

the beginning of

**WHEN I GROW UP,
I WANT TO BE A CHRISTMAS TREE**

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

(from **SMALL WONDERS**)

Time: The holiday season

Place: A child's imagination

Characters: CHILD (male or female, can be played by a child or an adult)

THE DECORATORS

(friends and family of the child, at least 2 or 3 people,
but can be more. If this play is performed as part of a
collection of plays, everyone in the cast can participate.)

The CHILD stands before us.

CHILD

When I was little, before I became a big girl*,

(*or "boy")

CHILD (cont'd)

I used to get so upset when grown-ups would
ask me, "What do you want to be when you
grow up?" "What's the rush?" I kept thinking.
"Sometimes I don't know what I want to be
in ten minutes." So I'd answer, "I don't know."
That rarely satisfied them. "Give it some thought,"
they'd say in that grown-uppier than thou voice
they get. "Do you want to be a doctor? Do
you want to be a lawyer? Do you want to be
a firefighter? Do you want to be president?
Who do you want to be when you grow up?"
Once I replied, "NOT YOU!"

I got sent to my room for that one.

So I figured out that I better come up
with an answer to that question, because there
was no way I was going to get to grown-uphood
without getting that question a billion times more.

(cont'd)

CHILD (cont'd)

And then this year, when I went with my mom and dad when they picked out a Christmas tree, and I saw all the other moms and dads picking out Christmas trees, and everyone seemed to –... When Mom and Dad taught me about, about “sex”, they didn’t say this, but – I got the sense that when the baby comes out of the womb, you’re just stuck with it. But choosing a Christmas tree – that’s a *choice*. And, and my mom and dad looked like they were getting along so well when they were choosing the tree. They weren’t arguing about money, or *anything*, and well, they always told me that they “deeply respected each other”, even when Dad moved in with his girlfriend, and I think my mom and dad really *do* respect each other because whenever his girlfriend or her boyfriend starts to say something nasty about my other parent, my mom or dad always says, “Not in front of the child.”

But the night they chose the tree for me, well, I think they still love each other; they’re just too embarrassed to admit it. Anyway, a week later, one of my aunts – you know, the kind that always pops up during the holiday season – she asked, “So what do you want to be when you grow up?” And I knew. I said, “When I grow up, I want to be... a Christmas tree!”

The Child steps on a small pedestal or platform. The DECORATORS enter with all sorts of Christmas tree decorations and start to decorate the Child, slowly transforming the Child into a Christmas tree.

CHILD (cont'd)

And I will love the world,
and the world will love me!
I am beauty!
I am sparkle!
I am jelly beans!
And everyone will gather around me and shout:

DECORATORS

Hallelujah!

The Child slowly matures during the next few speeches:

CHILD

And as I grow up,
I will become as strong as your imagination.
I will be wonder that fits in your living room!
I believe in angels!
I believe in stars!
I will shine so brightly that darkness
can't hold a candle to me!
And love will be in your hearts
And your hearts will come out of hiding
And mommies and daddies will be as one,
And everyone will shout:

DECORATORS

Hallelujah!

CHILD

Do not hesitate!
I'm here for a limited time only
But your memory of me can last forever!
I have grown in the woods for years
Just to bring joy into your home.
My limbs are incredibly limber
So put shivers up my timber
Let my boughs bow before you
And let my branches support your dreams.
Lay gifts at my feet
For they are not your gifts to me
Or my gifts to you
But a celebration of the gift of giving gifts
To girls and boys and moms and dads
To the ones you love
And the ones you've forgotten you love
And the ones you will discover you love.
And you will bask in my glory
And my glory will be your glory
And we will all shout:

DECORATORS

Hallelujah!

And the play continues.