

CHRISTMAS WITHOUT THE ANGEL

By Tambra Kay Petrie

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my husband, Roger, and my children, Eric, Cody and Sunny. I spent many hours writing, rewriting, rehearsing and “stressing out” during the production of this play. Without my husband and children’s patience, support and love throughout this time, I could not have done it. Thank you, and I love you with all my heart.

*The Playwright
Tambra Kay Petrie*

STORY OF THE PLAY

Millionaire Jonathan Bingsley suddenly has his mansion and life turned upside down when a social worker friend asks him to take in six young children for the holidays. It’s just a “temporary” measure until the children, who have lost their parents and home in a tragic fire, can be placed permanently. To add to the confusion, Jonathan’s interfering sister shows up, bringing along her lazy son and his family. Jonathan’s only relief from all the stress is the thought of his only daughter, Cynthia, who is coming home for the first time since her mother’s (his wife’s) tragic death a year ago.

A witty mix of comedy and poignancy make this one of the most affecting Christmas plays ever.

Performance time is about 90 minutes.

CAST/COSTUMING

(4 M, 8 W, 4 B, 3 G)

JONATHAN BINGSLEY: He is in his mid-fifties, a self-made millionaire, yet very “down to earth.” Very likable and expressive with hand motions, tends to overreact when dealing with his sister and Bartley. He believes in God, but has not accepted Him as his Savior. Jonathan’s wife, Linda, passed away one year ago, and he blames God for her death. He is also tender-hearted, as shown in his scene with Linda and Cynthia. Jonathan’s clothes are nice, but casual.

LINDA BINGSLEY: Jonathan’s wife, early fifties, a very strong Christian, who returns to earth one last time to beg Jonathan to make Jesus Lord of his life. She has a sweet smile and a tender heart, as most of her scene involves strong emotion. She is visible to audience, but is only a memory to Jonathan. Linda should be clothed in a white dress or pantsuit, with white shoes.

CYNTHIA BINGSLEY: Jonathan’s daughter, in her early thirties. A very strong Christian. She continues Linda’s goal of reaching Jonathan for the Lord. Cynthia is tender-hearted, and like her parents, very strong. A career woman. Her clothes are nice, but casual.

ELIZABETH BINGSLEY JONES WASHINGTON-JOHNSON: Jonathan’s sister, mid-forties, very opinionated, flighty, shallow. Has no spiritual knowledge, but attempts to prove otherwise. Has been widowed four times. She dresses extremely well with hats, gloves, jewelry, matching shoes.

BARTLEY JONES: Elizabeth’s son, late twenties, extremely lazy, never speaks. He moves his family in with Jonathan. Most of his acting is physical. Dresses very sloppily.

TRUDY JONES: Bartley’s wife, late twenties, very petite and mousy, never speaks, most acting is physical. She wears her hair up in a messy bun and thick glasses.

BIFF JONES: Bartley’s adopted son, 12-13 years of age, a husky, smart-mouthed bully.

CAROLYN WILLIAMS: A social worker in town, early fifties. She is a close friend of the family, explaining the liberty she feels in asking such a favor from Jonathan. She is quite the actress, using every opportunity to manipulate Jonathan. Very friendly and cheerful. She dresses as a career woman, carrying a briefcase and nice coat.

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DIANA DEMMING: Nanny, hired by Carolyn Williams, to care for the children. She is in her mid to late twenties, very sweet, gentle demeanor, very caring, smiles a lot. She dresses very casually, appropriate for dealing with children on a day-to-day basis.

JAMES: The butler, mid-thirties, dressed in black pants, white long-sleeved dress shirt, black bow-tie, black vest. Very proper. Speaks with English accent.

KATRINA: The maid, early thirties, very petite and pretty. She speaks with French accent, uses a lot of facial expression, arm motions and body language. She is very hot-tempered, but also a flirt. Wears a black dress with lacy white apron. Wears hair up with matching lacy hair piece.

LUKE CARLETON: Samantha's twin brother, 12 years old. Dresses in old jeans, shoes and shirt with ball cap in first scene. After that, he wears nice new clothes that Jonathan bought for him.

SAMANTHA (Sam) CARLETON: Luke's twin sister, 12 years old. Dresses in old clothes in first scene. After that, in new clothes Jonathan bought for her.

CORY CARLETON: Luke and Sam's 9-year-old brother. Has long shaggy hair. Dresses in old clothes in first scene. After that, in nice, new clothes.

DIXIE CARLETON: Luke and Sam's 8-year-old sister. Very inquisitive and giggly. Dresses in old clothes in first scene. After that, in nice, new clothes.

JOSH CARLETON: Luke and Sam's 6-year-old brother. Very inquisitive and misses parents. Dresses in old clothes in first scene. After that, wears nice new clothes.

LIZA CARLETON: Luke and Sam's 5-year-old sister. Doesn't fully understand what's going on around her. Giggly. Dresses in old clothes in first scene. After that, dresses in nice, new clothes.

PAUL WILKINSON: A rancher from Montana. He and his wife, Mary, want to adopt a big family. Very big smile. Friendly and outgoing. Dressed in blue jeans, western shirt and tie, cowboy boots, corduroy sports jacket and cowboy hat.

MARY WILKINSON: Paul's wife. Soft spoken with a kind smile. Wears a western skirt and blouse, boots and jacket. She looks like a ranchers wife, very "down home" look.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: JONATHAN BINGSLEY enters, looking somewhat tired and depressed, loosening his tie. He sits in wing chair and begins reading newspaper. The DOORBELL rings twice and JAMES, the butler, enters from the center door to answer it.)

JAMES: *(Opening the door)* Good afternoon. Oh, Miss Carolyn. Mr. Bingsley has been expecting you. Please come in. May I take your coat?

CAROLYN: *(Taking off her coat)* Oh, don't bother. I'll just leave it here on the chair. Thank you, James. *(Stage whisper)* What mood is he in today?

JAMES: *(Points, to indicate to CAROLYN that JONATHAN is in the room)* Well...

JONATHAN: *(Recognizes HER voice and approaches)* Carolyn?

CAROLYN: Oh, Jonathan! I didn't realize you were in the room. *(Hugs HIM)*

JONATHAN: Have a seat.

JAMES: Would either of you care for something to drink?

CAROLYN: No, thank you.

JAMES: And you, sir?

JONATHAN: No, that will be all. Thank you.

JAMES: Very well. *(Exits)*

JONATHAN: So, to what do I owe this pleasure?

CAROLYN: Well, I'm trying to get things wrapped up before I take off for the holidays.

JONATHAN: Are you leaving town?

CAROLYN: Yes. I'm going to visit Mom and Dad in Springfield. I haven't been home since Easter, so it'll be nice to see everyone. So, how are you doing?

JONATHAN: Oh, don't ask.

CAROLYN: That bad? Does it have anything to do with Linda?

JONATHAN: Among other things.

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CAROLYN: She's in a much better place now. You know that, don't you?

JONATHAN: (*Irritated*) Her life wasn't so terrible here with me.

CAROLYN: Oh, I know. I'm sorry, I didn't mean anything by that. I just...(*Awkward silence*)

JONATHAN: You said you needed a favor on the phone.

CAROLYN: Yes, I did. (*Pulls file from HER briefcase*) Did you hear about the family who lost everything in that fire across town a few weeks ago? (*Hands HIM a newspaper clipping*)

JONATHAN: Vaguely. (*Reads*) Both parents died? Do they need money?

CAROLYN: Well, not exactly. Unfortunately, there were no living relatives, which means I have to put the kids in an orphanage until an adoptive family is found. I just hate the thought of that, especially with Christmas right around the corner. They need to be together in a loving surrounding, not separated into dormitory rooms. I just thought maybe...

JONATHAN: (*Catches on*) You want me to take them? (*Chuckles*) Carolyn, how am I going to take care of a couple of kids?

CAROLYN: Uh, six kids. (*HE responds.*) I'll get you a nanny!

JONATHAN: (*Helping HER to her feet*) It was so nice seeing you again, Carolyn. Call me again after you've had some therapy.

CAROLYN: You know, they might just help cheer you up. Besides, I heard Cynthia's coming to visit for the holidays. She loves children.

JONATHAN: When did you talk to Cynthia?

CAROLYN: Last night. She's not opposed to having the children.

JONATHAN: She may not be opposed to the idea, but I feel this is just not the right time to have six kids around. My daughter and I haven't been together since Linda's funeral, and I was hoping for a nice quiet Christmas at home—just the two of us. I just can't.

End of Freeview

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