

RAW PROVOCATIVE HUMANE PLAYS

royalty-free plays from **The CRY HAVOC Company**

Plays from the Royalty-Free One Act Collection may be performed without royalty. We do ask that you notify CRY HAVOC of any productions so that the company and the playwright can know where the play is being performed, and also to appropriately credit the playwright and CRY HAVOC in promotional materials and programs.

Terms of Use

By downloading this script, you agree:

- 1) To notify CRY HAVOC of any production of the play by emailing oneacts@cryhavoccompany.org.
- 2) To credit the playwright in all promotional material and programs.
- 3) To include the following text in all promotional materials and programs:
"[Name of Play] was developed with The CRY HAVOC Company (www.cryhavoccompany.org)."

For more royalty-free one-acts from The CRY HAVOC Company, visit:
www.cryhavoccompany.org/royaltyfreeoneacts



These terms and conditions are subject to change at any time.

Fine
by Kitt Lavoie

Lights rise on the bedroom of a middle class suburban couple. Tubes of wrapping paper, ribbons, and other wrapping accoutrement are arrayed across the bed.

DEREK, mid-30s, is putting the finishing touches on the wrapping of a package. MEL, mid-30s, adds the package she has just finished wrapping to one of three piles of gifts at the center of the bed.

She digs into a crinkly plastic WAL-MART bag and pulls out a three-pack of Matchbox cars.

She turns to Derek, the color draining out of her face.

Mel *(daunted)* That's it.

Derek That's it?

Mel Mmm-hmm.

Derek Who's that one for?

Mel Jarrod.

Derek Okay.

Derek goes back to wrapping.

Mel How many is that?

Derek surveys the piles.

Derek That's... seven for Dave, seven for Brandi, and that'll be seven for Jarrod.

Mel sits hard on the edge of the bed.

Mel It felt like more.

Derek It all feels like more this year.

Mel sits on the edge of the bed. She looks where she is sitting and shakes her head.

Mel We couldn't sit on the edge of the bed last year. We could barely walk around in here last year.

Derek looks up and reaches for the Matchbox cars.

Derek Here.

Mel hands the Matchboxes to Derek. He rips open the package. He hands the three cars back to Mel.

Derek Wrap up one for each of them. Give the convertible to Brandi.

Mel But now Dave and Brandi have eight and Jarrod only has seven.

Derek He's a big boy. He'll get it.

Mel I don't know.

Derek They know I haven't been going to work. They'll be okay. They'll understand.

Mel When Brandi gave me her Christmas list last week, I told her, "We're gonna have a small Christmas this year. Because of the business." You know what she said?

Derek What?

Mel She said, "That's okay. Santa doesn't have a business. He has elves."

Derek Great. Then she'll be mad at Santa, not at us.

Mel Derek—

Derek I'm kidding. I'm kidding, Mel. They'll be fine. We'll have Christmas. We'll see your folks. They'll eat ham. They'll be fine.

Mel holds up the three loose Matchbox cars.

Mel We gave them a Wii last year.

Derek And they're not getting one this year. They're getting everything we can give them this year. And it will be fine.

Mel I wish you would take this seriously.

Derek I'm taking it–

Mel That's all I've wanted. Is for you to take this seriously, Derek.

Derek Believe me, Mel, I'm taking it seriously. Look.

Derek picks up three wrapped packages – obviously books.

Derek (cont'd) From my Aunt Laura. But– TADA!

He tears the labels off one of the packages and slaps a new label on it. He jots with a Sharpie and tosses it on one of the piles.

Derek (cont'd) Nine. Fixed! It will be fine.

Mel How?

Derek Because it will be. Because it has to be.

Mel just looks at him - “how do you not get this?”

She kneels down next to the bed and begins wrapping one of the Matchbox cars. Derek re-labels the other two books, then begins wrapping the second car.

Mel finishes wrapping her car and moves on to the third one in silence. Derek finishes wrapping his car. With no more gifts to wrap, he watches her a moment.

He goes to the closet and pulls a large wrapped box from the top shelf. He places it on the bed in front of Mel.

Derek (cont'd) I was going to save this until tomorrow...

Mel What is this?

Derek It's nothing.

Mel What is this?

Derek It's for you.

Mel Derek. We said no gifts.

Derek I know.

Mel We said no gifts.

Derek I know. It's Christmas.

Mel God damn it, Derek. I knew you'd do this.

Derek Mel—

Mel We said no gifts because we can't afford any gifts. And you have never, ever understood anything like that. Never. Because everything is always going to be "fine", isn't it? It's fine to use the land as equity. It's fine to get the stainless steel appliances. "Sure, Bill. The tile can wait 'til next week. That's just fine." And that is why they called in the loans. That is why the business failed. That is why we are in this mess to begin with. This thing you do. So don't "here's a present, it will be fine" and expect me to think it's sweet or generous or anything other than you being as irresponsible as you are always.

A long, cold silence.

Derek Open it.

Mel I don't want it, whatever it is.

Derek *Open it.*

Mel just glowers at him. Derek advances and grabs the box from the bed. He tears the wrapping off, opens the box, and begins pulling out wads of colored tissue paper.

He reaches the bottom of the box and turns it over. Nothing comes out.

Derek *(cont'd)* It's nothing. I kept our deal. That was my present.

They stare at each other over the open package. Derek shakes his head.

Derek *(cont'd)* I thought it would be funny.

Mel In what conceivable world would that be funny, Derek.

Derek You used to think I was funny.

Mel looks at the paltry pile of gifts on the bed.

Mel Things just used to be funnier.

Derek I was trying. To make things better.

Mel It's never for a lack of trying with you, Derek. It's always in the execution.

They look at each other a moment. Mel scoops up all the presents on the bed in one arm load and heads for the door.

Mel (cont'd) Merry Christmas.

And she's gone.

Derek grabs the empty box and hurls it across the room. Being empty, it just sort of flops to the ground.

Derek looks after Mel for a moment, then gets on his knees and begins to finish wrapping the last Matchbox car.

Blackout.

END OF PLAY.