

A script from



## "'Twas the Fight Before Christmas"

by  
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**What** Marvin, who simply wants to read the famous Christmas story about Santa, is assaulted by family members who have their own ideas of what the night before Christmas should be like.

**Themes:** Christmas, Family, Focus

<b>Who</b>	Marvin - Dad	Stephanie (16)
	Linda- Mom	Margaret - Grandmother
	Joey (7)	Earl- Grandpa

**When** Present; Christmas

**Wear  
(Props)** Eggnog cups  
Cookies  
Tray  
Book

**Why** Colossians 3:2

**How** This script requires some timing, so be sure to have a director that can watch the dialogue and make sure the queues are tight. There are definitely some family dynamics in this script, so don't be afraid to ad-lib and to give the feel of familiarity.

**Time** Approximately 10 minutes

**Marvin** walks on stage, holding a book. **Margaret** and **Earl**, his brother and sister-in-law, sit on a couch and look like they're dreading something. **Linda**, his wife, stands near him.

**Marvin:** Gather around, everyone! Hurry up! It's time for the reading of "The Night Before Christmas"! Come on!

**Stephanie** and **Joey** make their way in. **Joey** sits at his feet.

**Stephanie:** I can't believe we have to sit and listen to this *again*. I'm missing the best party of the year, Dad!

**Linda:** Honey, this is family time. It's special. It's very important to your father to have all of you around.

**Marvin:** This is so great! We've got the fire going. Packages under the tree. Wasn't the candlelight service great this evening? Why don't we all sing "Silent Night" again-

*Everyone mumbles in disgust.*

**Linda:** Look, I baked some cookies and made some eggnog.

**Margaret:** Are the cookies fat free? I'm on a diet, so I can't have anything with fat or gluten in it.

**Earl:** There better not be any funny stuff going on in that eggnog. I'm a religious man, and I'm not about to defile myself the night before Christmas by getting tipsy on eggnog.

**Linda:** The eggnog is fine. The cookies are gluten-free and *low fat*.

**Margaret:** Speaking of low, your fire is roaring about as loud as a baby mouse.

**Earl** and **Margaret** mumble. **Margaret** grabs a few cookies. **Linda** exits.

**Marvin:** Come on, everyone. Sit down! Snuggle up close!

*Everyone sits, but no one is snuggling. Margaret seems consumed with the fire. Earl is making faces as he sips the eggnog. Linda is over-offering cookies then exits.*

**Marvin:** This is great! All of us together in a warm house, reading traditional-

**Stephanie:** Dad, can we just get on with it? I want to get to the party.

**Marvin:** Of course, of course. *(Chuckles)* Okay, everyone listen up. The reading is about to begin. *(Clears his throat)* Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a-

**Linda:** *(Entering)* Pumpkin pie anyone? Or I've got fruit cake.

**Marvin:** Honey, we've started the story.

**Linda:** Oh, I'm so sorry. Go right ahead, dear.

**Marvin:** 'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The stockings were hung by the chimney-

**Margaret:** Marvin, your fire's dying about as fast as patriotism is in this country. I'm getting another piece of wood. *(Exits)*

**Marvin:** *(Pause, then continuing)* ...by the chimney with care, in hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there. The children were nestled all snug in their beds-

**Linda:** Oh no! I forgot to take the sheets out of the wash! *(Exits. Margaret enters again.)*

**Margaret:** *(Enters)* You've run out of firewood, Marvin. On Christmas. You want me to go chop down a tree or something?

**Marvin:** *(Trying to stay positive)* No, no. Just sit down here and enjoy the story, Margaret. Just relax. *(Looking down at his story)* Now, where was I? Oh, yes. While visions of sugarplums danced in their heads.

**Joey:** What's a sugarplum, Dad?

**Margaret:** It's something with a lot of calories in it, Joey. Stay away from it or you'll have the kind of bloating that they run commercials about.

**Marvin:** *(Trying to continue)* And Maw in her kerchief and I in my cap, had just settled down for a long winter's nap. When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter. *(Getting into it again)* Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters and threw up the sash--

**Earl:** When are you getting to Jesus, Marvin?

**Marvin:** What?

**Earl:** When does Jesus come into the story?

**Marvin:** He doesn't. This is about Santa.

**Earl:** *(Hateful)* It's the night before our dear Savior's birth, Marvin. Don't you think Jesus should be mentioned somewhere in there?

**Marvin:** *(Confused)* Well, uh, this is about Santa and the rein-

**Earl:** You've got your nativity set up, and we went to the candlelight service, and we sang all the hymns and everything. I was in a real good spiritual mood. But now...now...I've got to hear about SANTA! And another thing. I think this eggnog is spiked!

**Linda:** It's not spiked, Earl. That's cinnamon you're tasting.

**Marvin:** Well, Earl, we always end the evening by reading the story of Jesus' birth from Luke. But it's always been tradition to read "'Twas the Night Before-

**Margaret:** Earl, good grief. Just let him finish the stupid story so I can go warm myself by that scented candle over there, whose flame has somehow beat out the fireplace.

**Marvin:** When what to my wondering eyes should appear but a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.

**Earl:** *(Hateful)* You know, that's the problem with Christmas these days! Everything's about Santa. Santa this and Santa that. Hey, Christmas is about Jesus! JESUS!

**Marvin:** Earl, of course it's about Jesus. Jesus is the center of our lives. You know that. But I just like to read this story because our dad used to read it to us, if you'll remember, and I like reading it to my kids-

**Stephanie:** Dad, are you ever going to finish this story? I've got to go.

**Linda:** Stephanie, have a cookie first.

**Stephanie:** Don't tell me what to do!

**Margaret:** I'm going to go chop down a tree. *(Exits)*

**Earl:** Is there rum in this cookie?

**Marvin:** Stop it! Everyone! Look...*(trying to be light hearted)*...look, look, look...just a few more minutes, okay? We'll read this story, and then we'll read the Christmas story out of the Bible, and drink some hot chocolate, and maybe even watch "It's a Wonderful Life" afterward, okay? Now, where was I? *(Reading really fast)* With a little old driver, so

lively and quick, I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick! More rapid than eagles his courses they came, and he whistled and shouted and called them by name: Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer and Vixen. On Comet, on Cupid, on Donner-

**Margaret:** (*Returning*) It's Donner. And I need an axe.

**Linda:** No, it's not. It's Donner.

**Margaret:** Donner. It's Donner.

**Marvin:** It says here it's Donner.

**Margaret:** Well, that's a misprint. It's Donner.

**Stephanie:** I've always heard Donner. Can we get on with it?

**Margaret:** I'm quite certain it's Donner.

**Linda:** Donner. I should know. I made Donner cupcakes last year.

**Marvin:** It says Donner right here!

**Earl:** You wouldn't have this problem if you'd been naming off the wise men.

**Marvin:** The wise men don't have names in the Bible!

**Earl:** Exactly! Look, let's stop this nonsense and get on with the *Bible* story of Christmas.

**Linda:** Earl, your brother wants to read *this* story. It's his house! Let him do what he wants!

**Earl:** Fine! Be sacrilegious!

**Joey:** Dad? What's sacrilegious?

**Earl:** It's when you put Santa Clause in front of Jesus at Christmas time.

**Joey:** What does he mean, Dad?

**Marvin:** Nothing, son. Look, I'm almost finished here... (*Gritting his teeth*) So up to the house top the coursers they flew, with the sleigh full of toys and St. Nicholas, too.

**Earl:** At least Jesus is real. Santa Clause isn't even real!

Everyone gasps, even **Earl**, after he realizes what he's just said. Everyone stares at **Joey**, and then they turn uncomfortable.

**Linda:** (Anxious) I'm going to go make some hot tea. Anyone want hot tea?  
(Exits)

**Margaret:** Is it going to be hot? (Exits with her)

**Stephanie:** I'm going to go party. (Exits)

**Earl:** Uh...uh...I'm going to go, uh...pray. It's the night before Christmas. I should be doing something, uh, religious. (Exits)

**Marvin** looks down at **Joey**, who is simply staring at him.

**Marvin:** (Continuing, sadly) He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot, and his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot. A bundle of toys he had flung on his back, and he looked like a peddler just opening his pack...

**Joey:** Dad, is everything okay?

**Marvin:** (Shaking his head) This just isn't turning out like I had hoped it would, that's all. I just wanted a nice, traditional Christmas Eve with the family. Now everyone is upset. I'm sorry about what Earl said about Santa.

**Joey:** Well, Santa's a nice guy, Dad. I'm sure he'll forgive Earl for what he said. (Beat) And Jesus tells us that we should too. And Jesus has forgiven us of a lot, so...

**Marvin** sighs with a thankful smile and ruffles **Joey's** hair.

**Marvin:** That's what Christmas is about, buddy. What do you say we read about when Jesus was born?

Lights fade.