

Christmas On Mars

A musical play for young performers

Words and Music by Cenarth Fox

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Cast

Speaking Parts

BETA - bossy Martian

RIGEL - Martian yokel, laid-back, super relaxed

DENEBO - Martian beatnik, cool dude

MARTIAN 1 - helper for Beta

ALCOR - fussy, busybody, excessively neat and tidy

LUYTEN - pompous Martian, snob

DYNAMIC DOLL - male or female Christmas present

MARTIAN 2 - helper for Beta

Chorus

As many Martians as you can safely accommodate on stage.

Set

Somewhere on Mars. If you use a backdrop it could feature a large planet whirling in space or some Martian landscape or whatever takes your fancy. The cheapest set is no set. You allow the colourful costumes to create the scene. Below are two illustrations re your set. The stage directions [these mainly appear in the teacher's script] are as follows. **UR** Upstage Right, **UC** Upstage Centre, **UL** Upstage Left, **RC** Right Centre, **C** Centre, **LC** Left Centre, **DR** Downstage Right, **DC** Downstage Centre and **DL** Downstage Left.

Time

Christmas Eve.

Notes for the Teacher/Director

1. Each speaking Martian and Doll has a distinctive personality. Help the actors to develop their character. Are they fussy, bossy, snobbish, dopey, cool or what? Martians 1 and 2 are helpers and need not have a dominant personality.
2. Your version of the script has suggestions on how, where and when the actors should move. But you're the boss. Use what you like.
3. Each song has a movement or dance section. Perhaps you could have most or all of your choreography in these sections and have singing only when the actors are singing. Simple unison movements can be very effective.
4. Costumes are important in this play. The Martians need to look like ... well, Martians. Some sort of headgear would help. Body stockings, tights, skivvies and some plastic or soft material for ears, antennae, etc. Funny noses would help too. Doll could be some type of successful executive, a self-starter in a trade, business or profession. The chorus could perhaps be dressed the same but in a slightly less flamboyant fashion than the principals. The latter should not be lost in the chorus.
5. In the speeches, a word in italics needs emphasis or stress.
6. The backing tape has all the songs on side A with the tune or melody highlighted. Use this to teach the songs and for initial rehearsals. Once the children know the tune, use the versions on Side B which feature the full orchestration. Have the tape operator know the machine and its counter so that the songs are ready to start on cue every time!
7. This is a unisex show. All the characters, including Doll, can be either male or female.
8. The names of the main characters are the names of stars.

Script for the Teacher/Director

[Curtain rises and lights come up on a scene from Mars. The Martians are scattered around the stage. If there are rocks/platforms upstage and to the sides then Martians are placed safely on these objects. Music begins immediately and the Martians give the audience the good oil. This is who we are. This is where we are. G'day.]

Song - HERE ON MARS

Company

*Life is a happy one here on Mars.
Laughter and lots of fun here on Mars.
Something for everyone here on Mars.
Life is a happy one here on Mars.
Crackers, oh yes we're crackers
You will often hear it said
That we are crackers, oh yes we're crackers
With this crazy, crazy head.*

[During the song the Martians dance and have fun. The song finishes and the Chorus relax and move to the sides. Some sit. The main actors move downstage. There is a hubbub and BETA needs to quieten things down]

BETA Thank you, Martians. A bit of shush if you please. *[Hubbub settles]* Thank you.

ALCOR *[Fussing]* Has anyone seen my automatic dusting, washing, drying, cleaning and folding machine?

RIGEL *[A bit slow]* I ain't *seen* nothin'. I ain't *heard* nothin'. And have a guess what I learned today?

COMPANY Nothin'!

RIGEL *[Amused]* Hey! Nice one. Spot on.

LUYTEN We all know what you failed to learn. It was how to speak properly. It's not nothin'. It's *nothing*.

COMPANY *[Stirring the pompous LUYTEN]* Ooooooh.

DENEb Nothin'. Nothing. It's all the same. And anyway, who cares? It ain't important.

LUYTEN *[Upset]* Of course it's important. We are what we speak.

BETA That could be right. We don't want humans thinking Martians are a bunch of wallies.

[Everyone talks at once. "What's a Wally? Are we stupid? Do humans care?" etc]

MARTIAN 1 *[Bursts in from UR]* Help! Help! There's been a terrible accident! *[MARTIAN 1 pushes through and comes DC]* Oh it's awful!

BETA What accident? What's happened?

MARTIAN 1 A human spaceship has just crashed on Mars.

[Big hubbub from COMPANY. "A human spaceship!" Rhubarb, rhubarb, rhubarb!]

ALCOR Oh no. That means a mess. We'll have to tidy up.

RIGEL That's the third spaceship to land on Mars this year. Them astronauts must be learner drivers.

LUYTEN *[Upset]* Oh please. It's not *them* astronauts. It's *those* astronauts.

DENEb *[Pointing offstage]* Well from what I can see, it ain't astronauts at all.

COMPANY *[Shocked]* What? *[COMPANY turn and look where DENEb was pointing]*

DENEb That's the funniest-lookin' spaceship I've ever seen.

[Hubbub from COMPANY. "Yes, it's looks strange. That's not a spaceship." etc]

BETA Will somebody please bring the astronauts over here. *[MARTIAN 1 and MARTIAN 2 exit UR/RC]* Let's hope they can speak Martian. All that sign language is so boring.

ALCOR But shouldn't we tidy up first? I mean, they're visitors and just look at this mess.

DENEb Hey, Alcor, over here. *[ALCOR stops and looks at DENEb who beckons ALCOR over. Everyone watches]*

ALCOR *[Goes to DENEb]* What do you want?

DENEb Listen friend, you've gotta learn the secret of cleanin'. Are you ready for this?

ALCOR *[Impressed]* You know the secret of cleaning? That's fantastic. I'd love to know.

DENEb The best way to get rid of dust is to let it settle.

ALCOR Let it settle?

DENEb Yes. Let the dust sit for a while before you clean.

ALCOR Okay. Thanks. Ah, how long do you let the dust sit there?

DENEb Well, let's say, about three years.

[COMPANY and DENEb laugh their heads off and ALCOR is not happy. ALCOR is teased back into the group as MARTIANS 1 and 2 enter each carrying a small wrapped Christmas present. Suddenly silence]

LUYTEN I say, what's going on? Where are the human astronauts?

MARTIAN 1 It's not a normal spaceship.

MARTIAN 2 It's full of presents.

COMPANY Presents!
MARTIAN 1 Yes and there's only one astronaut.
MARTIAN 2 And he's fat and jolly and wearing a red suit.
DENE B Hey, cool. That astronaut must be Santa.
COMPANY Santa!?
DENE B Yeah, I heard he's been flying through space for ages.
BETA So what has Santa got in his spaceship?
MARTIAN 1 It's absolutely packed with presents. Just like these.
COMPANY Presents!?
MARTIAN 2 They're all wrapped in coloured paper with ribbons and bows.
ALCOR Oh that sounds wonderful. Beautiful presents with neat ribbons and tidy tags.
RIGEL Them tags have all got writin'.
LUYTEN Oh please. It's *those* tags have got *writing*.
DENE B [*Looking at present*] This one's for Debbie from Mum and Dad.
BETA [*Looking at other present*] This one's for Danny from Gran and Grandpa.
RIGEL There's no-one here called Debbie or Danny.
LUYTEN Yes there is. My middle name's Daniel.
DENE B Well ain't that peculiar. My middle name's Debbie.
BETA Hey this is fantastic. There must be a present for all of us!
COMPANY Hooray!

Song - STRUCK IT RICH

Company

*Rich, we're rich, we've struck it rich
This is our lucky day.
Rich, we're rich, we've struck it rich
Riches have come our way.
Presents and parcels with ribbons and strings
Boxes all bursting with beautiful things.
Rich, we're rich, we've all struck it rich
This is our lucky day.*

[During the song, a few more smallish wrapped presents are passed from offstage into the company. They dance using the presents and celebrate their good fortune. When the song finishes there is much fussing over presents. Martians squabble over who has what and BETA needs to restore order again. It may be necessary to remove presents. Pass them back into the wings]

BETA All right, stop this racket! [*Squabbling stops*] Thank you. Now I suggest we open one present at a time.
ALCOR Yes but we must fold the wrapping paper and place it neatly in a nice, straight pile.
RIGEL I think we should open the biggest present first. Especially if it's for me.
LUYTEN There's a big present over there.
BETA Right bring that big present down here.
[A large present is pushed DC and the Martians crowd around. DOLL is in this present and may need to shuffle]
DENE B Come on you Martians. Hurry up and unwrap it.
LUYTEN It looks very expensive. I'll bet it's from [*Insert name of well-known expensive store*]
ALCOR Pass me the bow. It must be put in its proper place.
[Bow is passed to ALCOR and the top or front of the present is cleared of wrapping. Pause. Don't rush this]
BETA Right. Let's see what's in the first present.
RIGEL [*Opens lid or front door if DOLL is standing upright*] Okay, here goes.
[RIGEL opens the box but steps back in surprise. DOLL stands up or steps out of the box. Everyone is stunned and an audible gasp is heard]
LUYTEN I say. Who are you?
DOLL Who are you?
DENE B We asked first.
BETA Are you a present?
LUYTEN Are you an expensive present? Because if so, you belong to me.
DOLL My name is Dynamic Doll and I am a present for Debbie.
DENE B Hey, cool, Dynamic Doll. My middle name's Debbie.
DOLL [*Unhappy*] You? Oh, yuk!
COMPANY Yuk!? [*They buzz amongst themselves*]
LUYTEN It's all right. It's probably posh talk for goody goody gumdrops.

DOLL No it isn't. Yuk means yuk!
BETA Well we don't like that sort of talk here on Mars.
DOLL *[Stunned] Mars!?! Is this Mars?*
ALCOR *[Examining DOLL'S attire]* Your clothes are awfully clean. Who does your washing?
[By now, DOLL could step free of the box and it could be quietly removed]
DOLL This is ridiculous. I'm supposed to be on Earth.
COMPANY Earth?
RIGEL But your rocket ship just landed in our backyard.
DOLL That's not a rocket ship. That's a sleigh.
COMPANY A sleigh!?
DOLL And it's full of presents like me.
BETA So who's that jolly chap with the red suit and the white whiskers?
DOLL That's Santa and he's got to deliver all the presents to children on Earth.
DENEb You mean I'm not the only Debbie in the universe?
DOLL Santa took us up too high. We must have been blown off course.
BETA Of course.
DOLL That's what I said. Off course.
ALCOR No. You said *off* course. Beta said *of* course.
DOLL Oh this is terrible. Now there won't be any Christmas.
COMPANY Christmas?
RIGEL What's Christmas?
DOLL *[Shocked]* What's Christmas? You mean you don't know?
COMPANY No.
LUYTEN Well, whatever it is, I'll bet Christmas is just for a better type of person. People like me.
DOLL Oh no. Christmas is for everyone. *[LUYTEN miffed]*
[Hubbub from COMPANY]
BETA Would you please explain this Christmas to us?
DOLL Okay. I'll tell you about Christmas and you can help Santa start his sleigh. How's that?
ALCOR Sounds great. Doesn't it, Martians?
COMPANY Yes.

Song - CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

DOLL	<i>You take a tree. And add some glee. When you celebrate at Christmas. You phone a friend. Best wishes send. When you celebrate at Christmas. Jolly. Holly. The tree is in the tub. Caring. Sharing. Loads of lovely grub. A peaceful dove. And lots of love. When you celebrate at Christmas.</i>	COMPANY	<i>You take a tree. And add some glee. You phone a friend. Best wishes send. Jolly. Holly. Caring. Sharing. A peaceful dove. And lots of love.</i>
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[During the song, a Christmas tree is brought on and decorated by the Martians who learn about Christmas. The song finishes with everyone happy and excited. Perhaps keep the smallish tree to one side or raised UC]

BETA *[To DOLL]* Thank you very much. Christmas sounds like a very good idea.
ALCOR There must be a lot of washing up to do.
RIGEL I like the idea of sittin' around and doin' nothin'.
LUYTEN *[Upset]* Oh not again. It's sitting, doing and nothing.
DOLL Yes but this isn't helping Santa get me and the other presents back to Earth.
DENEb Hey, relax. We can help. Come on, Martians, stay cool.
[DENEb leads some of the Martians UR and offstage. The OTHERS turn upstage and watch. DOLL exits with them but stops UR and turns back to those on stage]

**DOLL
COMPANY** Bye. And thanks for helping Santa get back to Earth.
*[Waving, calling] Bye! ... Safe journey! ... Fly safely!! ... etc.
[The main characters turn back to face front]*

**BETA
ALCOR
RIGEL
LUYTEN
RIGEL
ALCOR** Well there goes Santa and another year.
I think there's a mess where the sleigh landed. Let's go and clean up.
Hey! F'get it! Sweep, sweep, sweep. Leave the mess alone. It ain't done nothin'.
Oh really. That's the tenth time you've said nothin'. It's just not right.
I'll say what I like.
*[At LUYTEN] Hey! Stop picking on others.
{RIGEL shouts at ALCOR. ALCOR shouts at LUYTEN. LUYTEN shouts at RIGEL. Try and get all three speeches to happen simultaneously}*

RIGEL *[At ALCOR]* I'm sick of you cleaning everything. Clean, clean, clean. What's wrong with a bit of mess? Leave it alone. I like a mess.

ALCOR *[At LUYTEN]* You're a snob, do you know that? Just because someone doesn't speak the way you speak, that doesn't mean they're wrong.

LUYTEN *[At RIGEL]* You do it deliberately. You know it annoys me. Why won't you speak like I do? Just try it for once instead of being so rude?

BETA *[Once the three speeches above are happening simultaneously, BETA joins in trying to cool things down]*
Hey! Hold it! Hold it! Stop!
[Finally the four Martians stop and there is silence. DENEb and the other Martians who exited with DOLL re-enter]

**DENEb
BETA
ALCOR
RIGEL
LUYTEN
DENEb** Well Santa's on his way. We got the sleigh heading back to Earth.
*[Sheepish] That's good.
[Sheepish] That's nice.
[Sheepish] That's good.
[Sheepish] That's nice.*

**BETA
ALCOR
RIGEL
LUYTEN
DENEb
BETA
ALCOR** Oh and Santa said to wish everyone Merry Christmas and a happy new year.
[The four are still embarrassed at having been caught out shouting and arguing]
That's good.
That's nice.
That's good.
That's nice.

**DENEb
BETA
ALCOR** Well come on. Christmas is about peace on Mars and goodwill to all Martians.
You're right. I'm sorry I yelled at you.
Me too. I'm sorry.
[The main characters all shake hands as the following dialogue takes place]

**RIGEL
LUYTEN** Please forgive me. And Merry Christmas.
I apologise and a happy New Year.
[Everyone shakes hands with their neighbours and wishes them a Merry Christmas. The music starts under this activity and leads into the final song. Use the dance break for curtain calls if you like]

Song - WE'RE GOING TO HAVE CHRISTMAS

Company

*We've decided we're going to have Christmas
With lots of fun and grand, good cheer.
We've decided we're going to have Christmas
And spend some time with friends so dear.
We've decided we're going to have Christmas
By spreading peace and love sincere.
We've decided we're going to have Christmas
So Merry Christmas, Happy New Year!*

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