

THE HERO OF BINGSLEY MANOR

By Tambra Kay Petrie

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DEDICATION

This play is dedicated to the Harmony Drama Fellowship, of Fresno, California. Without their cooperation, hard work, patience, talent to perform and prayers, my dream of writing Christian drama and seeing it through to production would never have come true. They will forever hold a special place in my heart. Thank you.

STORY OF THE PLAY

A light-hearted comedy of millionaire Jonathan Bingsley whose home is turned upside down due to the disappearance of his long-time maid and butler. His sister, Elizabeth, convinces him to hire her son and daughter-in-law as replacements. They do an awful job and let the children run wild. Jonathan is forced to hire questionable substitutes, who create chaos of their own.

TIME: Present day

PLACE: Large town in Midwest.

CHARACTERS/COSTUMING

(7 M, 5 W, 2 B, 2 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.

CYNTHIA BINGSLEY: Jonathan’s daughter. She is in her early thirties. She has never been married and moved back in with her father to help with the orphans he adopted. She is tenderhearted, yet very strong. She dresses nicely, but casually.

ELIZABETH BINGSLEY-JONES-WASHINGTON-JOHNSON: Jonathan’s sister, mid-forties, very opinionated, flighty, shallow. She dresses extremely well with hats, gloves, jewelry, matching shoes. Has been widowed four times.

BARTLEY JONES: Elizabeth’s son, in twenties, extremely lazy. Most of the time he is seen reading with food in his hand. He lives with Jonathan and ends up being the hero of the play. Bartley is a small built man, very unkept. He should be the same height and size as James.

TRUDY JONES: Bartley’s wife, in twenties, mousy and nervous, speaks with high-pitched, whiny voice. She wears her hair up in a very messy bun, also wears thick glasses. Trudy is very petite — the same size as Katrina.

INSPECTOR COOLIDGE: The detective assigned to the case of the missing maid and butler. He is a tall, large man, mid-thirties. It is apparent that he is embarrassed by the incompetence and cockiness of his assistant, Kid. He wears casual pants and shirt under a trench coat and hat. Makes up for Kid’s lack in courteousness.

KID: Inspector Coolidge’s assistant, mid-twenties. Very cocky, insulting, and incompetent. He is very physically expressive. He dresses in blue jeans with shirt under a trench coat, wearing a cowboy hat and tennis shoes.

TONY (Alias William.): Maria’s son and partner in crime, mid-twenties. He kidnaps the real butler, James, and replaces him. He is balding on top, but has a long ponytail in the back, wears black pants, a white t-shirt, and black vest. Bronx accent.

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MARIA (Alias Marcia.): Tony's mother and partner in crime, mid-fifties. She kidnaps the real maid, Katrina, and replaces her. She wears black pants, a black shirt and a white plain body apron, with white hairpiece. Bronx accent.

JAMES (The Butler.): Mid-thirties, dressed in black pants, white long-sleeved dress shirt, black bow-tie, black vest. Very proper, though is relaxed enough with Jonathan that he indulges in a dry chuckle from time to time. Speaks with English accent. A Gentlemen's Gentleman.

KATRINA (The Maid.): Early thirties, very petite and pretty. She speaks with French accent. She is very hot-tempered, but also a flirt. Dressed in black dress with lacy white body apron, wears hair up with matching lacy hair piece.

HANK: Late thirties, loud southern voice, insulting to others. Dressed in dirty coveralls, ball cap, messy hair.

CORY CARLETON: 10 years old. Long shaggy hair. He often dresses up like a cowboy with Josh.

DIXIE CARLETON: 9 years old. Very inquisitive and giggly. She often plays dress up with Liza.

JOSH CARLETON: 7 years old. Very inquisitive and misses parents. He often dresses up like a cowboy with Cory.

LIZA CARLETON: 6 years old. Doesn't fully understand what's going on around her. Giggly. She often plays dress up with Dixie.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

ACT I

Scene 1 - The Bingsley Mansion - Morning

Scene 2 - The Bingsley Mansion - Early afternoon

Scene 3 - The Bingsley Mansion - Early evening

ACT II

Scene 1 - The Bingsley Mansion - One day later

Scene 2 - The Bingsley Mansion - The next morning

Scene 3 - The Bingsley Mansion - The following morning

ACT III - Same day - Mid-afternoon

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: Bingsley Manor. JONATHAN is sitting in the living room reading the Wall Street Journal. In the background is soft classical MUSIC. The quiet is broken with the PHONE ringing twice. Jonathan is seated next to the phone, but does not answer. JAMES enters from hallway.)

JAMES: Mr. Bingsley, you have a phone call.

JONATHAN: Thank you, James. Do you know who it is?

JAMES: Yes, sir. It is a Miss Sophia Johnson of Johnson's Cleaning Service.

JONATHAN: Again?

JAMES: Would you like me to tell her you're not available?

JONATHAN: No, I can't run from her forever. Apparently she's not going to stop calling until I talk to her.

JAMES: As you wish. *(Turns to leave.)*

JONATHAN: Oh, James. You might want to come up with some emergency to interrupt me. You know, in case I'm on the phone longer than two minutes.

JAMES: Yes, sir. *(Exits.)*

JONATHAN: *(On phone.)* Hello. This is Jonathan Bingsley. Yes, James gave me your messages...all twelve of them. Oh now, why would I be trying to avoid you, Miss Johnson? You know what, I'm in the middle of something right now. Can I call you back? OK, I suppose I could spare a few moments. Uh huh. Uh huh. Uh huh. *(Yawns.)* Uh huh. Yes, well, I certainly appreciate your offer, and I'm sure you do provide wonderful services, but you see, I already have a maid and butler. Uh huh. Yes, well, let me assure you that James and Katrina are both extremely qualified and I am extremely pleased with their services. Uh huh. Uh huh. *(Looks at watch.)* No. Uh huh. Well, thank you for calling, and I will keep you in mind should I need your services. Yes, I have your business card. Well, you did send me fourteen letters. *(Chuckles.)* OK. OK. Yes. Uh huh. Good-bye. *(Hangs up and sighs.)*

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JAMES: *(Enters and shouts.)* Mr. Bingsley, I have an emergency that needs your immediate attention!

JONATHAN: *(Opens newspaper.)* Too late. I did it myself.
(JAMES turns to leave.) By the way, what emergency did you come up with this time?

JAMES: *(Holds up finger.)* A paper cut, sir. As you can see, I'm bleeding.

JONATHAN: Oooh, blood and everything! You won't be needing the rest of the day off will you? I mean, what with the injury you sustained while under my employ?

JAMES: Oh no. A simple raise in salary will suffice.
(JONATHAN looks at JAMES and chuckles. James remains straight faced until Jonathan becomes serious and turns away.) Good day, sir. *(JAMES smiles and exits into kitchen. KATRINA enters and begins dusting the room with dust wand.)*

JONATHAN: Good morning, Katrina.

KATRINA: Good morning to you, Monsieur Bingsley.

JONATHAN: Katrina, have I given you a raise in salary recently?

KATRINA: Let me see. Ah, yes! I remember you, how you say, increased our wages, three years ago.

JONATHAN: It's been three years?

KATRINA: Oui, monsieur.

JONATHAN: *(Stands and exits into kitchen doorway.)*
James!

(The DOORBELL rings. KATRINA goes to wall mirror, straightens her hair and dress, then opens the front door.)

KATRINA: Good morning! May I help you?

(Two black gloved hands reach in, grab KATRINA by the arms and pull her out the door.)

KATRINA: What are you doing? *(Screams.)*

(LIGHTS out.)

End of Scene 1

End of Freeview

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