



**Sample Pages from
The Merrie Christmas Show**

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THE MERRIE CHRISTMAS SHOW

A CHRISTMAS PLAY IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



The Merrie Christmas Show
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Characters

3M+3W, Easily Expandable

A troupe of travelling players led by:

Dame Dorothy
Robyn Steadfellow

<p>Story One <i>King Karl and the Lamprey Pie</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary-Ann • William • King Karl • Mother • Father • Santa • Courtiers
<p>Story Two <i>Rupert</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rupert • Singer and Chorus
<p>Story Three <i>A Very Special Night</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katherine • Henry • Reggie • Simon • Cat • Duck • Wasps, a barn door, apple trees
<p>Story Four <i>Good King Wenceslas</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wenceslas • Page • Peasant • Chorus

The size of your cast depends on how many players you need. You can have different actors for each story, or the same actors in each story playing multiple roles. Although *King Karl and the Lamprey Pie* and *A Very Special Night* have named narrators, it is possible to just have two lead players (Dorothy and Robyn) narrate all the stories. This play has also been performed with just two actors with volunteers from the audience making up the other characters. Please contact author for this version.

Sheet music for the songs used in this show can be found at:
<http://tfolk.me/p15>

Keep everything quite simple – props should have a handmade feel to them, music should be a cappella or accompanied with a single flute or drum. No synthesizers please. The costume pieces in the individual stories should also be simple and come out of a trunk or off of a cart. For example the actor playing KING KARL should just put on a crown and a cape over his existing costume.

The travelling players enter singing and dancing. They should be dressed in clothes reminiscent of Elizabethan England – tunics with full sleeves, tights, bodices, petticoats and full skirts.

ALL: *(this is a seventeenth century poem by George Wither put to music)*

So, now is come our joyful feast
 Let every man be jolly.
 Each room is dressed with ivy leaf
 And every post with holly
 Though some may grumble and may whine
 Round your foreheads garlands twine
 Everyone will be just fine
 Let us all be merry.
 Now every lad is wondrous trim
 And no man minds his labour.
 Our lasses have provided them
 A bag-pipe and a tabor
 Young-men, maids, girls and boys
 Give life to one another's joys.
 And you anon shall by their noise.
 Perceive that they are merry.

ALL: Yule! Yule! Yule! Three puddings in a pool!

There should be actions to go with the above chant – something that the audience can do as well.

DAME DOROTHY and ROBYN STEADFELLOW come to the front of the stage as the rest of the group settles behind them in a group pose.

DAME: Hello! Welcome!

ROBYN: Welcome to the Merrie Christmas Show!

DAME: My name is Dame Dorothy.

ROBYN: And I am Robyn Steadfellow, at your service. *(he bows)*

DAME: And we (*she claps and gestures to the whole group*) are travelling players.

Everyone claps, bows and curtseys.

DAME: We have been scouring the globe for many years.

ROBYN: Through many countries.

DAME: Collecting stories on our favourite topic.

ALL: CHRISTMAS!!!!

ROBYN: We love Christmas!

DAME: Christmas Pudding.

ROBYN: Christmas Trees.

DAME: Christmas Crackers.

ROBYN: Christmas Presents.

DAME: Christmas Stories.

ROBYN: Today we're going to tell some stories about Christmas from around the world.

ALL: Story, story, who's got a story?

DAME: But first...

ROBYN: Oh right. We have to do some carolling first.

DAME: The first thing we want to do today is sing! And you guys are going to help.

ROBYN: We're going to warm everyone up with a song. Who knows Deck the Halls?

DAME: "Deck the halls with boughs of holly..."

ROBYN: That's the one. Now. Who can sing the fa la la's? Shout it out! (*everyone encourages the audience to shout out the Fa la la's*) Good.

DAME: We're going to have a contest. You guys between my fingers are going to be on my team. (*she holds up her arms and all audience members between them are on her team*)

ROBYN: And you guys between my fingers are going to be on my side.

DAME: Whenever I point to you, you sing the fa, la, la's. Let's practice. "Deck the halls with boughs of holly." (*points to group*)

ROBYN: Well, that's OK. I think that my team is going to be much louder. Ready? "Deck the halls with boughs of holly." (*points to group*)

DAME: I guess that was all right. The object is to out-sing the other team. Why don't we have some of our players in the audience to help out?

ROBYN: Great idea!

DAME: Is everybody ready? Ready. Here we go!

While DAME and ROBYN stay on stage, the players move into the audience and sing the Fa la la's along with the audience.

ALL:

Deck the halls 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 we now our gay apparel
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
 Troll the ancient Yuletide Carol
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
 See the Blazing Yule before us
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
 Strike the harp and join the chorus
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
 Follow me in merry measure
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
 While I tell of Yuletide treasure.
 Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

The players make their way back to the stage and do the chant with DAME and ROBYN.

ALL: Yule! Yule! Yule! Three puddings in a pool!

ROBYN: There is something else you should know. Every time we finish a song or a story we like to do a little chant. Feel free to jump up and yell along with us.

ALL: Yule! Yule! Yule! Three puddings in a pool!

DAME: We'll do it one more time, just so you get the hang of it.

ALL: Yule! Yule! Yule! Three puddings in a pool!

DAME: Story story, who's got a story?

ALL: Story, story who's got a story?

DAME: William and Mary Ann!

The group lets out a big cheer.

ALL: Huzzah!

MARY-ANN: (*jumping up and dragging WILLIAM along*) William and I are going to tell King Karl and the Lamprey Pie!

Every time someone says "Lamprey pie" there should be an action to go along with it. Suggestion: move one arm in a swimming motion like a fish and then both arms clamp together in a big circle to illustrate a pie.

ROBYN: Excuse me! Question! Question!

MARY-ANN: What.

ROBYN: What is a lamprey?

WILLIAM: You've never had lamprey pie?

ROBYN: Sounds disgusting.

MARY-ANN: A lamprey is a fish.

ROBYN: Eww. Now I know it's disgusting.

WILLIAM: Hey, I wouldn't talk like that. A long time ago lamprey pie was Santa's number one dish.

ROBYN: Why?

MARY-ANN: Well it was his only dish.

ROBYN: Why?

MARY-ANN: Let us tell the story and you'll find out.

ROBYN: Right!

MARY-ANN: Once upon a time, not so very far away there was a kingdom. This kingdom had a particular custom that happened every year at Christmas time. Let's introduce the royal family.

WILLIAM: This is King Karl. Say hello King.

KARL is a very excitable guy. He should have a crown and a cape.

KARL: (*wiggling about*) Helloooooo everybody!!!!

MARY-ANN: *(to audience)* You have to say hello back. Hellooooooo King!

WILLIAM: *(bringing forward FATHER)* And this is the King's father.

FATHER: How do you do.

WILLIAM: Everyone say "How do you do." in a nice low voice.

ALL: *(with the audience)* How do you do.

MARY-ANN: *(bringing forward MOTHER)* And this is the King's mother.

MOTHER: Charmed I'm sure.

MARY-ANN: Everyone say "Charmed I'm sure" in a nice high voice.

ALL: Charmed I'm sure.

WILLIAM: This kingdom's crazy Christmas custom was that every Christmas Eve, King Karl got his favourite dish in the whole wide world. Lamprey Pie.

ROBYN: Are you sure we have to give him a fish pie? What about apple? Or blueberry?

MARY-ANN: Hush!

She stands in a formal choral pose. KING KARL moves centre stage. The actors playing his MOTHER and FATHER move to either side. The actors playing courtiers gather around – this is all done with great flourish and pageantry. An actor holding the lamprey pie kneels in front of KARL.

MARY-ANN: *(solemnly)* very year on Christmas Eve, with great celebration,

WILLIAM: And with a grand flourish of trumpets,

MARY-ANN: And with the whole kingdom watching,

WILLIAM: The court promenaded into the throne room and presented King Karl with the biggest, bestest, tastiest, juiciest Lamprey pie he had ever seen!!!!

ALL: *(dancing around the KING to the tune of "Here we go round the mulberry bush")*

Here's to the great King Karl.

On Christmas Eve.

On Christmas Eve.

Here's to the great King Karl.
 Huzzah! Huzzah! Hooray!
 Here's the pie, We hold it up high.
 Hold it up high.
 Hold it up high.
 Here's the pie, We hold it up high.
 Huzzah! Huzzah! Hooray!

KARL: I loooooooooove this pie!

WILLIAM: King Karl loooooooooooved his pie. Well, he only got it once a year. He loved the smell. (*KARL sniffs the pie*) He loved to touch it. (*KARL touches the pie and sighs*) He loved to listen to the pie. (*KARL puts his ear to the pie*)

ROBYN: Hear any fish swimming around in there?

MARY-ANN: He wanted to gobble the whole thing all up in one fell swoop.

WILLIAM: Ah Ha! But there was a catch!

MARY-ANN: A catch!

KARL: A catch? What kind of catch?

MARY-ANN: A teeny tiny, itsy bitsy catch.

WILLIAM: King Karl had to save a piece for Santa.

KARL: I always forget the catch.

WILLIAM: That's right you do. Because one year, King Karl was so looking forward to the pie that he started gobbling it all up.

KING KARL mimes the motion of eating slices of pie – everyone does the same motion along with him.

WILLIAM: He ate 1 piece. 2 pieces. 3 pieces.

MARY-ANN: 4 pieces. 5 pieces. 6 pieces. 7 pieces. STOP! STOP! STOP!

ALL: STOP!! STOP!! STOP!!!

MARY-ANN: How many pieces are left? I'm afraid to look.

KARL: One piece.

Everyone gives a huge sigh of relief.

WILLIAM: One piece left. What does he have to do with the last piece?
(ask crowd – who should say, save it for Santa) That's right save it for Santa. Give it back Karl!

MOTHER and FATHER should step forward to take the pie when MARY-ANN speaks.

MARY-ANN: King Karl gave the last piece of pie to his father. Who gave it to his mother. And she took it down to the pantry for Santa.

ROBYN: I shall guard the pie.

WILLIAM: King Karl decided to go straight to bed.

Everyone gives a big yawn. Someone brings a pillow and a blanket for KARL. All the courtiers fade back and watch the action.

KARL: The sooner I get to sleep, the sooner Santa will come and the sooner I can stop thinking about that last piece of pie!

He lies down and starts to toss and turn.

MARY-ANN: But King Karl could not sleep. He couldn't help thinking about the pie. About how yummy and tasty and scrumptious, and he couldn't take it anymore! He leapt out of bed. He threw open the bedroom door.

MOTHER steps forward. KARL leaps out of bed and runs into her.

WILLIAM: And ran smack into his mother.

MOTHER: What are you doing Karl?

KARL: Nothing.

MOTHER: Where are you going Karl?

KARL: Nowhere. Just to get a glass of water.

MOTHER: I'll get the water. You go back to bed!

MARY-ANN: So Karl went back to bed. But he couldn't stop thinking about that pie. He couldn't stop thinking about that last piece of pie just sitting there waiting for him, calling him.

ROBYN: Karl...oh Karl...

MARY-ANN: He leapt out of bed. He threw open the door...

WILLIAM: And ran smack into his father.

FATHER: What are you doing Karl?

KARL: Nothing.

FATHER: Where are you going Karl?

KARL: Nowhere. Just to get a blanket.

FATHER: I'll get the blanket. You go back to bed!

WILLIAM: But this guy Karl had a one-track mind. And his mind was on that pie.

MARY-ANN: (*very very quietly*) So for a third time Karl leapt out of bed. But this time he put his ear to his bedroom door to make sure no one was there. He opened it very slowly. (*WILLIAM makes the sound of a door slowly creaking open*) And he crept very quietly out the door. Down the hall. (*Sound of creaking footsteps getting a little faster*) Down the stairs. (*Faster still*) Into the pantry. (*Faster still*)
AND THERE WAS THE PIE.

KARL: The pie!

WILLIAM: Karl was so excited he did a little dance.

KARL does a crazy dance.

WILLIAM: Boy Karl that was some dance. Now the person guarding the pie was sound asleep. He was even snoring.

ROBYN: I don't snore!

WILLIAM: So Karl took the last piece of pie without even thinking and ate it all in one bite!

MARY-ANN: But as soon as that pie was gone there was a noise on the roof. And a thump. And a patter of hooves. And the very faint sound of the jingle of bells.

WILLIAM: Jingle. Jingle. Jingle.

MARY-ANN: And then there was soot in the chimney and the jingling got louder.

WILLIAM: JINGLE JINGLE JINGLE!

MARY-ANN: Not that loud.

WILLIAM: Sorry.

MARY-ANN: And there was Santa in the pantry! And there was Karl with the pie plate in his hands.

The actor playing SANTA should only have on a red hat and a beard – OR perhaps use a Santa puppet.

WILLIAM: Karl's knees trembled.

KARL does so.

WILLIAM: And his arms trembled.

KARL does so.

WILLIAM: And his whole body trembled.

KARL goes crazy.

MARY-ANN: Santa was very unhappy with Karl. He looked at the empty pie plate. He looked at Karl. He scowled at Karl and put his hands on his hips.

SANTA: Because you have eaten the last piece of Lamprey Pie, I will not deliver any presents to anyone in your kingdom. No presents!!

KARL: No presents?

SANTA: No presents for anybody!

KARL: No presents?

SANTA: I work so very hard delivering presents that there isn't any time for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. By the time I get to this kingdom I am oh so hungry! The only snack I get is that lamprey pie.

WILLIAM: And King Karl ate the late piece.

KARL: I'm sorry. Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!

MARY-ANN: There was so much noise in the pantry that it woke King Karl's mother and father and they came running. Then King Karl, and his mother and his father started to beg Santa to reconsider.

KARL & MOTHER & FATHER: *(on their knees)* Please!!!

MARY-ANN: Santa wouldn't budge.

WILLIAM: I think they need some help. *(To the audience)* Would you guys help? OK, on the count of three, say "please" really really loud. Ready? 1,2,3. Louder. Louder. What do you think Santa?

SANTA shakes his head.

MARY-ANN: Santa wouldn't budge.

ROBYN: Gee Santa, give these guys a break. Maybe if you had more snacks throughout the night then you wouldn't be so cranky just because Karl ate some fish pie.

WILLIAM: Suddenly Karl's father had an idea.

FATHER: What if we had everyone in the kingdom leave something out for you Santa?

MARY-ANN: Santa thought this was a fabulous idea. He liked it so much that he changed his mind and decided that he would deliver the presents after all. But not until Karl had given him a handful of cookies and a swig of milk.

WILLIAM: So the next year, Karl had the lamprey pie all to himself. That made him very happy. And the kingdom was happy to help out because none of them liked the pie either. And Santa was happy to eat the cookies. And everybody lived happily ever after!

ALL: Yule! Yule! Yule! Three puddings in a pool!

DAME: That was great everybody!

ALL: Story story, where's the next story?

ROBYN: Now everybody knows who delivers the presents to the good girls and boys? But I've forgotten his name? Who is it again? I can't hear you. I can't hear you. Oh that's right. Santa Claus.

DAME: Now everyone here is very good right? Right? There are always presents in your stocking right? Right? So you guys probably don't know who visits all of the bad boys and girls. You've probably never met Rupert. (*RUPERT starts to grumble behind her*) Rupert is that you?

The players start to snap their fingers. RUPERT enters. He should look like a troll. Four of the players move downstage as well, three to sing the chorus, another to speak/sing the verses.

RUPERT: Bahhh! Humbug!

DAME: (*as she backs away from him*) Oh I hope none of you ever run into this guy.

CHORUS: (*singing*)
Rupert

He's hairy and he's scary.
Rupert
He's never ever merry.
Rupert won't be pulling out any toys.
When he visits all the bad girls and boys.

PLAYER: Now, Rupert is an elf. Not a happy-go-lucky elf. He lives at the North Pole.

RUPERT: I hate the cold. I always get a chill.

PLAYER: And he travels with Santa on Christmas Eve, sitting on the rudders of the sleigh.

RUPERT: And I leap off whenever we pass by a house on my list. I never get cookies and milk though. Bah! Humbug!

CHORUS: (*singing*)
Rupert
He's hairy and he's scary
Rupert
He's never ever merry
Rupert won't be bringing out any toys
When he visits all the bad girls and boys.

RUPERT: I don't carry toys. I don't wear a red suit. And I never ever go: Ho! Ho! Ho! Let's see here. Am I going to be visiting any of your houses this year?

PLAYER: (*singing*)
If you see Rupert come down your chimney
Don't even hesitate, don't even sneeze
Say, "Please Mr. Rupert. I promise to be good!
Send Santa my way, please if you would!"
Sometimes he'll listen. Sometimes he'll say:

RUPERT: (*singing*)
OK kid, today's your lucky day.
But you better be good this year cause I got the knack.
And if you're ever bad, then I'll be back.

CHORUS: (*singing*)
Rupert
He's hairy and he's scary
Rupert
He's never ever merry
Rupert won't be bringing out any toys
When he visits all the bad girls and boys.

CHORUS:

Rupert

RUPERT:

I'm hairy and I'm scary.

CHORUS:

Rupert.

RUPERT:

I'm never ever merry.

ALL: (*big finish*)

Rupert won't be bringing out any toys
When he visits all the bad girls and boys.

ALL: Yule! Yule! Yule! Three puddings in a pool!

DAME: Hey Robyn.

ROBYN: Yes my dearest Dame Dorothy?

DAME: Did you know that Christmas Eve is the one night of the year
that animals can talk?

ROBYN: Who told you that?

DAME: Katherine did.

ROBYN: Is that really true? I mean animals talking...

DAME: Well it is a pretty special night.

KATHERINE: That's right. If you can stay up long enough to see Santa,
you might hear your dog talking to your fish, or your cat talking
to your hamster.

ROBYN: Sounds like a story to me!

ALL: Story, story, story!!

DAME: Katherine and Henry!

HENRY: Once upon a time there were two brothers.

The two brothers come downstage. One is wearing a bow tie, one is wearing a cravat. They should be walking and standing according to their personalities. If the cast is largely girls you have the option of changing it to two sisters named Sarah and Rona.

KATHERINE: Simon is the elder brother and he was really nice. He was always very kind and very helpful. Let's all give a big cheer for Simon!

ALL: Hip Hip hooray!!!

SIMON: Aw shucks.

HENRY: Reggie was the younger brother and he was mean, nasty, petty, and selfish. He only cared about himself and he didn't like his elder brother at all. I think we should boo Reggie.

ALL: Boo.

REGGIE: Yawn. Yawn.

KATHERINE: One day their father said:

FATHER: I hereby degree that all of my land and earthly possessions should go to... Reggie.

REGGIE: Woo Hoo!!

HENRY: Reggie got all the land and the nice house and all he left for Simon was a duck, a cat, a speck of land and a run down shack.

KATHERINE: But Simon was so good that he just looked after his land and his animals and didn't bother anyone.

When they are mentioned, the CAT and DUCK sit with SIMON.

HENRY: Christmas Eve came.

KATHERINE: "Deck the halls with boughs of holly!"

HENRY: Simon always spent Christmas Eve with the duck and the cat because everyone knows they have special powers on Christmas Eve. Simon liked to hear them tell stories. After Simon went to bed, the animals stayed up talking.

DUCK: Quack, quack, we must do something about that Reggie.

CAT: What we need is a plan. Meow!!

KATHERINE: Later that night, Reggie approached the shack with his Christmas present for Simon.

REGGIE: I'm going to kick my brother off the land completely. Merry Christmas!!

HENRY: Then suddenly he heard a sound – it sounded like singing.



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