

# **BRINGING THE GIFT OF LOVE**

**By Mark Anderson**

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**DEDICATION**

*I would like to dedicate this to Ken, Wayne, and Jenny for their faith, non-wavering support and love they have shown me since we have become friends. God Bless you is in my prayer. I would also like to dedicate this to my new church family, the members and friends of East Bristol Church of God. The encouragement you have given me has been unreal! Thank you so much.*

*The playwright, Mark Anderson*

**STORY**

"Charity Magazine" has chosen the Stetson family for an "at home" Christmas article. The Stetsons are well known - mother Monica is a children's author, Cody a soap opera actor, Brad a high-profile attorney, and Mallory a pediatrician. As the interview nears, however, the family members make a shocking discovery - that both Mallory and Cody are alcoholics. In fact, while the whole family looks so perfect on the outside, all they feel on the inside is emptiness. But a reporter, who reminds them of Jesus' love and the critical needs of a children's shelter, starts the family on the path to a better way to live their lives.

**TIME:** 2 days before Christmas.

**SCENE:** Living room of Monica Stetson's home.

**PLAYING TIME:** 45 min.

**SCENE 1:** Mid-morning.

**SCENE 2:** Early afternoon.

**SCENE 3:** Late afternoon.

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**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

(5 M,9 F)

**MONICA STETSON:** Famous children's author dedicated to her family. Early fifties.

**DAKOTA (CODY) STETSON:** Older son, an actor who is tired of Hollywood. Around thirty.

**BRAD STETSON:** The youngest, an ambitious lawyer. Late twenties.

**MALLORY STETSON:** The oldest sibling, a doctor who hates her profession. In her mid-thirties.

**LIZA ANDERSON:** Monica's aunt, a little eccentric, but is a Christian. In her mid-seventies.

**KAYE ROARK:** The Stetsons house-keeper, can't be with her own family. In her mid-fifties.

**LEIGH HARTSOCK:** Reporter for the "Charity Magazine." An outspoken Christian. Late thirties.

**AMBER REYNOLDS:** Director of Childrens' Shelter. Needs the Stetsons' help. Mid-twenties.

\***JAMESON:** Limousine driver from airport.

**JOHN PERRY:** Councilman. The children's godfather. Early fifties.

**SYLVIA PERRY:** His wife. Monica's best friend. The childrens' godmother. Early fifties.

**CARRIE:** A child from the Shelter. Between 8 and 10 years old.

**JOEY:** Another child from the Shelter; 6 - 8 years old.

**MADDIE:** A little girl from the shelter, who is very ill; 5-10 years old.

*\*(Part can be doubled by the actor playing John Perry.)*

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**PROPS**

Decorations for Christmas tree  
Phone  
Angel decorations  
Clock  
Watch - Monica  
Coat and suitcase - Mallory, Brad, Dakota  
Box for children's shelter  
Money - Dakota  
Magazine - Jameson  
Briefcase and papers to fill out - Brad  
Script - Dakota  
Glass of orange juice - Mallory  
Pad and pen - Leigh  
Bible (*on desk*)  
Crackers - John  
Checkbook - Dakota

**SOUND EFFECTS**

Doorbell, phone.

**SET DESIGN**

The entire play takes place in the Stetson living room, an upscale yet very comfortable room with a couch and several arm chairs in center. A table with a phone on it is behind the sofa. A desk with a Bible is DSR. A Christmas tree, mostly decorated, is needed USR. A large picture window is USC. USR is the front door and DSL is a door to the kitchen. USL is the hallway to the bedrooms upstairs. SL is a bookcase or fireplace.

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SCENE 1

(AT RISE: MONICA is on the phone, LIZA is decorating the tree.)

LIZA: Monica, who are you talking to?

MONICA: It's Sylvia.

LIZA: Heavens to Betsy. You've been on that phone all morning. Before you know it, it's going to have to be surgically removed.

MONICA: Aunt Liza! Please! (Pauses.) No, Sylvia. Aunt Liza was making jokes. You and John be sure to stop by, OK? The children would love to see you. Good-bye. (Hangs up phone.)

LIZA: It's about time!

MONICA: I wonder how dinner is coming along? Kaye? (Louder.) Kaye!

KAYE: (Enters from DSL.) Yes, ma'am?

MONICA: You may want to set a couple of extra places at the table. John and Sylvia will be joining us for dinner.

KAYE: OK. The children will be excited to see them. They haven't seen them much since Mr. Stetson's funeral.

MONICA: I know. Are their rooms ready, Kaye?

KAYE: Yes, ma'am. I finished them earlier this morning.

MONICA: How's the dinner looking?

KAYE: Great. The turkey is just about done.

MONICA: Good. If you need any help, just let me know.

KAYE: I will. Excuse me. (Exits DSL.)

MONICA: Aunt Liza, is the tree finished?

LIZA: Almost. Quit rushing me, young lady. You can't hurry perfection! When are the children coming home?

MONICA: They'll be here sometime today. I've heard from Brad and Cody earlier and they'll be flying in from California. Brad just finished the contract negotiations with the producers, so I guess Cody is still a member of "The Rich and Glamorous" cast.

LIZA: It should be called the Rude and the Grouchiness. I've seen that show. Yuck!

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MONICA: Aunt Liza. Really.

LIZA: Give me the re-runs of Howdy Doody any day. At least the puppet could act.

MONICA: Don't be so cynical. Cody is proud of what he does.

LIZA: He should've stuck to commercials. He made the cutest Gerber baby.

MONICA: Yes, he did. But that was 28 years ago!

LIZA: He should've quit while he was ahead. Have you heard from Melody yet?

MONICA: Melody?

LIZA: Your daughter.

MONICA: Oh, Mallory.

LIZA: Yeah, her too!

MONICA: She started her vacation today. She'll be here shortly.

LIZA: Monica, where did you get these lovely angel decorations?

MONICA: Ryan bought me those before he died. He was always collecting angels for me.

LIZA: He was a nice man!

MONICA: He had his problems, but he was good to me. I wish the children could see that.

LIZA: It was rough for them, Monica.

MONICA: It was rough on all of us. (*Changes subject.*) Are you through with the tree?

LIZA: Yes. What do you think?

MONICA: It's beautiful.

LIZA: (*Forgets.*) What's beautiful?

MONICA: The tree, it's beautiful.

LIZA: Unlike the tree we had last year.

MONICA: What was wrong with last years' tree?

LIZA: Child! Don't you remember? It seems like it was only yesterday. Those bratty kids from the orphanage came by to sing carols and drink eggnog and turned it over. Then that snowstorm hit and we almost froze to death. Don't you remember?

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