

Harvey and Mabel: The Christmas Pageant

by Randy Sly

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(It's Sunday evening. Harvey and Mabel are seated at their favorite restaurant - one that specializes in great pie - talking about the church's Christmas Pageant that night.)

Harvey: (Shakes his head) Well, Mabel, that's one pageant that will go down in church history, I wanna tell ya! I doubt we'll ever be able to top that one, that's for sure!

Mabel: Oh, Harvey, you're so right! I think there was something for everybody - even the Fire Chief said so.

Harvey: It was sure nice that he stayed after the trucks left. You know, Mabel, I still say the man at the nursery told me that hay was fire proof! (He acts astonished)

Mabel: I know, Harvey, I know! Anyway, it wasn't you're idea to have the cherub choir carry candles.

Harvey: You're so right, Mabel, you're so right! I told Mrs. Pringle it was a mistake. I walked right up to her at the last pot luck dinner and caught her right in the middle of the bean dip. I said to her straight out, "Mrs. Pringle, that candle idea is wrong, wrong, wrong! We should give each of those little rug-rats flashlights. Them Energizers that rabbit sells on TV would last through all five rehearsals and at least three performances!" Would she listen to me? Noooooo...

Mabel: And you were right, Harvey!

Harvey: I was and do you know what? I think I oughta call Mrs. Pringle when we get home and remind her. I should let her know she'd been warned... but, nooooooo... she wouldn't listen. I'll call her as soon as I finish my French Silk and hot cocoa!

Mabel: (With a matter-of-fact attitude) It's the Christian thing to do, for sure.

Harvey: You're right as Rudolph the Reindeer, Mabel. Remember, the Bible says that when a person sins against you, you're to call them up and let them know about it, so they can repent!

Mabel: Harvey, you sure know your sins when you see 'em. And you, being the head of the church's Sin Awareness Committee, must show the way!

Harvey: (Serious tone of voice) Well, Mabel, as I said at the annual church meeting, the Sin Awareness Committee wants to "S.A.C." the sin in this church!

Mabel: And here's a good opportunity to start.

Harvey: Got to, Mabel. People have to know this sin thing is serious business with me! (pause) I sure hope little Heather's hair will grow back soon, don't you?

Mabel: (Nods her head) I do. (Scolding) Shame on Bobby Shelton for trying to light her pigtails during "Away in the Manger!"

Harvey: I'll call her mother, too, Mabel!! She has the makings of an arsonist in that little one! I tell ya, Mabel, someone's got to start speakin' the truth around here. And you know my motto, the one I always live by: (in awed tone) "Speakin' the truth is next to godliness."

Mabel: You're so right, Harvey. It's up to us to get these people straightened out! Just look at what happened tonight. Poor Heather got so scared when her hair lit up that she dropped her candle in the creche.

Harvey: Did you ever see a manger burn so bright? The hay went in a few seconds, but the wood burned for the longest time. The chief said the smell will be out of the sanctuary in a few weeks... but the ceiling is a goner...

Mabel: You were so brave, Harvey. There you were in your Wise Man costume, dashing out from the choir room. First you rolled Heather on the floor until her hair went out, then you sprayed foam from the fire extinguisher all over the cherub choir. I was so proud!

Harvey: Well, you have to think fast in those situations. You did your part, Mabel. You called the Fire Department. Usually the Virgin Mary doesn't run out of the Nativity scene screaming "call 911!!! call 911!!!" but I think everybody understood.

Mabel: Oh, sure, Harvey. They probably just thought it was a part of the play.

Harvey: (Nods head in agreement) You were a mighty beautiful Virgin Mary this year, Mabel.

Mabel: Why, thank you Harvey!

Harvey: How many years you been the Virgin Mary now, anyhow?

Mabel: Let me think. Why... it's been almost 29 years, I imagine!

Harvey: That's a record I'm sure, Mabel. Can't think of another church in this US of A that can brag of the same Mary for 29 big ones! Just think next year will make the big 3-0.

Mabel: (A little anger in her voice) Unless they give the part to Alice Toppler. I wouldn't know what to do if I wasn't Mary at Christmas! It's become tradition. (accusingly) She almost got it a couple of years ago.

Harvey: I know that, Mabel. What a year that was. Finally had to call a church meeting over the problem. I told the pastor what I thought, I tell ya... I said right to him, in front of God and everybody, "Pastor, you know I respect you and believe in your ministry... even them video cameras on the pulpit and the overhead projector choruses, but some things just have to stay as they are. You start changing parts in the Christmas pageant and the next thing you know, you aren't preachin' from the Bible anymore. You choose another Mary and, brother, we're outa here! We have to draw the line somewhere! And pastor you know where I stand, because of my motto..."

- Mabel: (she cuts in) Yes, Harvey... "Speakin' the truth is next to godliness" and you really spoke truth that night, Harvey!
- Harvey: Had to, Mabel! That's what's this thing's all about, speakin' truth! (pause) Speakin' of truth... did you hear the way Grace Fairbody sang "O Come, O Come, Mabelnuel?" With her southern accent, it sounded more like "Y'all come, ya'll come, Herman's in the well!"
- Mabel: (Somewhat scolding) Now Harvey, that's not very nice. Besides she did the best she could. Grace may be from way down south, but we still have to love her. She did the best she could. She got the notes all right, anyway...
- Harvey: I know, Mabel, but you know my motto...
- Mabel: (cuts in again) "Speakin' the truth is next to godliness." I know, Harvey, I know!
- Harvey: That's right there in the good book, yes sir. (pauses to contemplate) Right there in - uuuhhhh - Peter's letter to the church at Apostasy, I think.
- Mabel: (Lovingly) Harvey, you always were the Bible scholar of the family!

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