

A TOY'S STORY

by Terrie Todd

GENRE: Dramatic monologue

SYNOPSIS: A monologue in which Buzz New Year, the hottest toy on the shelf, speaks to the audience about his disillusionment with humans and their values.

DIRECTOR'S TIPS: Much of Buzz's monologue is a reliving of his first days of 'ownership', so let the words carry their own weight and really take us through those times. Don't let your actor be satisfied with just a glum 'reporting' of the information: make us see the delight and feel the despair by letting each line be fully realized by the actor's delivery.

It's tempting to 'play the ending' at times---we know the story concludes on a minor note, so we'll deliver even the lighter lines with an edge of sadness. This isn't necessarily wrong, but a more interesting choice is to let Buzz get caught up in his own memory, beaming with recalled joy as he's relating the good times. This gives the monologue infinitely more depth and texture, and keeps the tone of the piece from seeming flat. Punching the high points also tend to make the low points more dramatic by way of contrast. This doesn't mean the lines have to be 'milked' for more than they were intended, but let the lines fully mean what they mean. Don't push for more than that, but don't settle for less.

TIME: 4 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1M

THEME: Christmas; New Years

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 2

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Christmas; New Years

SUGGESTED USE: Church Service; Special holiday event

CHARACTERS:

BUZZ

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: White coveralls decorated with gadgets and buttons, on his head a helmet with some kind of light, across his back a pair of wings, one of which is broken and sagging sadly

SOUND: Wireless microphone (optional)

LIGHTING: General stage or spot on Buzz

SETTING: A home

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A TOY'S STORY *Terrie Todd*

Lights up on BUZZ.

BUZZ: It's two days after Christmas and I'm broken already. I can't believe that a mere three days ago I was the hottest item on the store shelves. I was the coveted toy, the long-awaited dream come true. You can imagine how elated I was to be purchased just a half hour before closing time on Christmas Eve. I smiled and smiled as I was lovingly wrapped and placed under the tree with care, knowing that the one for whom I was chosen was sleeping soundly in the next room. With glee, he tore off my wrappings on Christmas morning. With squeals of delight, he pulled my string and watched my light light and my whistle whistle. No one seemed to notice or care that my sold-separately, glow-in-the-dark nuclear radar lazer-phazer got tossed out with the wrapping paper. It didn't matter, for we had a wonderful Christmas morning together, he and I. We must have saved the universe at least a dozen times before noon.

Then the cousins arrived and I was greeted by a whole new chorus of shrieks as I was mauled and man-handled and tossed from child to child until I was left in a corner, my light-bulb slowly fading, as the children lost interest in me and went on to the next thing... tormenting the girls by flushing WNBA Barbie's kneepads down the toilet.

Oh, I should introduce myself. I am Buzz New Year, Space Ranger, Cosmic Holiday Protection Unit. And my short life has taught me much about the human condition. It's not a pretty realization. From my vantage point as a toy, the only thing I can conclude is that there is no life after Christmas Day.

The carols they played in the store gave me such hope. "Joy to the World" they said. They made me think that Christmas was a time of joy. Not superficial toy-joy that's gone in a few hours, but joy that lasts all year round because it carries eternity in its message. "Let Earth Receive Her King" they sang. I watched the Christmas parade through the store window and I saw the king... I think. He wore a funny red suit and shouted "Ho Ho Ho, Merry Christmas." It was all rather confusing and made me glad that I was only a toy. Who can understand the complexities of human beings and their holidays? Perhaps they don't even know what joy is.

All I know is that joy doesn't come from a store, that's for sure.

And now, it's on to another holiday... New Years! This is my specialty. Too bad I'm broken. Oh well... with the New Year's Eve celebrations my people have planned, they'll look as bad as I do by New Year's Day. Me, I'll just sit here on the closet floor until spring cleaning comes around, and then... who knows? Perhaps a new battery and some crazy glue will put me back into circulation for awhile...perhaps I'll go into the Goodwill box for some other, less fortunate child whose eyes will light up with glee... temporarily.