

For Christmas to Come

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A Musical in Two Acts

By Rick Widen

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Synopsis

After a future global catastrophe in an alternate quantum dimension, the humans who've managed to survive have forgotten all things related to their old culture and heritage -- related to our present quantum dimension that is -- including Christmas!

The worst of a "Great Hibernation" is over, and humans have begun to emerge, including one small circle of people known as Copians, along with a group of feral humans. Also present is a mysterious renegade known as "The Antediluvian", whom the Copians hate for ignoring their laws and for hoarding foodstuffs and medicines in his stronghold.

As the story begins, Dajee has learned about some of the practices of what used to be known as "civilization," which he wants to revive! Unfortunately, because of the circle's strict rules limiting anything that would waste resources or human energies, he is finding this to be difficult. Whardin, the circle's Chief Mother, has even thrown him in a cage for his most recent attempts, from where he enlists the help of his daughter, Ainjee, to implement his latest scheme: a Christmas celebration!

Against the Chief Mother's wishes, most all in the circle secretly go along with this plan, preparing a Christmas Eve pageant, which some believe may awaken the Christmas God and bring forth the Santa Claus as well as any number of Christmas miracles! Alas, it is not to be, as their plans to distract Whardin fail, and she discovers their plot right before the Xmas Eve pageant is to begin. In a confusion of Copians running scared for fear of Whardin's reprisal, Ainjee's snow machine is knocked over and goes berserk. The next day, Christmas day, Whardin's son Kemdin agrees to find and disable the renegade machine, as Ainjee is now in the cage with Dajee.

While trying to neutralize the machine, Kemdin is injured and enters a coma. No one in the circle can heal him, and so it falls on Ainjee to explore the last avenue anyone can think of: she must somehow enter the Antediluvian's stronghold and find a way to enlist his help ...

Cast of Characters

<u>AinJee:</u>	A girl, early teens.
<u>KemDin:</u>	A boy, early teens.
<u>AhYoo:</u>	A younger girl (or boy).*
<u>SumDuf:</u>	A bigger boy (or girl).*
<u>Slahnk:</u>	A man with an impaired mind.
<u>DaJee:</u>	The tribe's troublesome dreamer.
<u>WharDin:</u>	The Chief Mother of the tribe.
<u>Ghel:</u>	Chief's right hand woman (or man).
<u>Dave:</u>	"The Antediluvian", very old.
<u>ahAHha:</u>	A curious feral woman (or man).
<u>Peezee:</u>	A small dune-buggy-thing-robot.
<u>Effex Duesey:</u>	An Interdimensional Consciousness.
<u>SeaEss:</u>	A Copian.
<u>ShaDuf:</u>	A Copian, mother of Sumduf.
<u>Temoc:</u>	A Feral.
<u>Snow Machine:</u>	A snow machine.
<u>Stage Manager:</u>	A (maybe actual?) stage manager.
<u>The Copians:</u>	Chorus, playing Copians.
<u>The Offspring:</u>	Chorus, playing Copian youths.
<u>The Ferals:</u>	Chorus, playing feral humans.

\* Ahyoo and Sumduf parts should be split between more kids if casting permits. Names should adhere to page 23 rules.

\*\* All actors should also participate, disguised, in Copian and Feral choruses when possible or prudent.

Musical Numbers

ACT 1

- |    |                       |                            |
|----|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | That Happiest Holiday | EFFEX and CHORUS           |
| 2. | People Say It's Not   | DAJEE and AINJEE           |
| 3. | For Christmas to Come | AINJEE and OFFSPRING       |
| 4. | Waste Not, Want Not   | WHARDIN, GHEL, and COPIANS |
| 5. | I Believe in Snow     | AHYOO                      |
| 6. | Better Make Way       | COPIANS                    |

ACT 2

- |     |                                  |                        |
|-----|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 7.  | People Say It's Not (Reprise)    | DAJEE                  |
| 7a. | Never Gonna Let Us Outta Here    | AINJEE and DAJEE       |
| 8.  | Looking Out for the Snow Machine | KEMDIN and OFFSPRING   |
| 9.  | You Could Be the Santa Claus     | AINJEE                 |
| 10. | Whoa-o                           | FERALS, SLAHNK, AINJEE |
| 11. | Christmas God                    | WHARDIN                |
| 12. | Finale Medley                    | ALL CHORUS             |

Scene and Time

A small hot corner of the world, decades and decades after a global catastrophe.

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ACT 1

Scene 1

SETTING: A junky place, with long driftwood looking sticks and rubble strewn about, on the outskirts of where the Copians abide. There is a cage near center stage.

AT RISE: DAJEE is in the cage. EFFEX enters.

EFFEX

Who's out there? Where am I? Ah, here I am.

(EFFEX inspects themselves.)

And it appears as though I'm to be your narrator for the evening, along this timeline anyway... Just one thing to remember, not only could it have all turned out differently by the end, but indeed it did, in an unimaginable caboodle of other possibilities! I'm inter-dimensionally omniscient you see, that's how I know ...

(EFFEX blows on a pitch pipe.

**1. That Happiest Holiday.)**

ONCE UPON A TIME, A LONG TIME AHEAD  
AFTER A GLOBAL CATASTROPHE WHEN MOST EVERYONE WAS  
DEAD,  
YES, MOST EVERYONE WAS DEAD, EXCEPT FOR A HEARTY  
FEW!

(DAJEE makes a 'hearty' pose and  
grunt.)

AND STAYING ALIVE BY THE WILL TO SURVIVE  
WAS ALL THAT THEY COULD DO,

(Enter ALL CAST, going about the  
business of staying alive after  
a global catastrophe.)

AND THEY FORGOT ABOUT ALMOST EVERYTHING THAT  
ANYONE EVER KNEW.

THEY FORGOT ABOUT GOLF AND BASEBALL AND HOW TO  
FOLLOW THROUGH,

(EFFEX clicks tongue and mimes a  
golf swing.)

THEY FORGOT ABOUT SHAKESPEARE AND INTERNAL  
REVENUE,  
AND THEY FORGOT ABOUT CHRISTMAS,  
NOT A THOUGHT ABOUT CHRISTMAS,  
THAT HAPPIEST HOLIDAY.

Yes, it was the worst of times; it was ...

(stutters)

The worst of times for crying out loud -- huge global  
catastrophe! Some even went "feral" from the strain!

(FERALS run across the stage  
acting feral.)

The humans who did manage to stave off flat out savagery  
and outright wildness banded together into groups whose  
activities were continually beholden to the resources they  
could or could not scavenge from day to godforsaken day.

CHORUS

NO TIME FOR STORIES AND NO TIME FOR SCHOOL,  
NO TIME FOR GOOD TIDINGS OF CHRISTMAS AND YULE.  
WHEN "FEND FOR YOURSELF" IS THE NEW GOLDEN RULE  
YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT CHRISTMAS,  
SUCH A REGRET ABOUT CHRISTMAS,  
THAT LONG-LOST HOLIDAY.

WHEN DEATH LIKE A VULTURE PERSUES TO THE EDGE,  
THERE GOES YOUR CULTURE AND HERITAGE.

EFFEX

YES, THE ONLY KEPT TRADITION  
WAS THE GRADUAL PROHIBITION  
OF ALL THINGS NOT ESSENTIAL TO SURVIVAL.  
YES, THESE POOR DARWINIAN CREATURES  
LEFT NAZARINIAN PREACHERS  
FORGOTTEN IN THE PAGES OF THE BIBLE!

YET LITTLE DID THEY KNOW ABOUT CHRISTMAS'S  
IMPENDING REVIVAL!

CHORUS

ONCE UPON A TIME, A LONG TIME AHEAD,  
WHEN HUMANITY POST-APOCALYPSE WAS HANGING BY A  
THREAD,  
YES, HANGING BY THIS THREAD,  
WE LEFT ALL OUR TRADITIONS BEHIND,  
'CAUSE SEEING OUR SPECIES GO BACK TO THE B.C.'S  
MADE EVERYONE LOSE THEIR MIND,

AND WE FORGOT ALL THE HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS  
ANYONE EVER DREAMED.  
WE FORGOT EVERY STREAMABLE TV SHOW THAT ANYONE  
EVERY STREAMED,  
ALL OF IT NEVER TO BE RESTORED, NEVER TO BE  
REDEEMED.  
AND WE FORGOT ABOUT CHRISTMAS.  
WE WERE NEVER TAUGHT ABOUT CHRISTMAS,  
THAT HAPPIEST HOLIDAY

EFFEX

(to the audience)

Oh, don't look so sad out there, people! As I was saying  
our story takes place within only one, of an infinite  
number of possible future quantum universes from your time.  
A great many of your timelines came out alright, you'll see  
... except that is for the one where a Swedish  
pharmaceutical company unleashed a muscle relaxant virus  
that reduced all humans to wobbly piles of goo; and the  
universe where a horrible accident in gravitational  
research sends the earth spinning out of its orbit and off  
towards the sun -- which reminds me of the several quantum  
future nuclear holocausts brought about by various --

SUMDUF

Hey inter-dimensionally omniscient narrator guy! You gonna  
help us finish telling our story here or what?

EFFEX

Well, hold on to your gravitons, explanations of the  
quantum multiverse theory can't be rushed. Let's see, um,  
ah yes, interpenetrating dimensions are all around us, and  
which branch we are currently on or separating from must be  
thought of as only one of a --

SEAESS

KNOCK IT OFF WITH YOUR YACKING,

CHORUS

WE'VE GOT TO GET CRACKING, WE'RE HERE TO TELL  
THE TALE OF WHEN WE FORGOT ABOUT TRAFFIC JAMS AND  
POPSICLES ON RINGS,  
WHEN WE FORGOT ABOUT STYROFOAM, AND THE BIRTH OF  
THE KING OF KINGS!

EFFEX

For a million different reasons they forgot a billion  
different things!

CHORUS

AND WE FORGOT ABOUT CHRISTMAS,  
WE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT CHRISTMAS.  
YET, IF YOU WILL STAY AND NOT DISMISS US  
WE'LL TELL YOU THE STORY OF HOW THAT HAPPIEST OF  
HOLIDAYS CAME BACK AGAIN!

EFFEX

ONCE UPON A TIME, A LONG TIME AHEAD!

(CHORUS goes back about their  
business and begins to exit.)

EFFEX

Yes, times were tough for the human race, but, as we have  
just alluded to, this particular corner of the multiverse  
was now hobbling up upon a time when celebrations like  
Christmas could perhaps become fathomable again. Indeed,  
many humans were finding the recent recovery of the earth's  
bread-basket-abilities as it were, to have proven a benefit  
to their -- like the camel's hump -- their fat reserves --  
much more for some than others.

(EFFEX pokes SEAESS.)

SEAESS

Hey, get your hands off my reserves!

EFFEX

Still, despite this recent fortune, the specter of the once  
great "hibernation" as it was, and its rules for survival,  
could not and would not be forgotten lightly...

(ALL have exited by now except a caged DAJEE, who looks around, then takes out a small screen-pad from a hiding place. HE turns it on and alternates looking at it, swiping at it, and furtively putting it up to his ear. Enter AINJEE with a bag of things, followed by PEEZEE, who is being followed closely by SLAHNK, who is wearing dull-sounding "locator bells" on his ankles. When DAJEE speaks it becomes apparent that he is very fond of the dialects and accents discovered in his studies of the time pre-global catastrophe, and they slip in and out of his speech from time to time.)

DAJEE

With the shadows this long I didn't know if you'd be coming at all.

AINJEE

I'm sorry, but Kemdin kept asking for more games.

DAJEE

Games, what a scandal. Staring contests?

AINJEE

Yes, and it just, you know ...

DAJEE

Mm, how many contests?

AINJEE

14, I'd won 12 before he quit asking.

DAJEE

(poor Russian accent)

Ha, very good, very good.

AINJEE

Which one is that?

DAJEE

Russian. The Pomeranian has spilled the vodka.

AINJEE

What's that mean?

DAJEE

I have no idea...

(referring to SLAHNK)

I see Slahnk is along, further recompense on my account?

AINJEE

Oh, no. I volunteered. He's been no bother, really.

DAJEE

Hmm, well, that's good. Though I hope it's no distraction.  
I could make a --

AINJEE

It's no distraction. Here's your ration.

(AINJEE takes out some food and  
offers it through the bars.  
SLAHNK starts to wander about,  
bored of a stationary PEEZEE.  
DAJEE refuses his food.)

DAJEE

Ha, no thank you: don't need it, I'll go without! I'll go  
for days on just my reserves, then we'll see what she  
thinks about that!

AINJEE

Show her what, your ribs under your skin? That you're just  
as stubborn as you are wasteful?

DAJEE

Wasteful? You know I don't -- I've told you: they don't  
understand, I wasn't wasting anything -- you have to crack  
an omelette to make the eggs you know.

AINJEE

I know, I'm just saying that that's what she'd think.

DAJEE

Ainjee, some things can't be tallied, can't be counted.  
You'll see, I'll go without, I'll prove I can function  
beyond my allowances!

(sing-songy)

There's testing to be done, and figures to find if only we  
look!

AINJEE

Yeah, I know dad.

DAJEE

You do, hmm? ... This cage -- you'll see, this will be a  
great experiment, and I'll succeed, you'll see.

AINJEE

Sure dad.

DAJEE

That reminds me, have you found any more viable chips?

AINJEE

Yes, here they are, did you find anything in the last ones?

(AINJEE gives DAJEE some  
computer chips. AHAHHA appears,  
but stays to the periphery.  
SLAHNK detects something and  
makes a noise. DAJEE and AINJEE  
look over their shoulders, but  
do not detect anything.)

DAJEE

Hmm, er, yes, actually, that brings me to it. Now, just  
listen before you scoff, but ... I want to try another one.

(AINJEE is not amused by this.)

The celebration was off -- not right for us -- I see that  
now: a holiday just for eating too much,

(indicating his cage)

I should have known it would come to all this trouble...  
but there is another one I've found, that I think --

AINJEE

Another.

DAJEE

Yes, and, fortuitously, the proper holly date and time for this one isn't but a week away, and, the rituals and practices associated with it mainly involve arbitrary things, gifts, toys and such, or things you'd be getting anyway, just wrapped up in papers.

AINJEE

Gifts, papers, how would you get Whardin to approve of --

DAJEE

Well we'd find what we'd need lying about, or we could ignore those parts, couldn't we? We'd sidestep all the parts we'd need to. I believe we can tailor it so as to be acceptable to Whardin. You leave it to me, and next time she'll be sticking me in her very own pod, instead of this cage, you'll see!

AINJEE

Right.

DAJEE

Well ... alright, so maybe we'll have to keep her in the dark about it, just for now.

AINJEE

(laughs)

You're already locked up, what else can she do?

DAJEE

(nods)

Mmm ... Ainjee, will you help me?

AINJEE

I am helping.

(AHAHHA is sneakily following behind SLAHNK, who is looking around.)

DAJEE

Yes, of course you are. But you see, I need you to help convince the people.

AINJEE

Yeah -- me convince the people. I'll just stand up in the middle of the circle, "Hey everyone, wanna try Dajee's latest --

DAJEE

Or, just the offspring then, of course I don't mean the whole tribe, not at first, but the young at least, they will listen to you.

(AINJEE makes a nasal "I'm not so sure about that" noise.)

Plus, from what I've studied so far, this holiday's meant more for children anyway, or that's where it starts, with a child.

(SLAHNK finally turns and notices AHAHHA; they stare a bit, then mirror each other. SLAHNK makes noises, which are ignored by AINJEE and DAJEE.)

So yes, it has to be the offspring first. I'm sure it has to be this way -- in all the examples, it's the children first, then, the grown-ups follow their lead.

SLAHNK

Hi!

(AHAHHA retreats and hides.  
AINJEE looks back at SLAHNK.)

AINJEE

Hang on a sec.

(AINJEE activates PEEZEE, who roams around in a pattern. SLAHNK's attention is diverted, AHAHHA watches.)

Okay but, so: back to the gifts, some aren't wasteful you said, so it's --

DAJEE

Yes precisely, it's like the birth-date holiday -- but not just anyone's birth-date, so anyone can do it. And, just stick with me here, it's complicated but you'll get it: the baby is a god you see, but he grows up to be three gods or so, it's very fascinating, almost everyone celebrated the baby god, and everyone gets a gift, and it's all so lovely.

(SLAHNK remembers AHAHHA, and leaves PEEZEE to look for her.)

AINJEE

Yeah, but, why again?

DAJEE

Why? For -- this is "culture" Ainjee, celebration, decorations, ceremonies, spirits and joy.

(fidgets and thinks a few beats)

This is what I mean. I can't get it through to you all by just talking about it, we must do it -- then you'll see the rewards! This is why we ... we must bring it all back into our lives! Don't you understand, I can't tell you i have to show you -- tell me you understand, daughter.

AINJEE

Um ... some, I understand some, it's just --

DAJEE

And again, this time -- we won't waste any grits, we won't have to, that's the break-through I've found with it, we can make them, the gifts, from things lying around.

AINJEE

I can make them you mean.

DAJEE

Well, yes, mostly. I'll do what I can from in here.

(SLAHNK spots AHAHHA and sits, and starts inching towards her.)

AINJEE

You really think it can happen?

DAJEE

Of course I do! Christmas is a time of miracles you see, anything can happen!

AINJEE

Miracles?

DAJEE

Yes, I almost forgot the best part: miracles, wondrous things, good things that happen, that shouldn't have happened. They used to happen all the time when the people invoked the Christmas! Like magical pocket watches that tell time without chips, hairbrushes that make your hair grow long again, and magic beasts whose noses glow like lanterns as they pull you across the sky!

AINJEE

That's impossible.

DAJEE

Ah yes, but that's it, miracles are when the impossible does happen!

(SLAHNK and AHAHHA play.)

You see, there's a sequence to unlock: a pageant and ceremonies -- and if we do everything just right, we will get on the good list, and we will wake up the god of Christmas who was a miracle magician, and --

AINJEE

Magician.

DAJEE

Yes, he could create food out of thin air, fish and loaves -- food that would fill your belly for a year! Don't you see what's at stake, what I'm trying to accomplish? Abundance can be ours again, like it was in the time of Christmas so long ago.

AINJEE

Well ... just sounds too good to be true.

DAJEE

Oh yes, but of course there is a price to be paid, it's dangerous too -- from what I can tell so far, if we do it

wrong, and get on the bad list, we will get the dreaded lump of coal!

AINJEE

Coal? Dad, coal's not possible, rocks don't burn. I mean, how can any of this be possible?

(DAJEE lets himself out of his cage and dances around, eventually AINJEE joins him at a lower severity. SLAHNK and AHAHHA dance too, the two groups still not noticing each other.

**2. People Say It's Not)**

PEOPLE SAY IT'S NOT, BUT I KNOW IT'S POSSIBLE.  
DRAWING STRONG AND AIMING WELL MY ARROW'S FLYING FAR.

FOLLOWING MY DREAMS, YES I KNOW THEY'RE ACHEIVABLE.

PEOPLE SAY THEY'RE NOT, BUT I SAY: THEY ARE.

I KNOW THE WORLD CAN BE RESTORED,  
REESTABLISHED, RENEWED, REBUILT, REPAIRED.  
IT'S HAPPENED ALL BEFORE AND IT CAN HAPPEN ONCE AGAIN,

(DAJEE gestures towards AINJEE.)

ALL THEY NEEDED BACK THEN WERE PEOPLE WHO:  
WERE PEOPLE WHO:

Oh, come on Ainjee, you know this.

WERE PEOPLE WHO:

AINJEE

Cared.

DAJEE

Yes that's right! You got it.

(clears throat)

PEOPLE CAN BY NATURE BE AFRAID OF METAMORPHOSIS,  
BUT IF YOU KNOW THE CATERPILLAR MAKES THE BUTTERFLY:

YOU CAN CHANGE THE MINDS OF PEOPLE SAYING "IT'S  
IMPOSSIBLE."  
YOU CAN SHOW THEM HOW, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TRY.

THE TRICK IS NOT TO DWELL ON PRESERVING THE OLD,  
BUT IN BUILDING SOMETHING NEW.  
FOR IF YOU DARE TO IMAGINE A NEW IMAGE FROM THE  
OLD,  
THEN ANYTHING IS EVERYTHING THAT YOU CAN DARING  
DO.

HOW CAN PEOPLE SEE UNLESS YOU SHOW THEM WHAT'S  
POSSIBLE?  
PULL THE CURTAINS OPEN AND THEY'LL THANK YOU IN  
THE END.  
PEOPLE CAN BE STUBBORN FROM A FEAR OF BREAKING  
BUT IF YOU CAN BREAK AND COME OUT RIGHT,  
YOU'LL SHOW THEM HOW TO BEND.

WHEN PEOPLE SAY "NO CAN DO"  
BLAZE THEM A TRAIL TO FOLLOW AND YOU  
MAY FIND THE POSSIBILITY

(DAJEE gets back in his cage.)

WILL COME...  
WILL COME...  
WILL COME...

AINJEE

True.

DAJEE

Yes, that works, but I was thinking "will come to  
fruition." You see, "fruition" was one of the whole other  
words people used to say and --

AINJEE

Slahnk!

(SLAHNK looks around, and AHAHHA  
retreats a few hops from HIM.)

DAJEE

Oh my, a Feral ... venturing very close, hasn't it?

AINJEE

Yes, I've never seen one come this close to us before, not by a mile.

DAJEE

Hmm, must have come to gawk at me: a man in a cage.

(AINJEE gets up.)

AINJEE

Slahnk buddy, why don't you come back over here.

(SLAHNK looks at AINJEE, then starts to walk towards AHAHHA. AINJEE walks towards SLAHNK, which spooks AHAHHA offstage.)

DAJEE

Ohp, there she goes.

AINJEE

Sla-ahnk. Come here my man, buddy.

(SLAHNK drifts toward where AHAHHA exited, AINJEE uses her controller and PEEZEE goes to SLAHNK and circles HIM, then leads HIM back to AINJEE, who gives him something else from her bag to keep him occupied.)

DAJEE

I wonder -- what could have drawn it so very far from the Antediluvian's stronghold, very curious ...

AINJEE

Maybe Old Doovee's finally gonna start poking us the way we've been poking him lately.

DAJEE

Ha, what would he need to do that for? No matter, back to the topic at hand. So, the first thing we'll need: gifts, yes, and also a pageant, that's the key, there must be a pageant. Here, I'll show you what I mean.

(DAJEE tries to show something  
to AINJEE on his lookie, but it  
is out of charge.)

Oh drat! My lookie's lost its charge, quick, while there's  
some light left, do you have any mirrors? We can --

(AINJEE motions DAJEE to stop.)

What?

(AINJEE pulls out a fan  
doohickey with a mouthpiece and  
cord from her bag. SHE motions  
for his pad, HE gives it to her  
and SHE plugs it in and gives it  
back to HIM, then places the  
mouthpiece fan thing in DAJEE's  
mouth. He breathes, the fan  
turns a few times, and the pad  
works again.)

DAJEE

(glottal)

Whaaaaa, uah! Whuh?

AINJEE

It's for Peezee mainly. But you can use it for tonight.  
I'll need it back though -- until I make another.

DAJEE

(muffled)

'izz iz a-ay zing!

(DAJEE removes the mouthpiece.)

This is amazing! Such a creative harnessing of imminent  
energy expenditures!

AINJEE

Goodnight dad, I'll see you tomorrow.

DAJEE

Yes, good night, my clever daughter.

(SLAHNK points at DAJEE.)

SLAHNK

You're in trouble!

DAJEE

Yes, I'm in trouble good friend Slahnk, and a good night to you too. You go with Ainjee now, back to the Circle and be a good --

(SLAHNK rips a few bars out of the cage.)

SLAHNK

There ya go!

DAJEE

No, Slahnk, give those back. I'm in trouble now and I have to --

AINJEE

Here Slahnk, let me.

(AINJEE takes the bars from SLAHNK and hands them to DAJEE.)

AINJEE

Back to the pods now.

(AINJEE programs PEEZEE to head back, SLAHNK follows. PEEZEE and SLAHNK exit.)

AINJEE

Here.

(AINJEE uses a tool from her bag to repair the bars while DAJEE holds them in place.)

DAJEE

Ainjee? There's one more thing.

AINJEE

Yes dad?

DAJEE

For this next planting to work, you'll have to believe.

AINJEE

What?

DAJEE

You have to believe in it, in the Christmas, whole, unconditional, belief.

AINJEE

I don't understand what that means.

DAJEE

Well, I'm not sure either actually, but I know that we must, at least just a little bit if not all the way, for it to work properly. So, can you believe, at least just a little bit?

AINJEE

Sure dad.

DAJEE

Good, thank you.

(AINJEE exits.)

EFFEX

So, what do you think of them so far? They speak quite well for a people who've suffered through decades and decades of a global catastrophe's aftermath, don't they? Well, let me tell you that's only because we've had to use our inter-dimensional translator, for our purposes of telling the story in your dimension. You see: Dajee would never have used the word "Antediluvian" to describe the "master guarantor" of the Ferals. Words like that had all been long forgotten, even banned! In the times when rationing every single syllable spoken, every finger lifted, meant the difference between life and death. No, "Old Doovee", as Ainjee referred to him, was pronounced in their tongue,

(extremely staccato)

"Eld Dueh". You see, over time, slight vowel and consonant shifts made it so, or will make it so -- along this particular quantum dimensional path -- that we might ... Well, think of what it is like for you in your dimension to understand language speakers from your 15th century. If you've ever read, or heard Shakespeare of course you'll

begin to know what I mean, but you must now think of that in reverse. Whereas Shakespeare may sound highfalutin and stuffy, the Copian lingua franca, to your ears, would mainly, without translation, sound like short fragments of your language in grunts and coos. Again, multiple syllable words were outlawed for their inefficiency. Saying "Parastratiosphecomyia Stratiosphecomyioides," where "house fly" would do, or "abstentious" where, well ... what I mean is, these abstentious people would never use the word abstentious in the first place! Where was I, ah yes, in addition to the differences in linguistic articulation and omission, "semantic drifts" or changes in word meaning, lead to many misunderstandings. For instance, Dajee, in his research using his "lookie", encountered --

(STAGE MANAGER barges in.)

STAGE MANAGER

Dangit all, you're supposed to be talking about the Antediluvian, and setting up the whole competition thing with the Ferals and the Copians and that, not wasting time on whatever that was you're talking about! And now we're ready to move on to the next scene! So, I guess we'll just have to fit that in later somehow. Hope you're happy!

(STAGE MANAGER exits. Lights begin fading.)

EFFEX

Happy? I'm an omniscient inter-dimensional consciousness, the philosophical implications and explanations of what "happiness" constitutes for an entity such as myself are very --

(BLACKOUT)

-- Oh, very well then.

(END SCENE)



AHYOO

... well maybe he's just crazy sometimes.

AINJEE

It's Whardin who gave the go for the planting. She believes it will work. Some of his things work, sometimes.

SUMDUF

(pointing to the ground)

Yeah, well: this isn't working.

AINJEE

Maybe not here, yet, but there are sprouts coming up over the plantings by the creek.

SUMDUF

Really?

AINJEE

Yeah, some. Plus, it works better in the summer, so we have to keep planting till then and it will be better.

SUMDUF

Well, but he did break the rules though.

AINJEE

So what if he broke the rules. You have to break the omelettes.

SUMDUF

Huh?

AINJEE

It's like: you're saying it's not possible, but I know it is possible, so all you have to do is --

(AHYOO stops SLAHNK, who's been  
batting at a fly, from trampling  
the planting bed.)

AHYOO

Hey big guy, no walking over here, this dirt is 'no go',  
(points to the ground)  
See the line, don't cross.

AINJEE

Here Slahnky buddy, time for your eats anyway.

SLAHNK

No-go.

AYHOO

That's right, no-go.

(AINJEE gives SLAHNK a ration.  
AHYOO notices something in  
AINJEE's bag.)

SUMDUF

Hey is that one of those lookies in there?

AINJEE

Is Kemdin around?

AHYOO

He said he was going on the sweep.

AINJEE

Really? Ha, I'll believe it when I see it.

SUMDUF

So, is it a lookie or not?

AINJEE

Yes, it is.

AHYOO

Can we see it?

AINJEE

Sure -- here, I'll show you the other planting, I'll prove  
it's got sprouts, wanna see that?

OFFSPRING

Yeah / I do / what's she mean again?

(AINJEE sits on the ground and  
ALL but SLAHNK look over her  
shoulders at the tablet.)

AINJEE

Here look, I just took this -- just a little while ago.

(THEY watch a video.)

SUMDUF

What are all those extra holes and messed-up dirt piles around?

AINJEE

I don't know how those happened ... but you see the sprouts don't you?

AHYOO

Oh listen! Slahnk is singing to the croupes.

SUMDUF

No he's yelling at them.

AHYOO

He should yell at ours, then maybe they'd grow too.

AINJEE

Yelling at crops doesn't make them grow.

SUMDUF

Well, it can't hurt can it?

(SUMDUF coaxes SLAHNK to the crop area.)

Come on big buddy, do what you did in the lookie.

(SLAHNK stands and looks around.)

AHYOO

Come on! Like --

(AYHOO imitates what he saw SLAHNK doing in the video. SLAHNK stands amused.)

SUMDUF

No not like that like this:

(Now SUMDUF models for SLAHNK.  
Soon OTHER OFFSPRING join in and  
finally get SLAHNK to join them  
singing/yelling at the ground.)

AINJEE

Now who's crazy? You guys are the crazy ones. You're acting like a bunch of Ferals.

SUMDUF

You're a Feral.

(AINJEE gives SUMDUF a funny  
look. SHE then holds up a  
lookie.)

AINJEE

Here, I've got a few more, want to see how it really works?

AHYOO

I do, let me.

AINJEE

Careful with them, There aren't many more where these ones came from. Be gentle.

(AINJEE passes out her tablets.  
SOME share if needed. SLAHNK  
looks on with AINJEE.)

EFFEX

Perhaps this would be a good time to explain the reason young Ahyoo over here was recently in defensive of Ainjee's father's -- crazyitude. It was due to Dajee being his father as well. They are half siblings. You see, it was uncommon for anyone to have many full sisters or brothers. For you see Copians were quite promiscuous, mainly for genetic reasons.

(clears throat)

Nomenclature due to this facet of their mating practices was also somewhat fascinating, in that the child's later-part of their name was taken from the opposite gendered parent of the child. Only one new syllable per name was allowed, where convenient. Sometimes second syllables weren't bothered with, for various reasons.

(EFFEX moves to indicate AINJEE,  
then SUMDUF, then SLAHNK.)

Hence Dajee's daughter was Ainjee, and Shaduf's son was Sumduf. And Slahnk, was merely Slahnk, for no one knew who his mother was, as he came from a tribe which soon after went off and disappeared, never to be heard from again.

(EFFEX produces a remote control  
and clicks it at the upstage  
ceiling.)

Now, as you'll see, we shall begin to discover some quite interesting phenomena from this genealogy chart.

(click)

From this genealogy,

(click)

From this -- Oh drat, this was working earlier, or, was it working in another dimension? ... I'd better go see what the matter is. Won't be a moment.

(EFFEX exits.)

SUMDUF

These people on here! They're so -- not dirty!

AYHOO

They talk funny. Why do they talk so slow like that?

SUMDUF

They talk stupid.

AINJEE

That's just how the people used to talk back then.

(KEMDIN enters.)

KEMDIN

Those don't look like you should have those.

SUMDUF

See -- this is why we didn't tell you about them!

AINJEE

It's just looking and listening, it doesn't waste any grits really.

KEMDIN

Have you reported them to the Chief Mother?

AINJEE

No, obviously.

KEMDIN

Then I have to.

AINJEE

(giving a stern look.)

Well, then you have to then.

KEMDIN

Well, just, um ... uh --

AINJEE

Just let me know if I'm wasting anyone's grits, okay.

KEMDIN

Um, yeah, I'll let you know.

AINJEE

Thanks. So, heard you were going on the sweep today, what happened with that, lose your nerve?

(SOME giggle at this.)

KEMDIN

No, I, um. I came back to protect you all.

AINJEE

Oh, thanks.

SUMDUF

No you didn't, they wouldn't let you go.

KEMDIN

They did send me back to protect everyone. The Ferals have been venturing closer, and what if they were thinking about sweeping us maybe?

AYHOO

They wouldn't do that, they don't like our stuff, only Old Doovee's stuff.

KEMDIN

They would! They'll come in the night, and sweep you right up, and take you back to their stronghold -- right through the traps. That's where the Antediluvian will keep you, always, like all the other things he keeps for himself!

AINJEE

Kemdin you're full of it.

KEMDIN

Ha, it's your Dad who's full of it though, waste any grits on celebrations in his cage lately?

AINJEE

Ha, ha. He's fine. But he was talking about a new one he's found that wouldn't waste any grits. In fact, it's meant to double our grits, even without any extra rations or reserves, if we can do it right.

KEMDIN

Double our grits, what do you mean, and without rations too?

(The word 'presents' to be always pronounced, incorrectly, with the accent on 'ents'.)

AINJEE

Yup, and there are presents.

KEMDIN

What are presents?

AINJEE

Gifts, like you get things from other people and from the Santa Claus.

AHYOO

Like you get rations?

SUM-DUF

Wait, who is the Santa Claws?

AHYOO

Sounds scary.

SUMDUF

Sound awesome, rawr!

AINJEE

Well, you get rations anyway -- this is like, something just for fun. We'd just have to do it without more rations. There's a way we could do it without wasting grits.

AYHOO

Do what?

AINJEE

You know, Christmas things, just we do it our way.

SUMDUF

If we have to do it so that we do it without doing it different than how we do it our way, how's it any different, like how's it different than just regular times doing things?

AINJEE

Well, maybe ... like most of the things you make the holiday with are just things that don't mean anything, so, as long as we stick to those things it should be okay. Like you do things just for fun.

KEMDIN

Just for fun?!

AINJEE

Yes, the presents are fun, and the pageant.

KEMDIN

Does the pageant waste grits?

AINJEE

Not really, you just stand around in these clothes, and someone talks, and some people kiss, and it really doesn't waste anything.

AYHOO

Why do they kiss?

AINJEE

Because they're under the mistletoe.

SUMDUF

Missile, like an arrow? Like a toe arrow?

AINJEE

No, like a plant.

(AHYOO does a floppy toe-led  
'tour jete' like jump.)

AYHOO

Missile toe!

AINJEE

No, that's not it.

(SUMDUF laughs and copies. THEY  
keep jumping about like this.)

SUMDUF

Missile toe! Hey who wants to kiss under my missile toe?

KEMDIN

Hey, that's like dancing, that's wastes grits! Stop!

AYHOO

That's dangerous to kiss under a missile toe, what if you  
get kicked in the face?

AINJEE

No that's not, it's, just, hey, stop!

(THEY ALL stop but giggle.)

Just, if we're going to do this -- we only have like a few  
days. According to the day counter, we have to do it on  
this one day, and then on the next day, the miracles  
happen, and so that's why you do it.

KEMDIN

What's a miracle?

AINJEE

Um ... well, we won't know until we do it. But it's good,  
it's really -- you guys, there's tons of records in the  
lookies, it'll work, we just have to try. I mean, why do  
you even think people always used to do it? They wouldn't

have had the celebration if it didn't work. Why do you think we do all the things we do, cause they're good for us? Right?

(No one has a rebuttal to this, KEMDIN thinks he might have one, but then loses the thought.)

AHYOO

So, then we should try?

AINJEE

Yes, and, one more thing, I almost forgot -- you have to believe in Christmas.

SUMDUF

Believe? How do you do that?

AINJEE

Oh it's easy you just do. It's like you pretend. It's easy.

AHYOO

So, you believe but it's pretend so it's not real?

AINJEE

(thinks a bit)

Yes, and that's why it's okay that we're going to try it out -- cause it doesn't waste any grits, and it's not real. Just here, it's all in the lookies.

SUMDUF

That's all you gotta do and you get double grits? I say let's do it!

(ALL begin to look and listen to the lookies. SOME have ear-buds that SOME fight over. If the tech exists, have AINJEE show them more about Christmas on a projection. Otherwise, ALL simply looking and listening to the lookies is fine. **3. For Christmas to Come.**)

FOR CHRISTMAS TO COME, WE'LL NEED SOME MISSLETOE,  
WE'LL NEED A SANTA CLAUS AND SNOWS.

(SUMDUF points to his lookie.)

SUMDUF  
YOU GOT TO SUCK A SUGAR PLUM.

Uh...  
AINJEE

AHYOO  
YOU GOTTA BANG IT ON A DRUM!

AINJEE  
AND FOR CHRI-STA-MAS TO COME,  
YOU GOTTA BELIEVE JUST A LITTLE BIT, JUST A  
LITTLE BIT, JUST AN ITTY BITTY LITTLE BIT.  
WON'T YOU HELP ME BRING BACK CHRISTMAS TIME?

(AINJEE walks around instructing  
and correcting lookie usage.)

YES, FOR XMAS TO COME: WE'LL NEED SOME PRETTY  
THINGS, SOME CALLING BIRDS, FRENCH HENS AND  
TURTLE DOVES AND --

SLAHNK  
FIVE GOLD RINGS!

Yes, Slahnk those too.  
AINJEE

AND GOOD TIDINGS AND GOOD CHEER,

SUMDUF  
(listening to earbud)  
AND SOME PUNCH WITH EVERCLEAR.

What's that?  
KEMDIN

I dunno.  
SUMDUF

AINJEE  
AND FOR CHRISTMAS TO APPEAR,  
YOU GOTTA BELIEVE JUST A LITTLE BIT, JUST A  
LITTLE BIT, JUST AN ITTY BITTY LITTLE BIT.  
WON'T YOU HELP ME BRING BACK CHRISTMAS,

SO WE CAN SEE?

KEMDIN

See what?

AINJEE

I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE, BUT AREN'T YOU CURIOUS?

AHYOO

YES, I'M CURIOUS!  
AND FOR XMAS TO SPRING, WE'LL FILL STOCKINGS WITH  
LOTS OF CLEMENTINES,  
WE'LL SEE A STAR OF BETHLEHEM THAT SHINES IN THE  
SKY, WAY UP HIGH!  
AND WE'LL DO SOME CHRISTMAS PRESENT WRAPPING.

AINJEE

Well actually about that --

SUMDUF

WHILE I'M ON THE SOFA NAPPING.

AINJEE

NO, SUMDUF, FOR CHRISTMAS TO HAPPEN,  
YOU GOT TO GIVE IT A TRY ONCE EVERY YEAR,  
AND IF WE PULL IT OFF IN FULL, WE'LL MAKE A  
MIRACLE, A MARVELOUS-MYSTERIOUS MIRACLE.  
SO, WON'T YOU HELP TO BRING BACK CHRISTMUH --

SUMDUF

DON'T YOU KNOW I SAID FOR CHRISTMAS TO  
MATERIALIZE,  
EVERYBODY'S GONNA HAVE TO REALIZE,  
THAT YOU GOTTA BELIEVE! ...

In um, what was that again Ainjee? I forgot.

AINJEE

IN THE BIRTH OF THE BABY GOD JESUS.

AHYOO

OOO! AND CRACKERS AND MEATS AND CHEESES!

ALL

MMM... CHEESES.

AINJEE  
WE'LL PUT UP LIGHTS WHERE WE LIVE.

SUMDUF  
WE'LL PUT UP AN ANNOYING RELATIVE!

AHYOO  
AND PRESENTS TO GIVE!

AINJEE  
WON'T YOU HELP ME BRING BACK CHRISTMAS TIME?

AHYOO  
YES, LET'S DO IT LET'S EVERYBODY DO IT,

ALL  
LET'S HELP AINJEE BRING BACK CHRISTMAS TIME!

AYHOO  
Oh! Yes, let's everyone! Oh Kemdin, please don't tell  
Whardin about this -- please?

SUMDUF  
We won't get in trouble -- only if you blab again.

(KEMDIN stands importantly.)

KEMDIN  
Okay, I've decided, we can have this Christmas, as long as  
we cut the parts that need extra rations, and as long as  
it's not wasting any grits, and it for sure is just only  
once a year.

OFFSPRING  
Yay! / Awesome Kemdin! / I knew you'd be cool this time!

KEMDIN  
And as long as we can figure out a way to make it right  
with Whardin.

(ALL are not as cheery anymore.)

Ainjee, how do you think we can do that?

AINJEE  
Well ... I think Dajee had an idea about that.

AHYOO

Yeah, let's go ask Dajee!

SUMDUF

Yeah! It was his idea, he'll know all about it!

AINJEE

Well, but, just --

SLAHNK

Dajee!

(SLAHNK starts a parade of  
OFFSPRING.)

AINJEE

Hey!

KEMDIN

Guess we're going to see Dajee.

AINJEE

Alright, but -- give me back the lookies guys, guys!

(AINJEE collects some lookies  
from the parade. She drops one  
though, before ALL exit. EFFEX  
then comes back.)

EFFEX

Where is everyone? Oh, fiddle-chips, did I miss the title  
song? That's my favorite song! Oh well, I suppose I'll see  
it in one of the other dimensions ... Ah: here come the  
Ferals, right on time.

(In come FERALS, including  
AHAHHA. THEY do an elaborate  
dance with grunting, in which  
they dig at the crops. At the  
end, THEY fertilize the crops.  
Then AINJEE, PEEZEE, and AHYOO  
return.)

AHYOO

I just -- I was sure I gave it to you!

AINJEE

Just help me find it, if it's broken I swear I'm going to -  
- Shh -- Ferals!

AHYOO

What are they doing? ... There's a lot of them.

AINJEE

Hey! Get away from there!

(AHYOO tugs on AINJEE.)

AHYOO

Ainj -- ee!

AINJEE

Just come on!

(AINJEE and AHYOO yell, flail,  
and throw things at the FERALS,  
who scatter. AHAHHA howls,  
obscured by scenery or offstage,  
as she is hit by something,  
trips and injures herself.)

AHYOO

Whoa you got one!

AINJEE

What!

AHYOO

Oh my gosh, its bleeding!

(AHAHHA howls and whimpers.)

AINJEE

Oh no!

AHYOO

What should we do?

AINJEE

I don't know!

AHYOO

Oh my gosh, it's bleeding so much blood!

AINJEE

We have to help it!

AHYOO

What! Are you crazy!

AINJEE

They're coming back!

(AHYOO and AINJEE scream and retreat a bit. FERALS come to collect AHAHHA, who hobbles on her good leg.)

Wait, they're coming back -- for her ... they've got her, oh good.

(FERALS exit.)

AHYOO

Yeah ... wow.

AINJEE

She'll be alright won't she?

AHYOO

I dunno, I thought her leg was gonna fall off.

AINJEE

Oh -- I, I just, I didn't mean it, I, I, I just wanted to scare them off.

AHYOO

I know, I mean, you sure did! ... I thought you were real brave though.

AINJEE

I just -- hey what in the ...

(AINJEE and AHYOO inspect the crops, then THEY look at each other and react to the fertilization.)

(FADE OUT)

(END SCENE)