

Written In Stone: The Story of the Ten Commandments

You think your boss has anger issues?

A 10 Minute Comedy

By James Hutchison

Also available from www.jameshutchison.ca

What the Dickens! *Even Scrooge got a second chance.*

When Marty Fisher gets caught kissing his stage manager Samantha and the actor playing Scrooge shows up drunk Marty has to scramble to save the opening night production of a Christmas Carol and his engagement to his fiancée Tami.

Two Act Comedy, 6M, 3W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes

A Christmas Carol – Two versions available for download

When Scrooge's nephew Fred finds some letters Scrooge had written to his sister Fan a long time ago the past is unlocked, and Scrooge learns how his fear of poverty and pursuit of wealth have cost him a chance for love and genuine happiness.

CAST OF 10 + - Two Act Drama, 6M, 4W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes

CAST OF 25 + - Two Act Drama, 15M, 10W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes

Under the Mistletoe *Not every romantic evening goes as planned.*

Two couples in their late fifties, one long time friends and the other having just met, try to navigate the tricky road of love, sex and desire while spending a romantic night in the Christmas Themed Suites at the Prairie Dog Inn.

Two Act Romantic Comedy 1M, 1W or 2M, 2W Single Set, 120 minutes

Heart of Stone: A Jessica Quinn Mystery *Trusting the wrong person can be deadly.*

When Jessica Quinn uncovers the truth about her father's killer and the truth behind a woman claiming to be the long-lost daughter of her client Mary McConnell more than one person ends up dead.

Two Act Mystery, 7M, 3W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes

Stories from Langford *Every town has its secrets.*

Six characters from Langford tell stories from their lives: stories about, jealousy, revenge, love and forgiveness.

Two Act Drama, 1M, 1W, Simple settings, 120 Minutes

Death and the Psychiatrist *Even Death Could Use a Friend*

Feeling depressed about having a job where no one likes him Death goes into therapy with Dr. Thompson in order to help him cope with his guilt.

One Act Comedy, 3M, or 2M, 1W, Single Set, 50 Minutes

Plus, other One Acts and 10 Minute Plays including The Blood of a Thousand Chickens, 500 bucks and a pack of smokes, and Elvis is Dead.

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Written in Stone the Story of the Ten Commandments premiered at the 2019 Newmarket National 10 Minute Play Festival in Newmarket Ontario Canada. Cast Bridget Bezanson, Meredith Busted, Stephanie Chistiaens, and Alexia Vassos. The production was directed by Heather Dick.

The Playwright

James Hutchison writes comedies, dramas, and mysteries. He also interviews other playwrights, actors, and directors about the business and creative aspects of theatre, film, and television. You can read his interviews on his blog and download his plays at www.jameshutchison.ca.

Written in Stone: The Story of the Ten Commandments – You think your boss has anger issues.
A comedy in 10 minutes.

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CAST of CHARACTERS

Gabriel	An angel
Michael	An angel
Lucifer	An angel
God	The Almighty – voice only

SETTING

A boardroom.

TIME

The time of Moses

STORY OF THE PLAY

When Gabriel, Michael, and Lucifer are tasked with writing the Ten Commandments we discover how Lucifer ended up in hell and why man was given a soul.

PRODUCTION NOTE

These are Angels...they may have wings, or they may not. The look and feel of the costumes and setting may be as corporate or heavenly as the production team wants to make it.

WRITTEN IN STONE

SCENE: A BOARDROOM

Setting: There is an easel with pads of newsprint. The boardroom is somewhat cluttered with debris since it has been the scene of several hours of fruitless brainstorming.

At Rise: Michael and Gabriel are complaining to each other about their boss and having to work so late. MICHAEL is thumbing through the e-mails on his smartphone.

GABRIEL

He is the boss.

MICHAEL

I know that.

GABRIEL

He can do whatever He wants.

MICHAEL

I know that. I just hate it when He springs these things on us at the last minute. And why do we need Ten Commandments? Why not five? Why not one?

GABRIEL

This is all about the corner office he gave to Lucifer isn't it.

MICHAEL

That corner office should have been mine along with the parking space and the expense account.

GABRIEL

I agree. That was some nice work you did in Egypt. It's not easy to find locusts that time of the year.

MICHAEL

As God is my witness Gabriel, one of these days that corner office is going to be mine. I deserve it.

GABRIEL

You'll have to get Lucifer out of the way first.

MICHAEL

I'm working on it.

LUCIFER enters carrying coffee and sandwiches.

GABRIEL

We'll speak of the devil.

MICHAEL

Where in Eden have you been?

LUCIFER

You think it's easy to find a deli open this time of night. Let's see. *(Hands Gabriel a sandwich.)*
Pastrami on rye for Gabriel. Chicken Club for Michael. And Roasted Vegetarian for me.

They all dig into their sandwiches as they continue to talk.

LUCIFER

So, what have you two come up with? Any new commandments?

MICHAEL

I came up with a few.

LUCIFER

Like what?

MICHAEL

Like, don't fart at the dinner table.

LUCIFER

Very funny.

GABRIEL

How about no double dipping?

LUCIFER

Come on guys, this is a big deal and you're not taking it seriously.

MICHAEL

Alright what do you think the first commandment should be?

LUCIFER

Okay I've got something that, I think, will stand the test of time. What do you think of this, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

MICHAEL

I don't know. I don't really like it. Doesn't sound God like.

LUCIFER

You can do better?

MICHAEL

Without a doubt. "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not lie." That sounds like a commandment.

LUCIFER

I don't know – the commandments should be positive and poetic, don't you think? Love all creatures – honour the earth – forgive – treat all men and women with love, kindness and respect as if they were your brothers and sisters – flesh of your flesh.

MICHAEL

You know what I don't get about you Lucifer. No matter how evil people are, or how much evil they do, you always claim they have good in them. Why is that?

LUCIFER

Because, I see the flaws in myself. Because I know in my heart what I am capable of. We all have good and evil in us. Even God.

MICHAEL

Our mission is to serve God.

LUCIFER

Without question?

GABRIEL

He prefers it that way.

LUCIFER

All you two ever see is the dark side of God, but I see the light. I see the good in Him. He needs our help and counsel and that means for the good of mankind and for the good in God He needs us to be honest with Him – to be more than yes men – to speak up when His temper gets the better of Him – to appeal to His loving and kind side – yes we're here to serve Him, but we do not serve Him well by blind obedience.

MICHAEL

Hey, I might kid around about what a pain in the ass He is and how much I hate working for the Guy, but when it comes right down to it – I'm loyal. I don't question what He says or does. That's not my job. My job is to follow orders. To do as He commands.

LUCIFER

Only a fool refuses to listen to advice.

MICHAEL

Oh, so now God's a fool, is He?

GABRIEL blows his horn. LUCIFER and MICHAEL stop arguing.

GABRIEL

Listen as much as I'd like to spend the night debating how we should serve God, the fact is, we have a job to do and not much time to do it. So, why don't we take turns suggesting a commandment and then we vote. Two votes yes – it stays. Two votes no – it goes. Deal?

MICHAEL

Deal. I'll go first. How about, "Thou shalt have no other God before me." All in favour?

MICHAEL and GABRIEL put up their hands.

MICHAEL

All against.

LUCIFER raises his hand.

MICHAEL

The commandment passes. Okay Gabriel you go next.

GABRIEL

I like the three you mentioned earlier. Thou shalt not kill, steal, or lie.

LUCIFER

Hold on a second what about, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

MICHAEL

Well suppose somebody likes to be spanked. Your commandment gives them permission to spank whomever they want – you want people going around spanking each other? You put that commandment in and you’re giving people free reign to do any sinful act they want.

LUCIFER

That’s not true.

GABRIEL

Oh, what’s it matter anyway? These commandments aren’t going to work. People aren’t going to follow the rules if there’s nothing in it for them.

LUCIFER

Funny you should mention that. I’ve been working on a proposal.

MICHAEL

A proposal?

LUCIFER

Yes. I agree with Gabriel. People need something positive to look forward to. So, what if we offer mankind eternal life?

MICHAEL

No way. Immortality is for the Gods. Not humans. Humans are mortal.

LUCIFER

But what if we gave man a soul?

GABRIEL

Why would we give man a soul?

LUCIFER

So, he could dwell in the house of the Lord, in the Kingdom of Heaven, if he lives a righteous life.

MICHAEL

And if he doesn't?

LUCIFER

Then he returns to earth and tries again.

GABRIEL

The soul returns to earth. That's crazy.

MICHAEL

Hold on a second it's not that crazy. I like the idea of the righteous being rewarded. That's a great incentive, but you know Lucifer – think about it – maybe instead of returning to earth there needs to be a place where those who haven't lived a righteous life can go in order to be given an opportunity to acknowledge the error of their ways.

LUCIFER

And what sort of place would that be?

MICHAEL

Oh, I don't know – a boot camp for redemption – maybe.

LUCIFER's phone rings.

LUCIFER

Oh, hold on a sec. It's the Boss.

LUCIFER answers his phone.

LUCIFER

Hello your fullness? No, we're not finished. What? Oh. Okay sure send them to me. Um listen God, I was wondering if you had a chance to look at the proposal, I sent you. The one about eternal life. Yeah that's the one. You don't like it. Can I ask, why not? Oh. Well...uh... maybe instead of going back to earth for a do over these other souls could go to a sort of a boot camp for redemption. Oh, the boot camp wasn't my idea actually it was Michaels. Yeah, he's here. Okay. I'll put you on speaker.

LUCIFER puts God on Speakerphone.

MICHAEL

Hey big guy how's it hanging.

GOD

Couldn't be better. Now this idea of sending a soul back to earth doesn't really make sense to me.

MICHAEL

Me neither. We all know how wicked man is.

GOD

Exactly. Now, I'm not saying man doesn't have potential, but spare the rod and you spoil the child if you know what I mean, right?

MICHAEL

Couldn't agree more.

GOD

Glad to hear it Michael because I like that idea of a boot camp you came up with and I'm thinking you'd be the perfect person to run that thing for me. You'd be on the road most of the year, but you'd be doing God's work.

MICHAEL

Wow, I'm really honoured that you'd think of me and want me to take it on but being on the road – I don't know – it might be a little beyond my scope. I really think this might be a job for Lucifer. He loves to travel.

GOD

What do you think Lucifer? Interested?

LUCIFER

In what?

GOD

Going to hell?

LUCIFER

Hell?

GOD

Yes, I'm going to call it hell. Hell, of a name eh? Ha, ha, ha. Just thought that up. God I'm good.

LUCIFER

Well I don't know. How do you see this thing rolling out?

GOD

Hell and damnation – that's what I want – we'll use some good old fire and brimstone.

LUCIFER

Oh, well what about something a little more rehabilitation friendly you know. Maybe making lost souls return to earth as junior angels in order to give guidance and assistance to those in need.

GOD

No, I'd rather have my fire and brimstone. I love my fire and brimstone. I love the way it crackles.

LUCIFER

Uh okay, well could we think of it as a pilot project, maybe?

GOD

Think of it however you want. You can start tomorrow. Now I have few virgins to sacrifice if you know what I mean. Ha, ha, ha.

LUCIFER

Uh, sure.

GOD

And send me those commandants as soon as they're done. I want to give them to Moses first thing in the morning. I've got a tee time at eight and I don't want to be late. You know how hard it is to get a tee time on a Sunday.

LUCIFER

Right.

GOD hangs up. LUCIFER turns off the speaker phone.

MICHAEL

Looks like somebody just got a promotion. Congratulations.

LUCIFER

I didn't ask for this.

MICHAEL

Well I'm sure in time you'll figure out how to make it work.

GABRIEL

Can we just finish this up guys I'm tired and I want to go home.

LUCIFER

We're pretty much done. He sent a bunch of other commandments He wants to include. That's why He called.

GABRIEL

What's on his list?

LUCIFER, GABRIEL and MICHAEL look at the phone.

LUCIFER

Let's see. Worship me. And then there's a bunch of stuff in here about keeping the Sabbath – no worshipping of idols. But there's nothing in here about the earth. About loving your fellow man. I guess I was just expecting more – something that talked about man's relationship with nature and the holiness of life – not just a bunch of stupid rules.

MICHAEL

Disappointed in God, are you?

LUCIFER

Only because I see His potential and I just don't think He's living up to it. It's up to us to push Him towards being better than He is. Maybe if we'd spoken up we could have avoided that whole flood thing.

MICHAEL

Maybe you need to help Him see the error of his ways.

GABRIEL

Shall we get these down to the stone cutter?

LUCIFER

You sure you guys don't want to add, "Do unto others..."

MICHAEL

No, they're good the way they are.

GABRIEL

Okay then we're done. Now what?

MICHAEL

Anybody want to go for wings? I'm buying.

LUCIFER

Yes please. I need a drink.

GABRIEL

Me too. Let's blow this joint.

MICHAEL

You know Lucifer if I were you, I wouldn't be afraid to challenge God about how He's running things. What's the worst thing that could happen? You tell him what you think and then give him some time – and sooner or later – He'll see the wisdom in your words and the error in His way.

LUCIFER

Thanks Michael that means a lot to me. I appreciate you backing me up. I've always felt you and I were at odds, but you've certainly proven me wrong tonight.

MICHAEL

Oh, don't you worry. I've got your back buddy. We both have.

END PLAY