

"The Junk Man's Christmas Dinner" Preview #1
written by Fred Passmore

(Actions during the next paragraph.) *There is no-one on stage at first; then about halfway through the first paragraph, the main character Andy comes in from the outside, wearing an old coat and hat, carrying a bag of salvaged decorations. Putting them down, he takes off his hat and hangs it up, then removes his tattered old coat and hangs it up. He rubs his hands together rapidly, trying to warm himself over the space heater for a moment.*

Narrator: One of the prevalent themes in scripture is that to receive, you must give. By holding on too tightly to anything, we are reduced even further, but by releasing whatever it is to share with others, whether of possessions, time or our own heart, we find that we are blessed in return in a greater measure. Think of the boy that gave of his few small loaves and fishes to Jesus... of the widow who shared her last bit of meal and oil with the prophet; and many other examples. However, few people really grasp this truth, and even fewer practice it. Because of this, they --and others around them-- often suffer for it. Such is the case with the fellow we are dropping in on today, which just happens to be Christmas Eve...

(Actions during the next paragraph.) *After his hands are warmer, he goes over to the pitiful tree in a corner, and taking some faded garland out of the bag, he begins to drape it around the tree. After it is on, he steps back to examine his handiwork, and he makes some further adjustments to the garland. His situation gets him down, however, and after he realizes he just can't keep decorating feeling like he does, he drops to his knees to pray. When he is done, he rises, turns on the radio and scans through it. The Junk Man then sits down, putting a tattered old blanket around him, and holding his hands out toward the small heater to warm them.*

Narrator: I'd like you to meet a very unique and, shall we say, "colorful" individual, by the name of Andy Freeman. Sadly, but understandably, everyone else in town knows him only by the moniker "The Junk Man." He lives beside the town's junkyard, where he had worked for years keeping the recyclables separated, and overseeing the materials brought. But when the town could no longer afford to pay him, they let him continue to live in the security shed, since he had nowhere else to go. All his furniture and appliances are scavenged from other people's cast-offs. His bed is an old patio lounge, and he keeps warm with a small rusted electric heater. Someone had thrown out a worn Christmas tree and decorations, so he was using them to try and cheer up his small shed which he called home.

But, as he decorated the tree he had found with discarded and scraggly garland, his situation and loneliness began to weigh him down. Dropping to his knees, he asked the Lord to send someone to him to bless him with more food, and to send some encouragement. There were so many people better off than him, he said, that surely someone with more than he had, could share with him, and make his Christmas better than it was going to be. The Junk Man shivered as he prayed, and began to remember why he was in this sad state. Feeling guilty over poor choices he had made in life, he had isolated himself from other people, including his family, and withdrawn from human contact to lessen the pain of the judging he saw in their eyes. At times like this, however, he was beginning to wonder if it would hurt as much as being alone.

Getting up from his prayer, he turned on the radio that he had found, and scanning through some stations, he settled on one that was playing Christmas music he liked. Then he sat down on the patio lounge, and pulling up a thin blanket, he warmed himself by the old heater as he listened to the radio.

Announcer on the radio: (From Luke) And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.