Welcome to Virginia

by Cameron Kent

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STORY OF THE MUSICAL

It's Christmas Eve, and the interstate in Virginia has closed due to major snowstorms. Frank, a brash billionaire businessman, and his secretary Kristine – who's not the "sharpest bulb on the tree" – are forced to seek shelter in a highway rest area. They are soon joined by Tom, a hitchhiking wannabe country music singer, and Mary Beth, a young, very pregnant widow. Of course, Charlie, the rest area janitor, is stuck there even though he just wants to get home to dinner.

But this special night has much in store for all of them. Frank, who describes himself perfectly in his song, "Money-Making Machine," is used to having his own way, but, as he speaks with Mary Beth, who mourns her late husband in "My Precious Earl," and as he chats with Tom, who displays his musical talents in "Redneck Christmas," something wonderful starts to happen. Frank reconnects with his younger, enthusiastic self and helps them find earthly solutions to their problems, and their shared feelings about the true meaning of Christmas help Frank connect to his spiritual self. Even Kristine shows her true grit helping Mary Beth have her baby, aptly named Virginia. Beautiful songs "Weary Traveler" and "Five Golden Rings" add the perfect finishing touch.

This show is designed for simplicity. It's one set, one act, no special effects, and no costume changes. With echoes of *It's a Wonderful Life*, *A Christmas Carol*, and the original Christmas story, this musical with 11 songs is uplifting, poignant and laugh out loud funny. You'll leave the theatre filled with the true spirit of Christmas!

Approximately 1 hour and 35 minutes.

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

The premiere performance of the show was at the Theatre Alliance, Winston-Salem, North Carolina on November 29th, 2016. Original Cast inculded: Stephen Robinson, Ashley Pearson, Mark Walek, Jake Messina, Liz White, John C. Wilson.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 2 w)

CHARLIE DICKSON: A man in his early 50's. He's the rest area janitor. Quick-witted and wise.

FRANK LOUDMAN: A man in his late 40's. He's a billionaire owner of a chain of discount department stores. He's outspoken and rude.

KRISTINE NICHOLS: A very attractive woman in her mid-20's with lots of makeup and big hair. Frank's secretary. Has a sweet southern accent and a caring heart but is not the brightest bulb on the tree.

TOM BITTERMAN: A man in his mid-30's. An unkempt hitchhiker, trying to make it as a country music singer. He's a combat veteran suffering from PTSD.

MARY BETH SINGLETARY: A woman in her early 20's. Very pregnant. She's poorly dressed and dead broke, but is an eternal optimist, seeing the good in everything, and she loves Christmas.

STATE TROOPER: A man in his early 30's. Very handsome, very strong.

SETTING

The inside of an interstate rest area somewhere in rural Virginia. It is Christmas Eve, present day, with blizzard conditions outside. It is one large room with one window and a few benches. Along the top of the back wall is a large sign reading "*Welcome to Virginia.*" There is one door on stage left that leads to the outside. On stage left is an archway with a sign that reads "*Restrooms.*" On stage right is an archway with a sign that reads "*Vending.*" In center stage, along the back wall, is a Christmas tree decorated with lights and ornaments. On the very top of the tree is a star, but it's not illuminated. On the back wall, stage right, is a pay phone. The handset is off the hook, dangling by the cord.

SYNOPSIS OF SONGS

SONG 1: CHRISTMAS ALL WRONG (CHARLIE)
SONG 2: MONEY MAKING MACHINE (FRANK)
SONG 3: ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN (KRISTINE)
SONG 4: MY PRECIOUS EARL (MARY BETH)
SONG 5: REDNECK CHRISTMAS (TOM)
SONG 6: I CAN'T CATCH A BREAK (TOM AND FRANK)
SONG 7: TURKEY AND STUFFING BLUES (CHARLIE)
SONG 8: AIN'T NO PROBLEM MERRY CHRISTMAS
CAN'T CURE (TOM AND CAST)
SONG 9: FRANK'S SONG (FRANK)
SONG 10: WEARY TRAVELER (CAST)
SONG 11: FIVE GOLDEN RINGS (CAST)

Welcome to Virginia

(AT RISE: CHARLIE, the rest area janitor, is sweeping the floor with a push broom, going back and forth from one end of the room to another while he whistles "The 12 Days of Christmas." He stops and picks up the dangling handset.)

CHARLIE: Uh huh. Oh yeah. I couldn't agree more. So then what happened?

(CHARLIE lets the phone dangle again. He sees the unlit star on the top of the tree. He taps the broken star with the broom handle, shakes his head, then exits into the vending machine area. FRANK and KRISTINE enter, dusting snow off their expensive overcoats.)

FRANK: Whoever invented winter oughta be shot. If I were king, that's the first thing I'd get rid of. That, and mosquitoes. And whoever invented fruitcake. They *all* gotta go.
KRISTINE: *(Sniffing the air.)* Frank, you smell that?
FRANK: I don't smell anything.
KRISTINE: Exactly!
FRANK: I should think that not smelling anything at an interstate rest stop would be a *good* thing. What am I supposed to be smelling?
KRISTINE: I don't smell Italian food. *(Sniffs again.)* See? There it isn't again!
FRANK: There's *what* not again?
KRISTINE: Nothing! Don't you find that odd, Frank? I find that odd.
FRANK: Why do you think we should be smelling Italian food, Kristine?
KRISTINE: Because when we pulled off the interstate, the sign clearly said "rest-a-ria." That's Italian for restaurant, Frank. So, where's the pasta? *(Sniffs again.)*
FRANK: *(Puzzled.)* Restaria? You mean rest area?
KRISTINE: Honestly, Frank, don't you think I know the difference between a bathroom and an Italian restaurant?

FRANK: *(Muttering.)* Apparently not.

(CHARLIE enters from the vending machine area with a stepladder in one hand and a small toolbox in the other.)

CHARLIE: Hey, folks! Welcome to Virginia!
KRISTINE: You must be the manager! Are you still serving?
CHARLIE: Serving?
KRISTINE: The Italian food. I love spaghetti, manicotti, tacos… anything Italian.
CHARLIE: Uh… well. We gotta couple vending machines through that door.
FRANK: *(To KRISTINE.)* Go get ya something. And bring me back some coffee. *(Looks through his wallet.)* And you'll have to pay for it. All I've got is hundreds.
KRISTINE: *(Cheerily.)* One large coffee coming up! Two sugars, three creams, just the way you like it! *(To CHARLIE.)* Your Christmas tree is so pretty! It looks just like a Burl and Ives painting!

(CHARLIE gives her a puzzled look. KRISTINE exits through the archway to the vending machines.)

CHARLIE: *(Looking out the window.)* So, how'd y'all get here, anyway? It's a blizzard out there.
FRANK: You're not kidding. It's blinding! In fact, I was the last car through. A few miles back, some old lady spun out right in front of me and flipped over. She looked like she mighta been hurt pretty bad. I sure was lucky to get around her before the traffic backed up.
CHARLIE: Yeah. Lucky you.
FRANK: I'm just gonna grab a cup of coffee and keep pushing through.
CHARLIE: I don't think so. Better make yourself at home.
FRANK: Why? Whaddya mean?
CHARLIE: The highway is shut down in both directions. Nothin's moving. We're gonna be here awhile.
FRANK: But I have a plane to catch!

End of Freeview

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