

THE CHRISTMAS SHOES: THE MUSICAL

Written by

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INT. LOW-INCOME STUDIO APARTMENT, MAMA'S ROOM, EVENING

MAMA (37) is terminally-ill and confined to her bed by the window. Her appearance is weak, sickly, and pale. By her side, LITTLE BOY (9), holds her hand and offers comfort. DADDY (39), disheartened, sits close nearby.

Their apartment, like their clothing, is old and worn out. There is a broken window covered by a trash bag and rats can be seen moving about. Little Boy doesn't care; he only sees Mama. She coughs, turns away, and settles uncomfortably to rest. Little Boy is happy to see her rest, but worried. Daddy looks at his watch and becomes even more despondent. Little Boy quietly exits to the hall.

INT. STUDIO, CRAMPED HALLWAY, CONTINUED

Little Boy opens hall closet, retrieves his worn out jacket, puts it on, checks the pockets, and finds what he's looking for: a fistful of pennies. With a sense of resolve, Little Boy runs out the door, down the stairs, and out onto the busy city streets below.

EXT. SNOWY CITY STREETS, CONTINUED

Little Boy, full of promise, leaps out the front door on to the snowy, wet city streets. Almost immediately, a passing truck splashes Little Boy with a muddy puddle, covering him from head to toe. The Little Boy cannot believe it. Upset, he looks up towards his home and is able to catch a glimpse of his mother resting. This gives him strength to continue his journey, and he takes off down the street, on his way to the shoe store.

INT. SHOE STORE, EVENING, SHORTLY AFTER

Little Boy searches through the shoe rack for a specific pair - The Christmas Shoes. By now, the mud has caked over and Little Boy looks filthy under the store's harsh lights. Much to his relief, he finally finds The Christmas Shoes, buried behind another pair. He basks in their glory for a moment before remembering where he is. He bolts to get in line, but he's too late - two other people are in front of him. Little Boy sighs and takes his place in line, holding the shoes close and pacing. A few moments pass.

MAN (38) takes his place in line behind Little Boy. Man is holding a pair of shoes, too, and is agitated by the length of the line. He appears to be silently cursing himself before he notices Little Boy. Man shifts from agitated to curious. Enter musical accompaniment. Man sings.

MAN

*It was almost Christmas time, there
I stood in another line. Tryin' to
buy that last gift or two, not
really in the Christmas mood...*

The line moves forward.

MAN (CONT'D)

*Standing right in front of me was a
little boy waiting anxiously;
pacing 'round like little boys do.*

Little Boy paces anxiously, grips shoes tighter.

MAN (CONT'D)

*And in his hands he held a pair of
shoes. His clothes were worn and
old, he was dirty from head to
toe...*

Line moves forward; it is Little Boy's turn.

MAN (CONT'D)

*And when it came his time to pay, I
couldn't believe what I heard him
say...*

Close-up on Little Boy, who sings.

LITTLE BOY

*Sir, I want to buy these shoes for
my Mama, please, it's Christmas Eve
and these shoes are just her size.
Could you hurry, Sir? Daddy says
there's not much time, you see
she's been sick for quite a while.*

Man cannot believe what he is hearing.

LITTLE BOY (CONT'D)

*And I know these shoes would make
her smile, and I want her to look
beautiful if Mama meets Jesus
tonight...*

Close-up on Man's face, stunned. Little Boy, having explained himself, excitedly places pennies on counter, one-by-one. He counts them out, in silence, for two and a half minutes, uninterrupted. Man, who hasn't moved, sings.

MAN

*He counted pennies for what seemed
like years, then the cashier said-*

CASHIER (45) looks to boy and sings.

CASHIER

-Son, there's not enough here-

Little Boy, anguished, searches pockets for more pennies.

MAN

*He searched his pockets
frantically...*

Little Boy turns to Man.

MAN (CONT'D)

*Then he turned and he looked up at
me...*

(beat)

He said...

LITTLE BOY

*Mama made Christmas good at our
house, though most years she just
did without, tell me, Sir, what am
I going to do? Somehow I've got to
buy her...*

(looks to shoes)

These Christmas shoes...

Tension rises. Man searches himself, unsure of what to do. He wants to be decent, but... that's not what he's here for. Still, he looks at Little Boy's innocent and profoundly sad eyes, and he can't help but help. Man nods, as if finally understanding something obvious, and steps forward. Victoriously, he lays down some cash, sing narrating his actions as he does so.

MAN

(with conviction)

*So, I laid the money down, I just
had to help him out...*

Little Boy lights up with hope; tears come to his eyes.

MAN (CONT'D)

*And I'll never forget the look on
his face when he said...*

LITTLE BOY

(basking in shoe's glow)

Mama's going to look so great.

(looks to Cashier)

*Sir, I want to buy these shoes for
my Mama, please. It's Christmas Eve
and these shoes are just her size.*

(MORE)

LITTLE BOY (CONT'D)
*Could you hurry, Sir? Daddy says
 there's not much time.*

Cashier, also inspired, wraps shoes quickly, nicely.

LITTLE BOY (CONT'D)
*You see, she's been sick for quite
 a while, and I know these shoes
 would make her smile...*

Cashier hands wrapped shoes to Little Boy.

LITTLE BOY (CONT'D)
*And I want her to look beautiful...
 If Mama meets Jesus tonight.*

Man and Cashier are holding back tears, but Little Boy is too excited to notice. He scoops the pennies back into his pocket and grabs the Christmas Shoes. Man sings.

MAN
*I knew I'd caught a glimpse of
 heaven's love...*

Little Boy turns to man, nods with a smile full of hope. Man almost breaks.

MAN (CONT'D)
As he thanked me and ran out.

In a second wind, exit Little Boy.

MAN (CONT'D)
*I knew that God had sent that
 Little Boy to remind me what
 Christmas is all about...*

Slow pan out as Man and Cashier are sobbing.

EXT. SNOWY CITY STREETS, CONTINUED

Little Boy hops, runs, and sings through icy streets, all the way home.

LITTLE BOY
*Sir, I want to buy these shoes for
 my Mama, please. It's Christmas Eve
 and these shoes are just her size.
 Could you hurry, Sir? Daddy says
 there's not much time...*

Arriving at his doorstep, Little Boy stops short and dodges an oncoming puddle. He looks up and is pleased to see Mama sitting up, smiling.

LITTLE BOY (CONT'D)
You see, she's been sick... for quite a while...

Little Boy runs into building.

INT. APARTMENT, STAIRWELL, CONTINUED

Little Boy charges up stairwell with shoes held close to his chest.

INT. APARTMENT, SMALL HALLWAY, CONTINUED

Little Boy bursts through door, tears off jacket, desperate to get the shoes to Mama.

INT. APARTMENT, MAMA'S ROOM, CONTINUED

Little Boy crashes into Mama's room and quickly catches himself. Daddy is next to Mama, looking even more grim than before, shaking his head. Still, Mama smiles at Little Boy, encouraging him. He approaches, sings.

LITTLE BOY
And I know these shoes would make her smile...

Little Boy, full of reverence, carefully places shoes on Mama's feet.

LITTLE BOY
And I want her to look beautiful... if Mama meets Jesus... tonight.

Mama, despite looking even more ill than before, sees the shoes and smiles. Little Boy finally breaks.

LITTLE BOY
 Mama!

Little Boy runs to Mama's side, hugging her tightly. Daddy also breaks, embraces Mama and Little Boy. Mama suppresses her tears and hugs them back. She closes her eyes and begins to pass. Soon, her spirit leaves her body. Before leaving, she pauses outside the window, and smiles knowingly at her son. Finally, she ascends to heaven.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. HEAVEN'S GATES

Through the clouds, Mama ascends in her true form. She is young, beautiful, and healthy in a beautiful dress and the Christmas shoes. She surveys her surroundings and can't believe it, but is even more surprised to find her health and beauty restored. She takes inventory of herself from the shoes up and doesn't notice JESUS approaching from the other side of the gates.

LITTLE BOY (V.O.)

I want 'er to look beautiful...

Mama's gaze finally reaches eye level and sees Jesus smiling back at her, kindly.

LITTLE BOY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If Mama meets Jesus...

Mama smiles. Jesus takes her hand and leads her through the gates, off into the sunset.

LITTLE BOY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Tonight...

FADE TO BLACK.