

LAST MINUTE RUSH

by JOHN COSPER

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: This farce brings us the Christmas rush in all its materialistic wrappings. Too busy to shop himself, a father sends his business associates out to shop on Christmas morning for his family's presents. But as the new possessions fail to satisfy the spoiled children, the father is left to wonder if there is anything more to Christmas than presents.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: This script is way over the top, so have fun with it. Work with the actors to make the characters believable. If the actors treat the characters like real, three-dimensional people, the humor is that much more intense. If the actors treat the characters like cardboard cutouts of stereotypes, the humor will fall flat.

TIME: Over 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 6

TOPIC: Materialism

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 2

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Christmas

CHARACTERS:

Rush - Busy family man and businessman
Nancy - Rush's wife
Adam - Rush's spoiled adult son who lives at home
Laura - Rush's obnoxious teenage daughter
Gloria - Rush's cook
Huxley - Rush's assistant

PROPS: 1) Cell phone
2) Gifts: toys, dress, bracelet
3) Shopping bags
4) TV/VCR with tape of It's a Wonderful Life
5) Christmas tree

COSTUMES: Contemporary clothing, appropriate to character

SOUND: Six wireless mics, sound effect of cell phone ringing

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Rush's home at Christmas

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Scene opens with RUSH pacing. NANCY ENTERS.

NANCY: Darling, the kids are waiting.

RUSH: I know the kids are waiting! I'm waiting, too.

NANCY: You're holding up Christmas.

RUSH: What? I'm not holding up Christmas. "Santa Claus" is. His little elves are scouring the shelves of every store that's open this morning so that my family will have a happy Christmas.

NANCY: What do you mean, Santa's elves are scouring the shelves? You didn't put off shopping till the last minute, did you? *(Pause)* Did you?

RUSH: I'm a very busy man, Nancy, and it's that busy schedule of meetings and travel and conferences that allows us to live the good life.

NANCY: And causes you to forget birthdays, anniversaries and now Christmas.

RUSH: I didn't forget Christmas. I'm just a little late. Trust me. Everything will be fine.

RUSH'S cell phone rings. NANCY EXITS.

RUSH: Hello? Huxley? Huxley, where in the name of Kris Kringle are you? Wal-Mart? You're buying gifts at Wal-Mart? You're not buying gifts at Wal-Mart because it's closed. How can it be closed? That place never closes! I know because we were on vacation once in Nowheresville and we stopped in there at 3 a.m. The place was packed ... Look, I know you think it's hilarious that your boss shopped at Wal-Mart, but that's not solving my problem here!

LAURA: *(From offstage)* Daddy!

RUSH: *(Calls off)* In a minute. *(On phone)* Listen, you find someplace that's open, and you get me what I needed ... Repeat them back to me so I know you didn't forget ... Red designer cocktail dress for Laura, size 3 ... Star Destroyer Commando Action Figures for Adam ... diamond tennis bracelet for Nancy ... Now get to it!

RUSH hangs up.

LAURA: Daddy, I want to come down now.

RUSH: Not just yet! Santa's got a few things to take care of.

Cell phone rings.