



CHRISTMAS IN ROOM 309: 10 MINUTE PLAY

from

CHRISTMAS IN ROOM 309 One Act Musical

written by

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FAITH BASED STUDENT MUSICALS

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THEME

**"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other,
just as in Christ God has forgiven you." Eph. 4:32**

SYNOPSIS

When Grandpa Oscar Long ends up in the hospital on Christmas day, his visiting family gather. Unresolved issues and secrets surface in these close quarters. How will the family work through their issues in love?

CAST

GRANDMA/KATHERINE: (Female) Nurturing, warm, engaging.

ALEX: (Male or Female) Grandma's appealing, athletic, over-achieving, older grandchild. Carries weighty scenes.

GINA: Adult daughter of GRANDMA and GRANDPA, mother of ALEX.

WAITING ROOM HOSTESS: (Female) Gum smacking, phone addicted, otherwise oblivious. Strong comic character actress.

Grandpa is unseen. His hospital bed can be implied with set pieces, pillows, and covers over stuffing, or unseen off stage.

SURGERY WAITING ROOM HOSTESS is far left or right, constantly scrolling her phone unless otherwise noted.

GRANDMA is saying goodbye to offstage Doctor, who has just exited hospital room.

GRANDMA

Thank you for that report, Doctor. Such a relief!

GRANDMA quietly sings or hums (optional) over GRANDPA who is sleeping in his hospital bed.

"I CANNOT STOP LOVING YOU" *a cappella*

I CANNOT STOP LOVING YOU.
AFTER ALL THAT WE'VE BEEN THROUGH.
YOU'RE THE FAMILY GOD GAVE TO ME –
CHRISTMAS, MAY OR JUNE.
I CANNOT STOP LOVING YOU.

Crazy old man! Climbing that ladder without telling anyone! I'm just grateful you're gonna be OK. Who do you think you are – Clark Griswold.

Unseen by GRANDMA, ALEX enters.

ALEX

(casually, from just behind her)
Merry Christmas, Grandma!

GRANDMA

(startled, then delighted)
Alex!

They embrace. They do not see each other nearly enough.

ALEX

How's Grandpa?

GRANDMA

Well, thankfully, the Doctor said he's recovering fine, just to let him sleep. He's got that down! He's been out cold for hours.

ALEX

Wow! What a relief!

GRANDMA

Alex, honey, I'm so glad you made it home from school! Your Mom told us you were coming. That tyrant of a coach finally gave you a couple of days off, huh? He'll probably make you practice on your wedding day.

ALEX

Yeah! Well if he doesn't, my Mom will.

GRANDMA

Where is that daughter of mine?

ALEX

She's with the kids, corralling all the cousins.

GRANDMA

Oh, that was good of her to stay at the house with that whole crew.

ALEX

Nope. Not at your house. They're here at the hospital! Downstairs in the lobby.

GRANDMA

You brought the kids? Here? To the hospital?

ALEX

What else could we do? We couldn't get your neighbors to take them off our hands. Believe me, we tried. Mom said we needed to get everyone out of the house for a while.

The kids went a little crazy last night after you and Grandpa left in the ambulance. Of course they were worried about Grandpa...but I think they were also worried they wouldn't get to open any presents on Christmas Eve. Riley organized a little protest...that turned into a little...riot. Don't worry, Grandma, I cleaned the eggs up off your carpet. And the baby wipes took most of the purple sharpie off your dining room wall.

Beat for Grandma's response.

Just kidding.

GRANDMA

Well, since they're right downstairs, why don't we bring those kiddos up here with me! Take my mind off worrying about Grandpa.

ALEX

Don't you think there's too many of us?

HOSTESS, who has been scrolling her phone the entire scene, snaps out of her freeze.

HOSTESS*(answers phone)*

Hey girl!

ALEX

And what about her?

HOSTESS*(responding to phone)*

No way!

GRANDMA

From what I can tell, there's **no way** our little Receptionist is gonna mind...or notice, for that matter.

GRANDMA crosses to HOSTESS, who remains glued to her phone, oblivious.

Excuse me. Hi. Hello. Hello?

HOSTESS

I have to go. Call ya back.

HOSTESS hangs up phone.

Hiiiiiiiiiii.

HOSTESS turn attention back to scrolling phone.

GRANDMA

My name is Katherine Long.

Throughout following rhythmic exchange, HOSTESS continues scrolling phone, distracted.

HOSTESS

Uh huh.

GRANDMA

My husband, Oscar Long,

HOSTESS

Uh huh.

GRANDMA

in Room 309?

HOSTESS

Uh huh.

GRANDMA

In this hospital?

HOSTESS

Uh huh.

GRANDMA

Where you

work? *(air quotes)*

HOSTESS

Okay.

GRANDMA

I'd like to have my Grandchildren come up for a little Christmas get together.

HOSTESS is all ears at "get together," fully attentive.

HOSTESS

OOH, a party! Sure, invite them all. The more the merrier!

GRANDMA does a take to ALEX.

GRANDMA

Bring it on!!!

ALEX

Grandma, before I get the kids, can I talk to you about something? It's really important.

GRANDMA

Sure honey.

ALEX

This is really hard for me to say –

GINA enters.

ALEX

(surprised and disappointed)

Mom! I didn't expect to see you.

GRANDMA

Gina, I didn't know you were coming up.

GRANDMA and GINA hug.

ALEX

(knowing her opportunity has passed)

I guess I'll go check on the kids.

ALEX exits to "lobby."

GINA

How's Dad doing?

GRANDMA

Well, the Doctor said he should be fine, thank the Lord. They just got all the tests back. He just needs to sleep.

GINA

And how are **you** holding up?

GINA studies her mom's face.

You look exhausted. Why don't you go home and rest? I'll stay here with Dad today.

GRANDMA

That sounds tempting...

GRANDMA ponders.

GINA

Please Mom, you go on and enjoy a restful Christmas day in your home.
Let me stay today.

GRANDMA

(cautiously)
Gina, I need to tell you something.

Gathering courage.

Jerry's on his way.

GINA

(bomb drop)
Here!?!

GRANDMA

Here.

GINA

To the hospital?

GRANDMA

Yes. I called him last night after Grandpa fell in case...you know...before we knew he was gonna be OK.

GINA*(with sarcasm)*

Jerry. Wow! You finally reached Jerry. Where is he living now?

GRANDMA

I didn't ask. I'm always just grateful to talk to him.

Beat.

He'll always be part of this family - no matter what. He wants to come see Dad.

GINA

When?

GRANDMA

He says today. But you know Jerry...he likes to keep us guessing...

GINA takes a beat to ponder.

GINA

Then nevermind. I can't stay here. I'll take the kids and wait at the house.

GINA gathers up to leave.

GRANDMA touches her arm, stopping her.

GRANDMA

Gina, I know Jerry has put you - put all of us - through a lot, but we love him just the same as we love you, and Jessie, and Jill...all our children. He'll always belong.

GINA resumes exiting.

GINA

Text me when he's gone - if he actually shows up, that is.

GRANDMA crosses to stop GINA.

GRANDMA

Gina, wait!

GINA stops again.

GRANDMA

I understand if you feel like you need to go. But, if you really want to give your Dad a Christmas gift this year, you'll find a way to forgive your brother.

GINA ponders.

GINA

I can't.

GINA exits.

GRANDMA slowly turns attention to GRANDPA.

GRANDMA

Oscar, ya think those kids will ever come around? I mean, they're only entering middle age. It's never too late to do the right thing, right?

When people ask me the secret to our long marriage, I tell them it's having a bunch of kids like ours. Keeps us praying and trusting in the Lord.

What's that verse? "A cord of 3 strands is not easily broken." The good Lord, you, and me. And you've been a fine "cord strand partner." Always loving, always forgiving.

Beat.

And forgiveness is what this family needs now, so you better wake up soon, old man!

You reminded **me** how to forgive, you know that? I was so angry when I was younger. Thank you for helping me love again.

Beat.

And you sure were handsome when we met... it's just too bad you went and got so old and wrinkled. You, a starving musician, and me...just starving.

Did you notice how I used to show up every Sunday night when you played at Church? I surely did notice you. And you could play those old songs like a pro – gospel, jazz, swing. You could play anything. Those hymns were my favorite. Especially, "It is Well with My Soul."

Feeling emotional.

Wow! I didn't see that coming! Whew, I need a break. Be right back.

As GRANDMA exits, she runs into ALEX entering.

ALEX

Oh Grandma, I just checked on the kids. They're fine in the lobby – as long as Ricky stands on that chair whipping that string of Christmas lights like a lion tamer.

Kidding. They're fine.

I really need to talk to you about something.

GRANDMA

(still emotional)

Sure! Alex, honey, can it wait a few minutes? I'm fine, I just need to get some fresh air. I'll be right back.

Listen, you can stay with Grandpa a minute, right? Of course you can. You're about the most mature, responsible kid I know.

GRANDMA exits.

ALEX can carry this emotional burden no longer.

ALEX

(upset, with urgency)

Grandpa, I don't know if you can hear me, but I need to talk to somebody. I can't stand it any longer. Something happened...something bad...I did something bad...Grandpa, I got caught cheating on a test. I'm gonna be suspended from school. And that means no travel team, no training team...I don't know how I'm gonna tell my Mom.

I know better. It's so embarrassing. I'm so sorry I did it and I'm sorry to disappoint everybody.

I know I'll survive, but right now it seems like the end of the world.

You always help me remember what's important, Grandpa. You and your wisdom...

Beat.

...and your Bible verses.

Beat.

I remember, "Man looks on the outside, but God looks on the heart." Funny you marked that one in your Bible, Grandpa. Cause I feel like everybody's always "looking on the outside," watching me, and I have to be perfect all the time.

Beat.

It feels like you heard me.

GRANDMA returns.

GRANDMA

Alex, honey, I know you've been trying to talk to me all day. I'm so sorry. What's up?

Beat.

ALEX

(still emotional)

I'm feeling a little better since I talked to Grandpa.

GRANDMA does comic take, curious how she "talked to Grandpa."

ALEX

Well, it **seems** like he heard me. I feel like I can tell you and Grandpa anything. I mean, I know you'll be really sad and disappointed, but you guys will forgive me, and still love me the same.

I messed up, Grandma. Big time.

They hug, eyes closed, so neither sees GINA enter doorway, in earshot.

I'm scared my Mom will freak out. She expects me to be almost perfect. She's always posting about how great I am. It'll make her so sad - I wonder if she'll ever forgive me, or love me the same. I'm scared to tell her.

GINA

Tell me what?

ALEX AND GRANDMA

(startled)

Mom!

Gina! What are you doing here!?!

GINA

Alex, you're scared to tell me something?

GRANDMA

Gina, your brother will be here any second. I thought you were gonna wait for my text when he was gone.

GINA

(laser focused on Alex)

But you felt comfortable telling Grandma?

ALEX

Grandpa. I am working my way up.

GRANDMA heads to exit.

GRANDMA

If I were you, I'd cough it up now - while the gettin's good.

ALEX stops GRANDMA.

ALEX

No, Grandma, please stay. I only want to do this once.

Beat to muster courage.

Mom, I got caught cheating on a test. I can tell you all about it - not here.

I know I've got some tough consequences coming. I wanted to tell you sooner but I didn't know how. I couldn't stand to disappoint everyone. But Grandpa helped me find my courage. He helped me see that...

God still loves me, and He forgives me. And I'm asking you – both – to forgive me.

Beat for GINA to absorb.

GINA

You're right. I'm shocked. And sad. And disappointed.

Beat.

But Alex, you're my child. And there's nothing you've done – or can ever do – to make me love you any less. Even if you tried. I'll love you always and forever, no matter what.

GINA hugs ALEX.

And you're right about tough consequences. We'll deal with that at home.

GINA looks at GRANDMA, giving her permission to jump in with a hug and a word.

GRANDMA

Alex, we all make mistakes, and fall short, that's not news. The news is we can be forgiven. We can forgive others, and ourselves.

Beat.

And speaking of forgiving, Gina, you decided to come back?

GINA

I've been sitting in the car, thinking about it, and praying about it. I want to make peace with Jerry – to forgive him. I decided to make the first move. I was thinking this might be a good day to start. Now, I **know** it is.

Motioning to ALEX.

C'mon. Let's go downstairs and wait for your Uncle Jerry.

ALEX

Crazy Uncle Jerry?!? Does he still braid his beard? And put quarters up his nose?

GINA

Who knows? If forgiveness is the word of the day, Jerry's the poster child.

GINA and ALEX exit to "Hospital Lobby."

When they're out of sight, GRANDMA looks to GRANDPA in grateful amazement.

GRANDMA does a happy dance or cartwheel, crossing to HOSTESS.

cartwheel, etc.)

GRANDMA

Now the party's really on!

GRANDMA gives HOSTESS a high five.

HOSTESS

Party!!