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# Wishin' and Hopin'

By John Doolan

Wishin' and hopin'  
and thinkin' and praying  
planning and dreaming  
each night of his charms  
that won't get you  
When you're young,  
Christmas is weld together  
into a blur of jingle bells  
And twinkling lights.  
But the one of 1964,  
The year I was  
a fifth grade student  
At st. Aloysius Gonzaga  
parochial school,  
Was when I learned  
what was actually important.  
I guess you could call it  
the Christmas of surprises,  
And I don't mean the kind  
That are gift wrapped  
under a tree.  
It all started when I,  
Felix Funicello,  
Accidentally triggered  
my teacher  
Sister Dymphna's  
meltdown.  
Spit out the gum.  
For this and all my past sins,  
I'm heartily sorry.

**"Mortal sinners:**

in hell or headed there"  
By Rosalie Twerski.  
Lee Harvey Oswald  
and jack ruby...  
Murder.  
Sister Dymphna,  
Who was named  
after the patron saint  
Of sleepwalking and insanity,  
Seated us by academic rank.  
My best friend Lonny  
was in the last row.

Having stayed back twice,  
He was the oldest kid  
in class  
As well as the dumbest.  
I was seated in front,  
Second in class  
to Rosalie Twerski.  
Marilyn Monroe...  
Suicide.  
We all know a Rosalie Twerski.  
Sister Dymphna,  
I think you forgot  
To assign homework  
for the night.  
Can we have more difficult  
math problems next time?  
These ones were too easy.  
Can we add illustrations  
for extra credit?  
My father, of Twerski's  
impressions printing,  
Would be happy  
to donate the materials.  
Rudi Gernreich invented  
the topless bathing suit.  
Pervert!  
Sister Dymphna,  
Felix Funicello  
just rolled his eyes at me.  
Sister Dymphna?  
Felix!  
Show Ms. Twerski some respect!  
Thanks a lot.  
You're welcome, Dondi.  
Ugh, Dondi...  
A nickname I'd be stuck  
with for years  
Because of my undeniable  
resemblance  
To that adorable Italian orphan  
from the comic strips.  
You're nothing but a dirty,  
rotten rat fink, Twerski.  
I know you are,

but what am I?  
She had to be taught a lesson.  
And during lunch,  
Lonny and I devised our plan.  
What name shall we give him,  
father?  
Perhaps it would be all right  
if we named him  
After today's saint.  
Very well.  
It's St. Marcelino.  
Psst, Felix.  
You look very hungry.  
I'll bring you something to eat.  
Brother cookie, help me quick.  
There's a scorpion out here.  
Ow!  
Who did that?  
Marcelino!  
I got some bread.  
I couldn't find anything else.  
I was in such a big hurry.  
It touched me!  
Satan, I rebuke thee!  
Leave, I pray!  
Save the children!  
Lucifer!  
Holy crap,  
she finally flipped her wig.  
My sister Simone had  
sworn on a stack of bibles  
That the sisters were  
as bald as Yul Brynner.  
I couldn't wait to tell her  
about this.  
Duck and cover, children!  
Is it gone?  
Yes.  
Yes, it's gone.  
- It was cross with me, sister.  
- Oh, no, no.  
- It was...  
- It was a test.  
Perhaps it was a test.

Are we okay?  
- The children!  
- Oh, very good.  
The children all right?  
You put the children first.  
Excellent.  
Thank you, gentlemen.  
You may take your seats.  
I don't like its mouth.  
Yes, I think we're fine  
to leave now.  
The Kubiak twins,  
Ronald and Roland,  
Were raised on a dairy farm  
And no strangers to taking care  
of rogue bats.  
We spent the rest of the day  
Under the rule of St. Aloysius'  
most nefarious penguin,  
The enforcer,  
Sister Agrippina.  
This was clearly my penance  
for that day's sins.  
That night, Simone  
and my other sister, Frances,  
Had nothing but encouraging  
words to calm my fears.  
I heard Agrippina  
once hurled a dictionary  
At some kid's head for speaking  
without raising his hand.  
That's nothing.  
I once saw her  
rip Wayne walker's glasses  
Off of his face  
and snap them in two  
Just because he had  
sloppy penmanship.  
Oh, yeah, and then there's  
that mole on her bottom lip  
That she tries to hide  
by barely moving her mouth  
When she talks.  
Felix, whatever you do,

Don't let her catch you  
looking at it.  
Yeah, don't.  
When you finish  
your vocabulary,  
I want you to take out  
your library books  
For silent reading.  
There it was  
staring right at me.  
Yes, Rosalie?  
Sister Agrippina,  
I was just wondering  
how sister Dymphna was doing.  
Will she be back soon?  
She's resting comfortably,  
And she will be back  
after the Christmas break.  
Now, get out that book.  
Yes, Rosalie.  
What are we gonna do  
about the Christmas pageant?  
Last year,  
the fifth graders performed  
The seven joys of Mary.  
And if we do it again this year,  
I would gladly  
represent the blessed virgin.  
We'll have to see what  
your permanent substitute  
Has planned.  
But who's gonna be our sub?  
You do have a lay teacher  
Who's coming next week  
to take over.  
Please, begin your reading,  
miss Twerski.  
Is something the matter,  
Mr. Funicello?  
It had grown to  
at least ten times its size  
In the past two minutes.  
No, sister.  
Silent reading, Rosalie!

My family  
had one claim to fame:  
We were cousins  
with Annette Funicello.  
Yes, the Annette Funicello.  
Technically, she was  
my father's cousin's kid,  
But who was keeping track?  
The picture was a Christmas  
present from pop's cousin  
A few years back.  
We took pride in being related  
to a famous movie star.  
But the only one more so  
than me...  
what do you think?  
Was Simone.  
Identical, right?  
I think you've inhaled  
way too much hair spray.  
But there was  
another family member  
On the brink of stardom.  
I, Felix Funicello,  
Would be making  
my television debut  
On the ranger Andy show  
later that month  
With my junior midshipmen group.  
Your old man had to have been  
in the navy  
To join the midshipmen,  
So I was the only one  
in my class going.  
Surely I'd be the envy  
of everyone,  
Especially Rosalie Twerski.  
Felix Funicello.  
Felix Anthony Funicello,  
the first.  
I was ready.  
Hey, ma.  
Hey, honey.  
Oh, hey, listen,

Tomorrow your father is headed  
into town to the wholesaler's,  
And I'm gonna take your sister  
shopping after school.

So Chino will be watching you.

Chino?

Yes, what's wrong  
with Chino?

He's a responsible adult figure.  
You might as well hire oddjob  
to babysit me.

Whatever was I thinking?

Dinner was always  
an important part of the day.

Pop owned a diner down  
by the bus station

And always filled us in  
on the day's dirt.

Christ, our lord,  
amen.

- Amen.

- Amen.

So the minister's wife  
comes in,

And she sees I'm trying  
to recruit another sailor  
For his missionary work,  
And she...

Felix, how was school today?

Next week, we're gonna have  
a new teacher.

That's great.

Yeah, we're really excited.

Yeah?

Why's that?

Did you hear  
what Agrippina said?

A lay teacher.

Yeah, I heard.

You know what that means, right?

'Cause all us guys  
are gonna get laid.

Sal, maybe you can  
take Felix outside



And finish the Christmas lights  
after dinner.  
Yeah, pop.  
I was thinking of waiting  
on that.  
Sounds good.  
So, uh...  
Felix, what you said  
about your teacher...  
What about it?  
Do you know what that word  
you used means?  
I clearly wouldn't  
have said it if I did.  
No.  
See,  
When you get to a certain age...  
oh, man.  
I had an uneasy  
feeling pop  
Was stirring the conversation  
toward the birds and the bees.  
And, hey, it's not that I didn't  
need information on the subject,  
But I never expected him to  
enlighten me by talking about...  
Toilet seats  
and drinking fountains.  
So...  
sometimes you have a lot of  
people taking a sip out of them.  
And you don't...  
want to touch  
your lips on the metal.  
You understand  
what I'm talking about?  
I think so.  
Good.  
Great talk, son.  
Are you getting a drink  
or what?  
No.  
The day our new  
substitute teacher arrived,

I smelled her before I saw her...  
Lily of the valley perfume,  
A scent that would open a flood  
of memories anytime  
I smelled it for years to come,  
A scent that...  
I was definitely allergic to.  
Bonjour.  
Je m'appelle Marguerite Irene  
Dubois Frechette.  
But you can call me  
Madame Frechette.  
Madame Frechette  
was unlike any teacher  
I'd ever seen.  
She was energetic, alive.  
You could tell she was excited  
By the way she would clasp  
her hands together,  
Causing all of her jewelry  
to ring in unison.  
Je viens Du Quebec, Canada.  
Who would like to go to the map  
To point out where Quebec  
is located?  
Oui, mademoiselle.  
I would love to, Madame.  
Tres, tres bien.  
Et...  
what might your name be?  
Je suis mademoiselle Rosalie.  
Ah, vous parlez Francais.  
Un petit peu.  
I believe  
that children work best  
When they are...  
confortable.  
Donc take this opportunity  
To find a seat  
wherever you would like.  
Whoo!  
- Yes!  
- All right!  
But, Madame,

What about the class ranking?  
All that matters is what is  
in my grade book, mademoiselle.  
Depeche-toi.  
Merci.  
God bless you.  
Comment vous appelez vous?  
Huh?  
I asked you what your name is.  
Oh, Felix Funicello.  
Ah.  
But you remind me of another  
little garcon Italien,  
Donc I shall call you  
monsieur Dondi.  
Oh, Christ.  
He likes bread  
and butter  
he likes toast and jam  
Monsieur Dondi.  
Cream it, Turdski.  
At pops' lunch counter,  
You could swivel your stool  
And follow the arc  
of our cousin's career.  
From mouseketeer  
to recent films  
Like beach blanket bingo,  
Her star ascended  
as her cup size worked its way  
Through the alphabet.  
Je suis...  
Getting very, very dizzy.  
What's that you're speaking  
there, Lix?  
Pig Latin?  
Um, it happens to be French.  
Our new teacher's making us  
learn it.  
Wow, ooh la la.  
Your old lady says  
I got to feed you.  
So what do you want?  
French toast?

I got a nice bottle  
of French dressing.  
That was so funny,  
I forgot to laugh.  
All right, Pepe Le pew,  
How about I find you a little  
chicky boom boom?  
She can teach you  
how to French kiss.  
French kiss?  
That's chino,  
High-School dropout and  
my adult figure for the night.  
It's when the boy and the girl  
put their tongues  
In each other's mouths.  
Yick.  
Don't knock it  
till you try it.  
All right, what will it be?  
A Sal's torpedo  
and a coke.  
No fries?  
They're French.  
I'll get them myself.  
Oh, okay, hotshot.  
Why don't you put some tunes on  
while you're at it.  
She's playing on the juke now?  
This place has Funicello fever.  
Um, she happens  
to be our cousin.  
Hey, pal, is this a kid,  
Or did a munchkin wander off  
the yellow brick road?  
Oh, let's just say  
he's still a little sore  
About that dead witch  
in his backyard.  
Oh, yeah, I got a good one  
for you guys.  
How is a woman like an oven?  
How?  
Well, you got

to heat them both up  
Before you stick  
in the meatloaf.  
So long, fellas.  
Come on.  
Don't let those squids  
bother you.  
They're just a couple  
of screwballs.  
It takes one to know one.  
Oh, that hurts,  
really.  
Hold the floor for me  
for a second, will you?  
I got to pee.  
Hi, honey.  
What's wrong?  
Do you know  
what time it is?  
We stopped to get  
mom's hair styled  
After we went shopping.  
Yeah, I mean,  
doesn't she look great?  
She practically looks  
ten years younger.  
I mean, check out her new skort.  
Her what?  
Her skort.  
It's real modern.  
The girls thought  
I needed a makeover  
To chaperone you on  
your ranger Andy trip.  
Why do your legs look  
like blue cheese?  
I told you it was too short.  
No, it isn't.  
Okay, Felix is just  
being a little jerk.  
Yeah, as usual.  
I'm the one who almost got  
killed today.  
What are you talking about,

Felix?  
Boiled in oil.  
Cool it, Dondi.  
It was a little accident.  
A little accident?  
Felix, what happened?  
I fried my tie.  
Stop.  
You're fine.  
The guilt of defiling  
my cousin's poster  
Had eaten away at me all week,  
So that by the time Friday  
confession came around,  
I was ready to crack.  
Fifth grade class may now pass  
for confession.  
Allez.  
Line up!  
Tuck in your shirt  
and zip up your fly.  
Detention after school.  
Rosalie.  
Geraldine, your sweater.  
You look like a basset hound.  
Ow.  
Hey, no cuts, no butts,  
no coconuts.  
Sorry, I just really have  
to get up there.  
Well, wait till NAACP hears  
about this.  
Marion was always  
making that joke.  
He's a boy,  
in case you couldn't tell,  
Even though Marion's  
a girl's name,  
Which is worse than having  
everyone call you Dondi,  
If you ask me.  
Felix Funicello,  
Left box.  
Confession was,

as my pop would always say,  
"A crapshoot."  
Get the lead out.  
You'd never knew which  
priest you'd end up getting,  
Which seemed like  
an accurate comparison  
Since my luck was always crappy.  
Monsignor Muldoon,  
He was roughly 500 years old  
And made up of equal parts  
Phineas T. Bluster,  
Crabby Appleton,  
and Mr. Magoo.  
He always smelled  
like butter rum candy,  
Which, if you listened  
to Simone,  
Was to cover up a few too many  
sips of the communion wine.  
Bless me, father,  
for I have sinned.  
It has been two weeks  
since my last confession.  
Speak up, boy,  
you're mumbling.  
Well, of course I was.  
I didn't want  
any of my classmates  
To hear what I had to say.  
It has been two weeks  
since my last confession.  
These are my sins:  
I copied a friend's homework  
on the bus,  
I called my sister a bad word  
two times,  
And I cursed  
on six separate occasions,  
But not the really bad ones,  
Just a couple "H"S, "D"S,  
and "S"S.  
And finally,  
I had impure thoughts.

About what?  
You know...  
no, I don't know  
unless you tell me.  
About my cousin Annette.  
She's famous.  
Did you act on these thoughts?  
I'm not sure.  
Well, you either did,  
or you didn't.  
I kissed her poster  
on the lips,  
The one of her on the beach in  
her bathing suit listening to...  
Incest is a mortal sin.  
You made Jesus  
very, very, very sad.  
Perhaps he even wept,  
As he did on the day  
of his crucifixion.  
I knew I was in for it now.  
To absolve yourself  
of these sins,  
You must say  
one complete rosary.  
The entire thing?  
The entire...  
thing.  
I have a very exciting  
announcement to make.  
Today we welcome  
a nouvel etudiant,  
A new student.  
She has come all the way  
from the soviet union...  
Evenija Vladimirovna Kabokova,  
Or as she prefers to be called  
for short,  
Zhenya.  
Come in, mademoiselle.  
Thank you, sister.  
Hello, classmates.  
I am very, very, very happy  
To meet your acquaintance.



Hello.

Things had most definitely

Gotten more interesting.

Come in.

Does anyone have a question  
for our new student?

Yes, Rosalie?

Are you a communist?

To the girl

with a bow in her hair

ooh

Zhenya Kabokova

Had the kind of frenzied smile  
usually reserved

For game show hosts

And was the strangest girl  
we'd ever met.

Each day before school,

Her father would walk her to the  
entrance singing the same song.

And before he'd leave,

He'd finish the ritual by giving  
her a kick to the rear end,

Which she'd pretend to be  
surprised by

Every single time.

She also had this bizarre,  
tangy odor to her,

Which we later found out

Was because she would condition  
her hair with mayonnaise,

As apparently did...

Many, many girls  
in soviet union.

Then there was the fish.

Day after day,

She'd eat the exact same thing  
for lunch.

And I wished in my heart  
she could care

Along with

the mayonnaise hair,

She returned to class smelling  
like a tuna sandwich.

Given my ring  
to the girl with a bow  
in her hair  
Hey, guys.  
Too easy.  
Drop it.  
Detention, Mr. Flood.  
Yes, sister.  
Felix Funicello.  
Yes, sister?  
Mother Filomena wants  
to see you in her office.  
Come along.  
Sit there.  
Felix?  
Felix.  
You may have a seat.  
Monsignor Muldoon  
has brought you a gift.  
Wasn't that nice of him?  
How much do you know about the  
life of this school's namesake?  
Not a lot, monsignor.  
Well...  
I want you to have this.  
And you might find it  
very inspirational...  
After what  
we talked about earlier.  
And you might find  
that this boy...  
could be the perfect...  
example...  
for you  
To emulate.  
Oh, yeah?  
Oh, yes, monsignor.  
Oh, yes, monsignor?  
Isn't there something else  
that you'd like to say, Felix?  
Nothing?  
Felix.  
Oh, yeah.  
Thank you, monsignor.

You're welcome, son.  
Can I go now?  
May I go now,  
and yes.  
You may.  
Read the book.  
He's really a very sweet boy.  
I thought you handled that well.  
You don't know  
what he's been doing.  
Psst.  
Felix.  
What do you want?  
What'd you have to go  
to the office for?  
I quickly thought,  
"What would make her go  
completely ape?"  
I'm getting a top secret  
big award.  
For what?  
You writing a book?  
Make that chapter a mystery.  
I'd rather write  
a monster story  
About an ugly dwarf named Dondi.  
You want to borrow my comb  
so you can brush your leg hair?  
Go eat a hairy bird.  
Mademoiselle!  
He started it!  
Well, I only heard you,  
not monsieur.  
Go back to your seat.  
It says here  
he avoided females,  
Including his own mother,  
And put wood in his bed  
every night  
To distract himself  
from temptations of the flesh.  
I don't know why I'm supposed  
to be like him.  
He bathed lepers and carried

away their slop pails.  
Their slop?  
Oh, man.  
Hey.  
What'd you say  
to monsignor Muldoon  
To make him give you this  
anyways?  
Well...  
hey, Lonny.  
I didn't know you were here.  
You gonna have dinner  
with us?  
Actually, mom,  
can he stay the night?  
Sure, as long as it's okay  
with his mom.  
It sure is, Mrs. Funicello.  
My old lady says you can keep me  
as long as you wanted...  
Forever,  
as far as she's concerned.  
Well, I'm sure  
she was just joking.  
But I want you boys in bed

**by 10:**

Come on, ma.  
Well, come on, Felix.  
You got to go to church  
in the morning.  
But that's no fair.  
How come pop never has to go  
to church?  
Do I have to remind you  
pop has a business,  
And that business puts food  
on the table?  
But, ma.  
Come on.  
You're embarrassing yourself  
in front of your friend.  
I ain't embarrassed,  
Mrs. Funicello.

We fight in my house  
all the time.  
That's very polite of you,  
Lonny,  
But we weren't fighting.  
We were having a disagreement.  
What if we go  
to the later mass?  
Fine.  
Midnight.  
When I say, "lights out,"  
it's lights out.  
Okay, fine.  
Swear on a stack of bibles,  
Mrs. Funicello.  
Hey, tootsie cake.  
Look what I got.  
What is that?  
It's a tree.  
No, it's not.  
It's a cardboard box.  
Ah, it's a color wheel tree.  
I thought we'd do something  
real special this year.  
- Right, Felix?  
- Right, pop.  
Hey, Lonny.  
La  
Aluminum or real,  
The tree was the first  
official sign  
That Christmas  
was right around the corner.  
You know, it's gonna look  
pretty good  
Once you get the color wheel  
going.  
We can do better  
than pretty good.  
Yeah, by the red reindeer.  
Wa  
Pop was always big  
On having the right balance  
of bells to lights to tinsel.

But that year,  
he took extra care  
In making sure  
everything was perfect.  
Put that...  
there.  
Yeah.  
We let them know who's sharp  
during the holidays, huh?  
Hey, come get me.  
Okay, Turdski.  
- Knuckle sandwich.  
- Hey.  
I almost forgot.  
Yeah, what do you mean?  
Oh, that's mine.  
Where'd you get it?  
Let's just say I'm robin hood.  
I steal from the rich  
and give to the poor.  
What makes you think  
I'm poor, wise guy?  
Hey, all I was saying was that  
the teachers are the bad guys,  
And we're the good guys.  
Okay.  
Come on.  
Your pop's real old,  
isn't he?  
I guess so...  
Older than my ma is.  
Did they have to get married?  
I'm guessing they wanted to.  
Why?  
I'm just wondering.  
My old man had  
to marry my old lady  
Since my brother  
was already in the oven.  
How's a woman like an oven?  
How?  
'Cause you got to heat them  
both up  
Before you stick

in the meatloaf.  
You know,  
You're lucky, Felix.  
Your old man's real neat.  
Mine's out of town all the time  
for work,  
And I never get to see him.  
Lonny's pop  
was actually in prison,  
But he didn't need to know  
I knew that.  
You know, you're right.  
I am lucky.  
Well, I'm getting sleepy.  
Good night.  
Night, dingle berry.  
I'm rubber,  
and you're glue.  
What ever you say  
bounces off of me  
And sticks to you.  
You sure are rubber,  
all right...  
for a teeny weeny tootsie roll.  
I know you are,  
but what am I?  
The gate's closed,  
no backsies.  
If sleeping on wood  
Made St. Aloysius  
a better person...  
Lonny.  
I was willing  
to give it a try.  
Ow.  
Don't ask.  
Ma and Frances had  
gone to the diner after mass  
To help pop,  
Leaving Simone in charge to make  
sure we made it to church.  
What are those things  
in your hair, Simone?  
They're splays.

I'm in a modeling show  
at G. Fox later today.  
Don't let her fool you.  
They're transmitters.  
She's dating Robby the robot.  
Even if I knew who that was,  
It still wouldn't be funny.  
Lonny didn't  
take his eyes off Simone.  
He just kept swallowing  
like he was thirsty.  
Let me help you with that.  
She can get it.  
Thank you.  
Sit down before these  
delicious pancakes get cold.  
Okay.  
- Oh! Oh!  
- Got you!  
That is not funny!  
I told you  
I would get you next time.  
Oh.  
We didn't see Simone again  
For the rest of the morning,  
So we were left to find  
our own way to church.  
We should ditch church  
and go to the movies instead.  
No way.  
It's all the same.  
Jesus... Good,  
Satan... Bad,  
Never any fun.  
But I promised ma.  
Oh, well,  
okay then, Rosalie.  
Hey, cut it out.  
I'm sorry, I just get  
All the little goody two-Shoe  
girls mixed up.  
If he thought  
he could get me  
To watch a stupid movie



Just by calling me a girl,  
He was absolutely right.  
Now, I had never  
actually seen a horror movie  
In a theater before,  
Since my mother was adamant  
that they'd give me nightmares.  
But I figured,  
what does she know?  
Oh, man,  
that head looked so fake.  
Yeah.  
A million scenarios  
raced through my head  
Every time I heard a noise  
that night.  
I knew it was Bette Davis.  
She was coming for my head.  
Or just one of my sisters  
using the bathroom.  
Lonny was right.  
That stupid head did look  
pretty fake.  
What was I so scared of?  
She is so gross.  
How does she eat that?  
Come on, Felix.  
What... Where are we going?  
Hello, classmates.  
Mind if us gentlemen join you?  
It is still free country.  
You look older  
than most of the girls.  
How old are you?  
We have different school  
where I'm from.  
Yeah, I'm older too...  
You from other school too?  
No, just dumb, I guess.  
Silly boy.  
Your accent sure is funny.  
I no have accent.  
Your accent funny.  
Say, "go blow slop

in a pail."  
Go blow slopping pail.  
Oh, my god.  
This is great.  
Okay, Lonny,  
your turn.  
Say...  
What'd I say?  
Tell me what I said.  
You esk feel, so you go to  
headmistress office today.  
Yo-dis?  
What the heck is "yo-dis"?  
Soft place.  
Ow.  
My "esk."  
I pitcher today.  
Okay, fellas?  
I pick Zhenya.  
I good baseball player,  
eh, Felix?  
Better than Mickey Mouse, da?  
Mickey mouse.  
He good baseball player.  
I suppose so  
for a cartoon.  
Nyet, Felix Funicello.  
No cartoon.  
He play with Yankees  
in New York.  
It's Mickey mantle, stupid.  
You're right, Lonny.  
Cartoon mouse still better  
than you though.  
It was the first time  
Lonny had been on the receiving  
end of an insult,  
And he kind of liked it.  
Tableau vivant.  
Who can tell me what this means?  
Yes?  
Uh, a tablecloth?  
No, Lonny.  
Anyone else?

Okay.  
Get ready.  
It means  
"living picture."  
Madame, you crazy.  
Picture do not live.  
That's why it is called picture.  
Oui, oui, Zhenya.  
I talked to mother Filomena,  
And after learning  
of my extensive experience  
In the other lesson,  
She has agreed to let  
the fifth grade class perform  
A series of tableau for the  
Christmas pageant this year.  
What does that mean?  
It means you will be the stars  
of the show.  
Between my famous  
family lineage  
And my upcoming  
Raer Andy appearance,  
Madame must have known I was  
already a star in the making.  
There will be four scenes,  
Each one presented between the  
other classes' musical numbers,  
All leading up  
to the showstopping finale  
Of la nativite.  
Imagine when the curtains part  
To reveal you  
all still as statues.  
You will hear gasps of awe  
and wonder from the audience.  
Like I say,  
looney tune.  
There will be parts  
for all of you,  
From shepherds  
to angels  
To the holy family.  
What about Santa Claus?

Of course not, dummy.  
Santa's not in the bible.  
- What did you just call me?  
- You heard me.  
Well, wait till the NAACP  
hears about this.  
What about the baby Jesus?  
A real enfant might  
be a problem,  
But perhaps one of you has a...  
Comment dit...  
A baby doll?  
Tres bien, Jackie.  
There's sheep at the farm  
that we could use.  
Yeah, they're real  
well-Behaved and everything.  
And right on cue...  
I would volunteer to play  
the blessed virgin Mary.  
Okay, hands down.  
Class, settle down.  
There will be no casting  
decisions made just yet.  
And moving on from our tableau,  
I will be visiting my family  
in Quebec later this week.  
And you will have a...  
remplacement...  
A replacement.  
Oui, Franz?  
Aren't you already  
the replacement?  
D'accord.  
You shall have a remplacement  
for your remplacement.  
Who will it be?  
I believe that sister  
Agrippina's agreed to step in.  
What is a Agrippina?  
Sure enough,  
later that week,  
We were back in the clutches  
of the enforcer.

Take out your arithmetic books  
and a sheet of paper.  
Complete problems  
one through ten on page 52.  
I had seen that look  
on her face before.  
It said, "try anything,  
And the pain I inflict in return  
will make you pray you hadn't."  
All of us knew better  
than to cross her...  
almost all of us.  
Young lady,  
where do you think you're going?  
I don't speak sign language.  
Pencil sharpener.  
I don't remember  
you raising your hand  
And asking for permission.  
No permission.  
Why is big deal  
you making of this?  
You are being openly defiant,  
And that is totally  
unacceptable.  
Why you no  
go blow slop in pail?  
Wow.  
You'd think a stunt like that  
Would have gotten Zhenya  
kicked out of school for good,  
But Madame was quick to jump  
to her defense  
When she returned.  
Sister Agrippina has been  
transferred from St. Aloysius  
For good.  
I myself know the confusion  
of being in a nouvelle culture.  
No need for French here,  
Mrs. Frechette.  
We're all aware that you are  
from Montreal.  
Quebec city, actually.

Even worse.  
Please, please,  
Give miss Zhenya one more shot.  
I assure you,  
just to...  
Comment dit?  
Misunderstanding.  
She is your student,  
For the time being, at least.  
So I shall leave it  
in your hands.  
May god help us all.  
Attention, class.  
Mademoiselle Rosalie would like  
To present her extra credit  
project for the class.  
Mademoiselle?  
"Russians,  
And are they a threat  
to America?"  
By Rosalie Twerski.  
First of all,  
Russians are atheists  
and do not celebrate Christmas.  
Second of all...  
What she talk about?  
We go to Russian orthodox church  
in USA.  
We love Christmas.  
Zhenya knew exactly  
how to fire back at Rosalie,  
And the competition  
was officially on.  
And third,  
Russian spies continue  
to infiltrate the united states  
To steal the secret  
of the atom bomb.  
Blessed art thou  
amongst women,  
And blessed is fruit  
of thy womb.  
Zhenya...  
As the pageant approached,

Both girls began dropping  
subtle hints  
About who deserved the role  
of the blessed virgin.  
Bonjour, Madame Frechette.  
Bonjour, Rosalie.  
Hi.  
Hey, Rosalie,  
what are you, slow?  
That's supposed to be  
on your neck.  
I happen to have a head cold.  
My current event is an article  
I found in the Hartford times  
About an experimental program  
called subscription television.  
It's about how people will pay  
to have channels  
They don't normally get  
on their TVs.  
Yes, Felix?  
Why would anyone do that?  
It's like paying for water  
When it comes out of the sink  
for free.  
I don't know.  
It doesn't get into Pacifics,  
okay?  
Does anybody else have  
any good questions?  
Tres bien, Rosalie.  
You may take your seat.  
Your turn, Felix.  
My current event is me,  
Felix Funicello.  
At the end of the week,  
I'll be taking a bus to Hartford  
With the other midshipmen  
To appear on  
the ranger Andy show.  
Oh, live television.  
How exciting.  
Yeah, well,  
my cousin Annette Funicello

Has been on TV, like,  
a billion times,  
So it's kind of  
family tradition.  
Zhenya?  
Who is this cousin you say?  
This Annette Funicello?  
She used to be a mouseketeer,  
But now she's  
a big-Time movie star.  
Movie star at cinema?  
Wow, Felix.  
Your cousin real big shot  
in the Hollywood, da?  
Yeah, but I've never met her,  
But that's just  
because she's really busy.  
Yes, Rosalie?  
I just want to help out  
our new student  
By explaining that it's  
"cinema," not "ceen-eema."  
You know, like committing a sin.  
Repeat after me, Zhenya.  
Cin-e-ma.  
That is what I say.  
You better should dig wax out  
of your ear with shovel.  
No, you didn't.  
You said "ceen-eema."  
Mademoiselle,  
If Zhenya would like to work  
on her pronunciation,  
I would be more than happy  
to help her at recess.  
Uh-Uh, nyet.  
During recess, I play baseball  
with the fellas.  
Well, just keep  
on embarrassing yourself  
In front of everyone, then.  
You know,  
that reminds me, Rosalie.  
It's pronounced "specific."



So?  
So you pronounced it "pacific"  
earlier.  
You do it a lot, actually.  
I do not.  
Yeah, you do, rose.  
Well, if she says  
"pa-cific,"  
How come I've never heard it?  
And I'm over her house  
all the time.  
Tres bien, children.  
Repeat after me, Rosalie,  
"Spe-cific."  
I don't have to repeat  
after anyone  
Because I know that I'm right,  
So you can just go  
shut your face, Dondi!  
Mademoiselle!  
That sort of outburst  
deserves a check minus.  
I didn't say he had to shut  
his face, Madame.  
I said he could if he wanted to.  
Please finish, monsieur.  
Any other questions?  
When you go on TV,  
Aren't you afraid  
you're gonna break the camera  
Because you're so ugly?  
That is enough!  
Oh, hurry back after recess.  
I shall reveal  
all of the casting decisions  
For the tableau.  
She can't play  
the virgin Mary.  
I mean, she has an accent.  
But nobody has  
to say anything.  
So?  
What does that have to do  
with it?

What is she even doing  
in this country?  
I bet her parents  
are communist spies.  
Felix.  
You'll be on my team today?  
Can I ask you something?  
Sure.  
We are friends, Felix Funicello.  
You ask me anything.  
Why'd your family  
leave Russia?  
We leave.  
So you're not spies?  
Who say that?  
Rosalie.  
Rosalie nothing but...  
blyad.  
What's that?  
Like, um,  
Prostitute...  
You know, girl who does  
naughty things with boys.  
Oh, a chicky boom boom.  
Da,  
chicky boom boom.  
Come on, Felix.  
All right, all right,  
all right.  
- Hi, fellas.  
- Who's playing?  
Want to play knockout?  
Like boxing?  
I good at that.  
It's basketball.  
Nyet,  
no basketball.  
I like baseball or dodgeball.  
- Ain't you playing?  
- No, not today.  
All right, let's go.  
I call first.  
All fifth grade girls  
Are to report to the gymnasium

immediately  
For an emergency meeting!  
And, boys, I want you running  
laps around the courtyard  
As penance  
for your lurid behavior!  
Now!  
Ladies.  
Hey, what was that meeting  
about?  
What's penguins know  
about kissing boys?  
They say I go to hell  
For opening myself for sin.  
Attention, class.  
It's time to reveal the casting  
for the tableau.  
Bien, bien.  
You should immediately  
get started on your costume  
And decide which refreshment  
you'll be bringing  
For the pageant after-Party.  
Madame's excitement  
was becoming contagious,  
And I couldn't wait to see  
what starring role  
She had given me.  
The little drummer boy?  
Congratulations, Joseph.  
Really?  
Who's Mary?  
Pauline Papelbon?  
Madame, there must have been  
some sort of mistake.  
There are no mistake.  
You'll be playing a pivotal role  
of a shepherdess  
Alongside Zhenya.  
Okay be me, teacher lady.  
Okay, back to your seat.  
But...  
this is not over by a long shot.  
Oh, shut up, Turdski,

you lost.  
Did you just hear that?  
You'll be serving detention  
after school for that, monsieur.  
Mrs. Frechette,  
May we speak with you  
for a moment?  
Of course.  
It's about the casting  
for your tableau.  
Uh, yes, what about it?  
First of all,  
I think we can all appreciate  
That Mrs. Frechette  
is newly arrived  
And might not necessarily know  
the workings of our school yet.  
Uh, what are you saying,  
mother Filomena?  
I'm sure that this Pauline  
is a lovely young lady,  
But is she really capable  
of such a demanding role?  
I mean, clearly,  
her overeating stems  
From that mother of hers  
being unstable...  
Emotionally, that is.  
I really don't know  
what Pauline's home life  
Has to do with anything.  
She is a very respectful,  
well-Behaved student.  
But shouldn't the smartest  
And the hardest-Working student  
in the class  
Be the one to represent  
the blessed virgin Mary?  
As usual, Twerski impressions  
will be printing the program  
Free of charge.  
And we were planning on having  
a three-Color cover this year.  
Did you hear that,

Mrs. Frechette?

Three.

My stars, with our budget  
as tight as it is,  
We are thanking the lord  
and the heavens above  
For such a generous donation.

I happen to know  
that there's an opening  
For a full-Time substitute  
After what happened  
with sister Agrippina  
And that awful Russian girl.

Please, Madame?

Please?

Finished.

Oh, bien, Felix.

You may go.

Can I say something first?

This is a private meeting.

What is it, Felix?

I just wanted to say...

I just wanted to say  
that Madame Frechette,

As a teacher,  
is just tops.

Tres magnifique.

Would you like me to wipe down  
the board for you, Madame?

Yes, that would be wonderful,  
Felix.

Merci.

To tell you the truth,  
I really don't have the heart to  
take the role away from Pauline,  
But if Rosalie wishes  
to play a king,  
I'm sure that none of the boys  
would mind switching their part.

I think that's  
a very good compromise.

So what do you say,  
mademoiselle?

Which gift would you like

to bring?  
Gold, frankincense, or myrrh?  
What the hey, honey?  
Go for the gold.  
Fine.  
Well, this has been  
a very successful meeting.  
Thanks a lot, Mrs. Frechette.  
Our little princess  
really appreciates it.  
Don't you, sweetie?  
Yes, thank you,  
Madame Frechette.  
Monsieur Dondi.  
I'll never be sure,  
But I could swear it looked  
like she was holding back tears.  
Merci.  
So Rosalie ended up complaining  
her way up  
From a shepherdess  
to one of the three kings.  
Hold one to the side.  
Is this the Twerski girl?  
The rat fink herself.  
I think it's cute  
that you guys  
Are always picking  
on each other back and forth.  
There's nothing cute  
about Rosalie Turdski.  
Felix, don't be stupid.  
She clearly likes you...  
Like likes you.  
Ew, gross.  
No, she doesn't.  
When I was in the fifth grade,  
If a girl really liked a guy,  
She'd make his life  
a living hell.  
Madame, what are you doing?  
I'm making room for  
all the wonderful decoration.  
But I worked hard on those.

Just for the holidays.  
Ours will be the best-Dressed  
room in the entire school.  
If you ask me,  
Madame was none too pleased  
With Rosalie going  
behind her back  
After their meeting  
And finagling a way to still be  
the star of the pageant.  
This is just so beautiful,  
Rosalie.  
I could just feel  
our lord's energy  
Working through my hands  
as I wrote it.  
Oh, my.  
I call it, Jesus is  
the reason for the season.  
Can I perform it at the pageant?  
I will, of course,  
play the beautiful narrator.  
The narrator...  
I will speak with Mrs. Frechette  
about this.  
And before everyone leave  
for the day...  
I would like for us all  
to wish Felix good luck  
On his television appearance  
tomorrow.  
I know we will all be watching.  
With all  
that pageant excitement,  
I'd almost completely forgotten  
about ranger Andy.  
In honor of my big debut,  
Pop lugged our television set  
down to the diner  
And spread the word  
to all the regulars  
That he'd have free pie  
and coffee  
For the ranger Andy broadcast.

Make us proud, Lix.  
Don't do anything I wouldn't do.  
Yeah, don't choke  
when you get up there.  
Choke on what?  
She means don't freeze up.  
He's gonna do just fine.  
Aren't you, Felix?  
That night,  
I was a bundle of nerves.  
What if I did choke  
on live television?  
I'd be the laughingstock  
of the entire school,  
Especially to Rosalie Twerski.  
No, everything  
was gonna be fine.  
Everything was gonna be just...  
Pop.  
Felix, what's wrong?  
I'm thinking about it again.  
About what?  
The head.  
Felix,  
I told you.  
It's just your imagination.  
Now go back to sleep  
before you wake your mother.  
I can't.  
Well, I'm not sleeping  
in your room.  
Once was enough.  
I was wondering if I could  
sleep in here with you.  
I don't know, Felix.  
You're ten years old.  
Don't you think  
it's a little much?  
Please, pop?  
Sal, just let him stay  
So we can all go back  
to sleep.  
Fine.  
Go get your sleeping bag.



Felix...  
Felix...  
who's that?  
Felix...  
help me, Felix.  
Is that you, Simone?  
It's the head.  
What's going on?  
None of us were able  
to get back to sleep,  
So the next day, I was surviving  
on pure adrenaline.  
Beer on the wall  
85 bottles of beer  
on the wall  
85 bottles of beer  
take one down  
pass it around  
Ma.  
I don't think Danny's  
feeling so good.  
Honey, are you okay?  
What's wrong?  
Oh... Oh, my...  
My, my, my...  
We have to pull over.  
83 bottles of beer  
on the wall  
83 bottles of beer  
For the love  
of all that is holy,  
Shut up!  
And as you can see,  
this is where it all happens.  
Fun fact...  
The ranger station was  
nothing like it looked on TV,  
But it didn't matter.  
- Real, live wood.  
- This was the big-Time.  
Speaking of which,  
Who's that coming down the trail  
over there?  
Ranger Andy!

And how are  
all my junior rangers today?  
- Great.  
- All right.  
Now, when the show starts,  
I'm gonna lead you in  
through that door,  
And you all are gonna come in  
and introduce yourselves.  
What you don't want to do  
is stare at the microphone.  
Because if you do,  
This is what y're gonna look  
like on TV...  
Okay, now,  
Hmm...  
who would like to volunteer  
To bring down the mailbag today?  
It was a known fact  
That the kid  
who brought the mailbag down  
Got the most screen time.  
How about you, young man?  
All right, then.  
Rats.  
People always say that  
we look like each other.  
Ma even has this picture  
of the two of us  
In a playpen  
when we were very little,  
And you can't even tell us  
apart.  
Simone, Annette is, like,  
five years older than you.  
She was very small  
for her age, Frances.  
Oh, hey, everybody,  
it's on.  
My name is ranger Andy  
and I've traveled all around  
and I am writing you a song  
about the things I've found  
I'll sing

about the mysteries  
Look alive,  
gentlemen and ladies.  
Did everyone use the bathroom?  
Good?  
Okay.  
Wipe your nose.  
Everyone, stand by.  
This was it.  
In a few seconds,  
I, Felix Funicello,  
Would be a bona fide  
television celebrity.  
Nothing to be nervous about.  
- Ready, ranger Andy?  
- Ready when you are.  
We are going live  
in five,  
Four, three...  
hi, everyone, and welcome  
to the ranger station.  
My, we got a lot of boys  
and girls coming down the trail,  
So let me bring them in.  
Then they can introduce  
themselves.  
Well, welcome  
to the ranger station.  
Come on in.  
Take a seat.  
Danny might have  
looked cleaned up,  
But the second those hot lights  
hit his uniform...  
a lot of sailors today, huh?  
All right.  
Okay, here come the scouts.  
Great.  
More sailors.  
Congratulations, Sal.  
We're so proud of you.  
Bobby Lubachino.  
Kevin.  
Brandon.

Danny.

Felix Funicello.

Which one of our guests  
would like to come down  
And lead us in  
the pledge of allegiance today?

This was my shot.

How about you, young lady?

And stand here on the blue dot  
for me.

There we go.

Right over there.

That's perfect.

All right, thank you.

All right, you all know the  
ching dong diddle song, right?

- Yes!

- All right.

Okay, a-One, two,

one, two, three.

Ching dong diddle

and a hi-Dee-Dee

sing along, my friends

ching dong diddle,

sing along with me

the song that never ends

ching dong diddle

and a hi-Dee-Dee

sing along with me

the song that never ends

We can't be sure our meals

supply enough vitamins.

And I need them to stay strong  
and healthy.

Well, a single one-A-Day

multiple vitamin tablet daily

Gives you all the vitamins

children or grown-Ups

Normally need to take.

I know all you kids take them.

All right,

we have time to call down

Some of our special station

guests.

Now, who has a really great joke  
today?

You, sir,  
what do you have?

How can you tell when an  
elephant's been in your fridge?

Hmm...

I don't know.

How?

You can see their footprints  
in the butter.

That's a good one.

That's cute.

It's cute.

That's cute.

Yeah.

Okay, who else has  
a good joke?

What do you got?

Why is it impossible to starve  
in the desert?

Ooh.

Now, that's a head-scratcher.

Why?

Because of all the sandwiches  
there.

Another good one.

All right, we have time  
for just one more joke.

The show was almost over.

Now, who has  
a really great one?

This was my last chance  
To be in the spotlight.

But I didn't know any jokes.

Did I?

You do?

Come on.

Let's hear it.

How is a woman like an oven?

Well, I don't know.

How?

'Cause you got  
to heat them both up

Before you stick  
in the meatloaf.  
Cut it.  
Pop hadn't said a word  
Since he picked us up  
from the bus stop.  
It was up to me  
to gently break the ice.  
How was I supposed to know  
it was a dirty joke?  
Felix.  
You can't just go around  
repeating anything you hear.  
Look, what your father  
is failing miserably  
At trying to say to you  
Is that you can always  
come to us  
If you don't understand  
something  
Before you broadcast it  
across the state  
On live television.  
Don't worry,  
'cause I never want to be  
In front of a live audience  
again.  
I'm quitting the Christmas  
pageant tomorrow.  
- Like hell you are.  
- Oh, no... Sal.  
You know, honey,  
what would cousin Annette do?  
Would she give up that easily?  
- I guess not.  
- No, of course not.  
Exactly.  
And don't worry, by tomorrow,  
Nobody will remember  
what happened.  
Walking into class that day,  
I had prepared myself  
for the worst.  
But no one said a word.

When you're ten years old,  
The only thing worse  
than getting laughed at  
Is getting the silent treatment.  
What's going on?  
Why is everyone so quiet?  
Frechette threatened everyone  
With check minuses  
if we talked about the show.  
Did you watch?  
Best episode  
of ranger Andy ever.  
Hey, nice outfit.  
Where'd you get it?  
My aunt, and I wouldn't be  
talking, Johnny Tremain.  
Formidable.  
Oh, interesting choice, Pauline.  
Thank you.  
I got it from my neighbors,  
the Margisellas.  
Tres bien.  
Ooh, Zhenya, you got  
a little scissor-Happy  
With the costume, no?  
Nyet.  
It fit me better  
than the other girls.  
Bon.  
Places, everyone.  
Hello,  
I am your narrator.  
And this play is about  
the true meaning of Christmas.  
Here comes the saints.  
Let's listen.  
I'm Aloysius Gonzaga.  
I was kind to children  
and lepers  
And said the hail Mary  
Every time I climbed up and down  
the stairs  
Before I died of the plague.  
In America,

Which hasn't yet been  
discovered,  
A wonderful school  
will be named after me.  
Look, here comes St. Therese.  
Hi, my name is St. Therese.  
I loved god so much  
That I would sleep under  
a heavy blanket in the summer  
And not use the blanket  
during the winter  
When I was freezing cold.  
I died of tuberculosis  
at the age of 24.  
Oh, look who's coming.  
It's Martin de Porres.  
Yes, it is me,  
The saint of hairdressers.  
I love animals  
And was so happy to finally  
become a saint in the year 1962.  
But today I am very, very sad.  
The saints start to talk  
to each other.  
Why are you sad, St. Martin?  
Is it because there are  
Still so many prejudiced people  
in this world?  
No.  
That's not it.  
St. Martin de Porres  
puts his hands over his face  
And starts to cry.  
That's it.  
I quit.  
You can't quit.  
You're the only one in our class  
who can play St. Martin.  
Oh, yeah?  
Why is that?  
Because...  
you just are.  
I ain't crying in front  
of my father and brothers.



Fine.

You don't have to cry.

You just have to look real sad.

- Okay?

- Fine.

Can we finish up now?

After what felt

like an eternity,

Rosalie's play finally reached  
its grand finale.

This is terrible.

And so the three saints

rode all night long

With Santa and his sleigh.

And in the morning,

Before opening their presents,

The children knelt down

and thanked god

For sending his only son

down to the earth.

And everyone was happy,

Except for the atheists.

The end.

Rosalie, did mother Filomena

read the entire play

Before approving it?

Well, perhaps we'll reword

a little bit

Before the performance.

What is it, Felix?

That ending doesn't make

any sense.

How could they ride around

with someone

That's not even real?

Santa is too real!

How else do the presents get

under the tree, huh?

It's still a dumb ending.

Not as dumb as you are!

Okay, children.

We're out of time.

But a few words before you go.

You must remember

That while the other classes  
are celebrating la nativite  
With their songs,  
You are the ones  
who will embody it.  
Should you have an itch,  
You must resist the urge  
to scratch it.  
What if we have to sneeze?  
You must suppress it,  
Perhaps by digging your  
fingernails into your leg  
And drawing a drop or two  
of blood  
Or maybe of thinking  
of something really sad,  
Like... Like a dead puppy.  
But you must never  
break the illusion  
That you are a three-Dimensional  
painting,  
Just as breathtaking  
as any in the Louvre.  
Madame's speech did  
nothing to calm my stage fright.  
I couldn't get a blink of sleep  
the night before the pageant.  
I was so nervous,  
I could have filled up  
a dozen leper slop pails.  
Pop had to keep the diner open  
late and would miss the show,  
But ma and my sisters  
would be there to witness  
My impending failure.  
But then again, I didn't even  
have to say anything.  
All I had to do was stand there.  
Everything was gonna be okay.  
Charlotte...  
Charlotte, what is it?  
Or not.  
The other one wouldn't get  
on the truck.

So we brought this one  
instead,  
On account of  
we could just carry him.  
Pa said nobody would notice  
anyways.  
This is gonna be good.  
No.  
No, really, really.  
Really, thank you.  
And welcome to St. Aloysius...  
Excuse me...  
Annual Christmas pageant.  
That's how rumors get started.  
We have a wonderful show  
for you tonight,  
And all the kids have worked  
so hard on this play.  
And we have an original play  
Written by one of our students.  
And it...  
It is called  
Jesus is the reason  
for the season.  
But there  
is the cutest little black...  
Whoa.  
Oh, oh.  
Whoa.  
You got to watch out  
where you put these mic cords.  
You know,  
it's none of our business.  
Anyway, this lamb's got  
this little white collar,  
And it is so cute.  
And you're gonna love the lamb,  
But you're gonna love the kids,  
and you're gonna love the play.  
So god bless all of you,  
and thank you,  
And have a great time,  
and... And...  
Yeah,

okay.

Okay.

Second graders, you're up.

All right, kids,

Make your parents proud.

That means our first tableau

will be up after them.

Monsieur Franz,

Mademoiselle Pauline,

L'annonciation.

Oh, what fun it is to ride

in a one-Horse open sleigh,

hey

jingle bells, jingle bells

jingle all the way

oh, what fun it is to ride

in a one-Horse open sleigh

Ave

Maria

gratia

plena

Maria

gratia

plena

Maria

gratia

plena

ave

ave Dominus

Dominus tecum

Did he just eat his booger?

Why is Mary dressed

like Scheherazade?

I don't know.

Why do you have

to criticize everything?

I don't have to;

I want to.

Like, if you ran the world,

everything would be perfect.

Probably.

Yeah, yeah.

Yes, it is me,

The saint of all hairdressers.

I love animals  
And was so happy to finally  
become a saint in the year 1962.  
But today...  
I am very, very sad.  
So the saints start to talk  
to each other.  
Why are you sad, St. Martin?  
Is it because there's still  
so many prejudiced people  
In the world?  
There are?  
Um, why, yes, St. Martin.  
Well, wait till the NAACP  
hears about this.  
You ruined my play.  
I think I improved it.  
That was marvelous, sweetie.  
Angels we have  
heard on high  
sweetly singing  
o'er the plains  
and the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains  
glo-Oh-Oh-Oh  
oh-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oria  
Madame Frechette,  
my stomach hurts.  
It's okay, Pauline.  
It's just nerves.  
Or the half dozen  
sno balls she'd inhaled  
That were supposed to be  
for the after-Party.  
I think I'm gonna be sick.  
Madame, could you take Pauline  
to the toilet, s'il vous plait?  
- Shouldn't...  
- Madame...  
Okay, fine.  
Come along.  
Oh!  
Damn it.  
The puke, the lights...

It was ranger Andy  
all over again.  
Jackie, give me this.  
Zhenya, you're Mary now.  
How I be her?  
My costume.  
Franz, you change your costume  
with Zhenya.  
No way.  
All I got under here  
is my underwear.  
You heard teacher lady.  
She wants us to switch;  
We switch.  
What's going on?  
Rosalie, I'm Mary now,  
lady man.  
That's not fair!  
I work harder than anybody else  
in this class.  
And why her of all people?  
She's an atheist  
and a communist.  
And I don't even care  
what you say,  
'Cause you're just a stupid sub.  
I'm Mary!  
I no think so,  
chicky boom boom girl.  
Rosalie.  
And I was officially  
never sleeping again.  
Singing o'er the plains  
sweetly singing  
o'er the plains  
Monsieur Dondi,  
Remove your chemise  
and pantalon.  
You are now our baby Jesus.  
I can't.  
I'm too big.  
But the show must go on  
maintenant.  
Fine,

I'll take off my chemise,  
But there's no way I'm taking  
off my pantalon.  
Fine, but hurry.  
In the crib, monsieur.  
Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh  
There it was,  
lily of the valley.  
Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh  
deo  
Felix is baby Jesus.  
He's got tiny doll feet.  
Silent night  
holy night  
all is calm  
all is bright  
round yon virgin  
mother and child  
holy infant  
so tender and mild  
Sleep in heavenly peace  
silent night  
holy night  
shepherds quake  
at the sight  
glories stream  
from heaven above  
heavenly hosts  
sing hallelujah  
Christ the savior is born  
Christ the savior  
is born  
The pageant  
was a complete disaster,  
But it didn't matter.  
We may not have been good at  
embodying the Christmas story,  
But we made up for it in spirit.  
Merci, monsieur Dondi.  
- Madame.  
- Zhenya.  
Me papa.  
I am so proud of you.  
That was so, so good.

Yeah, we actually gave you  
a standing ovation.

Yeah, I guess taste truly  
is subjective.

I'm just kidding.

- Good job, Felix.

- Good job.

Thanks.

But where's pop?

He had to work.

You know that.

But I thought I saw him  
in the audience.

Are you sure?

I'm sure I'm sure.

I'll be right back.

Okay.

Oh, look,

that's the Twerski girl.

Rosalie.

What do you want?

I just wanted to say

I really liked your play.

No, you didn't.

You said the ending  
was dumb.

Yeah, well, I changed my mind.

I think it makes sense now.

Thanks.

You were a pretty good Jesus  
too,

Better than that doll  
would have been.

Thanks.

Merry Christmas, Rosalie.

Wait.

Merry Christmas, Felix.

Pop!

Hey.

There's my star.

I knew I saw you.

I got chino to come in  
so I wouldn't miss it.

What's that?



This...

Just an early Christmas present.

Felix, Simone...

- Is that Annette?

- Yeah.

So that lady standing  
in the back with you...

That was her.

Sure was.

Yeah, she's doing a publicity  
tour for her latest film  
And was able to stop by  
on her way to Boston.

Wait, wait...

She was actually here?

Oh, dear god, hold me.

That was the year I learned

That what really mattered  
during Christmas

Was the friends and family  
you spent it with

And the surprises  
that came along

When you least expected them.

Felix,

You were the most adorable  
baby Jesus I have ever seen.

Oh.

How about we all head  
back to the house

For an early Christmas dinner,  
huh?

Oh, my god, yes.

Yes.

What do you say?

Christmas gift  
won't you hand it here?

Christmas gift  
hand it here

I said it first,  
so now hand it here

Sing it for your gift.

Christmas gift  
hand it here

Christmas gift  
won't you hand it here?  
Christmas gift  
hand it here  
Smile!  
Look out there now.  
Coming in here.  
Santa Claus,  
won't you listen here?  
After that year,  
Madame Frechette returned  
to Quebec,  
Where she sells perfume  
and directs community theater.  
The nativite tableau vivant  
Has become an annual tradition  
at St. Aloysius.  
When ma and pop retired  
to Florida in 1985,  
Chino purchased the diner  
And promptly went bankrupt.  
Frances owns and operates  
happy mouth dentistry  
Where Simone is employed as  
a hygienist and office manager.  
She also teaches zumba  
at the YMCA.  
Zhenya's parents were not spies,  
But her father was an engineer  
who had defected to the U.S.  
Close enough.  
Zhenya now hosts  
a popular jewelry show  
For the QVC shopping channel.  
Thrice married and divorced,  
Lonny is a blackjack dealer  
At Connecticut's  
Quinnipiac moon casino.  
He recently discovered  
social media  
And has reconnected  
with his former flame,  
Zhenya.  
Rosalie Twerski toured for two

seasons with up with people.  
Today her face can be seen  
across the state on billboards,  
Where she declares,  
"If I can't sell your house  
in 60 days,  
I'll buy it myself."  
As for me,  
I finally grew five inches  
as a freshman in high school,  
Making me taller than at least  
most of the girls.  
Today I'm a professor  
of film studies  
At Wesleyan university  
And an author.  
In 2009, I wrote a nostalgia  
Christmas memoir.  
The book sold modestly  
Until a famous TV talk show host  
recommended it,  
Turning it into an overnight  
best seller  
And eventually,  
a film.