THE GIFT OF THE SHEPHERDS

By Mark Anderson

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this play to my sister, Sandy, who has worked as hard (at times, harder) on the plays than I have. God certainly broke the mold when He made you.

With love - Mark, the playwright

The author wishes to thank members of the first cast:

DYLAN SHEPHERD	Author
TYLER SHEPHERD	Rick Compton
SHAYNE SHEPHERD	Joshua Compton
STEVE GALLAGHER	Tony Roberts
JEANI BRYANT	Robin Thomas
REAGAN CASSIDY	Karen Hayden
TABITHA RAFFERTY	Barbara Tran
RACHEL ALEXANDER	Genia Manicure
ADRIAN	Jonnetta Carnell
KIRBY	Johnnie Carnell
MORGAN	Amanda Compton
DIRECTOR	Nola Faye Herron
TYPIST	Sandra Roark

STORY OF THE PLAY

Dylan and Tyler Shepherd, brothers whose arguing finally stopped when they were brought together one Christmas *(See the original play, "The Shepherds Who Gather"),* are back in this sequel.

It's five years later and now they are working together on a Christian TV show. Unfortunately, the station has a new owner, Tabitha Rafferty, to whom ratings are more important than people or their priorities. She has little sympathy for Dylan whose wife has recently died leaving him to rear their young son alone.

But Christmas is a time of giving. Some unusual "gifts" given by some unlikely people, including a guilt-ridden student and a reborn Christian singer, make this a very touching and special holiday story.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 M, 3 F, 4 Flexible)

DYLAN SHEPHERD: Reporter for WKMT and host of "Chosen For His Purpose." About 30.

TYLER SHEPHERD: Dylan's brother, also 30s. A preacher who does devotions for the TV show.

SHAYNE SHEPHERD: Dylan's 10-year-old son. Has shut himself off from everyone since the death of his mother.

STEVE GALLAGHER: Producer of the TV show. An easy-going Christian.

JEANI BRYANT: Dylan's assistant. A soft-spoken Christian.

***REAGAN CASSIDY:** Director of the TV show. A Christian whose sarcasm makes people laugh.

TABITHA RAFFERTY: New owner of WKMT. Opinionated, demanding.

RACHEL ALEXANDER: Gospel recording artist. Makes a guest appearance.

***ADRIAN:** Winner of Teen Talent. Has something to share with Dylan.

***KIRBY:** Another winner. Tries to impress Dylan and Rachel.

***MORGAN:** Another winner. Sort of clumsy and comical.

***Roles can be played by male or female.

PERFORMING TIME: About 70 minutes.

TIME: Two days before Christmas, present day.

SETTING: Studio of "Chosen For His Purpose" at WKMT TV Station.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene 1: Early morning.
Scene 2: Mid-morning.
Scene 3: Mid-afternoon.

SETTING

All the action takes place in the studio of “Chosen For His Purpose,” a Christian program at TV station WKMT. UPS is a raised platform with two or three comfortable chairs, a coffee table, and a few potted plants. The program’s title is artistically displayed on the flat or curtain behind the chairs. This spotlighted area is where guests are interviewed or perform. Surrounding it is the rest of the studio where various cameras, sound equipment, lights, and cables are visible. SR is a door to a hallway to the station’s main entrance. SL is a doorway to other offices and the cafeteria. USL is a door to the office of Tabitha Rafferty.

PROPS

List for Steve; Microphone, folders, money for Dylan; Headset, cue card for Reagan; Coats for Shayne, Rachel; Notepad and pen for Tabitha; Cordless phone and package for Jeani; Watch for Tyler; Several vending machine cups.

ACT I

(AT RISE: It is morning, a few days before Christmas. The stage is empty. TYLER and JEANI enter SR talking.)

TYLER: *(Looks around.)* Well, Dylan will be back today.
JEANI: Oh, that's right. Well, I know Chris will be relieved. He's dreaded doing "Chosen For His Purpose." He keeps telling me, "Hey, Jeani, I'm only a sports reporter, not a talk show host." *(Laughs.)* How is Dylan?
TYLER: He says he's ready to come back to work.
JEANI: This soon? Hmmm ... *(Thinks.)* Well, you know Dylan. He has to be busy.
TYLER: After all he's been through, he refuses to take any more time off.
JEANI: Dylan's always been one to throw himself into his work. Might really help him, though. He's had a rough year.
TYLER: And when he gets back here and sees all these changes at the station, it's going to be rougher for him.
JEANI: I know. Then he gets to meet "you know who."
TYLER: Yeah, Mrs. Tabitha Rafferty.
JEANI: Yes! The new owner of WKMT.
TYLER: She's one of a kind!
JEANI: She's kept everyone on their toes.
TYLER: It's been like a three-ring circus around here! I hope things calm down soon.
JEANI: Me, too!
TYLER: I've got to get down to the sound stage and pre-record my devotions for the next couple of days before Christmas vacation. Can you help me?
JEANI: I'd be glad to! Let's go! *(THEY exit SL.)*

(STEVE and REAGAN enter SR.)

STEVE: Reagan, here's a list of what Mrs. Rafferty wants done today! *(Hands list to REAGAN.)*

REAGAN: *(Takes list and reads.)* Check sound system, meter readings on all lighting equipment, fix static on microphones and re-arrange setting for "Chosen For His Purpose." Is this all? No washing windows? No cleaning out the chimneys?
STEVE: Ha! Ha! Cute, Cinderella, real cute! She's serious!
REAGAN: How soon does she want this done?
STEVE: Yesterday! Is that soon enough?
REAGAN: I just had to ask!
STEVE: Also, she wants you to contact an engineer and get some blueprints drawn up for the set of Dylan's show.
REAGAN: "Chosen For His Purpose"? The set was just redecorated a few months ago!
STEVE: I know. I told her that, but she won't listen! She hears what she wants to hear! Every time that woman comes near me, I know I'm in for it. It's "Gallagher, I need this, I need that ... this needs to be done" ... and on and on and on.
TABITHA: *(Enters from HER office USL.)* Gallagher! There you are. Listen, I need to see you. Pronto. We have loads of work to do.
STEVE: *(Wearily.)* Oh, all right!
REAGAN: *(Softly to STEVE.)* You hit the nail right on the head, didn't you?
STEVE: *(To REAGAN.)* See what I mean?
TABITHA: Let's go. We don't have time for you to chit-chat! Come with me ... we've got a business to run, you know! *(THEY exit USL.)*

(REAGAN starts checking things on the set. DYLAN enters from SR.)

DYLAN: Good morning, Reagan!
REAGAN: Good morning! How are you?
DYLAN: I'm here, and I'm ready to get back to work!
REAGAN: OK, then! Let's do the promo for tonight's show.
DYLAN: OK, let me get ready. *(Puts microphone on.)*

End of Freeview

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