



“NO ROOM FOR JESUS”

Written by Joe Rieger

CAST

Anchorman (voice only):	Introduces us to our roving reporter
Susan Seeks :	A reporter who is at the mall trying to uncover the true meaning of Christmas
Businessman:	A nervous insurance broker who may be bending the law a bit to make his quota
College Student:	Stressed out female student who is cramming for finals
Gothic Girl	A middle school gothic type who is down on Christmas and everything else
Shopping Queen	Stella, a “shop until you drop” mother of two incredibly spoiled children.
Stella’s Girl	total brat ,5 to 8 years old
Stella’s Husband	Stella’s “shop until you drop” habits are killing him and souring him to Christmas
Football Fan	A selfish overzealous fan who thinks Christmas is all about parties, football and big screen TVs
Church Treasurer	Ron, an agitated church treasurer who is letting a children’s Christmas pageant turn him into Mr. Scrooge
Bible Reading Girl	A 12-13 year old girl who introduces our reporter to the real meaning of Christmas and reads to us from Luke 2
Santa (mall type)	A Santa in the background with children lined up to see him (no lines)
Children and Moms waiting in line for Santa	(no lines)

Assorted kids and Adult shoppers

passing by on stage

SETTING:

A busy mall at the height of the Christmas shopping season. Here we have a television news reporter on the hunt to find the true meaning of Christmas.

(A newscaster speaks from a remote microphone (out of view from the audience))

NEWSCASTER:

With less than six shopping days left until Christmas, retailers are pulling out the stops to draw shoppers to their stores. Our on the spot reporter, Susan Seeks is at the West Farms Mall in Farmington trying to uncover the true meaning of Christmas. Susan.

REPORTER:

Yes, Mark it's a beehive of activity here as you would expect for this time of the year. Things have even gotten a little ugly though, due to a shortage of the newest groovy girl dolls – the hottest present of the 2004 Christmas season. Riot police were summoned earlier to restore order, but things are back to normal now. Riots aside, there's something – and I can't put my finger on it – that's conspicuously absent from Christmas this year. We'll be speaking to yuletide shoppers to get their take on this holiday and hear what Christmas means to them. Here comes someone now.

(Enter stage right – a business man in suit and overcoat walking briskly with briefcase in hand)

REPORTER:

Excuse me sir, Susan Seeks of WYOY News. Can you tell me what ... *(she's abruptly cut off by the ring of his cell phone).*

BUSINESSMAN:

(Answers his phone) Hello. Hey Max, I'm glad you called. We've problems. The press is all over me – I've got cameras in my face. Someone is on to us. I'll call you back *(clicks off the phone and tightly clutches his briefcase in his arms).*

BUSINESSMAN:

I don't care what Elliot Spitzer thinks. I'm just a mid-level insurance broker trying to make an honest living. I didn't rig any bids.

REPORTER:

Ooo -kay, that's all well and good (*surprised and confused*). This isn't about Elliot Spitzer. I'm interviewing people to learn what Christmas means to them. That's all.

BUSINESSMAN:

You're kidding right? This is some kind of ploy to get me off my guard. I know how you Feds work.

REPORTER:

No sir. I'm a reporter doing a piece on Christmas. I mean, HELLO, it's December 19th and we're smack dab in the middle of a mall decorated to the gills. Please tell us. What does Christmas mean to you?

BUSINESSMAN:

Who's got time for Christmas? It's the end of the year and I'm running 8% below my sales quota. If I don't hit my numbers, there's no bonus. If there's no bonus, there's no Christmas! Santa blows right by the Donaldson house and the Missus can forget about the diamond necklace she's been expecting all year. Oh man, it's gonna be a long-cold winter in the Donaldson house. (*walks away and calls Max back on his cell – exit stage left*).

REPORTER:

Not exactly the Norman Rockwell Christmas scene I was trying to paint, but it will have to do for now. Oh, here comes another person.

(*Enter stage left – a college girl with heavy backpack and huge cup of coffee in her hand*)

REPORTER:

Excuse me Miss. Can you tell me what Christmas means to you and who you are shopping for?

COLLEGE STUDENT:

Christmas is like the very last thing on this girl's brain. IT'S FINALS lady! Final exams – you know, cramming a whole semester's worth of studying into one week. No sleep, no fun, no life. Shopping? I wish! I'm here at the mall for the caffeine. I should just get a Starbucks I.V. I am sooo not ready for my Western Civ exam. That professor is evil I tell you, eee-vil. I'm dead. No I'm deader than dead. (*exits stage right – mumbling to herself*).

REPORTER:

Wow, we're off to a great start, aren't we?

(*Enter stage right – young middle school girl all “gothed out” in black*)

REPORTER:

Oh good, here comes a sweet young girl. I bet she has visions of sugar plums dancing in her head. Hello there young lady. Would you please tell us what Christmas means to you?

GOTHIC GIRL:

Young lady – young lady? I don't see any young lady here. I'm Sandra, but everyone calls me Abbie – that's short for Abysmal (*pronounced: a biz mal*). Don't get me going on this stupid holiday. It's all about people spending too much money on presents they can't afford – for people they can't stand. Hypocrites. When all is said and done, the holiday comes and goes and people are left with shallow memories and deep credit card debt. And then we get to look forward to the coldest and darkest part of winter. I hate this time of year.

(Gothic girl exits stage left)

REPORTER:

Wow, I guess they won't be singing "have a holly jolly Christmas" at her house tonight. Oh good. This woman is loaded up with presents and ready for Christmas.

(Enter stage left – "Shopping Queen" mother loaded with bags of presents and being pulled by two young and impatient children).

REPORTER:

Hello, what's your name and would you mind sharing what Christmas means to you?

SHOPPING QUEEN:

Hi, my name is Stella and it would be my pleasure to share what Christmas means to me. I LOOOVE Christmas: the malls, the beautiful decorations and last but not least, the shopping. Shop until you drop I always say. After all, Christmas is all about the presents: presents, presents, presents. Hey, you look like you're my sister Margie's size. Would you try this sweater on for me? (*she begins putting the sweater on our reporter before she has a chance to answer*). Oh it looks kind of tight on you. Maybe you're not as slim as I thought. Try these slacks on (*she begins to hand the slacks to the reporter when the children start to act up*).

(The two children begin clamoring to leave – one tugs on mom's left arm and the other on mom's right).

YOUNG GIRL #1:

Mom, you promised that we'd get to see Santa before we go home. I just have to have that new groovy girl doll. I want to go and I want to go right now!

YOUNG GIRL # 2:

Yeah mommy, I want to make sure he's got my list. If I don't get everything on my list, heads are gonna roll.

ALL THREE GIRLS:

(chanting in unison) Santa, Santa, Santa ...

SHOPPING QUEEN:

Please, please kids – There's an Andrew Jackson in it for each of you (holds up a twenty dollar bill) if you let me go to one more store before we see Santa.

(The reporter doesn't even attempt to conceal her expression of disgust, but the children clam up instantly. They grab the twenty dollar bills and stuff them into their pockets).

ALL 3 GIRLS:

(totally ignoring their agreement, they resume chanting) Santa, Santa, Santa...

SHOPPING QUEEN:

Oh, don't you just love their enthusiasm for this holiday? Okay kids, have it your way. We're off to see Santa. Goodbye and Merry Christmas! *(Exit stage right – kids pulling mom by her coat towards the Santa in the background).*

REPORTER:

Kids. You gotta love'em. Good, here comes a nice looking man ... and oh look, no children. Too bad. *(said sarcastically).*

(Enter stage right – a man with a shopping bag)

REPORTER:

Excuse me sir. Would you mind telling us what you think Christmas is all about?

STELLA'S HUSBAND:

For starters, I hate everything about Christmas: the crowded malls, the tacky decorations and most of all the shopping. "Shop until you drop" my wife Stella always says. She'll shop until I drop. We're in debt up to our eyeballs. She's killing me... KIL-LING ME! Belly up, belly up I tell you when the Visa bill hits us in January. Oh there she is now. Stella don't go into that store! STEL-LAAH (*he runs towards his wife - exit stage left*).

(*Enter stage left – a stocky football fan wearing a football jersey and carrying two grocery bags filled with chips and party food*)

REPORTER:

Now this guy looks like he knows how to have fun. Excuse me sir, would you tell us what Christmas means to you?

FOOTBALL FAN:

Sure. Christmas is One – Big - Party. A celebration of sports – all kinds of sports. We're heading into the most wonderful time of the year: the NFL playoffs and all its glory. Plus we have college bowl games, pro hockey, pro basketball AND college hoops are just starting to get interesting. I'm off work for two weeks and it's time to par-tee.

REPORTER:

Yes that's great and all, but what about your wife and family? Any family gatherings or maybe even some church activities in your plans?

FOOTBALL FAN:

(*Looks at her as if she were from Mars*) What color is the sky in your world, lady? Who needs family and church when you've got a 42 inch plasma high definition television and the World Champion New England Patriots?

REPORTER:

That says it all brother. What was I thinking? You are one deep and sensitive individual (*said sarcastically*). Go Pats! (*raises her hand and gives him a high five*).

(*Football fan exits –stage right*)

REPORTER:

Boy I'm batting a thousand today. I'll give this one more shot. Let's grab this gentleman right here.

(Enter stage right – a conservatively dressed man who is very agitated and mumbling to himself)

REPORTER:

Excuse me sir, I'm Susan Seeks from WYOY News. We're doing a holiday special interest story. Would you please tell us who you are and what you do for a living?

CHURCH TREASURER:

I'm Ron. Ron Miserly and I'm our church's treasurer.

REPORTER:

Great, a church person. Surely you can tell us about the true meaning of Christmas.

TREASURER:

Aah, Christmas.... don't go there.

REPORTER:

What, you too? What about peace on earth, good will toward men?

TREASURER:

Stow that talk sister. We've got trouble – big trouble. Diane, our Director of Children's Ministries, has gone way over budget for this year's Christmas pageant. She plans to use real animals – and lots of them - in this year's show. Apparently money is no object in her world.

REPORTER:

Sounds fun and it will make it more authentic.

TREASURER:

(Repeats what she said in a mocking tone) Sounds fun and it will make it more authentic. Get real lady! Besides the high cost, we've just finished a very expensive renovation of our sanctuary. Do you know how much damage a herd of goats can do?

(cell phone rings – he answers it)

TREASURER:

Hello, Ron here. Camels Diane, real camels? *(spoken in a calm and collect tone)*. ARE YOU INSANE? Not one hoof of one camel will ever set foot in our beautiful new sanctuary. (pause while he listens to her) What part of "NO" don't you understand? NO, N – O, No! If English isn't getting through, how about German – "nein" or Russian - "nyet" or French - "non". Get the picture? I'm hanging up now Diane. I'm not list – en –ing (*"listening" is sung*) La la la la la la. (click – hangs up phone).

I'm sorry; I have to get back to the church right away (*starts to run off the stage – exit stage left*).

REPORTER:

(*Yelling to the treasurer*) But what about the true meaning of Christmas?

TREASURER:

(*Treasurer yells from offstage*) Look it up in the Bible... Luke chapter 2.

REPORTER:

Gee thanks. Boy, he was a lot of help. Remind me not to go to that church for Christmas service.

(*From the far left corner of the stage, a young boy sits reading a Bible*)

BIBLE READING GIRL:

(*The girl calls to the reporter*) Ma'am, he said to look it up in Luke chapter two. Want to hear what God has to say about the real meaning of Christmas?

REPORTER:

Well yes, yes I do.

BIBLE READING GIRL:

It's not about big bonuses, diamond necklaces, malls, football or plasma TV's. It's about a God who loves us so much that He became one of us. It's about sending His Son to earth so He could take the punishment for our sins. My Grandfather told me all about it. Here, let me read Luke 2 to you.

BIBLE READING BOY:

(*reads the scriptures*)

Luke 2:8-14

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

(At the conclusion of this reading, the curtain opens to a manger scene and the children will sing select Christmas songs).

THE END