Christmas at the O.K. Corral

A gang of bad guys in the old West try to kidnap Santa and ruin Christmas, only to be done in by the good guys in the red hats! Perfect for a large cast. . . .

by Patsy Miller and Cheryl Thurston

Characters

TWO NARRATORS
Clem
Sarah
Jane
Bart
Slim
Shorty
Annie
Jesse
Billy
TWO BOYS
THREE GIRLS
Santa

BEFORE RISE: NARRATORS enter, in front of curtain, and address audience.

1ST NARRATOR: Hello, everyone. We’d like to welcome you to our Christmas play.

2ND NARRATOR: And we bet our bottom dollar this play is different from any other Christmas play you’ve ever seen!

1ST NARRATOR: We decided we were tired of the same old thing with Santa, and reindeer, and blah, blah, blah. We wanted to do something new and different.

2ND NARRATOR: So we came up with a story not very many people know about.

1ST NARRATOR: It’s definitely great, and it’s definitely different.

2ND NARRATOR: It’s called “Christmas at the O.K. Corral.”

1ST NARRATOR: It begins in the center of a small town in the wild, wild West.

2ND NARRATOR: All the cowboys and cowgirls are decorating the town tree. . . . (NARRATORS walk to side of stage and sit on stools as curtain opens.)

***

SETTING: The O.K. Corral, in the wild, wild West. A cardboard fence at one side of stage has a sign reading, THE
O.K. CORRAL. On the other side of stage are two bales of hay and a bench. At center is a large, cardboard cactus with pegs or nails protruding from it (on which to hang ornaments). If desired, water trough, hitching post, and other touches may also be placed on stage.

AT RISE: BOYS and GIRLS are decorating cactus with Christmas ornaments.

1ST GIRL: Isn’t this a beautiful Christmas tree?

1ST BOY: Sure is!

2ND GIRL: It’s even more beautiful than last year’s tree!

1ST BOY: Sure is!

3RD GIRL: I just love decorating the tree. It’s the best part of Christmas.

1ST BOY: Sure is!

2ND BOY: I don’t know—I think caroling is the best part. Come one, everyone! Let’s sing! (BOYS and GIRLS sing to tune of “Oh Christmas Tree.”)

GIRLS and BOYS (Singing):
Oh, Christmas tree; oh, Christmas tree,
How prickly are your branches.
You’re not so hot, but all we’ve got
To decorate our ranches.
Your shape is not a normal one
Of evergreen or aluminum.
But, Christmas tree, oh, Christmas tree,
You’re all we’ve got with branches!
(They continue to decorate tree. NARRATORS get off stools and step center to address audience.)

1ST NARRATOR: In every western, the people are divided into two categories. First, there are the good guys. (CLEM, SARAH, JANE, BART, SLIM, and SHORTY, wearing red hats, enter. GIRLS and BOYS applaud and cheer.)

2ND NARRATOR: The good guys always wear red hats and, of course, are very, very good.

CLEM: Boy, are we good!

1ST NARRATOR: But every western also has another category of people: the bad guys. (ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY swagger in. GIRLS and BOYS boo and hiss.)

2ND NARRATOR: The bad guys are always lowdown, rotten—and mean!

ANNIE: Boy, are we mean!

1ST NARRATOR: Well, it looks like we have everyone on stage now—or just about everyone. So, let’s go on with the show! (NARRATORS return to stools to watch the action.)

BART: Well, tonight’s the big night! Santa Claus is coming to town!

JANE: I can’t wait! I’ve been so good this year!

SLIM: Me, too!

SARAH: So have I!

SHORTY: We all have. (SHORTY looks at ANNIE.) Well, almost all.

BART (Looking at ANNIE): But Santa knows who’s been bad and who’s been good. He’ll come to see some of us, for sure!

CLEM: And he’ll be here any minute. We’d better stop all this talking and get ready.

SLIM: Yep, we have to get the cookies and milk ready to leave at the O.K. Corral. (To audience) When you don’t have a fireplace, you just have to make do.

JANE (Putting glass of milk and plate of cookies on bench): There. Let’s
hurry. He'll be here soon. And you know how he is—he has to eat his milk and cookies in private.

**SHORTY:** Come on—let's go. (**CLEM, SLIM, SHORTY, SARAH, JANE, BART, GIRLS, and BOYS exit. ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY move center.**)

**JESSE:** Christmas. Bah, humbug!

**ANNIE:** That line belongs in another play.

**JESSE:** Oh, that's right. Then how about: Christmas. Bah, horse feathers!

**ANNIE:** That's better. (**ANNIE looks at decorated cactus.**) Look at this. Whoever heard of decorating a cactus?

**JESSE:** And cookies and milk—ugh. I'd rather have a big juicy steak!

**ANNIE:** Those good guys are just too—well, good.

**BILLY:** They make me sick!

**JESSE:** I wish we could figure out a way to make them miserable.

**ANNIE:** We could steal the Christmas tree decorations.

**JESSE:** Not bad enough.

**BILLY:** We could eat Santa's cookies.

**JESSE:** Not bad enough. (**JESSE walks around, scratching head. After a moment, BILLY approaches him, taps him on shoulder, and whispers in his ear. JESSE grins.**) That's it! Billy, you're a genius! (**JESSE quickly whispers to ANNIE, who lights up with evil smile.**)

**ANNIE:** Great idea! But we'd better hide—and fast. Santa will be here any minute now! (**ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY hide in various places on stage, or just off stage. SANTA enters, carrying a sack.**)

**SANTA:** Ho! Ho! Ho! Oh, look! I just love cookies and milk! (**SANTA puts bag down behind bale of hay. As he picks up a cookie, JESSE and ANNIE step out from hiding.**)

**ANNIE:** Too bad you won't get to taste those cookies, Santa Claus. Reach for the sky! (**JESSE and ANNIE fold their arms and look mean.**)

**SANTA (Dropping cookie and holding up his hands):** Who are you? What is the meaning of this?

**JESSE:** This is what you call an ambush! (**BILLY steps forward with rope and ties SANTA's hands behind his back.**)

**SANTA:** An ambush? But, why?

**ANNIE:** Because we hate Christmas!

**SANTA (Incredulous):** You hate Christmas? Why?

**JESSE:** Because we've been too bad to get any presents.

**ANNIE:** And if we're not going to get any presents, we don't think anyone else should, either.

**JESSE:** That's right. There won't be any Christmas at the O.K. Corral this year.

**SANTA:** But you can't. . .

**ANNIE (Interrupting):** That's enough! We don't want to hear anything else you have to say.

**JESSE:** Come on. Let's get out of here before everyone else comes back. (**They lead SANTA off. After a moment, CLEM, SLIM, SHORTY, SARAH, JANE, BART, GIRLS and BOYS enter.**)

**SARAH:** Look! The cookies and milk are still here.
SLIM: And there aren’t any presents under the tree.

BART: Santa should have come by now.

CLEM: Why do you suppose he’s so late?

JANE: I hope nothing’s happened to him.

SHORTY (Looking behind bale of hay): Look! There’s a red bag back here! (Picks it up)

SARAH (Looking inside): And it’s full of presents.

SLIM: It got to be Santa’s bag.

BART: But where’s Santa?

CLEM: You don’t suppose... .

JANE: I do suppose! The bad guys must have kidnapped Santa Claus!

SHORTY: I’ll bet they ambushed him!

SARAH: We have to find him—or else Christmas will have to be canceled!

SLIM: You’re right. Let’s go!

ALL (As they exit; ad lib): We have to hurry! Not much time left! Poor Santa! (Etc. NARRATORS step to center.)

1ST NARRATOR: Well, you might have guessed that something would happen to Santa. After all, the bad guys always have to do something bad.

2ND NARRATOR: And was that ever rotten! Why, who knows what they could be doing to Santa right now!

1ST NARRATOR: Don’t worry. They won’t have time to do much. Remember, the good guys are already on their way to find him.

2ND NARRATOR: I hope they hurry!

1ST NARRATOR: They will. (Looking off) In fact, I think I hear them coming back right now!

2ND NARRATOR: That was fast! (Peering off) Oh, no, wait a minute. It’s not the good guys. It’s the bad guys! And Santa’s with them! (NARRATORS return to stools. ANNIE and JESSE enter and look around.)

JESSE: The coast is clear. Come on! (BILLY and SANTA enter. Rope is wrapped around SANTA; BILLY holds one end of it. JESSE pushes SANTA down on bench, then laughs maliciously.) Well, we sure did spoil Christmas for all those goody, goody guys.

ANNIE: No Santa Claus—no Christmas! (ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY laugh.)

BILLY: I can’t wait to see their faces! They can’t do anything without him! (Points to SANTA and continues laughing, but ANNIE looks thoughtful)

ANNIE: But what are we going to do with him? (JESSE and BILLY stop laughing.)

JESSE: Hm-m-m. I guess we can’t just sit here with him forever. (Scratches head) Well, since we kidnapped him, I guess we need to ask for a ransom.

ANNIE: I know! We’ll write a note asking for all the money in the bank!

JESSE: Good idea! (BILLY nods enthusiastically, then, pulls pencil and paper from his pocket. He hands them to ANNIE and turns around so that ANNIE can use his back to write on.)

ANNIE (Writing): Dear good guys—(Looks up; to others) What should I say? (CLEM, SLIM, SHORTY, SARAH, JANE and BART sneak on stage. ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY do not see them.)
JESSE: Let’s see... We have kidnapped Santa Claus.

ANNIE (Repeating as she writes): We have kidnapped Santa Claus.

BILLY: If you ever want to see him again...

ANNIE (Writing): If you ever want to see him again...

JESSE: Take all the money out of the bank, put it in a suitcase, take it to the edge of town, and put it behind the big rock next to the—

ANNIE: Wait a minute! You’re going too fast!

SLIM (Grabbing JESSE): No, he’s not going anywhere! (CLEM grabs ANNIE, SHORTY grabs BILLY. SARAH grabs BILLY’s rope, while JANE and BART untie SANTA.)

SARAH: All right, now, put your hands up! (ANNIE, BILLY, and JESSE raise their hands.)

CLEM: So you thought you could ruin our Christmas, huh? I guess we showed you.

SLIM: That was a low-down, rotten thing to do.

SHORTY: It sure was! Didn’t you ever learn that crime doesn’t pay?

SARAH: I guess they didn’t. But they will now!

CLEM: We’ll put them in jail for the rest of their lives!

JANE: Wait a minute. We can’t do that.

CLEM: Why not?

JANE: We don’t have a jail.

CLEM: Oh, that’s right.

JANE: Besides, we wouldn’t want to do that. It’s too mean!

SHORTY: Well, what can we do? They have to be punished.

SARAH: That’s true. (Pauses, then suddenly) I know! (She goes to SANTA) Santa, can you help us think of some punishment?

SANTA: I do happen to have an idea.

SARAH: What is it? Tell us, Santa.

SANTA: I think they should be sentenced to a year’s hard labor—in my toy shop. They can help make toys for little boys and girls. I’ll bet that will change their minds about Christmas.

SARAH: Good idea! That’s perfect! (ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY begin to moan and groan.)

ANNIE: But it’s so cold up there!

JESSE: I hate snow!

BILLY: I don’t want to live at the North Pole.

SLIM: You don’t have to.

ANNIE (Brightening): We don’t?

SLIM: No. We could keep you tied up instead.

ANNIE: Oh, well, maybe a little snow isn’t so bad after all. (GIRLS and BOYS enter.)

GIRLS and BOYS (Ad lib): Yippee! You found Santa! Santa, are you all right? What did they do to you? Tell us what happened. (Etc.)

CLEM: Just chill, everyone. Everything’s under control.

1ST GIRL: That’s a relief! If anything
ever happened to you, Santa, the boys and girls all over the world would have no Christmas.

SANTA: Yes, I’m very lucky, indeed. But let’s stop talking about all that. It’s Christmas Eve. Wouldn’t you like to see what I’ve brought you?

ALL (Together): Yes! (SANTA passes out presents to everyone but JESSE, ANNIE, and BILLY, who sit and look dejected. Finally, SANTA looks at them, then reaches into his bag, and takes out three more presents. He hands them to JESSE, ANNIE, and BILLY.)

SANTA: These are for you.

ANNIE (Surprised): Presents—for us?

JESSE: But Santa, everyone knows you only give presents to kids who have been good.

BILLY: And we’ve been bad.

JESSE: Very bad. We don’t deserve any presents.

SANTA: I know that. But just this once I’m going to make an exception. You’ll need these if you’re going to come to the North Pole with me. Open the packages. (ANNIE, JESSE, and BILLY open packages. Inside each is a red hat.)

JESSE (Skeptically): Red hats?

SANTA (Firmly): Red hats. (He puts hat on each of them.)

ANNIE (Starting to smile): Hey, I feel funny.

JESSE: So do I. How about you, Billy? (BILLY grins and nods.)

SANTA: Is it a good feeling?

ANNIE: Yup. I haven’t felt this good in a long time!

SANTA: That’s because you’re turning into good guys.

BILLY (Alarmed): Good guys!

SANTA: Of course. I can’t have any bad guys working with me at the North Pole. It may take a little while, but eventually you three are going to be good guys, through and through! (He slaps them on the back. CLEM, SLIM, SHORTY, SARAH, JANE, BART, GIRLS and BOYS cheer.)

1ST GIRL: Three more good guys for the O.K. Corral. You know, this is the best Christmas ever!

1ST BOY: Sure is!

SANTA: Let’s celebrate with a song. (He looks down at glass and tray.) And some cookies and milk! (SANTA raises glass in a toast as everyone gathers around, facing audience. NARRATORS join the group. SANTA bites into cookie and smiles, as others begin to sing to the tune of “Deck the Halls.” Some may decorate the fence with holly as the group sings.)

ALL (Singing):
Deck the fence with boughs of holly
Fa la la la la la la la la.
’Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa la la la la la la la la.
Don our hats and join together,
Fa la la la la la la la la.
We’ll be good guys, now, forever,
Fa la la la la la la la la.
(All shout and wave hats in the air.)
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night! (Curtain)

THE END

(Production Notes on page 52)