people who could possibly feel the same attachment to it are— *(pauses for a moment, then looks at Steven and Sarah in shock)*—my brother and sister!

Steven: *(shocked)* Us?

Sarah: *(annoyed)* You have *got* to be kidding me.

Steven: Why would we steal that old nativity set? We're both famous authors. We could buy brand new nativity sets if we wanted to.

Smart crosses to Sarah and Steven and takes Sarah's arm.

Smart: But isn't it true that you have been heard saying that the family nativity set should've been yours?

Sarah: How would you even know that? You only arrived here like twenty minutes ago.

Smart: *(tipping his hat)* I have my ways. *(Continues holding Sarah's arm but takes Steven's arm on the other side)* And isn't it true that you both consider yourselves the real *stars* of the family?

Steven: Well it's true, isn't it? I can't help it if Kelly stayed home while Sarah and I followed our dreams. My book alone went on to sell millions of copies.

Sarah: *(tugging Smart's arm, in order to pull Steven closer to her)* My book sold millions of copies too, you know.

Steven: *(tugging Smart's arm, in order to pull Sarah closer to him)* Yes, but did yours get optioned for movie rights?

Sarah: *(tugging back towards her)* No, but it will.

Steven: *(tugging back towards him)* Doubt it. Even if it does it's not as if you-know-who-will be starring in it!

Steven and Sarah continue tugging over the next few lines.

Granny: *(to Donald)* Starring in what?

Donald: Steven's movie.

Granny: Little Stevie's going to be in a movie?

Donald: No. His book is going to be made into a movie. Someone famous is going to star in it.

Granny: Who? Clark Gable?

Donald: No, Granny.

Granny: *(turning away from Donald and smiling smugly)* I bet it's Clark Gable.

Sarah: *(tugging back towards her)* So what you're saying is, you think you're a bigger star than me?

Steven: *(tugging back towards him)* I can't help it if the light's shining on me and not you!

Sarah: *(tugging back towards her)* Why you—

Kelly crosses to Sarah and Steven and removing their arms from Smart, who is now exhausted from being pulled back and forth and crumbles to the ground.

Kelly: Would you two cut it out? It doesn't matter who the biggest star in the family is.

Jean: *(crossing to nativity set on the mantle and touching the creche)* Kelly's right. It shouldn't matter who has the most money or fame. On Christmas, the most important star is the one that shone over the place where Jesus was born—the star that guided weary travelers to pay their respects to the newborn king.

Sarah: Yeah. I guess you're right. Sometimes it's hard being a twin—everyone always sees you as part of a pair and forgets that you have your own identity.

Steven: Maybe that's why we've both been so consumed with being the star in the family.

Sarah: *(to Steven)* We've been so busy trying to steal the spotlight that we've both completely forgotten how much we used to love this tradition on Christmas Eve.

Steven: That's right! We used to fight over who got to put baby Jesus in the manger.

Smart: *(standing up)* And if memory serves, I somehow always ended up in the middle of those fights. *(Now standing in between them again, looking back and forth from Sarah to Steven)* Kind of like now.

Sarah: So, are we still suspects?

Smart: I'm not ruling the two of you out yet, although I doubt either of you could tear yourselves away from your own books long enough to steal the baby Jesus.

Steven: That's right! *(After a moment, indignantly)* Hey, wait a minute!

Carter: *(chuckling, indicating Steven)* He might be the biggest star in the family, but he's not the brightest bulb.

Steven: You're a real wise guy, aren't you Carter?

Smart: Yes, he is. And he's also my next suspect.

Smart crosses to the coffee table where he knocks everything over and picks up the math book. Kelly scowls and cleans it up.

Kelly: *(upset)* Really?

Smart: When I arrived, I first surveyed the room to see what clues I could gather. And one of the best ways to find a clue to is find something that is "out of place" in a room. *(Opens up math book)* And a math book in the middle of a Christmas party is definitely out of place.

Jeff: It wouldn't be out if Carter would just do his homework.

Smart: That is an explanation for the presence of this math book—and it's also a motive.

Carter: A motive?

Smart: You clearly didn't want to do your math homework, but your dad wasn't letting you off the hook. What better way to distract your family than to steal the baby Jesus?

Carter: Ha! That's pretty smart. I'll have to remember that.

Smart: *(crossing to the nativity set and picking up a Wise Man figure)* Yes. It's a very wise plan indeed.

Jeff: *(pulling the video game out of his pocket)* Oh really? Well I guess you won't be playing this video game anytime soon.

Carter: *(whining)* But Dad!

Jeff: Looks like you've cracked the case of Carter's failing math grade, Detective Smart.

Smart: *(tipping his hat)* You're welcome. *(To Carter)* Now tell us, Carter, where is the baby Jesus?

Carter: I don't know! That math book is mine, but trust me, dude, I didn't steal the baby Jesus.

Annie: *(crossing to the nativity and picking up a Wise Man figurine)* Carter is hardly wise. The Wise Men were scholars of science and mathematics. They studied the stars and used a bright star in the night sky to guide them so that they could bring gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the newborn Messiah. *(Putting the Wise Man figurine down)* Carter can't even tell you what five times five is.

Carter: That's where you're wrong, sis. Five times five is ten. *(Throws his hands up)* Boom!

Annie: I rest my case.

Smart: *(righting his hat again and crossing to Annie)* Well there were three Wise Men, and you seem like a little know it all.

Annie: Sorry, Detective Smart, but I live here and can see the nativity set anytime I want, so I don't have a motive for stealing it. Besides, I couldn't care less about the nativity set. *(Looks over at presents)* Not when there's all those presents under the tree, just waiting for me!

Brad: That's a fumble.

Smart: Very well. *(Crosses to Rocky)* What about you, smart guy?

Annie: *(laughing)* Smart guy? Rocky? I don't think so. Just before you arrived, I had to stop Rocky from trying to burn toys in the fireplace. *(Stops laughing and thinks)* Come to think of it, Rocky might be a great suspect. Maybe Rocky was messing around with the nativity set and broke the baby Jesus!

Smart: *(puts his detective hat on Annie)* Looks like we have a future detective here! *(Turns to Rocky as Annie smiles)* So, Rocky, what do you have to say for yourself?

Rocky: I was playing with the nativity set earlier—

Smart: *(interrupting)* So you *do* admit it!

Rocky: But I didn't break it, I swear! I was too busy eating Christmas cookies.

- Smart:** *(getting in Rocky's face)* Or is that just what you *want* us to think?
- Sarah:** Aren't you being a little hard on the kids, Walter? It's Christmas, after all.
- Smart:** Yes, it is. And all these kids seem to care about are video games, *(crosses to Carter and touches his shoulder)* presents, *(crosses to Annie and puts a hand on her shoulder)* and cookies. *(Crosses to Rocky and touches his shoulder)*
- Rocky:** Cookies are awesome!
- Smart:** They seem to have no care at all for our family tradition and what it all means, which makes them prime suspects in my opinion.
- Kelly:** I saw Rocky playing with the nativity figures and took them away from him myself. He's telling the truth.
- Polly:** Squawk! The truth! The truth!
- Jean:** *(jumping)* Ah! I will never understand why people choose to keep animals as pets.
- Smart:** Then maybe it was you who took the baby Jesus. *(To assembled guests, as he runs over to Jean)* Check the parrot's cage!
- Carter, Annie, Lydia, Sarah and Steven cross to the cage and look through it.*
- Jean:** What do you mean? I didn't take the figurine. And why are you having them check the parrot's cage?
- Smart:** You've been going on all night about how much you hate animals. Perhaps you stole the baby Jesus and put it in Polly's cage to frame the parrot!
- Polly:** Squawk! Frame the parrot! Frame the parrot!
- Jean:** *(jumping)* Ah! I don't hate all animals—just obnoxious noisy ones that make me jump out of my skin.
- Albert:** She's telling the truth. Jean doesn't hate all animals. In fact, she has a real affection for animals.
- Jean:** Except sheep. I don't like how they let their wool get all dirty. Yuck.
- Albert:** But horses, donkeys, and cows—she loves them.
- Jean:** *(swooning)* I just love it when cows moo! It's so sweet...like a lullaby.
- Carter:** Wow. I did not see that coming.

Jean: I've always thought that's why God chose to have Mary give birth to Jesus in the stable instead of in an inn. The warmth of the animals, nestled in the hay, and the sound of the cows mooing must've been a peaceful place for Jesus to come into the world.

Jeff: *(picking up Bible from bookshelf, opening it and dramatically reciting)* And lo, the cows mooed the newborn king to sleep. *(Closes bible)* Yeah...I don't think that's in here.

Lydia: There's no baby Jesus in Polly's cage.

Jean: See! I told you I didn't frame that silly bird.

Smart: Perhaps you didn't frame the bird, but you seem to know a lot about the nativity story.

Jean: I do. I love it.

Smart: Then maybe *that's* why you stole the baby Jesus.

Jean: I didn't, I promise. *(Crosses to Jeff and takes his arm)* Albert and I live three hours away and rarely get back here to see the family. I would never do anything to ruin such a special day.

Jeff: You know you can come visit whenever you like, Aunt Jean.

Jean: I know. Family is important. When God sent his Son to earth, he gave him a wonderful family in Mary and Joseph, full of love from the day he was born. *(Squeezes Jeff's arm)* We have a lot of love in this family too.

Jeff: *(squeezing her arm back)* We sure do.

Kelly: Detective Smart, you've questioned nearly everyone here and we are no closer to finding the missing baby Jesus!

Smart: I still have one more suspect I want to question.

Kelly: Who is that?

Smart: There's one person here who has created a clever disguise in which to hide the figure.

Donald: I thought we already established that this isn't a costume!

Smart: Not you, Donald. The suspect I'm referring to has mostly sat there quietly, only exclaiming every so often about how cold it is in here, even though we can all agree that it is quite warm.

Albert: It *is* cold in here!

Smart: *(dramatically)* Or is that what you want us to think? Perhaps you are choosing to stay wrapped up in that blanket so you can hide the baby Jesus?

Jean: Albert, no!

Albert: I didn't steal the baby Jesus.

Smart: *(dramatically)* Then unwrap yourself from those swaddling clothes and prove your innocence!

Carter: *(aside to Annie)* Swaddling clothes? Is it just me, or are these nativity references going a little bit too far?

Albert stands and drops his blanket. Underneath he is wearing onesie pajamas or some other funny pajamas/outfit.

Albert: There! Happy now?

Jean: *(shaking her head, looking at pajamas)* Albert...no.

Derek: That's out of bounds!

Donald: *(laughing)* And you guys thought I looked silly.

Albert: Fine, you got me. I wasn't cold. I just didn't want you to see my silly pajamas. I was taking a nap before we came and didn't have time to change. Sorry.

Smart: Trust me, Albert, no one's sorrier than me. *(Picks up blanket and hands it to Albert)*

Kelly: You said Albert was your last suspect, and we still haven't found the baby Jesus. What do we do now?

Smart: Now we recap.

Jeff: Recap?

Smart: Every detective knows the best way to sort through the evidence is to recap what you already know.

Brad: It's a hail Mary!

Kelly: How do we do that?

Smart: Follow me.

All line up behind **Smart**, except **Brad** and **Derek**, who remain seated on the couch over the next few lines.

Lydia: *(holds out her arm)* Come on, Granny. Take my arm.

Granny: I don't want to go to the farm! I may be old, but you aren't putting me out to pasture just yet. *(Shoo's away Lydia's arm and slowly joins the group)*

Smart: Walk me through the events of the evening.

Kelly: Everyone came in and got settled. Glenda was showing off her bag of nativity figures.

Smart: Who was she showing the figures to?

Jeff: She was showing me, over there, near the door.

Smart: Right over here?

Smart crosses to the spot where **Jeff** and **Glenda** stood at the start of the play. All follow.

Jeff: Yes.

Glenda: I was showing him a few of my favorites from my collection. *(Opens bag and looks inside)*

Smart: *(pulling out two figures)* So Glenda was over here talking to Jeff. *(Showing figurines to Jeff, and imitating Glenda)* "This shepherd's the best. No, this one is!" Is that about right?

Glenda: *(nods, laughing)* Yep. That looks right to me.

Smart: And then what happened?

Kelly: Then I brought Granny a snack.

Smart: And where did she have this snack?

Kelly: *(points to the chair)* In her chair.

They all follow **Smart** over to the chair.

Smart: Great. And what was the snack?

Kelly: Just some crackers and cheese.

Granny: Why yes, I do feel a breeze! *(Takes blanket off of Albert's shoulders)*
Thank you, Albert. *(Looks at Albert's pajamas)* What in the world are you wearing?

Smart: What happened next?

Kelly: Then Donald started his annual magic show.

Smart: And where did that take place?

Kelly: Over by the fireplace.

Smart: Then let's go to the fireplace! *(Rushes over to the fireplace with everyone following)* So Donald did a magic show here?

Donald: Donald, the *Great!*

Smart: Right, Donald the Great. *(Takes Donald's hat and puts it on his head. He takes Donald's wand and imitates Donald doing a magic trick)* So Donald's over here, waving the magic wand around, saying, Abra-ca-dabba-dabba-dee! *(Flowers pop out of end of wand)* And out pops the flowers.

Carter: Not exactly.

Donald: *(shocked)* How did you do that? *(Takes wand from Smart and looks at it, mystified)*

Smart: Then what happened?

Jeff: Then I noticed Lydia trying to leave, so I stopped her.

Smart: I'm assuming you ran over to the door?

Jeff: I guess so.

Smart: Then let's go! *(Runs over to the door with all following)* And then what?

Jeff: I think Lydia had the door open.

Lydia: I did not.

Jeff: You did! It was just like this.

Jeff opens the door. Mrs. Winters is standing there, holding document.

M. Winters: *(sharply)* Hello again, neighbors. *(Opens up document)* When I was here earlier, I noticed your Christmas decorations are out of compliance in

regard to Article J of section 247 of the Homeowner's Association Agreement. *(Holds out document, showing them a page)* See?

Jeff: Yes, I do and we'll take care of it right away, Mrs. Winters. *(Starts to shut the door, pushing her out as he does)*

M. Winters: *(as the door closes)* Don't let it happen again!

Door shuts on Mrs. Winters.

Kelly: That wasn't very neighborly, Jeff. It is Christmas Eve after all.

Jeff: I'm sorry, Kelly, but she's the worst! *(Doorbell rings. Jeff is exasperated)*
You have got to be kidding me!

Jeff opens door. Carolers are standing at the door.

Caroler1: *(with a huge smile, enthusiastically)* You guys ready for that Christmas carol yet?

Jeff: *(yelling)* No!

Jeff slams the door in Carolers surprised face.

Smart: *(unphased)* So what happened next?

Kelly: Then we played the game to figure out who would place the baby Jesus in the manger.

Annie: *(looking at the clock)* Mom, we have to hurry! If we don't find the baby Jesus soon, it will be the first time in years we haven't put him in the manger on Christmas Eve!

Derek: Looks like he's running out the clock!

Smart: Then show me how you play the game.

Kelly crosses to the tree and picks up the wrapped box, as before. Unseen by audience, she places the baby Jesus in the box. All line up, as before. Kelly joins them, with box.

Kelly: You want us to pass the box?

Smart: Yes, please.

They all pass the box as before, while Smart looks on, commentating the following lines at intervals as they do.

Smart: I see. And then he takes the box. Oh, she passes it very quickly. And then who had it last?

Annie: I did! *(She now has the box)*

Smart: And is it safe to assume you were the one who opened the box?

Annie: Yes, I was.

Smart: And what did you see when you opened the box?

Annie: It was empty.

Smart: Very well. Then open the box.

Annie: *(opens the box and looks inside. She is shocked)* But...how can this be?

Sarah: What is it?

Rocky: What's in the box?

Polly: Squawk! What's in the box? What's in the box?

Annie: *(pulls out the baby Jesus figurine)* It's the baby Jesus. *(Looks at the figurine, then looks around at the others, then back at Smart)* It wasn't here before, Detective Smart. I swear.

Smart: I know.

Annie: *(puts the figurine back in the box)* Then how did it get here now?

Smart: *(crosses to Annie and takes the box from her)* If I'm not mistaken, our thief put it back in the box himself. *(Crosses to the Kelly)* Or should I say, herself. *(Hands Kelly the box)* Well done, Kelly.

Kelly: *(smiles)* Thank you, Detective Smart.

Jeff: *(shocked)* Wait. What?

Carter: Mom, did you steal the baby Jesus?

Kelly: *(smiling)* I did.

Annie: But why?

Kelly: *(steps forward)* We've had this tradition in our family for many years. We gather in this house. We eat cookies and drink punch. We look at Glenda's figurines and watch Donald's attempt at a magic show. We bicker over who is the star in the family, Brad and Derek watch a football game while we wait to open presents.

Rocky: And we eat cookies! *(Takes a big bite out of a cookie)*

Kelly: We've just been going through the motions of Christmas Eve, doing the same thing year after year, growing bored with our traditions and forgetting why we do them in the first place. *(Crosses and puts her hands on Granny's shoulders)* Granny's lucky she's nearly deaf. At least she doesn't have to listen to all the bickering and complaining.

Granny: Oh, I've heard it alright.

All: *(shocked)* You have?

Granny: I sure have! And Kelly's right, we've forgotten the meaning of Christmas and what it means to be a family gathering together on this day. *(Takes the box from Kelly and takes out the baby Jesus figurine and puts the box on the table)* When I was a little girl, my grandmother, *(turns to Kelly)* your great-great grandmother, saw this nativity set in a shop window. She saved every nickel and dime she could until she had enough to purchase this set. You see, even in those days, as we all got busier and busier, my grandmother could see that we needed something to help us all remember why we gather together on Christmas.

Lydia: And why is that?

Granny: To celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, of course.

Lydia: *(crossing to Granny)* We all know Christmas is about Jesus's birth, Granny. I still don't see why his birth means I have to miss going to the biggest party of the year with my friends.

Granny: *(taking Lydia's hand)* When we come together as a family to honor the gift that God gave this world—his one and only Son—it helps to remind us of the love God has for each and every one of us—and the love we have for one another.

Lydia: Yeah, I guess you're right. *(Looking around at everyone and smiling)* I guess I have forgotten how special this family can be.

Steven: We've been so wrapped up in ourselves.

Sarah: We forgot the message of peace and love that remembering Jesus's birth brings.

Jeff: *(putting his arm around Kelly)* And how coming together to honor Jesus on Christmas helps spread that peace and love throughout the world.

Kelly: There are so many special events of Jesus's birth to remember.

Donald: *(crosses to the nativity and picks up angel)* Like the angel Gabriel surprising Mary and Joseph with the news that Mary was expecting the Son of God.

Glenda: *(crosses to the nativity and picks up Joseph)* And how Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be counted for the census.

Lydia: *(crosses to the nativity and picks up Mary)* They looked for a room at the inn, but there were none to be had.

Jean: *(crosses to the nativity and picks up cow)* So they went to the stables out back where Mary gave birth to Jesus amongst the animals.

Albert: *(crosses to the nativity and picks up the manger)* Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and placed him in the manger.

Granny and Jeff cross to the nativity and each take a shepherd and sheep.

Jeff: Meanwhile in the fields, the shepherds were tending to their sheep.

Granny: Until a chorus of angels appeared, proclaiming the good news of Jesus's birth.

Steven and Sarah: *(crosses to the nativity and picks up the creche)* A star shone in the sky over where the baby Jesus lay.

Annie, Carter and Rocky cross to the nativity and each pick up a Wise Man.

Carter: The three Wise Men saw the star and traveled across the land, bearing gifts for the newborn king.

Annie: Is that right, Mom? Is that what you wanted us to remember?

Kelly: *(smiling)* Yes, it is.

Granny: *(taking Kelly's hand)* I think your great-great grandmother would be very proud of how you've honored the tradition she started so long ago, Kelly.

Kelly: Thanks, Granny. *(They embrace. Kelly turns to Smart)* Thank you, Detective Smart, for helping solve the case...and helping us all remember the true meaning of Christmas.

Smart: *(smiling)* Thanks for letting me play detective, and for helping me remember too.

Annie: It's still Christmas Eve. Let's put baby Jesus in the manger!

Kelly: Let's get this nativity scene put back together.

All rush over to the coffee table. Any other items from the nativity set can be picked up by any character. Kelly brushes items off the coffee table onto the floor.

Jeff: *(looking at Kelly)* Really?

Kelly: *(smiling)* Really.

All work together to reassemble the nativity scene. After a few moments, it is put back together, except for the baby Jesus. Smart is walking towards the door, his job finished.

Annie: So, who has the honor of putting the baby Jesus in the manger this year?

Kelly: I have an idea. *(Crosses to the door, which Smart is just about to open)*
Not so fast.

Smart: This case is closed, Kelly. Is there something else you need from me?

Kelly: Just one thing. *(Holds out the baby Jesus)* You might only be an amateur detective, Walter, but you're still a part of this family. And you're the one that found Jesus today. You should be the one to put him safely in the manger.

Smart: It's been so long since I've done this—since I was a child. *(Smiles, looking down at the baby Jesus)* I'd be honored. *(Puts the baby Jesus figurine in)*

Derek: And it's the Bears for the win!

Derek high fives Brad. Brad picks up the remote and "turns off" the television.

Brad: So, did we find the missing baby Jesus or what?

Kelly: *(smiling)* Yes, we did.

Annie: How is it you two are watching football this late on Christmas Eve? There are no games on right now.

Derek: It's a recording of the state football championships from our senior year in high school.

Brad: We watch it every year.

Annie: So you knew what was going to happen in the game all along?

Derek: Yep. We're smart like that.

Brad: Chest bump! *(They bump chests and high five as the doorbell rings)*

Jeff: Not again!
Lydia: I'll get it.

Jeff: *(rushing to the door)* No way! You're just using it as an excuse to leave.

Lydia: Not anymore. I realized that if I left early, I'd be missing out on some pretty special traditions, *(embraces Granny)* and a very special family.

Kelly: That's right. And I think we have enough room to open our door, and our home to others who might want to share in the tradition too.

Jeff: Even Mrs. Winters?

Kelly: Even Mrs. Winters.

Jeff: Alright. *(Opens door to find Mrs. Winters standing at the door)* What is it this time, Mrs. Winters?

M. Winters: *(faltering, flipping through her document)* Well, actually it says in article T of section 432 that—

Jeff: *(interrupts)* Do you have any plans tonight for Christmas Eve, Mrs. Winters?

M. Winters: *(stops looking through document)* No, I don't. Why do you ask?

Jeff: *(opens the door wide)* Because we'd love to have you join our family Christmas Eve party.

M. Winters: *(surprised)* But...I'm not family. I'm just your neighbor.

Kelly: *(crossing to Mrs. Winters and putting her arm around her)* The great thing about neighbors is that sometimes they become just like family.

Guides her into the room. As she does, Jeff picks the Homeowner's Association document out of her hand and tosses it into the fire, unnoticed by Mrs. Winters.

Kelly: Now let's find you a seat by the fire.

Granny: I love the church choir! I always say, the best way to end a Christmas Eve celebration is with some good old-fashioned Christmas music sung by a church choir.

Doorbell rings.

Jeff: What now?

Jeff opens the door to find the Carolers.

Caroler2: Are you ready for that Christmas carol now?

Granny: *(excitedly)* And here they are! Right on time!

Jeff: *(turning to everyone)* What do we think, guys?

Kelly: The more the merrier. Let's hear it!

Carolers stand in door or enter. They sing a Christmas carol. Perhaps all the others join in as lights out on the scene. An optional spotlight can shine on nativity scene before lights fade to black.

The end.

TO

REMOVE

WATERMARK

AT

SKITGUYS.COM

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXX: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
PURCHASE

SCRIPT

TO

REMOVE

WATERMARK

AT

SKITGUYS.COM