

THE SECOND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TELETHON SPECTACULAR!

by Tracy Wells



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A Talent Show within a Play

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SYNOPSIS: The diva host, the spacy-sleepy production assistant, the operators on standby, and the talent—this TV telethon has it all! Proceeds go to a soup kitchen or your cause of choice. Enmeshed within the action is a talent show. First up is an instrumental version of "Away in a Manger." Then it's "punny" stand-up comedy by shepherds Jimmy and Carl. Next up is a puppet show by the stable animals, then a dance, and finally, a soloist sings "O Holy Night." You may substitute or add other acts, depending on the skills of your church's children and youth. Individual practicing means fewer group rehearsals. In the end, despite operators confused by land lines and other glitches, everyone bands together to give to a worthy cause and put on a great show, beating last year's total by \$1!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 2 males, 16-23 either)

SCARLETT MCMASTERS (f)	Diva host of the telethon. (34 lines)
JUNE/JOHN (m/f)	Producer holding it all together. (65 lines)
CARLOS/CARLOTTA (m/f)	Wise-cracking camera operator. (37 lines)
ABBY (f)	Hair stylist. (13 lines)
GABBY (f)	Makeup artist. (7 lines)
LOUISE/LOUIS (m/f)	Stage manager who is falling asleep. (31 lines)
PHONE OPERATOR 1 (m/f)	(7 lines)
PHONE OPERATOR 2 (m/f)	(7 lines)
PHONE OPERATOR 3 (m/f)	(8 lines)
PHONE OPERATOR 4 (f)	(10 lines)
DENNIS MCMASTERS (m)	Scarlett's father and corporate sponsor. (6 lines)
RYAN/RACHEL (m/f)	Musician. (1 line)

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CARL/CAROL (m/f)	Comedian. (9 lines)
JIMMY/JACKIE (m/f)	Comedian. (10 lines)
CARMEN/CARMINE (m/f)	Vocal soloist. (9 lines)
TOM/TINA (m/f)	Puppet show performer. (3 lines)
GINA/GEORGE (m/f)	Puppet show performer. (2 lines)
JULIE/JEFF (m/f)	Puppet show performer. (3 lines)
JOHN/JOANNE (m/f)	Puppet show performer. (3 lines)
MEG/MARK (m/f)	Dancing performers. (1 line)
ALLIE/ALLEN (m/f)	Dancing performers. (1 line)
TONYA/TODD (m/f)	Dancing performers. (1 line)
SOPHIA/SAM (m/f)	Cook from the soup kitchen. (1 line)
JOEY/JENNA (m/f)	Cook from the soup kitchen. (1 line)
MICHELLE/MICHAEL (m/f)	Cook from the soup kitchen. (1 line)
DANIELLE/DANNY (m/f)	June's sister/brother. (3 lines)
CHILDREN'S CHOIR (m/f)	Any number.
OFF-STAGE CALLER 1 (m/f)	(4 lines)
OFF-STAGE CALLER 2 (f)	(5 lines)
OFF-STAGE CALLER 3 (m)	(5 lines)

OPTIONAL CAST DOUBLING

CARL can double as DENNIS MCMASTERS
 JIMMY can double as TOM and JOEY.
 RACHEL can double as GINA and CARMEN
 JULIE can double as MEG
 JOHN can double as MICHAEL
 ALLIE can double as SOPHIA

DURATION: 40 minutes.

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Performances in Order of Appearance

1. Ryan, instrumental version of “Away in a Manger.”
2. Children’s choir, any traditional Christmas carol.
3. Carl and Jimmy, shepherd comedians.
4. Four puppeteers, stable animals puppet show.
5. Children’s choir, any traditional Christmas carol.
6. Meg, Allie, and Tonya, dance to “Angels We Have Heard on High.”
7. Children’s choir, any traditional Christmas carol.
8. Carmen, vocal solo of “O Holy Night.”

PRODUCTION NOTES

SET: Soundstage of a televised telethon. This may be a simple set, or as elaborate as the director chooses. Decorations indicative of a telethon are on the Upstage Center (back) wall. This could be a red curtain with sparkly streamers hanging down in the middle and a sign with the telethon name on it. Another option is to use tulle or red and green plastic tablecloths with red and green Christmas lights behind them (same color lights and tablecloth). Optional additional Christmas decorations such as Christmas trees, garland, lights, a Nativity set, etc. may all be present. Stage Right is a table covered in a red or green tablecloth with four chairs and four telephones for the Phone Operators. An optional barn cutout puppet show stage may be used during the puppet show.

TECHNICAL ELEMENTS: The easiest way to make a pledge board that tallies up the pledges as they come in is to make a PowerPoint presentation with slides that have increasing amounts of money (with the final screen reading \$10,001). The pledge board would then be shown on a television or screen.

COSTUMES: Carl and Jimmy should wear shepherd costumes. Angel dancers should wear white and optional wings and halos. Scarlett McMasters and Carmen should wear fancy dress attire. June, Carlos, and Louise could wear all black, as they are part of the production crew. They should also have headsets or microphones and watches. All others should wear festive Christmas attire.

LIGHTING/SOUND: Christmas lights of any color may be strung up to add festive lighting and give the feel of a telethon. Spotlights are optional but may be used for individual performances if available. Musical accompaniment may be played for the children's choir songs and vocal soloists. Upbeat recorded Christmas music should play at the start and end of the telethon. Audience applause, a rim shot drum sound effect for the comedians, and a ringing phone sound effect for phone operators are also needed.

OPTIONAL CHARITABLE TIE-IN: Attendees could bring a canned good item in lieu of a ticket to the performance. All canned good could then be donated to a local soup kitchen, whose name could be substituted whenever "Oak Street Soup Kitchen" is mentioned.

PROPS: instrument(s) for talent portion, three clipboards, seven pens (three for June, Carlos, and Louise and the rest for the Phone Operators), two headsets (or microphones), a large video camera on a tripod (need not be working), large broom or mop, handheld microphone for Scarlett, brush and hairspray and/or hairstyling caddy, powder puff and/or makeup case, four cell phones, earbuds for Phone Operator 4, four corded land line phones, four pieces of paper, two shepherd's crooks, puppets (pig, cow, horse, sheep), bottle of water, large fake check from McMasters Automotive made out for \$1,000,000, and ten one-dollar bills.

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AT START: *LOUISE stands at Stage Left, leaning against a large floor mop or broom, asleep. A camera tripod is set Upstage Right. After a moment, JUNE enters Stage Right. She has a headset on and carries a clipboard and pen and is followed by CARLOS, who carries a video camera.*

JUNE: *(Looking around, frantically.)* Where is everyone? It's T-minus ten minutes to airtime, and this soundstage looks like rehearsal after Carl and Jimmy tell one of their bad jokes.

CARLOS: Don't worry, June. I'm sure Louise has everyone backstage and ready to go.

JUNE: *(Sees LOUISE sleeping, crosses to her, points at her, and looks back at CARLOS.)* Really, Carlos? Because I'm pretty sure Louise is right here, leaning against her broom and sleeping.

CARLOS: I thought you liked how calm and laid back Louise is. Isn't that why you asked her to be the stage manager for the Telethon?

LOUISE lays down or leans down further into a reclined sleeping position.

JUNE: Laid back is one thing. *Laying down* is another! *(Cupping her hands over her mouth and yelling.)* Louise!

LOUISE: *(Sitting up suddenly, snorting and looking around confused.)* Just one more minute, Mom. I promise I won't miss the bus again.

CARLOS: This isn't your bedroom, Louise.

LOUISE: *(Confused.)* It isn't?

CARLOS: And you're not in school anymore.

LOUISE: I'm not? *(Wakes up completely and stands.)* Of course I'm not! *(Starts to sweep/mop.)* Sorry, June. I've been working so hard getting everything ready for the telethon that I must have dozed off there. It won't happen again, I promise.

CARLOS crosses to tripod and begins setting up the camera.

JUNE: So all the performers are backstage and ready?

- 1 **LOUISE:** (*Confused.*) The performers? (*Remembering, alarmed.*)
2 The performers! (*Sweeps very quickly toward Stage Right.*)
3 **JUNE:** What's the matter, Louise?
4 **LOUISE:** Oh, nothing. I just need to check on a few last-minute
5 details, that's all. (*Turns back to JUNE.*) Say, how much longer
6 until the show starts?
7 **JUNE:** (*Looking at her watch.*) T-minus six minutes.
8 **LOUISE:** (*Alarmed.*) Six minutes!
9 **JUNE:** Should I be concerned, Louise?
10 **LOUISE:** Not at all, boss. I have everything under control, don't you
11 worry! (*Salutes JUNE dramatically, tripping over her broom. She*
12 *stands up and shrugs sheepishly, then sweeps quickly Off-stage*
13 *Right.*)
14 **JUNE:** Are you ready to go, Carlos?
15 **CARLOS:** Just about.
16 **JUNE:** I just want this telethon to go well. Last year they raised over
17 ten thousand dollars for the Oak Street Soup Kitchen. This
18 year's telethon has to be bigger and better so we can blow that
19 ten thousand dollars out of the water!
20 **CARLOS:** I'm sure the Oak Street soup kitchen will be grateful for
21 any money we're able to raise. It's nearly Christmas Eve, and
22 I'm sure they have many mouths to feed.
23 **JUNE:** Yeah, I'm sure they do, which is why we have to raise more
24 than the measly ten thousand dollars they raised last year.
25 **CARLOS:** (*Crossing to JUNE.*) Are you sure your competitive spirit
26 has nothing to do with the fact that your sister produced the show
27 last year and raised all that money for the soup kitchen?
28 **JUNE:** (*Turning away.*) Of course not. Why would you even
29 suggest such a thing?
30 **CARLOS:** (*With a smirk.*) No reason.
31
32 **CARLOS** turns back to fuss with his camera as **SCARLETT**
33 **MCMASTERS** enters, with **ABBY** and **GABBY** trailing close behind.
34 **ABBY** carries a brush in on hand and a can of hairspray in the other.
35 **GABBY** has a makeup case in one hand and a powder puff in the
36 other.
37

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- 1 **SCARLETT:** June! Darling, please tell your lackeys that I look
2 beautiful just the way I am and that I do not need their services
3 any longer.
- 4 **ABBY:** Lackeys?
- 5 **GABBY:** *(Crossing her arms.)* Well, I never!
- 6 **JUNE:** First of all, Scarlett, Abby and Gabby are not my lackeys.
7 Gabby is our hair stylist and Abby is our makeup artist for the
8 show.
- 9 **GABBY:** Actually, I'm the makeup artist.
- 10 **JUNE:** Exactly. You're Abby, right?
- 11 **ABBY:** No, I'm Abby!
- 12 **CARLOS:** Easy mistake.
- 13 **GABBY:** Well, I never!
- 14
- 15 *GABBY stomps Off-stage, followed by ABBY who mimics GABBY.*
- 16
- 17 **JUNE:** *(Sighing.)* Oh, dear. After the show, I'm going to need to find
18 those two and apologize.
- 19 **SCARLETT:** Just keep them away from me.
- 20 **JUNE:** Are you ready to go, Scarlett? The show is about to start in
21 T-minus— *(Looks at her watch, then exclaims.)* three minutes!
- 22 **SCARLETT:** Of course I am ready. Scarlett McMasters is always
23 ready when the camera is on her. *(Smiles at the camera.)*
- 24 **JUNE:** *(Rushes toward Stage Right.)* Great. Carlos, will you give
25 Scarlett a microphone? I need to check on the status of our
26 performers.
- 27
- 28 *CARLOS hands SCARLETT a microphone and shows her how to*
29 *use it as LOUISE enters, nearly running into JUNE.*
- 30
- 31 **JUNE:** Louise! There you are. Is our first performer ready?
- 32 **LOUISE:** That depends—who is our first performer?
- 33 **JUNE:** *(Anxiously.)* Are you kidding me? Where is your clipboard
34 with the list of all of our acts on it?
- 35 **LOUISE:** I must have left it backstage. Let me go and see. *(Walks*
36 *slowly toward Off-stage Right.)*
- 37 **JUNE:** Make sure Ryan [Or substitute name of child who is
38 performing.] is ready to go. He's our first act.

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LOUISE: Will do, boss! (*Salutes, twirls around and stumbles, then smiles and exits.*)

JUNE: (*Crossing to empty table where PHONE OPERATORS will sit.*) The show is going to start in T-minus two minutes! Where are our phone operators?

CARLOS: I think they might be over there. (*Points toward Stage Left.*)

PHONE OPERATORS enter slowly, talking on cell phones, texting, watching movies, listening to music, etc.

PHONE OPERATOR 1: (*Talking on the phone.*) So then I told her, I'm not going to the dance wearing that! What am I? Santa Claus?

PHONE OPERATOR 2: (*To PHONE OPERATOR 3.*) Check out this video my friend just sent me! Who knew a cat could play the piano?

PHONE OPERATOR 3: Shhh! Can't you see I'm trying to get caught up on season three of *Lost*?

PHONE OPERATOR 4: (*With earbuds in, dancing a bit and singing.*) Jingle Bells, Batman smells, Robin laid an—

JUNE takes one earbud out and looks at him sternly.

PHONE OPERATOR 4: What? I was just trying to get in the holiday spirit!

JUNE: You need to be in the pledge-taking spirit! Hurry up, everyone! Get to your phones. The show's about to start.

JUNE looks at clipboard as PHONE OPERATORS sit at phones.

PHONE OPERATOR 1: (*Picking up entire phone.*) What is this thing?

PHONE OPERATOR 2: I think it's our phone.

PHONE OPERATOR 3: (*Holding up cell phone.*) No, *this* is a phone.

PHONE OPERATOR 4: (*Holds up wrong part of phone to his ear.*) How do you use this thing?

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1 **CARLOS:** (*Shaking his head.*) God help us. (*Looks up.*) No, really,
2 God. Please help us.

3 **JUNE:** (*Calling out.*) T-minus ten seconds until the start of the
4 show. Let's count it down!

5 **ALL:** (*Everyone Onstage counts down.*) Ten, nine, eight, seven,
6 six, five, four, three, two—

7

8 *As they count, JUNE crosses to Stage Right and SCARLETT*
9 *crosses to center, picking up a microphone. CARLOS points*
10 *camera at SCARLETT. Instead of saying "one," JUNE points at*
11 *SCARLETT. Upbeat instrumental Christmas music plays for a few*
12 *seconds.*

13

14 **SCARLETT:** (*Looking into the camera and speaking into*
15 *microphone.*) Good evening! And welcome to the Second
16 Annual Christmas Telethon Spectacular! (*Pauses as sound of*
17 *audience clapping is heard.*) I'm Scarlett McMasters, your
18 beautiful and talented host for the evening. (*Pauses for clapping,*
19 *which does not happen, until CARLOS motions to audience to*
20 *clap. Soundtrack of audience clapping is heard, but actual*
21 *audience may clap here as well. SCARLETT feigns modesty.*)
22 Tonight we gather to raise money for a very important
23 organization: the Oak Street Soup Kitchen. (*You may substitute*
24 *your own organization here and from now on, if desired.*) This
25 soup kitchen works hard all year long to feed the hungry and
26 homeless, but at Christmas, like many other soup kitchens, it
27 finds itself with many more mouths to feed. That's where we can
28 help. (*Crosses to PHONE OPERATORS and fixes how PHONE*
29 *OPERATOR 4 is holding phone.*) Our highly skilled phone
30 operators are standing by, waiting to take your pledge. Your
31 donation will help the Oak Street Soup Kitchen feed members of
32 our community in need this Christmas. (*PHONE OPERATORS*
33 *wave as sound of audience clapping is heard. SCARLETT*
34 *crosses back to Center Stage.*) Now we have some great acts
35 ready to perform for you, our television and studio audiences,
36 while you make your pledges. So open your listening ears, your
37 generous hearts, and your hefty wallets for a great show. I am
38 Scarlett McMasters, and this is the Second Annual Christmas

1 Telethon Spectacular! (*Sound of audience clapping is heard.*)
2 Our first performer is a talented musician all the way from
3 Bakersville. (*Or substitute a nearby town.*) Please put your
4 hands together for Ryan, playing a classic Christmas song on
5 his guitar. (*Substitute name and instrument as needed, or this*
6 *may be a vocal solo. SCARLETT claps and exits Stage Right as*
7 *RYAN enters Stage Left, carrying instrument.*)

8 **RYAN:** Thank you, Scarlett. I chose this song to illustrate the story
9 of Jesus' birth in the manger so long ago. The Bible tells us in
10 Luke 2, verse 7, "And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She
11 wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because
12 there was no guest room available for them." What a beautiful
13 story that is. And no song better illustrates that story than this
14 one. This is "Away in a Manger." (*Plays "Away in a Manger" on*
15 *his instrument.*)

16
17 *While RYAN plays, LOUISE enters Stage Left and stands by*
18 *CARLOS to listen. As the song is played, she falls asleep and leans*
19 *onto CARLOS. When RYAN is finished, the sound of audience*
20 *clapping is heard as RYAN bows, then waves and exits Stage Right*
21 *as SCARLETT enters Stage Left.*

22
23 **SCARLETT:** Ryan is such a talented musician, isn't he, folks?
24 (*Crosses to PHONE OPERATORS.*) Why don't we check in with
25 the phone operators to see how we're doing? (*To PHONE*
26 *OPERATOR 1.*) How are the pledges coming?

27 **PHONE OPERATOR 1:** I mean... they're coming in through this
28 thing. (*Holds up the phone.*)

29 **SCARLETT:** You mean the phone?

30 **PHONE OPERATOR 1:** (*Shrugs his shoulders.*) I guess so.

31 **SCARLETT:** (*Confused, but regroupes and turns back to camera.*)

32 All right. Well, let's get back to the show. Our audience is in for
33 a real treat! A very talented soloist, Carmen, (*Or insert your own*
34 *singer's name.*) is here to sing her rendition of "O Holy Night" for
35 us. Please join me in welcoming Carmen. (*Starts to clap and*
36 *looks Off-stage Right, but nothing happens.*) Maybe she didn't
37 hear us. Come on, everyone, let's put our hands together for
38 Carmen! (*Starts to clap and looks Off-stage Right, but nothing*

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1 *happens. She crosses to JUNE and says, in an agitated stage*
2 *whisper.) Where's Carmen? She's making me look like an idiot*
3 *out there!*
4 **JUNE:** *(Looking at clipboard.)* I don't know. She should be ready to
5 go. You know how she can be, though.
6 **SCARLETT:** This telethon only has enough room for one diva, and
7 you're looking at her!
8 **JUNE:** Right. Let me see if Louise knows where she is. *(Talking*
9 *into her headset.)* Louise? *(Nothing happens. Yells.)* Louise!
10 **LOUISE:** *(Startles, snorts, looks around, confused.)* But this hay is
11 so comfy! It's just like a pillow.
12 **CARLOS:** Hey! I'm not hay!
13 **JUNE:** Louise! Did you fall asleep again?
14 **LOUISE:** No! Maybe.... *(Looking down, ashamed.)* Yes.
15 **JUNE:** Where is Carmen? She's supposed to be onstage right now!
16 **LOUISE:** I'll go look for her. *(Starts to exit Stage Left.)*
17 **SCARLETT:** We don't have time to wait for her!
18 **LOUISE:** The children's choir is here, and the director told me they
19 have several songs prepared. Why don't you have them perform
20 while I try to locate Carmen?
21 **JUNE:** Sounds good to me. Send them out.
22 **LOUISE:** Right away, boss!
23
24 *LOUISE salutes, tripping over CARLOS as SCARLETT crosses to*
25 *Center Stage.*
26
27 **SCARLETT:** Change of plans, folks. While Carmen is preparing for
28 tonight's performance, her littlest fans, the children's choir, will
29 entertain us with a holiday favorite. Let's welcome them to the
30 stage.
31
32 *SCARLETT claps and exits Stage Right as CHOIR enters Stage*
33 *Left and stands center. They sing a traditional Christmas carol. After*
34 *they perform, the sound of audience clapping is heard. SCARLETT*
35 *enters Stage Right and crosses to Center Stage as CHOIR exits*
36 *Stage Left.*
37

SCARLETT: Great job, kids! There's nothing quite like the angelic voices of children singing a Christmas classic, is there? Our next performers are a real funny pair—of shepherds, that is! Put your hands together for Carl and Jimmy and their amazing comedy!

SCARLETT claps and exits Stage Right as CARL and JIMMY enter Stage Left dressed as shepherds and carrying shepherd's crooks or staffs. They cross to Center Stage. PHONE OPERATORS take calls throughout show. If possible, numbers on the tally board increase.

JIMMY: Hi, Carl.

CARL: Well, hello there, Jimmy.

JIMMY: Mighty fine night to be a shepherd, wouldn't you say?

CARL: Every night's a great night to be a shepherd—the sheep are all asleep!

Rim shot sound effect is heard.

JIMMY: Can you believe an angel came all the way out here just to talk to us?

CARL: *(Looking around, excitedly.)* An angel? Where?

JIMMY: Don't tell me you fell asleep and missed the angel, Carl.

CARL: What can I say? I've been out here so long I started counting sheep!

Rim shot sound effect is heard.

JIMMY: The angel had some pretty exciting news for us, Carl.

CARL: Really, Jimmy? What did he say?

JIMMY: He said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all the people" *(Luke 2:10)*.

CARL: Good ewes, you say? We've got a lot of good ewes... and some pretty fine lambs as well!

Rim shot sound effect is heard.

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1 **JIMMY:** Not good ewes, Carl. Good *news*! The angel said, "Today
2 in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the
3 Messiah, Christ the Lord" (*Luke 2:11*).

4 **CARL:** Wow. I wish I hadn't missed that. Now I feel sheepish.

5

6 *Rim shot sound effect is heard.*

7

8 **JIMMY:** The angel said we should go to see the Messiah. He said
9 "You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger"
10 (*Luke 2:12*). I think we should go right away!

11 **CARL:** Don't get bent out of *sheep*, Jimmy.

12

13 *Rim shot sound effect is heard.*

14

15 **CARL:** I'm sure shepherds all over the land are going to *flock* to
16 Bethlehem.

17

18 *Rim shot sound effect is heard.*

19

20 **CARL:** Why don't we hit the *hay* before we *hoof* it all the way to the
21 town of David?

22

23 *Rim shot sound effect is heard.*

24

25 **JIMMY:** It is with *shear* force of will that I don't drag you all the way
26 to Bethlehem right now, Carl.

27 **CARL:** I'm going to go out on a *lamb* and say you're getting
28 annoyed with me, Jimmy.

29 **JIMMY:** Ewe got that right!

30

31 *Three rim shot sound effects are heard, followed by the sound of*
32 *audience clapping as JIMMY and CARL bow and exit Stage Left.*
33 *As they do, LOUISE enters and grabs CARL's shepherd's crook and*
34 *leans on it, falling asleep as SCARLETT enters and crosses to*
35 *center.*

1 SCARLETT: Weren't they great? Those two really crack me up!
2 Our next performers are a talented duo that are sure to have you
3 looking at the Christmas story in a whole new way—through the
4 eyes of the manger animals! Please put your hands together in
5 welcoming Tom, Julie, Gina, and John, *(Substitute names as*
6 *desired.)* and their moo-tastic puppet show!

7
8 *SCARLETT exits Stage Left as TOM, JULIE, GINA, and JOHN enter*
9 *Stage Right, carrying a barn cutout puppet show stage and puppets.*
10 *They place it at Center Stage and stand behind it and start the*
11 *puppet show.*

12
13 JULIE: *(Holding pig puppet and speaking in pig voice.)* Hey, guys!
14 Did you hear the Savior was born in our very own barn tonight?

15 TOM: *(Holding up horse puppet.)* Neigh! I hadn't heard that. I was
16 wondering what all the commotion was.

17 JOHN: *(Holding up sheep puppet.)* What are those people doing in
18 here, anyway?

19 JULIE: I don't know. This place is a pigsty—certainly not the best
20 place for a baby to be born!

21 GINA: *(Holding up a cow puppet.)* I heard they tried to get a room
22 at the inn, but they were told to mooove on out to the barn
23 because there was no room for them in the inn.

24 JOHN: I just love baaaabies. I gave it some wool for its bed.

25 TOM: And I gave it some of my hay.

26 JULIE: God must have known that the manger would be a safe
27 place for the Savior to be born.

28 GINA: That's right. We animals will make sure the baby has a quiet,
29 warm place to sleep in.

30 JOHN: For he has come into this world to save all people from their
31 sins.

32 TOM: And we are so lucky to be here and see it happen.

33
34 *End of puppet show. TOM, JULIE, GINA, and TOM bow, each*
35 *holding their puppets, then exit Stage Right while SCARLETT*
36 *enters.*

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1 **SCARLETT:** Wasn't that wonderful? Who knew a horse could tell
2 the story of Jesus' birth so eloquently?

3 **CARLOS:** He's no one-trick pony!

4

5 *Rim shot sound effect is heard.*

6

7 **SCARLETT:** (*Chuckling.*) I'd leave the jokes to Carl and Jimmy if I
8 were you, Carlos. (*Looks at JUNE.*) Can I get a bottle of water,
9 June? It's getting awfully hot up here.

10 **JUNE:** Sure thing, Scarlett.

11

12 *JUNE exits Stage Right as ABBY and GABBY enter and nearly*
13 *knock her down. ABBY carries a brush and can of hairspray while*
14 *GABBY carries a makeup case and powder puff.*

15

16 **ABBY:** She said she was hot!

17 **GABBY:** We must get rid of the shine on her forehead. (*Starts*
18 *dabbing at SCARLETT with powder puff.*)

19 **ABBY:** And make sure there's not a single hair out of place. (*Starts*
20 *fussing with SCARLETT'S hair.*)

21 **SCARLETT:** (*Annoyed.*) Will you two cut it out? Can't you see I'm
22 in the middle of hosting a live television program?

23 **ABBY:** We were only trying to help.

24 **GABBY:** It's our job to make sure you look beautiful.

25 **SCARLETT:** I look beautiful without your help, thank you very
26 much.

27 **GABBY:** Well, I never!

28

29 *GABBY crosses her arms and stomps Off-stage Right, followed by*
30 *ABBY who mimics her. They bump into JUNE again as she enters,*
31 *nearly knocking her down. JUNE looks after them as they exit, then*
32 *crosses to SCARLETT and hands her the bottle of water.*

33

34 **JUNE:** Here's your water, Scarlett.

35 **SCARLETT:** Thanks, June.

36 **JUNE:** Carlos, why don't we take a few phone calls live on the air
37 while Scarlett takes a break?

38 **CARLOS:** Great idea, June.

CARLOS shifts camera to focus on PHONE OPERATORS as JUNE crosses to them.

JUNE: *(To 2 PHONE OPERATOR.)* We're going to take a couple of calls live on air.

PHONE OPERATOR 2: Does that mean I'm going to be on TV?

JUNE: It sure does. Are you ready?

PHONE OPERATOR 2: *(Nervously, stammering.)* I-I guess so.

JUNE: Then here we go!

PHONE OPERATOR 2 stares with wide eyes into camera. Sound of phone ringing is heard. No one answers. It continues to ring as PHONE OPERATOR 2 stares into camera.

JUNE: Are you going to get that?

PHONE OPERATOR 2 just stares.

PHONE OPERATOR 3: I'll get it. *(Reaches over 2 PHONE OPERATOR and grabs phone.)* Christmas Telethon Spectacular here. Would you like to make a pledge?

OFF-STAGE CALLER 1: I sure would!

PHONE OPERATOR 3: Great. How much can I put you down for?

OFF-STAGE CALLER 1: I'd like to pledge ten dollars.

PHONE OPERATOR 3: Great. That will really help the Oak Street Soup Kitchen. Now tell me, Caller, which act has been your favorite this evening?

OFF-STAGE CALLER 1: I really liked it when the talking pig was telling the Christmas story.

CARLOS: Talking pig?

PHONE OPERATOR 3: You do know those were puppets, right, ma'am?

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- 1 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 1:** That could be. I lost my glasses earlier
2 today so I can't see the TV as well as I would like to. I have to
3 say, it's a relief to hear they were puppets. I was wondering how
4 a talking pig fit into the Christmas story. Thanks for clearing that
5 up.
- 6 **PHONE OPERATOR 3:** Thank you for your pledge! And good luck
7 finding your glasses. *(Puts down the phone.)*
- 8 **JUNE:** Great job.
- 9 **PHONE OPERATOR 2:** *(Focusing again.)* Is it over yet?
- 10 **JUNE:** It sure is.
- 11 **PHONE OPERATOR 2:** How did I do?
- 12 **JUNE:** I don't even know how to answer that.
- 13
- 14 *JUNE crosses to SCARLETT and takes water bottle as PHONE*
15 *OPERATORS resume answering calls.*
- 16
- 17 **SCARLETT:** Who is up next?
- 18 **JUNE:** Let's see if we can get Carmen out here. *(Talks into her*
19 *headset.)* Louise, is Carmen ready? *(No answer.)* Louise!
- 20 **PHONE OPERATOR 1:** I think she's under here. *(Stands and lifts*
21 *up tablecloth to reveal LOUISE lying down, sleeping.)*
- 22 **JUNE:** Louise!
- 23 **LOUISE:** *(Sits up suddenly, shorts, confused.)* No, Mr. President, I
24 do not want any more pork chops and applesauce!
- 25 **CARLOS:** Is it just me, or are her dreams getting weirder and
26 weirder?
- 27 **LOUISE:** *(Standing.)* Sorry, June. You know how telethons can
28 be—they go all night and everyone gets so exhausted.
- 29 **JUNE:** *(Looking at her watch.)* We've only been on the air for thirty
30 minutes, Louise.
- 31 **LOUISE:** Time sure does fly when you're having fun!
- 32 **CARLOS:** Or when you're sleeping through it!
- 33 **JUNE:** *(Exasperated.)* Is Carmen ready to take the stage?
- 34 **LOUISE:** Not yet. But luckily for us, the children's choir has a
35 second song prepared.
- 36 **JUNE:** Bring them out again, I guess.
- 37 **LOUISE:** Will do, boss! *(Salutes, trips over edge of table, smiles,*
38 *and exits.)*

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JUNE: If we can't get Carmen out here, we're never going to beat last year's pledge numbers. When Carmen sang at the Exciting Easter Extravaganza Telethon in Smithville, they brought in record numbers during her performance alone. You have no idea what I went through to get her here, and now she won't even come onstage!

CARLOS: *(Crossing to JUNE and putting his arm around her.)* Don't worry, June. As I said before, the Oak Street Soup Kitchen will be happy with any amount of money we raise.

SCARLETT: *(Clearing her throat, annoyed.)* Ahem. Beautiful host just standing around doing nothing!

JUNE: Right. Let's get back to the show.

CARLOS crosses back to camera as JUNE crosses to Stage Left.

SCARLETT: Our main act of the night, the amazing soloist Carmen, is still not quite ready, so we have an encore performance from the children's choir. Please enjoy.

SCARLETT exits Stage Right as CHILDREN'S CHOIR enters and crosses to Center Stage. They sing a traditional Christmas carol. After they perform, the sound of audience clapping is heard. SCARLETT enters Stage Right and crosses Center Stage as CHILDREN'S CHOIR exits Stage Left.

SCARLETT: I tell you, I just can't get enough of that children's choir.

CARLOS: That's a good thing, because something tells me we haven't seen the last of them.

SCARLETT: Our next performers come to us from the local dance studio. Please join me in welcoming Meg, Allie, and Tonya as they perform a dance to the Christmas favorite "Angels We Have Heard on High."

1 *MEG, ALLIE, and TONYA enter Stage Right dressed as angels as*
2 *SCARLETT exits Stage Left. During the dance, LOUISE enters,*
3 *sleepwalking around the stage as the DANCERS do their number.*
4 *At one point JUNE crosses to LOUISE and pulls her Off-stage. At*
5 *the end of the number, the audience claps. SCARLETT enters and*
6 *crosses to MEG, ALLIE, and TONYA.*

7
8 **SCARLETT:** My, but these three certainly were angels, weren't
9 they? *(To MEG.)* Before you girls go backstage, why don't you
10 tell us a little bit about your dance number?

11 **MEG:** We chose to dance to "Angels We Have Heard on High"
12 because of its lively tune and special message.

13 **ALLIE:** The Bible says that a great chorus of angels appeared and
14 praised God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and
15 on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" *(Luke 2:14).*

16 **TONYA:** We wanted to show the joy that the angels must have felt
17 the night Jesus was born.

18 **SCARLETT:** Well, you definitely succeeded in doing that, girls.
19 Take a bow.

20
21 *MEG, TONYA, and ALLIE bow and exit as audience claps.*
22 *SCARLETT looks at JUNE and says, with sarcasm.*

23
24 **SCARLETT:** Is the amazing Carmen ready to grace our stage with
25 her performance yet?

26 **JUNE:** That's a good question. *(Looking at LOUISE.)* Louise?
27 *(Sees LOUISE is asleep and shakes her.)* Louise!

28 **LOUISE:** *(Sits up suddenly, snorts, confused.)* I don't want to go
29 trick or treating. I haven't finished my angel costume yet!

30 **CARLOS:** An angel? Really?

31 **LOUISE:** *(Wiping her eyes.)* Sorry, June. I guess I'm a little tired.

32 **CARLOS:** Ya think?

33 **JUNE:** *(With a sigh.)* Louise, I just need you to check on Carmen
34 and see if she's ready to perform yet.

35 **LOUISE:** I sure will. But in the meantime, the children's choir—

36 **JUNE:** *(Interrupting.)* I know, I know. They have another song
37 prepared. Go ahead and bring them out.

38 **LOUISE:** Will do, boss! *(Salutes, bumping into JUNE and exits.)*

- 1 **SCARLETT:** Why don't we take another on-air call while we wait
2 for the children's choir to get ready—again? (*Crosses to PHONE*
3 *OPERATOR 4.*) Let's show the fine folks at home the kindness
4 they can expect when they call one of our lovely phone operators
5 to give their pledge.
- 6 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** That sounds great!
- 7
- 8 *Sounds of ringing phone is heard. PHONE OPERATOR 4 picks up*
9 *the receiver and talks into it.*
- 10
- 11 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** Christmas Telethon Spectacular here.
12 Would you like to make a pledge?
- 13 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 2:** Oh, my goodness! Is this my sweet little
14 baby girl?
- 15 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** (*With a groan.*) Mom! I told you not to call
16 me here.
- 17 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 2:** I was just calling to make a pledge. What
18 luck that you answered the phone! (*Talking to someone behind*
19 *her.*) Phillip, get in here! You'll never believe who answered the
20 phone!
- 21 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 3:** (*Somewhat quieter than OFF-STAGE*
22 *CALLER 2, as if he is talking near the phone but not on it.*) Can't
23 you see I'm trying to watch the game?
- 24 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 2:** It's our daughter! She's answering the
25 phone for that Telethon Spectacular thingy, and she answered
26 my call!
- 27 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 3:** (*Quieter.*) She did? (*Suddenly louder, as*
28 *if he is now on the phone as well.*) Pumpkin, is that you?
- 29 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** Dad! I told you not to call me that anymore.
- 30 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 3:** Why, pumpkin? Are you embarrassed of
31 your dear old dad?
- 32 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** Can we talk about this later? This call is
33 on live television right now.
- 34 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 2:** (*Excitedly.*) It is? Phillip, turn the channel,
35 quick!
- 36 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** Mom, can you just make your pledge so I
37 can take some more calls?

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1 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 3:** There you are, pumpkin! We can see
2 you.

3 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 2:** You would look so much nicer if you
4 smiled, sweetheart. Maybe a nice young man will see you on the
5 television. You know, your father and I aren't getting any
6 younger.

7 **PHONE OPERATOR 4:** (*Annoyed.*) All right, I'm ending this call
8 right now.

9 **OFF-STAGE CALLER 3:** Don't forget to pick up some milk on your
10 way ho—

11

12 *PHONE OPERATOR 4 hangs up phone and puts her head in her*
13 *hands, embarrassed.*

14

15 **SCARLETT:** (*Turning back to camera.*) That's just one example of
16 the kindness you can expect when you call to make a pledge
17 here at the Second Annual Christmas Telethon Spectacular.
18 Now it looks like we are all in for a treat... again. Please welcome
19 back to the stage the children's choir!

20

21 *Sound of audience clapping is heard as CHOIR enters and crosses*
22 *to Center Stage. They sing a traditional Christmas carol. After they*
23 *perform, the sound of audience clapping is heard. SCARLETT*
24 *enters Stage Right and crosses to Center Stage as CHOIR exits*
25 *Stage Left.*

26

27 **JUNE:** (*Crossing to Center Stage.*) That's all of our acts for tonight,
28 with the exception of Carmen. She had better perform soon, or
29 we will never meet our goal. (*Looks up at the pledge board.*)

30 **SCARLETT:** Don't worry, June. Scarlett McMasters has got you
31 covered. (*Calling Off-stage.*) Yoo-hoo! Daddy! It's time to bring
32 that ridiculously large check out here!

33

34 *DENNIS enters, carrying a huge check made out in the amount of*
35 *one million dollars.*

36

37 **JUNE:** Scarlett! You didn't tell me your dad was coming.

1 SCARLETT: Well, you said you were hoping for a couple of
2 corporate sponsors, didn't you? And Daddy does manage his
3 own used car dealership, you know.

4 DENNIS: *(Grabs microphone and talks to camera in salesman-*
5 *style voice.)* That's right, folks! Dennis McMasters here with an
6 offer that you simply can't pass up!

7
8 DENNIS *shoves check at JUNE forcefully, nearly knocking her*
9 *down.*

10
11 DENNIS: We over at McMasters Automotive heard about this little
12 telethon and thought— *(Puts a finger to his chin, thoughtfully.)*
13 just how much money can we pledge to that soup kitchen?

14 JUNE: *(Trying to see check.)* Yes, how much?

15
16 SCARLETT *pushed check back against JUNE so she can't see it,*
17 *nearly knocking her over again.*

18
19 DENNIS: And not only that, but we wondered, just how big of a
20 check can we put that pledge on?

21 JUNE: It's a very large check. But more importantly, exactly how
22 much did you pledge?

23
24 JUNE *tries to look at check, but SCARLETT rips it out of her hands*
25 *and shows it to the audience.*

26
27 SCARLETT: *(Excitedly.)* One million dollars!

28 JUNE: *(Shocked.)* One million dollars? *(Rushes around to see*
29 *check.)* But how? I didn't know used car dealerships actually
30 donated that kind of money! *(Gives DENNIS a big hug.)* Mr.
31 McMasters, I can't say thank you enough. Your donation will
32 help the Oak Street Soup Kitchen so much.

33 DENNIS: Donation? *(Confused, to SCARLETT.)* Honey, I thought
34 you said I just had to make a pledge.

35 JUNE: And now this telethon will go down as the best telethon that
36 this town has ever seen. *(Looking at check.)* One million dollars?
37 I can't believe it.

38 CARLOS: Neither can I.

1 **DENNIS:** (*Sheepishly, to JUNE.*) Darlin', I hate to tell you this, but
2 Dennis McMasters doesn't have no million dollars.

3 **JUNE:** What do you mean?

4 **DENNIS:** Scarlett just told me I needed to *pledge* a million dollars.
5 She didn't say I actually had to pay it.

6 **JUNE:** But that's what a pledge is—a promise to pay the money
7 you said you were going to.

8 **DENNIS:** Yes, well, I guess I'll know that for next time. (*Starts to*
9 *exit.*) That's all for me, folks. And remember, if you want a great
10 deal on a halfway decent used automobile, come see the man
11 with the ridiculously large check—Dennis McMasters, down at
12 McMasters Automotive!

13

14 *SCARLETT and DENNIS exit Stage Left, with SCARLETT taking*
15 *the large check with her.*

16

17 **JUNE:** (*Sits down, dejected.*) Now what are we going to do?

18 **CARLOS:** (*Crossing to JUNE and sits down next to her.*) We're
19 going to finish the telethon, that's what we're going to do.

20 **JUNE:** What's the point? Carmen will never come out to do her
21 performance. We have no more performers and no chance of
22 beating the pledge total from last year.

23 **CARLOS:** Why does that matter so much to you, June?

24 **JUNE:** I don't know. I guess it's because everyone thought Danielle
25 did such a great job producing the telethon last year. I just
26 wanted to show that I could do a good job at producing this one.

27 **CARLOS:** But you *have* done a great job.

28 **JUNE:** (*Standing.*) Are you kidding me? This show has been one
29 disaster after the other. The phone operators don't know what
30 they're doing, our stage manager can't stay awake for more than
31 five minutes, and our star performer won't come to the stage.
32 I've done everything I can do to save this show, but right now,
33 all I feel is lost.

34 **CARLOS:** You know what I think? I think that all of us feel lost at
35 one time or another. I'm sure the wise men did all those years
36 ago when they traveled through the night to see their Savior,
37 Jesus Christ, with nothing more than a star to guide them.

38 **JUNE:** I guess so.



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