

CHRISTMAS IN CRICKET COUNTY

by Eddie McPherson



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Christmas in Cricket County

A One-Act Christmas Comedy

by Eddie McPherson

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CITY COUSINS:

OSWALD: Very educated and somewhat conceited.

PETE: He does pretty much what Oswald asks him to do.

MIMI: The whiner; complains about everything.

PETUNIA: She can tolerate a little more from her country cousins than Mimi.

COUNTRY COUSINS:

ELKIN: The leader of the country bunch; the rest of his country family looks to him for guidance.

FESTER: A rather large fellow who speaks with a slow Southern drawl.

GLENDMAE and BRENDA MAE: Identical twins who look nothing alike. They dress alike, but they look different. They both have eyes for Oswald.

DONNA JO: Shy but very wise.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Summary of Play

It's the social clash of the Christmas season when city cousins Oswald, Mimi, Petunia, and Pete take a limo drive out to Cricket County for the reading of their Uncle Zeke's will on Christmas Eve. Their country cousins Elkin, Fester (an overgrown boy who likes to play with axes), shy Donna Jo and identical twins (who look nothing alike) Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae, greet their city family with open arms. After a deer head bobs across the window, Mimi decides she would rather go back home where civilized people keep their animals in cages. However, the city kids' greed keeps them hanging around until Christmas Eve. A box that holds the will mysteriously shows up, but a note specifies that the content not be revealed until Christmas Eve. After the city kids receive only one hundred thousand dollars apiece, they throw a tantrum over getting such a "small" amount of money. However, their country cousins are thankful for the fifty dollars they each receive to buy new coats and shoes for the winter ahead. As a Christmas tradition, the country kids put on the Nativity story for their relatives and in a very simple way help them understand the true meaning of giving and receiving. The city kids leave with a new attitude about material things and realize that it just might be better after all to give a little rather than always receiving. Then, after their rich cousins leave, the Cricket County kids discover there's more to the will than they originally thought in a delightful surprise twist that evens the score in the end.

Setting

The setting is a one-set interior of a log cabin. If possible, there needs to be two doors: one that comes in from the road, and another that goes out to the back porch and cornfield. One successful production of the play had no doors at all. The actors simply walked around and disappeared behind the flats. There does need to be a window cut out so the deer and Mimi can be seen when they run past it. Anything from a fireplace to an old wood stove can be painted on the backdrop if desired. A picture of a fox hangs on the wall. Stockings hang at the fireplace and old-fashioned decorations, including mistletoe, hang about the stage. An old wooden table sits Stage Right and a few wooden chairs may be placed around the stage. Another small table sits against the backdrop for the Christmas tree.

Lights

If theatrical lights are not available, simply shut off the house lights during the scene transitions.

Sound Effects

Dog barking, guitar playing.

Easy-to-Obtain Props

Luggage (City Cousins)

A pair of deer antlers or deer head

Two pails (Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae)

Purse with small mirror inside (Petunia)

An ax (Fester)

A tiny Christmas tree (Donna Jo)

A slingshot (Elkin)

A jar of jelly (Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae)

Rag doll (Donna Jo)

Purse with bottle of perfume inside (Mimi)

Bowl of green beans (Glenda Mae)

Large cloth bag (Fester)

Several suitcases

Large picture of Mimi (Mimi)

Homemade Christmas tree decorations

Old wooden box (Elkin)

Three sheets of paper the will is written on in an envelope taped
to the lid of the wooden box

Twigs and leaves (Mimi)

Sleeping bags (all)

Flashlight (Mimi)

Rubber snake (Mimi)

Homemade Christmas card (Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae)

Watch (Elkin)

Fake money (Elkin)

Homemade cardboard star covered with foil on a stick
(Glenda Mae)

A towel (Fester as a camel and shepherd)

Four crudely wrapped presents: Fester's ax, Elkin's slingshot,
a jar of jelly, and Donna Jo's rag doll

Sign reading "Merry Christmas from Cricket County"

Costumes

Costuming can be really easy and fun for this production. The important thing to remember is that the City Cousins' sophisticated attire is in great contrast to the Country Cousins' simple clothing. Here are a few ideas:

The City Cousins need to dress preppie with sweater vests, ties, khaki pants, penny loafers, starched white shirts, navy blazers, black pantsuits with pearl necklaces, nice sweaters with dress pants, etc.

The Country Cousins may wear overalls, jeans with ropes as belts, and costumes made from gingham, denim, burlap (Donna Jo's dress), and/or gabardine material. Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae need to be dressed alike. They should wear shawls and their hair in pigtails. The Country Cousins could wear unlaced work boots or go barefoot.

All the characters need coats.

Although Scene 3 has the characters sleeping, it's easiest if they don't change into pajamas. This keeps the blackout from being too long between the scenes. Shoes and jackets may be taken off. Otherwise, they should sleep with their clothes on. Folks in Cricket County have their own unique ways of doing things!

SCENE ONE

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(As the lights come up, PETE, MIMI, OSWALD and PETUNIA enter. They look around at the one-room cabin in disbelief that they have entered such a humble dwelling.)

MIMI: Please tell me we are not here.

OSWALD: We're here all right, though I'm not sure exactly where *here* is.

PETE: Do people actually live like this?

MIMI: Really. Where's the Jacuzzi?

PETE: Mimi, dear. I don't think we're going to find a Jacuzzi out here.

PETUNIA: Oh, Pete, of course they have a Jacuzzi — otherwise how are they going to relax after a grueling game of tennis or a long day on their feet at the shopping mall?

OSWALD: I'm not sure, Petunia, but somehow I don't think they have tennis courts and shopping malls out here, either.

MIMI: Well, how totally primitive. I vote let's go back home right now.

PETE: Me too.

OSWALD: We can't go. The limousine dropped us off and won't be back until late Christmas Eve.

MIMI: We are trapped here? Oh, how did I get myself into this?

PETE: Because of the money.

MIMI: Oh, yes. The money. I almost forgot.

OSWALD: That's why we're all here. To get what is rightfully ours.

PETUNIA: But why did we have to come here to get our money?

OSWALD: Because that's how Uncle Zeke wanted it. He asked that the will be read here at his old birthplace on Christmas Eve.

MIMI: I can't believe I have an Uncle named Zeke.

- 1 **PETE:** I can't believe he had money and lived here.
- 2 **OSWALD:** He was a miser. Rumor has it that he saved all his
3 money and hid it away someplace.
- 4 **MIMI:** That's so silly. Who can think of saving money when
5 there's all kinds of merchandise to be bought? (*Antlers, or,*
6 *if possible, a whole deer's head bobs across the window.*)
- 7 **PETUNIA:** Yikes! What is that?
- 8 **PETE:** Looks like a deer. (*The deer disappears.*)
- 9 **PETUNIA:** (*Hiding behind OSWALD*) There are wild
10 animals roaming freely about? Shouldn't it be in a
11 zoo somewhere?
- 12 **MIMI:** What's this world coming to? I want to go home now!
- 13 **PETE:** Stop being silly. It's just a harmless deer.
- 14 **PETUNIA:** But if there are deer, then there are other wild
15 creatures running wild too.
- 16 **MIMI:** Yes!
- 17 **PETUNIA:** Like foxes!
- 18 **MIMI:** Yes!
- 19 **PETUNIA:** And bears!
- 20 **MIMI:** Yes!
- 21 **PETUNIA:** And Big Foot!
- 22 **MIMI:** Yes! (*Pauses and turns back to PETUNIA.*) Big Foot?
- 23 **OSWALD:** Stop being silly. We've got to get settled. We had a
24 long drive in the limo.
- 25 **PETE:** I wonder where everybody is.
- 26 **PETUNIA:** It looks deserted. I think we've come to the wrong
27 old broken-down cabin.
- 28 **OSWALD:** We're at the right place. The name is on the door.
- 29 **MIMI:** Are you actually trying to tell me that the people who
30 live here have the same blood flowing through their veins
31 as I do?
- 32 **PETE:** Kind of scary, isn't it?
- 33 **PETUNIA:** All I can say is we'd better gets lots of money from
34 Uncle Zack.
- 35 **OSWALD:** Zeke.

- 1 **PETUNIA:** Zack, Zeke — who cares? I just want to get back
2 to my bedroom suite and silk pajamas.
- 3 **OSWALD:** Well, it's only for two days. I think we can tolerate
4 our hillbilly cousins for two lousy days. (*GLENDA MAE and*
5 *BRENDA MAE enter. They play identical twins, but it's*
6 *important that they look very different. They're wrapped in*
7 *shawls and both hold pails. They see their guests. Nothing is*
8 *said. They just stare at them.*)
- 9 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Finally*) Who are they, Glenda Mae?
- 10 **GLENDA MAE:** I don't know, Brenda Mae.
- 11 **BRENDA MAE:** They sure do dress awfully funny. Must be
12 from the city.
- 13 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Walks up to OSWALD.*) This one here sure
14 is pretty.
- 15 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Sniffs MIMI.*) And this one smells like a
16 honeysuckle vine.
- 17 **MIMI:** Oswald, she's sniffing me.
- 18 **OSWALD:** Excuse me, do you live here?
- 19 **GLENDA MAE:** Yep, this here is our home.
- 20 **OSWALD:** Who are you?
- 21 **BRENDA MAE:** We're the identical twins, Glenda Mae and
22 Brenda Mae.
- 23 **PETE:** You're identical twins? But you look nothing alike.
- 24 **BRENDA MAE:** We don't? That's funny, nobody never told us
25 that before.
- 26 **MIMI:** Why can't you just look in a mirror?
- 27 **GLENDA MAE:** What's a mirror?
- 28 **MIMI:** It's a piece of glass ... that you look into ... and see
29 yourself ... (*The twins just stand there with their mouths open*
30 *and look at each other.*) **OK, they're really scaring me now.**
- 31 **PETUNIA:** (*Has pulled a mirror from her purse.*) **Here, look.**
32 **Here's a mirror.** (*BRENDA MAE looks in the mirror, then looks*
33 *at GLENDA MAE.*)
- 34 **BRENDA MAE:** They're right, Glenda Mae. We don't look
35 nothin' alike.

- 1 GLENDA MAE: (*Looking*) Nope, I'm much prettier.
- 2 BRENDA MAE: I'm prettier.
- 3 MIMI: You're both plain Janes, so stop it.
- 4 PETUNIA: Do you live up here in the mountains all
5 by yourselves?
- 6 GLENDA MAE: Except for our cousins Elkin, Fester, and
7 Donna Jo. They live here too.
- 8 BRENDA MAE: (*Walks up to OSWALD.*) You're the prettiest thing
9 I have ever saw in my life. Are you married?
- 10 OSWALD: No. But it's probably because I'm only sixteen (*or*
11 *whatever his age is*).
- 12 BRENDA MAE: Do you wanna get married?
- 13 OSWALD: Not today. No.
- 14 GLENDA MAE: And even if he did, he wouldn't marry you. He
15 would marry me because I'm the prettiest.
- 16 BRENDA MAE: I'm prettiest!
- 17 PETE: Look, we are here for the reading of Uncle Zeke's will.
18 Our parents sent us up in the limo for the next two days.
19 Whatever money he has left us we will take back to
20 civilization with us.
- 21 PETUNIA: Yes, and we don't want to bother you while you're
22 doing your chores, so if you will kindly show us where the
23 bedrooms are, we will get settled in.
- 24 GLENDA MAE: Bedroom? What's a bedroom?
- 25 PETE: A bedroom. You know, a place with a bed. (*Pause*)
26 Where you sleep.
- 27 GLENDA MAE: Oh, sleep. (*Throws out her arms.*) This is where
28 we sleep.
- 29 MIMI: What?
- 30 BRENDA MAE: This is our bedroom.
- 31 OSWALD: You mean, you all sleep in here?
- 32 GLENDA MAE: The boys over there and the girls over here.
- 33 PETE: OK. This is where *you* sleep. But where do *we* sleep?
- 34 BRENDA MAE: Well, if you don't want to sleep in here, you
35 can always go through that door there (*Points to the door*)

- 1 *that leads to the cornfield) and ...*
- 2 **PETE:** That's all I wanted to hear, thanks. *(He heads for the door*
3 *and exits through it.)*
- 4 **MIMI:** Wait; now I get a room too! Peter!
- 5 **PETE:** *(Re-entering)* That's the back porch.
- 6 **GLENDA MAE:** You're welcome to sleep there, but you might
7 get cold during the night.
- 8 **MIMI:** Oswald, get my things. I'm calling Mummy and having
9 the limo sent back for me immediately. *(To GLENDA MAE)*
10 Where's your phone?
- 11 **GLENDA MAE:** Phone?
- 12 **MIMI:** Yes, phone. Where's your telephone?
- 13 **GLENDA MAE:** What's a tel-e-phone?
- 14 **MIMI:** *(Looks back at OSWALD.)* Oh no, we're stranded here. For
15 three days we're deserted with the Beverly Hillbillies.
16 *(MIMI backs up to the window. The deer goes by again. She*
17 *shuts her eyes and clenches her fists and whines.)* The wild
18 animal is back. We're going to be eaten alive. Take-me-
19 home!
- 20 **OSWALD:** Remember the money, Mimi. Remember the money.
- 21 **MIMI:** *(To herself)* The money. The money. Remember
22 the money.
- 23 **OSWALD:** *(To BRENDA MAE)* Where are your parents? Are they
24 here?
- 25 **BRENDA MAE:** Well, Mama and Papa went with our aunts and
26 uncles over to the holler in Cowpoke County to kill us a
27 turkey for Christmas dinner.
- 28 **PETE:** When will they be back?
- 29 **BRENDA MAE:** If they walk real fast, they'll be here early
30 Christmas morning.
- 31 **PETUNIA:** Then who's going to read the will on
32 Christmas Eve?
- 33 **GLENDA MAE:** I think Elkin will do that. He has the bestest
34 education of all of us. Him and Fester and Donna Jo will
35 be here any time. They are out gettin' a Christmas tree.

- 1 MIMI: I think I'm getting sick at my stomach. Where's
2 your bathroom?
- 3 BRENDA MAE: Let's see. If a bedroom is a room with a bed
4 in it, a bathroom must be a room with a bath in it.
- 5 GLENDA MAE: Sorry, we take our baths out on the porch.
- 6 MIMI: But it's ten degrees out there.
- 7 BRENDA MAE: I know. We've been thankin' the good Lord for
8 this warm spell we've been havin'.
- 9 GLENDA MAE: Yeah, it's hard to take a bath when you have
10 to scrub a little then break the ice, scrub a little then
11 break the ice, scrub a little ...
- 12 PETUNIA: All right, we don't need a play-by-play.
- 13 BRENDA MAE: Well, if you'll excuse us, we gotta go pour this
14 water up for Glenda Mae's bath. Come on, Glenda Mae. *(As*
15 *they exit with their pails)* Y'all just make yourselves at home.
16 Y'all are family too. *(They exit.)*
- 17 PETE: I feel like I'm in the twilight zone and we've entered a
18 different dimension.
- 19 OSWALD: Can you imagine not having a telephone?
- 20 PETUNIA: Or a bathroom?
- 21 MIMI: Or a Polo store?
- 22 PETE: Everybody just remember that as soon as we get our
23 part of the inheritance, we're outta here.
- 24 PETUNIA: Why have we never heard of this part of our family
25 tree until Uncle Zeke died?
- 26 OSWALD: The way I figure it, our parents were too ashamed
27 to have them around in the city.
- 28 MIMI: *(Sarcastically)* Wonder why.
- 29 OSWALD: Then when old Unc died, suddenly they were dear
30 members of the family.
- 31 PETUNIA: But did all of this have to happen at
32 Christmas time?
- 33 OSWALD: OK, everybody. We all agree to be nice to our
34 hillbilly cousins and see this thing through until after the
35 will is read, right? *(Pause)* Right? *(Everybody mutters their*

1 *OKs, disgruntled.*) Now, I guess everybody should just stake
 2 their claim on a part of the floor and get as comfortable
 3 as possible.

4 **MIMI:** Well, I'm not sleeping under the window. I don't want
 5 that deer gawking at me all night. *(She walks to the window.*
 6 *FESTER steps in front of the window, looking in. MIMI and*
 7 *PETUNIA both see him and start screaming, holding on to each*
 8 *other. FESTER disappears.)*

9 **OSWALD:** *(Calming them down)* What? What is wrong with
 10 you two?

11 **MIMI:** Outside! It's a monster!

12 **PETUNIA:** And it was leering at us!

13 **OSWALD:** *(Looking out the window)* Now you're seeing things.

14 **PETUNIA:** Oswald, please! Mimi's right. Let's forget the money
 15 and just go home.

16 **PETE:** Bite your tongue, Petunia.

17 **OSWALD:** Besides, we couldn't go home even if we wanted to.
 18 There's no phone.

19 **MIMI:** Then let's hitchhike! *(FESTER enters carrying an ax on his*
 20 *shoulder and stands just inside the door. He is a very tall and/or*
 21 *big fellow.)*

22 **OSWALD:** Now, we all agree to stick together on this. There's
 23 nothing out there. *(He's still looking at PETUNIA, MIMI, and*
 24 *PETE as he points toward the door they entered through. His*
 25 *hand hits FESTER. He feels FESTER's chest, shoulders, and*
 26 *face. Then he turns and looks at FESTER. He yells and runs*
 27 *behind MIMI.)* Get them! Get them! I'm just their dumb
 28 brother! I haven't done anything! *(ELKIN and DONNA JO*
 29 *enter. DONNA JO holds a tiny Christmas tree. A dog is heard*
 30 *barking Off-stage. ELKIN tries to keep the dog back when he*
 31 *enters.)*

32 **ELKIN:** Git back! Git back, you ol' bird dog, you! *(He pushes*
 33 *against the door as though the dog is trying to come in.)* I said,
 34 stay back!

35 **MIMI:** Oswald, it's going to eat us.

- 1 **PETUNIA:** We're going to die!
- 2 **ELKIN:** Howdy. Who, Tiny? Oh shucks, he won't hurt you
3 none. He just gets excited around supper time. Fester, put
4 that ax down before you hurt somebody!
- 5 **FESTER:** (*Speaking with a slow drawl*) You said I could play with
6 it.
- 7 **ELKIN:** You can play with it after while. We got company.
8 (*Sticks his hand out to MIMI.*) I'm cousin Elkin ...
- 9 **MIMI:** (*Looking at the palm of his hand*) Oooo, you have calluses.
- 10 **ELKIN:** This is Donna Jo. (*DONNA JO turns her back and drops*
11 *her head.*) She's a little on the shy side. And this is
12 cousin Fester.
- 13 **FESTER:** I like to play with axes.
- 14 **OSWALD:** Well, we're very glad to meet you, and we just know
15 this is going to be a very money Christmas ... I mean,
16 Merry Christmas, as we celebrate this joyous season
17 together.
- 18 **ELKIN:** We was out cuttin' us a Christmas tree to put up
19 in here ...
- 20 **FESTER:** I cut it with my ax.
- 21 **ELKIN:** We don't usually get one this nice, but we knew
22 you all was comin' and we wanted to really put on the
23 dog. (*TINY barks outside.*) Be quiet, Tiny! (*GLENDA MAE*
24 *runs in.*)
- 25 **GLENDA MAE:** Cousin Elkin, cousin Elkin! Come quick!
26 Brenda Mae is in trouble down at the outhouse!
- 27 **ELKIN:** What is it?!
- 28 **GLENDA MAE:** That little wooden shack in the cornfield.
- 29 **ELKIN:** No, I mean what's wrong with Brenda Mae?
- 30 **GLENDA MAE:** A black bear chased her in there and won't let
31 her out!
- 32 **OSWALD:** A bear?!
- 33 **MIMI:** An outhouse?!
- 34 **ELKIN:** Donna Jo, grab my slingshot!
- 35 **FESTER:** I'll get him with my ax!

- 1 **ELKIN:** No, Fester! You stay here. (*DONNA JO hands him a*
2 *slingshot.*) The bear may attack!
- 3 **OSWALD:** (*Grabs ELKIN's arm as he starts to exit.*) Wait
4 a minute. You can't go out there with nothing but
5 a slingshot!
- 6 **ELKIN:** Cousin Oswald, if David can kill a nasty ol' giant with
7 a sling, then a bear ain't nothin'! Besides, I've killed plenty
8 of bear before! (*He rushes out.*)
- 9 **FESTER:** (*Yelling after him*) If he kills you, I'll come out with
10 my ax!
- 11 **OSWALD:** This is ludicrous! He can't go out there all alone with
12 an attack bear on the loose! Pete!
- 13 **PETE:** Yes?
- 14 **OSWALD:** Go out and help him!
- 15 **PETE:** (*Starts to go, then stops.*) Wait a minute. Why don't
16 you go?
- 17 **OSWALD:** Because I've got to stay here and protect everybody
18 in the cabin!
- 19 **PETE:** Oh. (*Starts to go but then stops again.*) Wait a minute. Why
20 can't I stay here and protect everybody in the cabin?
- 21 **OSWALD:** Because you're going to be busy helping Cousin
22 Elkin with the bear.
- 23 **PETE:** Oh, yeah. (*Runs over to FESTER.*) May I borrow your ax?
- 24 **FESTER:** No, it's my ax!
- 25 **MIMI:** (*Crosses to FESTER and makes a fist.*) Give him the
26 ax, Jethro.
- 27 **FESTER:** My name is Fester.
- 28 **MIMI:** I don't care if it's the Jolly Green Giant. Give the boy
29 the ax.
- 30 **FESTER:** (*Runs out the opposite door.*) No, no, no! It's my ax, my
31 ax, my ax!
- 32 **PETE:** (*Quickly*) I have an idea. Mimi, give me your perfume.
- 33 **MIMI:** How can you think of smelling nice at a time like this!
- 34 **PETE:** Not for me, silly. One shot of that on the bear, and he'll
35 keel over dead! (*PETUNIA has gotten the perfume from*

- 1 *MIMI's purse and hands it to PETE. He runs out.*
- 2 **OSWALD:** Good luck, Pete!
- 3 **MIMI:** *(Shouting after PETE)* You owe me \$63.95!
- 4 **PETUNIA:** If he doesn't come back, I get his part of
- 5 the inheritance.
- 6 **MIMI:** Petunia, that's a terrible thing to say.
- 7 **PETUNIA:** I'm sorry, you're right.
- 8 **MIMI:** I think you should split it with me.
- 9 **OSWALD:** I can't believe you are talking about splitting his
- 10 inheritance while he's out there risking his neck for us.
- 11 **PETUNIA:** How much do you want?
- 12 **OSWALD:** A third. *(DONNA JO is over in the corner, sitting alone.)*
- 13 **MIMI:** Have you noticed that girl hasn't said a word since she's
- 14 been in here?
- 15 **OSWALD:** Why don't you girls go over and say something
- 16 to her?
- 17 **MIMI:** I wouldn't know what to say. It's obvious we have
- 18 nothing in common.
- 19 **OSWALD:** Ask her about her family.
- 20 **PETUNIA:** What is there to ask? *(In a hillbilly twang)* They're
- 21 all down at the outhouse, killin' a bear.
- 22 **OSWALD:** You girls are farcical. OK, I'll talk to her and give
- 23 her a thrill in her otherwise humdrum existence. *(He crosses*
- 24 *to DONNA JO.)* Hello there. *(DONNA JO turns and faces the*
- 25 *other way. It's plain to see she's bashful.)* My name is Charles
- 26 Oswald Tipinhimmer the Third... I'm president of my
- 27 class ... and just because I'm handsome doesn't mean I'm
- 28 arrogant. Have you noticed my superior physique! *(Flexes*
- 29 *his muscles.)* I work out. I know what you're thinking,
- 30 "Wow, what a good-looking piece of flesh." That's OK.
- 31 That's what all the girls say. So ... what do you think?
- 32 *(Nothing)* Speechless, huh? That's understandable. Most
- 33 women are when they're with me. See ya. *(He crosses back*
- 34 *to the GIRLS, who have been looking out the window.)*
- 35 **MIMI:** Well?

- 1 **OSWALD:** I left that girl with memories she'll take to the grave.
2 Now it's your turn. Go talk to her.
- 3 **MIMI:** I don't think ...
- 4 **OSWALD:** Come on, just once in your life try to be nice.
- 5 **MIMI:** OK, but it's not going to be easy. Come on, Petunia.
6 *(They cross to DONNA JO.)* Uh, my name is Mimi. *(DONNA*
7 *JO looks at the floor.)* This is Petunia. *(No response)* So, is that
8 a Polo dress you're wearing?
- 9 **DONNA JO:** *(Still holding her head down)* My mama made it.
- 10 **MIMI:** *(Pauses. She has no idea what to say.)* Oh. It's amazing what
11 people can do with burlap these day. *(She motions to*
12 *PETUNIA to say something.)*
- 13 **PETUNIA:** Uh, yes. I've never seen a potato sack look quite
14 that nice.
- 15 **DONNA JO:** My mama made it for me before she died.
16 *(Everything grows quiet. This information comes quite*
17 *by surprise.)*
- 18 **PETUNIA:** Your mother ... died?
- 19 **DONNA JO:** My mama used to make all my dresses. She made
20 me this doll, too. *(She holds up an old rag doll to MIMI.)*
21 That's OK, you can hold it. *(MIMI takes it.)*
- 22 **MIMI:** Petunia, her mama made this.
- 23 **DONNA JO:** Did your mama ever make you a doll?
- 24 **MIMI:** My mother can't open a can of sardines. If it couldn't
25 be gotten with a credit card, we did without.
- 26 **DONNA JO:** What's a credit card?
- 27 **PETUNIA:** A little piece of heaven, little cousin, a little piece
28 of heaven.
- 29 **DONNA JO:** If I had a credit card, could I see my mama?
- 30 **MIMI:** What do you mean?
- 31 **DONNA JO:** Well, you said that a credit card is a little piece of
32 heaven. They said my mama went to heaven, so if I could
33 get a credit card, maybe I could talk to my
34 mama again.
- 35 **MIMI:** *(Turns to PETUNIA.)* Petunia, are my eyes getting

1 all watery?

2 **PETUNIA:** I think so.

3 **MIMI:** Oh, great, my mascara will run.

4 **DONNA JO:** I'm really sorry.

5 **PETUNIA:** Sorry? For what?

6 **DONNA JO:** That her mama never made her a doll.

7 **MIMI:** *(Wondering how it could be true, but not in a snooty way)* You
8 feel sorry for me? *(Pause. MIMI hands the doll back to DONNA*
9 *JO.)* I'm beginning to feel a little sorry for
10 me too.

11 **OSWALD:** *(He's been staring out the window the whole time.)* Hey,
12 here they come!

13 **PETUNIA:** *(Rushing to the window)* Do you see any blood?

14 **OSWALD:** There's Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae. There's Elkin.

15 **MIMI:** What about Pete? Do you see Pete?

16 **OSWALD:** No. *(ELKIN, GLENDA MAE, and BRENDA MAE enter*
17 *hurriedly in a frazzle.)* What happened?! What happened?!
18 Where's Pete?

19 **PETUNIA:** Yes, where's Pete?

20 **MIMI:** Where is my perfume?

21 **ELKIN:** It was the biggest bear I've ever seen.

22 **OSWALD:** Forget the bear! Where's Pete?

23 **GLENDA MAE:** He was such a brave boy down at the
24 outhouse.

25 **PETUNIA:** *(Becoming impatient)* What is it?!

26 **GLENDA MAE:** That little wood house in the cornfield.

27 **OSWALD:** No! What happened to Pete?

28 **ELKIN:** Cousin Oswald, Cousin Petunia, Cousin Mimi, I'm
29 afraid I got some bad news. *(Everyone freezes with fear as*
30 *they can do nothing but stare at each other. The lights fade to*
31 *blackout.)*

32

33

SCENE TWO

34

35 *(Lights back up. GLENDA MAE is sitting on the floor breaking*

1 *green beans. OSWALD is staring out the window. BRENDA MAE*
 2 *is standing right beside him, looking lovingly at him. MIMI sits*
 3 *in a chair beside PETUNIA, who is asleep and has her head on*
 4 *MIMI's shoulder. ELKIN sits working on his slingshot.)*

5 **MIMI:** *(Shaking PETUNIA off her shoulder, waking her up.)*
 6 **Petunia, get off me. You're drooling all over my**
 7 **new blouse.**

8 **PETUNIA:** **What? Are we home? Where's Mummy?**

9 **MIMI:** **No, we're not home. We're still in the woods with our**
 10 **hillbilly cousins who just fed our brother to a wild bear.**

11 **PETUNIA:** **Oh yeah.**

12 **ELKIN:** **Now, I didn't say Pete got ate by a bear.**

13 **OSWALD:** **You said the bear chased him into the woods.**

14 **ELKIN:** **I also said I got a whack at his back paw with a good-**
 15 **sized rock. That bear was limpin'.**

16 **OSWALD:** **Oh, that's even better. Make the bear good and mad**
 17 **before he attacks my brother.**

18 **ELKIN:** **That bear was crippled. Pete has a good chance to**
 19 **outrun that bear.**

20 **GLEND MAE:** **I outrun bears all the time.**

21 **PETUNIA:** **You do?**

22 **ELKIN:** **Shoot, we all have.**

23 **OSWALD:** **Has a bear ever caught you?**

24 **GLEND MAE:** **Only once. But boy, was he ever worried.**

25 **OSWALD:** *(Getting his jacket)* **Well, I can't just stand around here**
 26 **and wait one minute longer. I'm going out there. *(The dog***
 27 *barks outside the door.)*

28 **ELKIN:** **Somebody's coming.**

29 **PETUNIA:** **Is it Pete? *(Everyone runs for the door. About that time***
 30 *the door opens and FESTER enters, dragging a large cloth bag*
 31 *behind him.)*

32 **FESTER:** **Git back dog! Git back! *(He fights the invisible dog, pulls***
 33 *in the bag, and closes the door.)* **Hey, everybody.**

34 **ELKIN:** **Fester, it's only you. Where have you been?**

35 **FESTER:** **Went down to my trap to see if I'd caught anything**

- 1 for supper, and I found this here critter all wrapped up.
2 **ELKIN:** It's too little to be a bear or elk.
3 **FESTER:** I figure it's a fox.
4 **MIMI:** (*Hiding behind PETUNIA*) It's still moving.
5 **OSWALD:** Whatever you have in there is still alive.
6 **FESTER:** Back up, and I'll hit it in the head with my ax.
7 (*PETE's voice is heard from inside the bag.*)
8 **PETE:** Get me out of here! Get me out of this bag.
9 **BRENDA MAE:** It's talking.
10 **FESTER:** That's funny, I've never heard a fox talk before.
11 **ELKIN:** Fester, put down that ax. You got a person in here.
12 (*ELKIN bends down and helps PETE out of the bag.*)
13 **MIMI:** Pete?!
14 **OSWALD:** Pete, it *is* you! You're alive!
15 **PETE:** Of course I'm alive!
16 **PETUNIA:** We were afraid you were eaten by the bear.
17 **PETE:** (*Very excited*) You guys won't believe this, but I outran
18 that old bear.
19 **ELKIN:** How?
20 **PETE:** (*Very excited and speaking very fast*) Well, I ran through
21 this cornfield, then I headed for the woods, with that old
22 bear right on my heel. (*Illustrating*) I dodged this way, I
23 dodged that way, I ran through a creek to lose my scent,
24 but nothing worked. That bear was still right on me. Then
25 I got to this hill and I tripped and fell and started rolling
26 through the snow! Rolling, rolling, rolling ...
27 **OSWALD:** And?
28 **PETE:** I rolled right into that animal trap, and it wrapped me
29 in that tarp and took me to the top of a walnut tree. I was
30 just dangling there, thirty feet up in midair. That old bear
31 was standing on his hind legs, trying his best to get to me.
32 He tried for a good forty-five minutes but finally gave up
33 and trotted off. Next thing I knew, Fester here had cut me
34 down.
35 **GLENDA MAE:** Fester, you're a hero.

- 1 **BRENDA MAE:** You saved cousin Pete's life.
- 2 **FESTER:** I did?
- 3 **PETE:** *(Still telling his story)* And anyway, I was a short three
- 4 feet from the jaws of death ...
- 5 **MIMI:** *(Sarcastically)* That's nice. *(Turns to OSWALD.)* Oswald,
- 6 where is our luggage?
- 7 **PETUNIA:** Still out on the porch. We haven't brought it in.
- 8 **PETE:** *(Trying to keep their attention)* And once I slipped, that
- 9 bear was right on top of me. But my superior knowledge
- 10 of the outdoors kicked in right at the precise moment —
- 11 **MIMI:** Fester, would you mind bringing in my luggage first?
- 12 **ELKIN:** I'll get them. Our hero needs to rest.
- 13 **MIMI:** I'll show you which ones are mine. *(MIMI and*
- 14 *ELKIN exit.)*
- 15 **PETE:** I came this close to death, but I wasn't ready to give
- 16 up. I wrestled that grizzly to the end.
- 17 **BRENDA MAE:** I'll get your luggage, cousin Oswald.
- 18 **OSWALD:** You don't have to do that.
- 19 **BRENDA MAE:** I don't mind. If I'm goin' to be your wife, I need
- 20 to practice being your slave. *(She exits.)*
- 21 **PETUNIA:** Donna Jo, why don't you and I put up the tree? All
- 22 this excitement has put me in the Christmas spirit. *(She*
- 23 *grabs DONNA JO who is still holding her rag doll and takes her*
- 24 *to the tree, where they busy themselves decorating it with*
- 25 *homemade ornaments.)*
- 26 **PETE:** *(Talking to himself now)* I got the most terrible scratch
- 27 right here on my elbow.
- 28 **OSWALD:** *(Still ignoring Pete)* Well, Fester, how does it feel to be
- 29 hero of the day?
- 30 **FESTER:** Oh, shucks.
- 31 **GLENDA MAE:** Sure, Fester, if it wasn't for your trap, Cousin
- 32 Pete would've been that there bear's Christmas supper.
- 33 **PETE:** Hey, what about me? I wrestled and outran that bear,
- 34 you know.
- 35 **OSWALD:** Get your luggage, Pete. *(PETE throws up his arms as*

1 *if to say "I give up" and exits just as ELKIN and MIMI enter.*
 2 *ELKIN carries a couple of suitcases and MIMI is carrying a*
 3 *large picture.)*

4 **MIMI:** Now, where shall I put this? *(She sees a picture of a fox*
 5 *hanging on the wall.) Here, this will work nicely. (She*
 6 *removes the picture of the fox and replaces it with the picture*
 7 *she's holding of herself.) There. This place feels more*
 8 **comfortable already.** *(BRENDA MAE and PETE re-enter with*
 9 *luggage.)*

10 **PETE:** Hey, I'm getting hungry. What are we going to eat
 11 **for dinner?**

12 **GLEND MAE:** I just finished making some of my famous frog
 13 **liver jelly.** That's what we usually eat for supper.

14 **OSWALD:** Frog ...

15 **PETE:** Liver ...

16 **MIMI:** Jelly?

17 **ELKIN:** Ummm, with fresh-baked biscuits. Sounds mighty fine.

18 **BRENDA MAE:** And I cooked up a right nice jackrabbit earlier
 19 **this evenin'.**

20 **ELKIN:** Jackrabbit and frog liver jelly. And it ain't even
 21 **Christmas day yet.**

22 **BRENDA MAE:** My jackrabbit is better than your old liver jelly
 23 **any day.** *(To OSWALD)* I'm the best cook in all of Cricket
 24 **County.**

25 **GLEND MAE:** I'm the best cook.

26 **BRENDA MAE:** I am!

27 **PETUNIA:** *(Still working on the tree with DONNA JO)* You
 28 **two sound like Mimi and me.** Always arguing about
 29 **something.**

30 **MIMI:** Like what?

31 **PETUNIA:** Oh, I don't know ... *(Remembers something.)* Like the
 32 **time you thought Charles Junior called the house to speak**
 33 **to you.**

34 **MIMI:** He did call to speak to me.

35 **PETUNIA:** He called to speak to me.

- 1 MIMI: Charles Junior wouldn't give you the time of day ...
- 2 PETUNIA: I beg your pardon?
- 3 PETE: *(To FESTER, who is playing with his ax)* Would you put
4 that thing down? You're going to hurt someone with it.
- 5 FESTER: I want to play with it.
- 6 OSWALD: That's not the way to talk to the cousin who just
7 saved your life.
- 8 PETE: I had a part in my escape too, you know!
- 9 GLENDA MAE: When Cousin Oswald marries me, he'll tell you
10 who's the best cook.
- 11 BRENDA MAE: He's not marryin' you, he's marryin' me. *(They*
12 *all jump in yelling at one another. DONNA JO crosses to Center*
13 *Stage and screams.)*
- 14 DONNA JO: Quiet! Quiet! *(Everyone grows quiet.)* It's Christmas.
15 It's Christmas, and we're all fussin'! Why can't we all just
16 get along? Whatever happened to silent night, holy night?
17 *(She clutches her doll and exits, running.)*
- 18 ELKIN: Donna Jo, wait. *(He goes after her.)*
- 19 OSWALD: She's right, you know. We shouldn't be arguing like
20 this.
- 21 PETUNIA: Mimi, I'm sorry I brought Charles Junior up.
- 22 PETE: Go ahead, Fester. Play with your ax. And thanks for
23 saving my life.
- 24 OSWALD: I'm sorry I snapped at you, Pete.
- 25 PETUNIA: Come on, Mimi. Let's go see if we can find Donna
26 Jo and apologize to her.
- 27 MIMI: OK. Wait! I can't go out there with a live deer and bear
28 running loose.
- 29 PETUNIA: We won't go far. Come on.
- 30 MIMI: Well, OK, but if I die, nobody's getting my inheritance.
31 I'm taking it with me. *(They exit.)*
- 32 GLENDA MAE: *(Crossing to OSWALD)* Cousin Oswald, you're
33 standing under the mistletoe.
- 34 BRENDA MAE: *(Grabbing the other arm)* And you know what
35 that means?

- 1 **OSWALD:** I'm going to have a lucky new year?
2 **GLEND A MAE:** Nope.
3 **OSWALD:** I get the largest portion of the inheritance?
4 **BRENDA MAE:** Nope. (*GLEND A MAE and BRENDA MAE close*
5 *their eyes and pucker up.*)
6 **OSWALD:** Hey, Pete?
7 **PETE:** Yes?
8 **OSWALD:** (*Looks up as though he sees something interesting.*) Come
9 here. (*PETE does.*) Well, I'll be.
10 **PETE:** What is it?
11 **OSWALD:** (*Slowly placing PETE between the girls*) I've never seen
12 anything like it.
13 **PETE:** What are you talking about?
14 **OSWALD:** Right up there, see?
15 **PETE:** Where?
16 **OSWALD:** (*Changing places with PETE*) Right up there. Here —
17 you can see it better from here.
18 **PETE:** I still don't see anything. (*Now PETE is standing between*
19 *the GIRLS.*)
20 **OSWALD:** Oh, it's just a bunch of mistletoe. OK, girls, let me
21 have it! (*The GIRLS, still with their lips puckered and eyes*
22 *closed, come close to PETE's face. PETE holds his hands up and*
23 *stops them.*)
24 **PETE:** Wait! I'm not a kissing cousin. (*The dog barks outside*
25 *again. Then ELKIN, DONNA JO, and PETUNIA enter,*
26 *dragging a large wooden box with them.*)
27 **OSWALD:** What in the world?
28 **ELKIN:** Hey, everybody, look what we found on the
29 front porch!
30 **OSWALD:** What is it?
31 **ELKIN:** That wooden thing attached to the front of our house!
32 **OSWALD:** No! (*Pointing to the box*) What is that?!
33 **ELKIN:** Some kind of old box. Somebody must have delivered
34 it just now.
35 **PETUNIA:** But who, I wonder.

- 1 **OSWALD:** You didn't see anyone out there?
2 **ELKIN:** No, just footprints leadin' away.
3 **OSWALD:** Now, that's mysterious.
4 **PETE:** Where's Mimi?
5 **PETUNIA:** Well, that's funny, she was right behind us.
6 **FESTER:** Open the trunk, open the trunk!
7 **ELKIN:** Just calm down, Fester. We need to check this
8 out closer.
9 **BRENDA MAE:** Looks like a letter taped to the top of the lid.
10 **FESTER:** Open the letter, open the letter!
11 **ELKIN, PETE, and OSWALD:** Fester! (*MIMI runs by the window,*
12 *screaming. The antlers are behind her.*)
13 **GLENDA MAE:** What was that?
14 **BRENDA MAE:** Sounded like a coyote.
15 **ELKIN:** (*Taking the letter*) Look, there's writin' on the outside.
16 **GLENDA MAE:** Let me see. (*Grabs the letter and reads the*
17 *envelope.*) Do-not-open-till-Christmas Eve.
18 **OSWALD:** (*Grabs the note.*) And it's signed "Uncle Zeke."
19 **FESTER:** I thought he was dead.
20 **BRENDA MAE:** He is. (*MIMI runs by again in the opposite*
21 *direction, still screaming and again followed by the antlers.*)
22 **FESTER:** Those coyotes are getting closer.
23 **PETE:** (*Referring to the box*) Do you think it's the inheritance?
24 **OSWALD:** I think so. Before he died, he probably asked
25 someone to deliver it to the cabin.
26 **PETE:** Then let's open it. Fester, give me your ax!
27 **ELKIN:** No, Cousin Pete. The letter says Christmas Eve. That's
28 not until tomorrow. We must do as the directions tell us.
29 (*MIMI runs by and stops at the window this time. She looks*
30 *through at everybody and screams. The next few lines are said*
31 *as MIMI is screaming.*)
32 **OSWALD:** Cousin Elkin is right. We should wait like the letter
33 says.
34 **GLENDA MAE:** What did you say?
35 **OSWALD:** I said, we should wait until Christmas Eve to open

1 the letter!

2 **BRENDA MAE:** We can't hear you for the coyotes! (*MIMI runs*
3 *off again.*)

4 **ELKIN:** We're not touching this trunk until Christmas Eve as
5 agreed! Now, Glenda Mae, Brenda Mae, fetch us our
6 supper so we can go on to bed and get a good night's
7 sleep.

8 **GLEND MAE:** OK, Cousin Elkin. Come on, Brenda Mae.

9 **PETUNIA:** Donna Jo, let's finish the tree. (*They cross back to the*
10 *tree. The dog barks. The door swings open. There stands MIMI*
11 *out of breath with some straw and weeds sticking out of her hair.*
12 *The dog keeps barking.*) **Mimi!**

13 **OSWALD:** Are you all right?

14 **MIMI:** I really appreciate my family coming to my rescue.

15 **ELKIN:** Rescue? You weren't chased by that bear, was you?

16 **MIMI:** (*Very agitated*) No, I was chased by a friend of Rudolph
17 the Red-Nosed Reindeer! Didn't you hear me screaming?

18 **FESTER:** We couldn't hear nothin' for those coyotes
19 surrounding the house.

20 **MIMI:** I'm having a nervous breakdown. If I could only watch
21 some of my favorite music videos to calm my nerves. (*To*
22 *FESTER, as the rest settle back down with their chores at hand*)
23 I don't suppose you have MTV, do you?

24 **FESTER:** No, I had my shots.

25 **MIMI:** Oh, I'm a nervous wreck. (*To herself*) **Remember the**
26 **money, Mimi. Remember, the money, Mimi.** (*She starts to sit*
27 *on the trunk. Everyone shouts at the same time.*)

28 **EVERYONE:** Mimi, No! (*She jumps back up.*)

29 **MIMI:** What?!

30 **ELKIN:** Don't sit on the trunk!

31 **OSWALD:** That's our inheritance.

32 **MIMI:** (*She starts fanning herself.*) **I need to calm down, I need**
33 **to calm down.** (*She crosses back to her picture and stares at it.*)
34 **There, I feel better.** (*Then she turns back around.*) **Did you**
35 **say that was our inheritance?**

- 1 **PETUNIA:** Yes. Before he died, Uncle Zack arranged to have
2 it delivered.
- 3 **MIMI:** *(Runs over to the chest and tries to open it.)* Give me my
4 **money! Give me my money so I can get out of this place!**
5 *(Everyone runs over and tries to stop her. The following lines are*
6 *all said at the same time.)*
- 7 **OSWALD:** Mimi, stop!
- 8 **PETUNIA:** You don't know what you are doing!
- 9 **GLENDA MAE:** Stop her, y'all! Stop her!
- 10 **BRENDA MAE:** We got to wait till Christmas Eve!
- 11 **PETE:** She's going to mess up everything.
- 12 **ELKIN:** The poor girl is goin' crazy!
- 13 **MIMI:** I've got to have my money! I've got to have my money!
14 *(MIMI fights them off and opens the trunk. Everyone quickly*
15 *gathers around the trunk and looks inside it.)*
- 16 **FESTER:** Goollee.
- 17 **ELKIN:** *(Slamming the lid shut)* We have got to respect Uncle
18 Zeke's wishes.
- 19 **OSWALD:** You're right, Cousin Elkin. It's just that the suspense
20 is killing us.
- 21 **MIMI:** *(Pulling PETUNIA Downstage as everyone else gathers*
22 *around the chest)* Petunia, I can't stand this one minute
23 longer.
- 24 **PETUNIA:** I know what you mean, but there's nothing else left
25 to do but wait.
- 26 **MIMI:** That's what you think.
- 27 **PETUNIA:** What do you mean?
- 28 **MIMI:** Tonight, as soon as everyone is asleep, we are looking
29 at that will.
- 30 **PETUNIA:** Mimi, we can't go against their wishes.
- 31 **MIMI:** You can join me or not, but I've got to make sure that
32 I leave this place with more than a nice run through the
33 forest. I am breaking into that trunk tonight. Are you with
34 me?
- 35 **PETUNIA:** OK, OK, but I still don't feel right about it.

1 **MIMI:** Tonight at midnight we meet at the trunk. *(They shake*
2 *on it as lights fade to blackout.)*

3

4

SCENE THREE

5

6 *(The KIDS are asleep on sleeping bags on the floor. There are now*
7 *presents under the tree. It's dark. MIMI and PETUNIA get up as*
8 *MIMI turns on her flashlight. They tiptoe to the chest in the middle*
9 *of the floor.)*

10 **MIMI:** I'm so nervous; my hands are shaking.

11 **PETUNIA:** Just hurry and look at the will before anybody
12 wakes up.

13 **MIMI:** Nobody's going to wake up. Stop worrying. Here, hold
14 the flashlight.

15 **PETUNIA:** This is so exciting! I can't stand it!

16 **MIMI:** Shhh. *(She slowly opens the trunk, reaches in, and pulls*
17 *out a rubber snake. The girls scream wildly. Everyone jumps ups*
18 *as ELKIN runs over and turns on the light. MIMI throws the*
19 *snake toward OSWALD, who then jumps around and screams*
20 *himself.)*

21 **FESTER:** What in the world is goin' on here?

22 **PETE:** What are you girls doin'?

23 **PETUNIA:** It was Mimi's idea. She wanted to see her
24 inheritance. *(ELKIN holds up the snake.)*

25 **MIMI:** *(Screaming)* Kill it! Kill it!

26 **ELKIN:** We can't kill this snake. It's harmless. Every winter
27 they make their way in here, where it's nice and warm.

28 **OSWALD:** I can't believe you'd stoop so low, Mimi.

29 **MIMI:** *(On the verge of tears)* I just want to get my money and
30 go home!

31 **PETE:** We can't read the will until Christmas Eve! Now, go
32 back to bed!

33 **PETUNIA:** *(Looking at her watch)* It's a quarter till. Nobody is
34 going to care if we open it a few minutes early.

35 **FESTER:** Sorry, Cousin Petunia. *(Turns to the others.)* Since

- 1 we're up anyway, why don't we go ahead and open
2 Christmas presents?
- 3 OSWALD: Christmas presents?
- 4 GLENDA MAE: Sure. What's Christmas without giving
5 presents?
- 6 FESTER: I'm first! *(Crossing to the tree and bringing a gift*
7 *to PETE. It's wrapped and plain to see that it's his ax.)*
8 Cousin Pete, I got you this present. Bet you can't guess
9 what it is.
- 10 PETE: Fester. You're giving me your ax?
- 11 FESTER: How did you know?
- 12 PETE: I can't take this. It belongs to you.
- 13 FESTER: *(Hurt)* You don't want my present?
- 14 PETE: Sure, it's just ...
- 15 ELKIN: *(Presenting one to OSWALD)* Oswald, this is from me
16 to you.
- 17 OSWALD: Elkin, you didn't have to do that.
- 18 ELKIN: Go ahead and open it up. *(OSWALD opens it and pulls*
19 *out ELKIN's slingshot.)*
- 20 OSWALD: It's your slingshot. But this is your pride and joy!
- 21 ELKIN: Aw, I can make me another one any time. That there
22 slingshot has killed more bear than any other this side of
23 Mosquito Ridge. It's famous.
- 24 OSWALD: And you're giving it to me?
- 25 ELKIN: Sure, you're my family.
- 26 GLENDA MAE and BRENDA MAE: *(Together)* It's our turn.
27 *(They bring PETUNIA a roughly wrapped package.)* Here,
28 Petunia, this is from the both of us.
- 29 PETUNIA: For me? Why, I don't know what to say.
- 30 GLENDA MAE: We wrote this Christmas card to go along with
31 the present. *(Reading a card)* We hope you like this present.
32 We hope it feels good in your belly.
- 33 BRENDA MAE: *(Taking the card)* And you will smack your lips
34 when you taste our frog liver jelly.
- 35 BRENDA MAE: Merry Christmas from Brenda Mae ...

- 1 **GLEND MAE:** And Glenda Mae.
- 2 **PETUNIA:** *(Trying to be sweet)* Oh, yummy.
- 3 **MIMI:** OK, everyone received a present but me. What's up with
4 that?
- 5 **DONNA JO:** *(Crossing to MIMI and holding out a roughly wrapped*
6 *package)* Here you go, Cousin Mimi. This is your Christmas
7 present from me.
- 8 **MIMI:** I don't suppose it was wrapped at Macy's.
- 9 **OSWALD:** *(Scolding her slightly)* Mimi.
- 10 **MIMI:** All right, all right, I will play along, and ... *(She unwraps*
11 *the package and finds DONNA JO's rag doll.)*
- 12 **PETUNIA:** Donna Jo, it's your doll.
- 13 **DONNA JO:** It's the one my mama made. And since your mama
14 never made you one, I thought you needed one to make
15 you feel good. That way you can always have it with you
16 and never be lonely.
- 17 **MIMI:** *(In shock)* Oswald, she gave me her doll.
- 18 **OSWALD:** Guys, we really appreciate the gifts. We just feel bad
19 that we didn't bring any for you.
- 20 **ELKIN:** Shoot, Cousin Oswald, Christmas is a time for giving.
21 We don't expect anything in return.
- 22 **OSWALD:** I don't know what to say.
- 23 **GLEND MAE:** Just say you'll marry me.
- 24 **PETE:** Guys, nothing we've ever obtained means as much as
25 these presents we just received.
- 26 **ELKIN:** *(Looking at his watch he has pulled out of his pocket)* It's
27 midnight. We can open the wood box now. *(The CITY*
28 *COUSINS throw their gifts down and quickly make their way to*
29 *the box.)* OK, everybody, gather around and take a seat.
30 *(Everyone gathers around.)*
- 31 **PETUNIA:** *(Standing next to the trunk)* OK, everyone, may I have
32 your attention? We have gathered here this Christmas Eve
33 for the sole purpose of reading the will of one dear Uncle
34 Zack.
- 35 **EVERYONE:** Zeke!

1 **PETUNIA:** And I for one am glad to be a part of this little
 2 family gathering to witness such a historic event as this
 3 communing with our fellow brethren and the dispersing of
 4 our dear uncle's loot.

5 **GLENDA MAE and BRENDA MAE:** Amen.

6 **MIMI:** Petunia, put a lid on it and sit down.

7 **ELKIN:** Well put, Cousin Petunia. (*Standing before the chest*) And
 8 now, Cousin Oswald, if you would be so kind as to open
 9 the box, we will go on with the reading.

10 **OSWALD:** Sure. (*He opens the trunk.*)

11 **PETUNIA:** This is so exciting.

12 **OSWALD:** There are two pieces of paper. One says "Oswald,
 13 Pete, Petunia, and Mimi."

14 **MIMI:** That's us.

15 **OSWALD:** The other says "Elkin, Fester, Donna Jo, Brenda
 16 Mae, and Glenda Mae."

17 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Holding up her hand*) I'm Glenda Mae.

18 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Holding up hers*) I'm Brenda Mae.

19 **ELKIN:** Yes, we know that. (*ELKIN takes the two sheets*
 20 *from OSWALD.*)

21 **PETUNIA:** Oh, read ours first.

22 **ELKIN:** Sure thing, Cousin. (*He unfolds the paper and reads it.*) I,
 23 Uncle Zeke, being of sound mind and body with lots of
 24 loot, hereby leave my spoiled, greedy, egocentric, self-
 25 centered, self-indulgent, and stingy nieces and nephews
 26 from the city who never visited me or wrote me a letter
 27 while I was alive but waited till I was dead to see how
 28 much money they could get out of me ...

29 **OSWALD:** (*To PETE*) This is not sounding good.

30 **ELKIN:** To them I leave the total sum of five hundred thousand
 31 dollars to spend on their selfish wants
 32 and desires.

33 **MIMI:** Five hundred thousand dollars?

34 **PETE:** Is that all?

35 **PETUNIA:** We came all this way at Christmas time for



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