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The Most Wonderful Time
by Jennifer Reichert

Lights rise on a college dorm common room. Late night. Lamp light. Study tables strewn with papers and personal electronics.

NADINE, punky, 21, and JOY, sunny, 21, sit together on a couch, punchy and lit by the glow of Joy's LAPTOP. Joy types. Nadine throws her arms around Joy and squeezes her.

Joy You're squishing me!

Nadine I squish you!

Joy Actually go ahead, I'm so cold!

Nadine You're always cold. Your thermostat's broken. *(looking at Joy's screen)* Expedia? Try Kayak. Or Hipmunk.

Joy It's my computer.

Nadine *(squeezing Joy)* Eeeeeee! I'm so excited. Christmas together is the best idea ever! People should spend all their holidays with their friends.

Joy I love this! I love Christmas! Ohmigod, it'll be the best time. You are my entire favorite person.

Nadine Well, yeah. And also you are mine. Entirely. And you *should* be with your favorite people for Christmas. That's the whole point.

Joy Totally. My mom will be so stoked you're actually coming.

Nadine I love your mom.

Joy *(re: the flight finder)* Let's see what there is.

Joy tips the monitor so they can both see and begins entering information.

Nadine *(re: the date)* No, later. My last final is on the 22nd in the afternoon. Do the 23rd.

Joy *(looking at the flight results)* Ouch.

Nadine Maybe try late night on the 22nd?

Joy *(typing)* Ooooo! I'll email my mom as soon as we're booked so she can get you an extra ticket for Christmas Eve.

Nadine A ticket for what?

Joy Oh, the Christmas Eve service at my church.

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Nadine Your church has tickets?

Joy Well, just for Christmas Eve. It's really popular. It's so beautiful with candlelight and singing. You will die! And our church band is so cool. The bassist is totally hot. Godly and hot.

Nadine Hmm. O-kay. It's just-- my family don't usually do the church thing. I mean, you've never gone to church here. It seems weird to think of you in church.

Joy It's Christmas! It's Jesus' birthday! You don't go to church on Christmas Eve?

Nadine No. We watch *A Christmas Story*. I have a copy here I'll bring. And after the kids get to bed we do last minute wrapping and then play board games! What games do you have?

Joy A movie? Board games? That's not very Christmas.

Nadine Sure it is! We have cocoa and Christmas fudge and gingermen, and watch the snow fall. And try to defeat our siblings without mercy. Your sister will love *Acquire*, it's the perfect game for her, she's so competitive. I can't wait to teach you guys how to play!

Joy (*looking at the flight results*) Hmm. Maybe if we didn't do nonstop?

Nadine Yeah, try that.

Joy Christmas is not about defeating your siblings. It's for peace and getting along.

Nadine Didn't you hear me? Defeating them with gingermen and snow. That's Christmas!

Joy You northeasterners think you have a lock on Christmas with your Norman Rockwell and Ives! There's no snow in Santa Barbara. We stay up late and sit in the hot tub and look at the stars. And this year you'll be there too. You'll love it! (*re: the flights*) How's that?

Nadine Hmm. That one has a layover in Chicago. Maybe it would just be cheaper to stop there and go to my place instead!

Joy Oh, but look! This one through Dallas only has an hour layover! Let's see. (*Joy clicks through.*) I can't wait to be actually warm again!

Nadine But at Christmas you need snow. Like for snowmen and sledding. And then you can have a fire because it's cold outside.

Joy I think this one's good. It's one of the cheaper ones plus it gets us there in plenty of time to see the lights before church!

Nadine Well, yeah, I guess the timing on that one works the best so far.

Joy Do you have your card? I'll enter your other information.

Nadine tucks her hands underneath her as Joy types.

Nadine I'll have to get my Mom to send me my stocking to have at your place.

Joy We don't do stockings.

Nadine What?

Joy We don't have a fireplace.

Nadine What do you do in the morning before you can open your gifts?

Joy We eat brunch. French toasts and orange buns!

Nadine Brunch is for after presents!

Joy I can't wait that long to eat, I'm too hungry when I wake up.

Nadine Wait! You really open your gifts after you eat?! Then when do you get up?

Joy Eleven. *(Joy hands her the computer.)* Here.

Nadine You sleep through Christmas morning!

Joy No, we just have Christmas morning in the afternoon!

Nadine I've never slept past 8:00. The kids jump all over me!

Joy Well, there are no kids to jump on your bed at my place. You can sleep 'til you wake up! Last year we finished opening gifts at 3:00.

Nadine Well, I will totally jump on your bed! Christmas morning is for sneaking out of bed in your flannel pjs to scope all the presents under the tree, and then waking everyone up to open them.

Joy It's too warm for flannel. *(re: the flight on the screen)* Hurry. It's gonna log us out.

Nadine pulls her credit card out of her wallet.

Nadine Wow. No stockings. Sleeping in. No snow. Huh.

Joy But, starry hot tubs. Candlelight carols. Orange buns.

Nadine's fingers hovers over the keys.

Nadine Why don't you to come to my house? Then you can have snow for Christmas!

Joy I don't need snow. C'mon, my house is closer.

Nadine *(re: the flight)* This is a lot.

Nadine's fingers retreat from the keyboard.

Nadine Maybe if we had this idea a few weeks ago, the prices would be better.

Joy Maybe, but come anyway. It'll be awesome-town!

Nadine It's a little much for me to spend. I have a lot of presents to get.

Joy It can't be that much more.

Nadine Maybe next year.

Joy Really? No? You don't want to spend Christmas together?

Nadine Well... I want to spend it with my family. I'm sorry.

Nadine closes the browser window and hands the computer back to Joy.

Joy Well... I have to study for my calculus final.

Nadine I need to finish reading that doorstep for my paper.

Joy and Nadine settle back into studying. After a moment...

Nadine Am I still your entire favorite person?

Joy Yeah. You're lucky.

Nadine I know.

They settle in. Lights down.

Also available from *The CRY HAVOC Company's College Play Collection*:

Bake Sale by Jennifer Reichert

An exploration of the economics of female sexuality and the choices women make in concert and as individuals - with baked goods. Based on a series of scientific articles. (6+m, 4f - comedy)

Forsaken by Kitt Lavoie

As a former teenage bride is confronted by the youth she skipped, she and her husband struggle to find how they can possibly grow old together (1m, 1f - drama)

Good Enough by Kitt Lavoie

Shortly after meeting her devoutly Christian future in-laws over Thanksgiving dinner, a Jewish college student receives a late-night visit from her fiancé's younger sister, who is determined to prevent the marriage from taking place. (1m, 2f - drama)

Just Julian by Jennifer Reichert

Prototypical awkward John Hughes hero, Julian, wins the heart of the all-American girl, Madison, on prom night. But just as the credits are about to roll on their happiness, Julian's long-suffering best friend, Nadine, tumbles through the window to declare her love. (2m, 2f - serio-comic)

Kat for Short by Kitt Lavoie

Following the opening night of his first show, a young playwright is confronted by his longtime girlfriend about the coded messages contained in his play regarding the true nature of his relationship with her best friend. (1m, 2f, 1 flex. - drama)

The Median Line by Kitt Lavoie

The story of a young man coming to terms with his promiscuous lifestyle and trying to find love, perhaps, with the girl next door... and the one he already shares a bed with. (2m, 4f - drama)

Not Entirely Platonic: Variations on a Confession by Kitt Lavoie

Is there a way to tell your girlfriend you are in love with her best friend without losing them both? And if you could take it back, would you? (1m, 2f - drama)

Party Girl by Kitt Lavoie

A young lawyer arrives at his cousin's bachelor party to find his girlfriend, an Ivy League PhD student, working the party as an exotic dancer. How do you introduce your family to a girl they've had a lap dance from? Maybe you don't. (1m, 2f - comedy)

[pwnd] by Kitt Lavoie

There are certain things a guy doesn't do with his best friend's fiancée. Playstation and *The Godfather* are just the start. Game on. (2m, 1f - comedy)

Then... by Cynthia Franks

On a moon-lit prom night, Madelyn has big plans for her childhood sweetheart. But Rhet has bigger plans for them both. (1m, 1f - drama)

Holiday Plays

Carry Me On by Will Clark

A young math whiz tries to sneak out of his girlfriend's dorm the night before winter break. (1m, 1f - drama)

Color Blind by Will Clark

A young man wants his girlfriend to change (her sweater) for his parents. (1m, 1f - comedy)

Invited by Jennifer Reichert

An act of holiday generosity threatens the friendship of a pair of skating rink employees. (1m, 1f - comedy)

Slut Claus by Ali Keller

How do you meet your future in-laws dressed as Santa's trampy girlfriend? (1m, 1f - comedy)

The Earth You Created by Sydney Painter

A pair of teenage friends face the eternal question - does the holiday have room for both church camp and a solstice party? (2f - comedy)

The Most Wonderful Time by Jennifer Reichert

College BFFs make plans to spend their Xmas together. (2f - comedy)

Winter Break by Kitt Lavoie

What do you get for the boy who gave up everything? (1m, 1f - drama)