



# AUDITION PACKET

## First Night

By Jack Neary

Directed by Jodi Hodgson, [612-804-8322](tel:612-804-8322)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** 218-451-0715 or [countyseatgm@aol.com](mailto:countyseatgm@aol.com)

### **AUDITIONS: Feb. 27, 28 & 29 – By Appointment**

**Please contact director to set up time. Text preferred: 612-804-8322.**

*\*\*Please note casting may take 1-2 weeks. Those not cast - may or may not receive an individual phone call.  
Feel free to contact the theater for cast list or further questions.*

**WHAT DO I NEED FOR AUDITIONS?** Auditions will consist of a cold read from the Acting Sides or your choice of scenes from the script. Full scripts are available for perusal upon request. Bring a completed audition form and a calendar reflecting any conflicts with you.

### **REHEARSAL & PERFORMANCE INFORMATION:**

Rehearsals may begin as early as March 4, 2024

Local Performances to be held: May 12 & 16-19 (subject to change)

### **ABOUT THE SHOW:**

A bright, warm comedy about dreams, life, and love that had critics and audiences cheering at its premiere. Danny Fleming had convinced himself that life's dreams can't be anything more than dreams. Then back into his life walks his eighth-grade flame, Meredith O'Connor – only now it's Sister Meredith Louise, and it becomes a New Year's Eve to remember.

### **Characters: 1 male, 1 female**

Danny Fleming & Meredith O'Connor - early 30s



# Audition Form:

## First Night

Please bring this completed form with you to your audition with calendar and conflicts  
(*acting resume and headshots are optional*).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Do you text message? Yes / No)

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

Work or school hours \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been vaccinated for Covid-19? Yes / No Pronouns \_\_\_\_\_

*\*vaccination is not required*

If you are familiar with this play, are there any part that interests you?

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you accept another part if not offered any listed above? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider being an understudy for a role? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider working on the crew or technical team? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you, **sing**, dance, **play an instrument** or have other special talents? If so, please explain level of skill:

Experience: Although not required, please list some of your theater background.  
*Some of this information may be used in the playbill for the show.*

Do you have ANY conflicts during the rehearsal/performance schedule? \_\_\_\_\_

Please list ALL conflicts below (be as specific as possible to dates, times). Additional conflicts after being cast may not be accepted?

**Casting Agreement:**

By accepting a role, I agree to play the role assigned to me to the best of my ability, trusting the judgement of the director and staff. In doing so, I also agree to wear the costumes, makeup and wig or hairstyle of the director's and/or designer's choosing.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance Agreement:**

By accepting a role, I agree to attend all rehearsals and performances as defined by the rehearsal schedule. I agree to arrive in a timely matter and be prepared to start when directed to do so. I also agree to abide by all theater rules while at rehearsals and performances.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you so much for auditioning for the show!*  
*We appreciate your time and interest in the County Seat Theater Company*

# FIRST NIGHT

## ACT ONE

*(The action takes place in, and occasionally around, a video store on a side street of the downtown area of an old New England mill town. Most of what happens, happens inside, but we can see at least the front of the store, and part of the sidewalk leading up to the door. We can also see the outside of a window to the store. It is New Year's Eve, at around ten-thirty. The street appears deserted, though we may hear revelers in the distance as "First Night" begins to ring in a few blocks away from the store. It's cold, and frost accentuates the store window, which is decked out in cinematic celebration of the holidays. At rise, DANNY FLEMING, in his early thirties, sits alone, munching popcorn, watching the end of a sentimental old movie on video. When the movie ends, he looks at the audience, smiles, and addresses them.)*

DANNY. I watch my first Christmas movie every year at Thanksgiving. I go to dinner at my mother's and do the T.V. football thing with the uncles, then I come back to my apartment and toss the 1948 version of MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET into the VCR. That keeps me going for about a week. Then I have to watch HOLIDAY INN. Even though it's not just about Christmas, it has that scene at the piano with Bing and the pipe and the girl and ... that song. Which of course moves me to watch WHITE CHRISTMAS a week later. Not a great film, I guess, but I'm for any movie where a fifty year old crooner gets to sing "Count Your Blessings" to Rosemary Clooney over a

glass of buttermilk. Christmas week I watch both great SCROOGE's -- Albert Finney and Alistair Sim. Then I watch A CHRISTMAS STORY. You know that one? Small town family tackles the holidays in the late forties? Beautiful. I love the parents in that movie. Scared and nuts and funny. But always there. Then on the 24th -- well, you know what I watch on the 24th. I tell you, every time Uncle Billy slips that envelope into Lionel Barrymore's newspaper, I want to leap into the set and straighten the whole thing out. But if I did that, I wouldn't get to see that ending where everybody pours dollar bills on Jimmy Stewart while they sing "Auld Lang Syne" -- accompanied by Ward Bond on the accordion ... I don't know ... maybe I hang on to Christmas a little more than I should. It just seems to ... come around when I need it the most. (He hears an outburst of revelry down the street.) New Year's Eve really doesn't do it for me. "First Night" is what they call it here in New England. Other parts of the country, too. You know, you bundle up the kids and maybe grandma, park the car in the municipal lot. They block off the streets, set up a few bandstands, pay a lot of cops overtime. Give out free coffee and doughnuts ... Let all the mimes loose. "First Night."

(As he takes down some decorations, MEREDITH O'CONNOR appears outside the store. She has a camera, and takes a quick flash snapshot of DANNY through the window.)

I love putting these things up. I never feel like it's part of my job.

(Turns to window on the flash; MEREDITH hides.)

I'd do it for nothing. 'Course, they have to pay me to take 'em down.

(DANNY brings some decorations out back. MEREDITH, who is also in her early thirties, enters the store very carefully. She wears a big winter coat and a cap. She carries a big bag. She closes the door without making a sound, then steps surreptitiously into the store. When she hears the sound of a door opening in the stockroom out back, she panics, and dives to hide behind the counter. DANNY re-enters and steps past the counter to one of the displays. MEREDITH bites the bullet, rises, and speaks.)

MEREDITH. Excuse me.

DANNY. (Startled.) Hey!

MEREDITH. Am I holding you up?

DANNY. I hope not.

MEREDITH. I mean, are you about to close or anything?

DANNY. Uh ... no. No, you have plenty of time. Till eleven. It's only ten thirty-five.

MEREDITH. Thanks. (Instantly she retreats to the movie boxes. DANNY addresses the audience. He is astonished. And unnerved.)

DANNY. Do you have any idea who that is? That is Meredith O'Connor!

MEREDITH. (Grabbing a video box.) Oh! You have THE QUIET MAN!

DANNY. Republic Pictures, 1952.

MEREDITH. I love this movie.

DANNY. One of the greats.

MEREDITH. John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara.

DANNY. Terrific couple.

MEREDITH. One of the greats.

DANNY. Fighting tooth and nail until all they can do is just let it happen.

MEREDITH. Just ... let it happen.

DANNY. Yeah.

MEREDITH. Yeah.

DANNY. Yeah.

*(They stare at each other a moment, speechless.)*

*MEREDITH then returns to the movie wall, while*

*DANNY returns to addressing the audience.)*

Meredith O'Connor ... shouldn't be here. Meredith O'Connor went away to be a nun. Right after grade school at St. Pat's. Didn't even go to high school with the rest of us, just went smack into some ... nunestary ... someplace in upstate New York and disappeared off the face of the Earth. Well, hey, look at her. She still could be. One of those ... New Age nuns. It's hard to tell the way they wear civvies these days instead of those ... starched white cardboard pith helmets they used to have. Sure. Look at her. The way she's standing. Look at the fist. Poised to whack knuckle with a wood ruler. And the clothes. The shoes. The hat, even. There's nothing about her that says she's not a nun anymore.

MEREDITH. *(Replacing a film box.)* Oh, shit, I broke a nail!

DANNY. *(To audience.)* Then again ...

MEREDITH. Pardon my vernacular.

DANNY. *(To Meredith.)* No problem.

MEREDITH. *(To herself: fascinated.)* Oh, my God! My first shit!

DANNY. Hey, listen, excuse me, but do I know you?

MEREDITH. Probably.

DANNY. Did I used to go to school with you?

MEREDITH. Were you one of the ones who never said anything to me?

DANNY. Probably.

MEREDITH. Don't tell me! Let me guess!

DANNY. Okay.

MEREDITH. Uh ... uh ... no, it couldn't be.

DANNY. Why not?

MEREDITH. My mother told me he died.

DANNY. Who?

MEREDITH. Jerry McElroy.

DANNY. He's dead.

MEREDITH. That's what I heard.

DANNY. I don't look anything like Jerry McElroy.

MEREDITH. God, what a hunk he was.

DANNY. Then again ...

MEREDITH. Were you on the smart side of the room or the slow side of the room?

DANNY. The smart side was ...?

MEREDITH. By the windows.

DANNY. And the slow side ...?

MEREDITH. *(Beat.)* Was the other side.

DANNY. I must have been in the middle.

MEREDITH. God, this is tough. It's been ... what? Twenty years?

DANNY. They used to call me Big Flash.

MEREDITH. Who did?

DANNY. The guys. Playing football in the school yard.

MEREDITH. Big Splash?

DANNY. Flash.

MEREDITH. Big ... Flash! Oh, yes, yes, yes! Because

you were fast!

DANNY. (*Modestly.*) Well ...

MEREDITH. And fat!

DANNY. (*To audience.*) I used to be stocky.

MEREDITH. So, you were a blimp.

DANNY. I cleaned my plate.

MEREDITH. Wait a minute! It's coming! It's coming!

Dennis? Donny?

DANNY. Close.

MEREDITH. Davy? Davy Finn?

DANNY. Danny Fleming.

MEREDITH. Danny ... Fleming.

DANNY. Davy Finn's in Walpole State Prison.

MEREDITH. Why?

DANNY. That's where he belongs.

MEREDITH. I see.

DANNY. Danny Fleming! You don't remember me?

MEREDITH. Should I?

DANNY. Well, it's not a commandment.

MEREDITH. Wait!

DANNY. What!

MEREDITH. You had freckles!

DANNY. I had a couple of freckles back then, yes.

MEREDITH. A profusion of freckles.

DANNY. Which have since disappeared.

MEREDITH. (*Moves into his face*) Not really.

DANNY. Hey ...

MEREDITH. What happened to the fat?

DANNY. Stop calling it that.

MEREDITH. My God, you've lost a person since then.

DANNY. Hey, wait a minute, what is this? You take a

smartass course in the convent, or what?

MEREDITH. Oh. So you do know who I am.

DANNY. I knew ... as soon as I saw you.

MEREDITH. Oh really. Why didn't you tell me?

DANNY. I ... figured you already knew ... who you were.

MEREDITH. Uh huh. Well, I knew who you were too.

DANNY. You did?

MEREDITH. So that makes us even.

DANNY. Even for what?

MEREDITH. You and your friends practically made a religion out of ignoring me in the eighth grade. Who am I?

DANNY. What?

MEREDITH. You say you know who I am, so who am I?

DANNY. You mean ... your name?

MEREDITH. I mean ... my name.

DANNY. Well, you're ... well, I don't know what to call you now, but I remember who you were then.

MEREDITH. Who was I then, then?

DANNY. (*Beat.*) Merry. (*Catches himself.*) Meredith. O'Connor.

MEREDITH. (*Beat.*) Yes!

DANNY. Yes, what?

MEREDITH. That was a nice name, wasn't it?

DANNY. So, who are you now?

MEREDITH. You mean ... my name? (*He waits.*) Sister Meredith Louise.

DANNY. Where'd the Louise come from?

MEREDITH. My aunt. She died. Some people leave money.

DANNY. Ah. So ... you ... home for the holidays?

MEREDITH. What happened to you?

DANNY. What do you mean, what happened to me?

MEREDITH. Well, why are you here? Still at home.



Working here in this little ... movie store on New Year's Eve?

DANNY. Why do you ask?

MEREDITH. An inquisitive nun is a vital nun.

DANNY. Who said that?

MEREDITH. I did. Didn't you hear me? Why are you here?

DANNY. It's my job.

MEREDITH. Did you go to college?

DANNY. Everybody goes to college.

MEREDITH. Where?

DANNY. Umass. Amherst.

MEREDITH. What did you study?

DANNY. English.

MEREDITH. Why?

DANNY. I was a good speller. I don't know why! What do you care?

MEREDITH. You were a great speller. You won the St. Patrick's Spelling Bee for two consecutive years.

DANNY. Lost in the eighth grade, though.

MEREDITH. You certainly did.

DANNY. (*To audience.*) Oh, God! She beat me! (*To Meredith.*) You beat me!

MEREDITH. I certainly did. I even remember the deciding word.

DANNY. What?

MEREDITH. Commitment.

DANNY. (*Laughing.*) Oh, yeah, commitment. What a stupid word to lose on!

MEREDITH. (*Also laughing; stops.*) Spell it.

DANNY. Why?

MEREDITH. Can't you do it?

DANNY. Of course I can do it.

MEREDITH. So do it.

DANNY. C-O-M-M-I-T-T-M-E-N-T.

MEREDITH. At which point, in the eighth grade, Sister

Gonzaga said, "Sorry, Daniel, can you spell it, Meredith?"

DANNY. Commitment. C-O-M-M-I-T-T-M-E-N-T. Commitment.

MEREDITH. Commitment. C-O-M-M-I-T-T-M-E-N-T. Commitment.

DANNY. (*Beat.*) That's right.

MEREDITH. (*Indicating the store.*) You'd think in twenty years you'd learn from your mistakes.

DANNY. Hey, in my speller, an extra "t" is not a mistake. It's re-inforcement. Why are you here?

MEREDITH. I'm a customer.

DANNY. You want to rent movies?

MEREDITH. That's what happens here, isn't it?

DANNY. But ... you're a nun.

MEREDITH. To a certain extent.

DANNY. What?

MEREDITH. You don't rent movies to nuns?

DANNY. How can you be a nun to a certain extent?

MEREDITH. You should put up a warning. A picture of Audrey Hepburn in THE NUN'S STORY with a big X through her face.

DANNY. You can rent movies. Of course you can rent movies. It's just ... well, like, what kind of movies would somebody like you want?

MEREDITH. I don't know. What kind of movies would somebody like you suggest? (*Turns to look at movies.*)

DANNY. (*To audience.*) Score one for the nun.

MEREDITH. This doesn't sit well with me.

DANNY. What doesn't?

MEREDITH. You're thirty-five years old.

DANNY. Thirty-four!

MEREDITH. This is a side job, right? You moonlight here while you write short stories and romantic sonnets.

DANNY. Listen, maybe you should just pick out your movies and go haunt Protestants.

MEREDITH. What happened to the writing?

DANNY. What writing?

MEREDITH. Those essays in the school newsletter! My God, you were only twelve. You wrote with humor and style and flair. That obituary you wrote about Sister John Marie. It was fabulous!

DANNY. She didn't think so.

MEREDITH. You're not telling me you've stopped writing?

DANNY. I'm not telling you anything.

MEREDITH. Good storytellers should keep telling good stories. It's what you were born to do. You can't just stop.

DANNY. Can we change the subject here?

MEREDITH. You started this conversation.

DANNY. Yeah, but I didn't mean for it to turn into an ABC Nightline Special on my failure as a human being.

MEREDITH. You consider yourself a failure?

DANNY. No! Well, I mean ... no. Not a failure like ... HEAVEN'S GATE or ISHTAR.

MEREDITH. Like what, then?

DANNY. (*Looks around.*) Uh ... I don't know. Like ... THE NATURAL. Not big at the box office, but there's a lot of good stuff in it.

MEREDITH. I don't think I've ever really failed at anything.

DANNY. In your life?

MEREDITH. Well, certainly not since I entered the

convent.

DANNY. Well, I mean ... come on ...

MEREDITH. Excuse me?

DANNY. Well ... the convent. What's there to fail at?

MEREDITH. Oh, Danny, that's an incredibly stupid question.

DANNY. What's do stupid? How can a nun fail? You sign up. You pray a few years in some dormitory in the woods. They give you a black dress and one of those ... (*Demonstrates.*) ... wooden click things, and sic you on Catholic kids.

MEREDITH. I smell a nunophobe.

DANNY. No. No, this is an intellectual reaction.

MEREDITH. Sounds like it's coming from the gut to me.

DANNY. No. I gave up gut reactions when I hit thirty. Always on the outside looking in for me. Safer that way.

MEREDITH. What are your plans?

DANNY. You mean like tonight?

MEREDITH. No, I don't mean like tonight. I mean what do you plan to be when you grow up?

DANNY. (*To audience*) Sister Mary Mean Streak.

MEREDITH. What do you plan to do with your life when the New Year arrives ...?

DANNY. Well, I ...

MEREDITH. ... in ... one hour and fifteen minutes?

DANNY. If I answer this right, do I win something?

MEREDITH. We'll see.

DANNY. We'll see?

MEREDITH. What does the New Year have in store for Danny Fleming?

DANNY. I don't know. I mean, if I knew in advance something like that I could head it off at the pass and avoid a good deal of humiliation.