

Lillian vs. The Galactic Space Mages of Doom Or Hearing the Cries of the Poor and Oppressed

(A Skit for 5-9 Youth)

by Rachel C. Hunter

NARRATOR 1: Lillian arrives home after a weary day's work at the Big-Mart. All day she shelves plastic toys and helps customers. Picking up the toys and putting them on shelves. Over and over and over again.

NARRATOR 2: Another day she has gone without breakfast or lunch so that she can save food and money for her daughter. She is worried about the electricity bill, it's higher than usual and she doesn't know how she's going to pay for it.

NARRATOR 1: Her eyes ache.

When she closes her eyes she can see the reflective glare of the light on plastic packaging. Her arms and shoulders ache from performing the same repetitive motion over and over and over again.

NARRATOR 2: Her daughter greets her affectionately:

DAUGHTER: Hi mom; why are you so late?

LILLIAN: The store was really busy today and I didn't get a chance to stock the shelves. The boss said we don't get overtime pay if we haven't finished our work.

DAUGHTER: But you were helping customers; how could you stock shelves? How can he do that?

LILLIAN: We're supposed to be able to do both, so they don't budget for overtime. Besides, if I don't show that I'm loyal to the company I might be the first to be laid off.

DAUGHTER: (*Thinks a moment*) Oh. I'm sorry.

LILLIAN: Thanks, sweetie. How was your day?

DAUGHTER: (*Suddenly excited*) I just saw a commercial for *Sci-Fi Mage*. Have you seen the new galactic wizards with Zap-o-ramma eyes?

LILLIAN: I see the package for them all day.

DAUGHTER: Really? Do you think you can get me one?

LILLIAN: I'm really sorry, but they're very expensive and, even with my employee discount, we just can't afford one right now.

DAUGHTER: That's okay. I guess I don't really want one anyway. *(They hug.)*

NARRATOR 3: Then you shall call and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help and the Lord will say, "Here I am." [*Isaiah 58:9*]

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile, that same evening, Bradford, the regional manager of Big-Mart, is attending a charity function to benefit the needy. He has spent all day crunching numbers so that he can achieve the maximum profit for his company.

NARRATOR 2: ...And the maximum salary for himself, of course. He makes 200 times the amount that Lillian makes.

NARRATOR 1: His wrist and shoulders ache from all the writing and typing, but his massage therapist is extremely good, and he sees her daily.

NARRATOR 2: Bradford rushes into the scarlet-carpeted ballroom with the glare of crystal chandeliers in his eyes.
He greets his friend Buffy, who is also the hostess.

BUFFY: Bradford, fashionably late as always.

BRADFORD: Yes; you wouldn't believe the day I had. Our profits aren't rising by the predicted amount, and I had to convince my local managers that they aren't budgeted for all this overtime pay—convince workers to stay late to show their commitment to the company.

BUFFY: Oh, you sneaky thing you. You are a brilliant business person.

BRADFORD: Well it's all in a day's work. So let's talk about you. This is a fabulous event. The decorations are gorgeous, but where is the food?

BUFFY: Darling, it's a banquet fast, to raise awareness for the hungry.

BRADFORD: Oh, how bohemian.

BUFFY: No it's a biblical thing, all the rave.

BRADFORD: Well, I could stand to lose some weight. Everyone wins! And I feel so good about doing it... [*Buffy and Bradford freeze*]

NARRATOR 3: Yet, day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments. They delight to draw near to God. [*Actors who play Bradford and Buffy unfreeze and become the voices*]

VOICES: God, why do we fast, but you do not see? Why do we humble ourselves, but you do not notice?

NARRATOR 3: Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers.

[Isaiah 58: 2: 3
(NRSV)]

NARRATOR 1: Ray and his Dad are at the downtown shopping plaza. Ray is excited about the birthday money his Aunt Katie sent him.

NARRATOR 2: Ray and his dad come upon the newly remodeled Super-Duper Deluxe Big-Mart. Ray's eyes sparkle from the array of toys displayed tantalizingly in the window.

RAY: Look, Dad! It's the new Sci-Fi Galactic Mage Flesh- Eating Alien, complete with realistic slime. Dad, that's what I want for my birthday. Can I get it? Can I? Can I? Can I?

DAD: Well, I promised myself I wouldn't shop here anymore.

RAY: But Big-Mart is the only place in town that sells Sci- Fi Galactic Mages. Ever since Terri's Toys closed down.

DAD: That used to be in this same shopping center, didn't it? Terri's was a local business and probably couldn't compete with the low prices.

RAY: You say that like it's a bad thing!

DAD: Ray, listen to me. We all want to buy things more cheaply, but some stores make their prices cheaper, by not giving the people who work there enough money, or by working them longer hours, or laying them off before they receive job benefits. Big-Mart does a lot of these things and more. Do you understand?

RAY: I do, but I really want the Sci-Fi Mage. Lots of kids in school have them and—

DAD: Well, it's your money and your decision. You have to make a choice...

NARRATOR 1: Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless and poor into your house; when you see the naked to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

NARRATOR 2: Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

NARRATOR 1: Then you shall call and the Lord will answer. You shall cry for help and the Lord will say,

NARRATOR 3: Here I am. [Isaiah 58: 6: 9 (NRSV)]

—Rae Hunter, at this writing, taught theatre and writing at The Meeting School in Rindge, New Hampshire. The last we heard about her whereabouts, she was teaching in Ecuador. From Sacred Seasons, Hunger Emphasis 2005, "You Have Heard the Cries of the Poor."