

Ebby Neezer Needs Christmas

by Pat Hines

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Ebby Neezer hates Christmas. As a matter of fact, she dislikes it so much, she leaves her estate every year on the 24th of December and goes to Bermuda to avoid the holidays and the memories of Christmas. Her staff and great-niece, however, love the holiday and during Ebby's absence, have an annual party and invite all of their friends and family to attend.

Ebby's staff and niece have prayed for years for Ebby. It is their hope that one day she will return to God and celebrate Christmas with them. This is the year their prayers are answered.

On the way to the airport, Ebby's car breaks down and her chauffeur tells her to wait in a nearby diner while repairs are made. She very unhappily agrees. A waitress named Marley brings her some coffee, which is only the beginning of an unusual evening for Ebby. Three angels of Christmas follow and, through their visits, Ebby finds God once again.

This drama was written to be performed as a dinner theatre. Taking into account the time it takes for eating, the play runs approximately two hours in length. It should be a leisurely dinner for the audience.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 male, 11 female, extras)

EBBY NEEZER: A very wealthy, unhappy, single woman who no longer believes in Christmas or God. In her 40's.

ROBERT: Ms. Neezer's ever-faithful butler. He has been with her family for many years. He is a kind old soul.

MIRANDA: Robert's wife, the housekeeper of the Neezer manor who has also been with the family for many years.

ELLIE NEEZER: Ebby's niece. A sweet person, late-20's, who loves Christmas. Having heard stories of her aunt when she was a little girl, she knows that her aunt did not always hate Christmas.

MARTHA: The daughter of Robert and Miranda. She is the upstairs maid and about the same age as Ellie.

PHILLIP: Martha's husband and Ebby Neezer's chauffeur.

PETER: Martha and Phillip's 10-year-old son. He has leukemia and needs a bone marrow transplant.

MARLEY: A waitress who tells Ebby that she will be visited by three angels.

ANGEL OF CHRISTMAS PAST: A Valley Girl, about the age of a teenager.

ANGEL OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: A jolly Salvation Army Santa. Can be man or woman.

ANGEL OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: Wears a hooded robe and does not talk, only points.

YOUNGER EBBY: About six years old.

TIM AND BELINDA NEEZER: Ebby's parents.

TEENAGE EBBY

RAY: A good friend of Ebby's, also a teenager.

CHORUS MEMBERS

SERVERS FOR THE DINNER

PIANIST AND/OR BAND

SETTING

The main setting is the dining room at the Neezer Manor. It should look very plush since Ebby is very wealthy, but it is void of Christmas decorations, except for an unlit Christmas tree and an Advent wreath beside the tree. One area of the stage should represent a hallway where the first scene takes place. In another section of the stage, there is a small table and two chairs which represent the diner where Ebby spends the evening while her limousine is being repaired. It is here that she encounters her three angels.

To make the meal more elegant for your audience, it is nice to do the drama by candlelight. On the tables you can have centerpieces with candles in them, or just use several pillar candles.

It is understood that each individual group will either have a license to perform the music suggested in this drama or purchase the music so that there is not a copyright infringement. Most of the suggested songs are in the public domain.

COSTUMES

Costumes are present day except for the flashback scenes. **Younger Ebby** and **her parents** dress in period clothing, as do **Teenager Ebby** and **Ray**. **Staff** wears white shirts and blouses with black trousers and skirts. **Servers** and **chorus members** also wear white and black attire. **Ebby** dresses very nicely, and she has a winter coat. **Ellie** can be dressed in Christmas attire. She also has a winter coat for her entrance. **Peter** is dressed in casual clothing. **Marley** has a waitress uniform with an apron. The costumes for the angels are:

Angel of Christmas Past: a valley girl look;

Angel of Christmas Present: a Santa coat and baseball hat;

Angel of Christmas Future: a dark, hooded robe which covers the face.

Scene 1

(BEFORE RISE: As GUESTS arrive for the dinner theater, they are seated and served an appetizer. SERVERS and STAFF should greet the guests and tell them that the mistress of the manor has not left yet for her holiday to Bermuda. Therefore, it is necessary to be rather quiet so that Ms. Neezer does not hear them in the dining room. She would be very upset if she knew that there were plans to have a Christmas party as she hates Christmas.)

(AT RISE: MIRANDA enters. She is frantically pacing and looking at her watch. ROBERT enters, and she goes over to him.)

MIRANDA: Robert, isn't she ready yet? Most of the guests have already arrived!

ROBERT: She'll be down momentarily. Who knew she'd stay two hours late at the office today, today of all days.

MIRANDA: We never even got a chance to put up some Christmas decorations in the dining room for our friends.

ROBERT: We can do it once she leaves. Perhaps our friends would like to help.

(PHILLIP enters carrying a suitcase. MARTHA follows him carrying a purse.)

PHILLIP: She's coming. Hope we get out of here quickly. I don't want her to miss her flight.

MARTHA: She's in a most foul mood. I don't know what happened at work today, but she's grumpier than usual.

MIRANDA: I know. When she came home, she barked at me something fierce. Seems she wants all the walls washed down throughout the house while she's away. I think that's her way of making sure we don't celebrate Christmas.

MARTHA: I'm surprised she gives her employees at work tomorrow off so that they can celebrate Christmas day with their families.

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MIRANDA: *(Shakes her head.)* She needs our prayers more than ever.

ROBERT: Yes, she does, but it wasn't always like this. Remember what she was like as a youngster, my dear?

MIRANDA: That I do. She just loved Christmas. And it was celebrated so grandly here at the manor.

ROBERT: Yes, her father and mother did know how to celebrate, didn't they? The house was filled with people, and there were presents for everyone. Her mother and father knew all of the staff by name, from the youngest to the oldest.

MIRANDA: Those were happy times.

MARTHA: Well, it's not like that anymore. Although we try to make Christmas a happy time for Peter, he senses that the lady of the house is a bitter, angry woman. I'm sure she doesn't even know he exists.

MIRANDA: How is Peter doing today?

PHILLIP: He's very weak, but we're planning to bring him down for the celebration. He so loves Christmas.

ROBERT: It wouldn't be Christmas without him.

(Offstage, EBBY says the following line.)

EBBY: I don't want anyone to wish me Merry Christmas again. It's a humbug!

MARTHA: Here she comes.

(A DOORBELL sounds as EBBY enters the room.)

PHILLIP: I'll get the door, Robert. I'm on my way out to get the car. *(PHILLIP exits.)*

EBBY: *(Enters carrying HER coat.)* What are you all standing around for? I don't pay you to be statues around here.

MIRANDA: No, ma'am, I hope you have a safe trip. I hear the weather's beautiful in Bermuda this week.

EBBY: Whatever. As long as it's quiet. That's all I care about. That department store was crazy today. People and their last-minute shopping.

End of Freeview

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