

The Life PRESERVER

Skit of the Week by Rich Melheim

SETTING: Anywhere

PROPS: Life preservers, oars, refrigerator box boat

CHARACTERS: Pat, Chris, Company

CHRIS: (Ahem) Ladies and gentlemen, tonight our theme is “God the Preserver.” I would like to do a dramatic reading of the psalm chosen for this auspicious event, Psalm 121. I would ask that you refrain from applause during the actual performance and, please, no flash photography until I am done. (Ahem) Now, a song of ascents from the court of David, King of Israel. (Ahem) “I lift up my eyes to the hills...”

(Pat and Company burst in through the back door)

PAT & Co.: (Dramatically) Far across the distance, I see you, I feel you...

CHRIS: Excuse me. Excuse me. I am in the middle of something here.

PAT: Don't let us bother you. We're just passing through.

Co.: (Nodding heads and smiling stupid smiles) Passing through.

PAT: Actually, we're in the middle of something, too.

Co.: Something, too. Something, too.

CHRIS: And that is?

PAT: (Dramatically) We're in the middle of the stinking Atlantic Ocean! Our luxury liner hit an icy burg and sank in half an hour.

Co.: Half an hour. Half an hour.

CHRIS: An icy burg?

PAT: You got it. We're really hungry and... (looking out at audience) What do we have here? A bunch of penguins? (Approaching the front row)

Co.: Bunch of penguins! Penguins!

PAT: I always wondered why you guys dress so nice. Are you...

CHRIS: (Ahem) I am in the middle of a dramatic reading about God the ...

PAT: God the Preserver? I know.

CHRIS: God the Preserver. You do?

PAT: Don't let us bother you. Continue.

CHRIS: (Ahem) Thank you. Now, a song of ascents from the court of David, King of Israel. Psalm 121. (Ahem) I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where...

PAT: Excuse me. Excuse me. What hills are we talking about here? Are we talking literal or figurative hills?

CHRIS: Any hills! Every hill! We're talking about looking for help.

Co.: (Screaming) Help! Help! Help!

PAT: That's exactly what we're looking for. Help. And some food if you got it. We were on this boat, see...

CHRIS: May I go on?

PAT: Go on.

CHRIS: (Annoyed) Thank you. I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made...

PAT: Who made...

(Chris glares at Pat. Pat shuts up.)

CHRIS: He will not let your foot be moved...

(Pat and Company yank at their legs, trying to move their feet)

CHRIS: What are you doing now?

PAT: I can't move my foot!

Co.: Can't move. Can't move.

CHRIS: May I finish?

PAT: Oh, go right ahead.

CHRIS: He who keeps you will not slumber...

PAT AND Co.: (Start to snore)

CHRIS: Will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor...

(The snoring grows louder)

CHRIS: Sleep! The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right

hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon... (Snoring drowns Chris out) (Shouting) Excuse me! Excuse me! Aaaaah! I'm trying to do my reading here! Quiet!

PAT: (Waking) Oh, sorry. So sorry. Were you saying something?

CHRIS: (Shouting) I was saying the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

PAT: Yeah? Oh. This is about God the Preserver! I got the only preserver I need right here. (Patting preserver) And where was God when we hit that icy burg?

Co.: Icy burg! Icy burg!

PAT: Where was this God when we needed him most? God didn't preserve us then!

CHRIS: God is preserving you right now.

PAT: No, he's not! This life preserver is the only thing preserving us now.

CHRIS: God is giving you life.

PAT: Is not!

CHRIS: God is giving you breath!

PAT: Is not! I'm breathing on my own, thank you very much.

CHRIS: The very breath you use to praise God or curse God. It's a gift. (Getting more excited) Every heartbeat. Every moment and second. Every new sunrise. It's a gift from God. (Shouting) Were God to turn his back for a moment, the entire universe would disintegrate into dust. (Screaming) God is your preserver. And the Lord will keep you from this time on and forevermore!

(Pat & Company pause, frightened)

PAT: Ooooooooooooo-kay. We'll just be on our way now.

Co.: On our way. On our way.

PAT: But before we go, can you point us to someplace to eat?

CHRIS: (Glaring) Eat? Eat?

PAT: Yeah. You know. A nice little icy burger joint. We're really hungry. Our ship went down in these waters, and we haven't eaten for days.

CHRIS: (Glaring, exiting) Would you get out of here (ad lib)...