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THE Herald Angels LEARN TO SING

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THE HERALD ANGELS LEARN TO SING

written by

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Synopsis

It’s Christmas in Herald and there’s nothing this small town loves more than its annual Christmas pageant...except maybe for their baseball team, the Herald Angels. So, when half the cast of the pageant comes down with laryngitis, it’s up to the beloved baseball players to save the day...if they can learn to sing, that is. But with their own invitation to play in the big city Winter Classic on the line, will the Herald Angels step in and sing? Or is the Christmas pageant doomed after all? This slice of small-town Americana will delight audiences of all ages and culminates in a beautiful reminder of what Christmas is all about.

Cast of Characters

20+ Actors (2 male, 2 female, 16 flexible, optional extras)

With the exception of ANNA, BILL, MARY and JOSEPH, all roles are flexible, and can be played by a male or a female, by choosing a version of the character name and adjusting all pronouns accordingly.

JANE/JIM STEVENS	reporter for the Herald Herald newspaper
SALLY/SAL THOMPSON	mayor of Herald
MR./MRS. PARKER	enthusiastic Christmas pageant director
COACH BILL	husband to Anna; gruff, nononsense baseball coach for the Herald Angels; male
ANNA	wife of Coach Bill; café owner; female
GERTIE/GARY	quirky gift shop owner
ELLEN/ELLIOT	bed and breakfast owner
NATALIE/NATHAN	child of Anna and Bill; plays a sheep in the pageant
CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS	team captain and player on the Herald Angels team
CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER	star player on the Herald Angels team
HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY	player on the Herald Angels team
CADEN/CADY TAUMANS	player on the Herald Angels team
SAM EVANS	twin sibling of Alex and player on the Herald Angels team
ALEX EVANS	twin sibling of Sam and player on the Herald Angels team
BRADY/BRENDA FLEMING	player on the Herald Angels team, limited lines plus one song
MAC WILSON	player on the Herald Angels team, limited lines plus one song

CLARK JOHNSON	player on the Herald Angels team, limited lines plus one song
MARY	actor in the Christmas pageant; female
JOSEPH	actor in the Christmas pageant; male
SHEPHERD	actor in the Christmas pageant
TOWNSPEOPLE/HERALD ANGELS	optional non-speaking extras

Place

The small town of Herald.

Time

Present day

Director Notes

SET

This play takes place in the small - town square of Herald. A lit and decorated Christmas tree is center. In front of the tree is a small stage, on which sits a nativity pageant set. In front of the small stage are several benches, angled toward the stage. A refreshment booth and souvenir booth are needed for scenes 3 and 4. Additional shop fronts, foliage and decor can be present.

COSTUMES

COACH BILL and all HERALD ANGELS baseball players should have some part of their baseball uniform on at all times, whether a hat, or their jersey/t-shirt. COACH BILL has a whistle. They will need a baseball uniform for the final scene, which can simply be a team t-shirt and some color of matching athletic pants. MR./MRS. PARKER should be dressed eccentrically, with loud patterns, bright colors, and flashy accessories. ANNA wears an apron. MARY, JOSEPH, and SHEPHERD should wear biblical costumes. NATALIE/NATHAN should wear a sheep costume. All other characters should wear modern day clothing, including cold weather accessories.

LIGHTING AND MUSIC

Optional backing music for the song, “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” for the performance in the final scene (might I suggest something folksy that invokes that small town Americana feel?). This can be live music performed on or offstage or can be backing tracks. The song can also be performed acapella. Lighting changes can be used to transition in/out of scenes.

HOW

This play is all about the characters who embody humor and heart, so take time for your actors to fully develop who these people are. While there are many towns named Herald, I intentionally did not designate a specific state or country for the town, so feel free to make it your own! Some options include incorporating regional dialects and storefronts to your set (although I would stayaway from franchises and big box stores as this is a small town).You may also choose to adjust the character names to suit your community if you’d like.

Props

Gavel
Notes
Baseball
Baseball mitts (one for each Angel)
Baseball bat
Notepad
Pen
Voice recorder or phone
Stack of papers
Assorted bobble heads
Tray of Christmas cookies and popcorn balls
Large hot drink carafe
Stack of cups
Bible

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting: The town square (see Director Notes).

At Rise: At start of scene, SALLY THOMPSON is standing at the podium, gavel in hand, notes on the podium. All TOWNSPEOPLE including JANE STEVENS, COACH BILL, ANNA, NATALIE, GERTIE, ELLEN, JOSEPH and CONNOR MATTHEWS are seated on the benches. CHAZZ VANKER is standing nearby, tossing a baseball up and down. HOLDEN GRAY stands nearby, working in his baseball mitt. All additional cast and extra TOWNSPEOPLE and HERALD ANGELS can also be present, seated or standing, with the exception of MRS. PARKER. JANE is holding a voice recorder, her phone, and a notepad and pen. Everyone is in murmured conversation over something that was said just before curtain opened.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(strikes the gavel, trying to get order)

Order! Order! I must have order in the court!

JANE/JIM STEVENS

This isn't a courtroom, Sally.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(annoyed)*

I know, Jane, but I've got to get this town meeting back on track. Everyone's in a tizzy.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

Well, you did kind of drop a bomb on them with that whole...

(looks at her notepad)

..."no hotdogs allowed in the park" rule.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Have you seen the mess people leave behind when they eat hotdogs? Mustard packets and crusty ends of uneaten buns everywhere!

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(making a note)

That rule is going to come back to haunt you Memorial Weekend during the annual Herald Hot Dog fest.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Always looking for a headline, aren't you, Jane? Can you just be useful for once and help me get this meeting back on track?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(with a smirk)

Are you implying that my reporting on the monthly town meetings for the Herald Herald isn't useful, Mayor Thompson?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

You know I'm all for journalistic freedom, Jane, but right now all I care about is getting through this agenda!

(She holds up a paper.)

JANE/JIM STEVENS

Fine.

(stands and yells)

Everyone, pipe down!

(Everyone immediately goes silent and turn to face SALLY.)

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(with a smirk)

You have the floor, Mayor Thompson.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(curtly)*

Thank you.

(looks at her notes, then looks up again)

Now, as I was saying, the new hotdog rule only applies to the park areas as designated in the town charter.

(ELLEN raises her hand. SALLY calls on her.)

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Yes, Ellen?

ELLEN/ELLIOT *(sarcastically)*

How about at my house? Can I eat a hot dog there?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Is your house in on park grounds?

ELLEN/ELLIOT

No.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Then obviously you can eat a hot dog in your own home.

(ANNA raises her hand. SALLY calls on her.)

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Yes, Anna?

ANNA

(with a smirk)

Can I still serve hot dogs in my café?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(annoyed)*

Seriously?

(sighs)

Come on, guys, these questions are ridiculous, and you know it.

(NATALIE raises her hand.)

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(sees NATALIE)

Let me guess, Natalie...you want to know if the school cafeteria can still serve hot dogs?

NATALIE/NATHAN

Nope.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

What is it then?

NATALIE/NATHAN

You know the Herald Angels?

JOSEPH

Best baseball team ever!

ELLEN/ELLIOT

The greatest!

GERTIE/GARY

No town has a ball club like the Herald Angels, that’s for sure!

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Yes, of course I know our beloved Herald Angels. There’s nothing our town loves more than cheering them on all summer long. What about them?

NATALIE/NATHAN

Well...you know how the Herald Angels play at the base ball diamond in the park?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Yes, I do. I never miss a game. So?

NATALIE/NATHAN

So, does the new rule mean there's no more hot dogs allowed at the town baseball games?

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS *(stands)*

No hotdogs at baseball games?

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER *(dramatically)*

It's an outrage!

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS *(dramatically)*

A travesty!

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

Why, if I can't have a hot dog at a baseball game I'll have to—

(looks around, sees HOLDEN's mitt)

-eat Holden's mitt instead.

(grab's HOLDEN's mitt and pretends to eat it)

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

Hey!

(grabs mitt)

Cut it out, will ya, Chazz? I'm breaking in this new mitt for the Winter Classic.

JOSEPH *(chuckles)*

Whatcha doin' that for? There's no way the Angels are playing in the Winter Classic.

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

(feigning indignance)

You take that back, mister.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

The Herald Angels have never been invited to play in the Winter Classic.

GERTIE/GARY

Besides, who plays baseball in the winter anyway?

JOSEPH

Bigger towns with fancy indoor stadiums.

GERTIE/GARY

Oh...right.

COACH BILL *(stands)*

Baseball's not about winning championships and getting invited to play in some hot shot game two towns over.

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

It would be nice to win a game once in a while, though.

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

A guy can dream, can't he?

COACH BILL

Besides, the Herald Angels are really good this year.

GERTIE/GARY

You have to say that, Bill. You're the coach.

COACH BILL

Hey, I'm the first one to admit when we stink, and most years the Herald Angels are—

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER *(interrupting)*

A rotting mound of garbage?

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

A total and utter embarrassment?

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

As useless as a third hand on the top of my head?

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS *(thinks)*

Actually, a third hand on the top of your head would be pretty cool. We could really upgrade our handshake game.

(CONNOR and CHAZZ perform an elaborate handshake, including the invisible hand on top of CHAZZ's head.)

COACH BILL

I was going to say most years the team doesn't have the greatest record.

(crosses to HOLDEN and puts his arm around him)

But with our new team captain, Holden Gray, on the mound, things are looking up! And while we'll probably never get the chance to play, for the first time in forty-three years we've made it all the way to alternate for the Winter Classic!

(All except SALLY cheer and shout, "go Holden!", "Go get 'em", and "strike em' out!", etc.)

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

And I bet they let us eat hot dogs at the Winter Classic.

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

You know it!

(holds up a fist and begins to chant)

Hot dogs! Hot dogs!

ALL *(except SALLY)*

(chanting along with CONNOR)

Hot dogs! Hot dogs!

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(strikes gavel)

We are really getting off topic now, folks. If we don't get through this agenda, we're going to be here all night.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

No one wants that—trust me.

(to JANE)

Jane?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(stands and yells)

Everyone, put a sock in it!

(All fall silent, except CHAZZ, who takes off his shoe.)

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

If you say so.

(pulls off his sock and puts it in his mouth)

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(shakes her head at CHAZZ then looks at her notes)

Next up on the agenda is the volunteer openings for next week's annual Christmas pageant.

(puts her notes down and looks up)

Now, come on guys...you know this is one of Herald's biggest events of the year. I need everyone to pitch in and do their part.

ANNA

(raises her hand)

I've got concessions covered.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(excitedly)*

Will you be serving your famous double chocolate hot cocoa?

ANNA

You know it! I'm also going to have popcorn and spiced nuts and an assortment of Christmas cookies.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

I can't wait!

COACH BILL

(indicating HERALD ANGELS)

The team and I will handle parking.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Great. We get a lot of out of towners for this one, so we're going to need all hands on deck for parking.

(looks at JANE)

What about you, Jane?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

What do you mean?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(looks at her notes)

I don't see your name on the volunteer list.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

I'll be busy covering the pageant for the Herald Herald.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

That doesn't mean you can't spare a moment or two to help out.

(writes in her notes)

I'll put you down for the snowball booth.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

The snowball booth! But that's the worst one!

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

That's what happens when you wait to volunteer.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

But—

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(ignoring JANE and looking at her notes)

Does anyone from the cast have an update on how rehearsals are going?

NATALIE/NATHAN

(raises her hand and waves it around enthusiastically)

Ooh! Ooh! Pick me! Pick me!

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(chuckles)*

Alright, Natalie, give us an update.

NATALIE/NATHAN *(stands)*

Rehearsals are going well. I've got five different baas prepared for my role as the sheep.

(delivers the word, "baa" accordingly each time)

I've got a sad baa, and a happy baa, and a silly baa, and a thoughtful baa, and a furious baa.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

A furious baa? Why would a sheep in a nativity pageant need a furious baa?

NATALIE/NATHAN *(shrugs)*

You never know. Either way, it's there if I need it.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

Fair enough.

(MRS. PARKER enters, frantically.)

MR./MRS. PARKER

The worst possible thing has happened!

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

(to CONNOR)

Someone must've told Mrs. Parker about the hot dogs.

MR./MRS. PARKER

(looks at CHAZZ, confused)

What?

(shakes her head)

No, not hot dogs...angels!

ANNA

Since when are angels a bad thing?

MR./MRS. PARKER

Since all the angels in the Christmas pageant came down with laryngitis!

JANE/JIM STEVENS

Now that's a headline!

(starts writing in her notepad)

MR./MRS. PARKER

We can't perform the Christmas pageant with no angels! Who will bring the good news to the shepherds?

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

(waves his hand in the air)

I'll do it!

GERTIE/GARY

A shortstop delivering announcing the birth of baby Jesus?

(chuckles)

Now that would be a sight to behold!

COACH BILL *(thinks)*

Actually, it's not a bad idea...

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

She was kidding, Bill. No one wants to see that.

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER *(affronted)*

Hey!

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Chazz might be a beloved member of the Herald baseball team, but an angel he is not.

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

(points at SALLY)

She's got a point, there.

COACH BILL

How many angels are out with laryngitis?

MR./MRS. PARKER

Nine*. Why?

*(*change the number to reflect the number of HERALD ANGELS you have)*

COACH BILL

(puts his arms around HOLDEN and CONNOR)

Nine* just so happens to be the number of Angels I have... and none of them have laryngitis.

(claps CONNOR on the back)

We'll do it!

MR./MRS. PARKER

Do what?

COACH BILL

The Herald Angels will do the Christmas pageant!

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

We will?

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

But isn't the pageant the same day as the Winter Classic?

COACH BILL

It is, but since there's basically no chance of us playing, I'm sure it won't be a problem.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Visitors come from all over to see Herald's Christmas pageant. Are you sure your boys can deliver?

COACH BILL

What we lack in wins, we make up in heart.

(crosses to CADEN and claps him on the back)

Isn't that right, Caden?

(CADEN just stares at COACH BILL but doesn't say anything.)

COACH BILL

Caden doesn't talk much, but if he did, he'd tell you that the Herald Angels will come through for their town! I guarantee it.

MR./MRS. PARKER

But can they sing?

COACH BILL

(with enthusiasm)

Can they!

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

(leaning in)

No...no we can't.

COACH BILL

(with only slightly diminished enthusiasm)

No, they can't...not right now anyway. But they can learn!

COACH BILL

In one week?

COACH BILL

Christmas is a time for miracles, is it not?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

A small town baseball team transforming into a choir of angels in one week?

(smirks and writes in her notebook)

This pageant is going to need a miracle, alright!

(COACH BILL smiles proudly and MRS. PARKER wrings her hands nervously as the assembled group turn to one another in excited murmured conversation. SALLY strikes the gavel, trying to call order as lights fade to black.)

(End of Scene)

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for the preview.

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Scene 4

Setting: The town square.

At Rise: The scene is set as in Scene Three. GERTIE is boxing up her bobbleheads. ANNA is wrapping up her cookies. MARY, JOSEPH, NATALIE and SHEPHERD are taking down elements of the nativity scene on stage. At start of scene, ELLEN enters, carrying a ledger or electronic tablet.

ELLEN/ELLIOT *(discouraged)*

Well, that's it. The last guest canceled their reservation when I told them the Christmas pageant was off.

ANNA

I'm sorry, Ellen.

GERTIE/GARY

Yeah, that stinks.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

(with a rueful laugh)

Sure does...but not as much as those Bobbin' Appleheads.

GERTIE/GARY

Hey!

(sniffs a bobblehead)

Okay, you're right. They're awful.

(throws it in to the box then looks at ELLEN)

Know anyone who wants one hundred rotting apple baseball playing angels?

ELLEN/ELLIOT

Nope, sorry.

GERTIE/GARY

(to ANNA)

Anna?

ANNA

Can't say that I do.

GERTIE/GARY

(shrugs)

Oh, well.

(picks up a bobblehead)

Maybe I can turn them into something else.

(SALLY enters with JANE, who carries her recorder and notepad/pen. GERTIE grabs a bobblehead from her box and runs over to SALLY. JANE walks around, observing and taking notes.)

GERTIE/GARY

Hey, Sally! You're up for re-election next year, right?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(warily)*

Yeah, why?

GERTIE/GARY

(holds up the bobblehead)

How would you feel about Gertie's souvenir shop supplying your campaign with one hundred Bobbin' Appleheads, all designed to look just like you?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(taking a step back)

I don't think so.

(SALLY tries to walk away from GERTIE, but GERTIE follows after her.)

GERTIE/GARY

(fiddling with the bobblehead)

I was thinking...if you were willing to get a haircut, I could turn their baseball caps into your hair and—

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

I'm not getting a haircut, Gertie.

GERTIE/GARY

(fiddling with the bobblehead)

And as for the wings, I think we could make a really cool statement, like maybe you're soaring into all of our hearts, or maybe you're part eagle or—

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(stops and turns)

It's Christmas, Gertie. The election isn't for months. Why don't we table it for now?

GERTIE/GARY

So, what I'm hearing is...it's a maybe?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(throws up her hands and groans)

Someone help me, please?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(crosses to SALLY)

At your service, Sally.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(looking around)

Anyone else?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(with a smirk)

Hey, I'm just trying to be useful for once.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Don’t you have an article to write or something?

JANE/JIM STEVENS *(over-enthusiastically)*

The Herald Herald can wait. When the mayor calls, I answer.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(throws her hands up, exasperated)

Okay, I get it. I give you a hard time and you’re just trying to help.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(holds out her recorder to SALLY)

Are you saying you were wrong about me?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(dismissively)*

Sure.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

I’m actually going to need to hear you say it.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Fine.

(snatches the recorder from JANE and talks into it)

I was wrong about you Jane. You were just trying to help.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(takes her recorder back)

Thanks for the quote. I’m assuming it’s on the record?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(aghast)*

Are you going to write about this in the paper?

JANE/JIM STEVENS

Nope.

(puts the recorder to her ear)

But I am going to listen to it over and over again.

(rewinds and replays the sound bite or repeats the line "I was wrong about you Jane." "I was wrong about you Jane.")

(SALLY stomps away from JANE as JANE laughs.)

ELLEN/ELLIOT

(crossing to ANNA)

What are you going to do with all those cookies?

ANNA

I'll pass some out to the neighbors....probably take some to church. I'm sure Bill and Natalie will be happy to eat up some of the cookies.

NATALIE/NATHAN

(looking up from her work)

Cookies? Did someone say cookies?

ANNA *(laughing)*

Come and get one.

(looking around at others)

In fact, why don't you all come and get a cookie? There's plenty to go around.

(All stop working and cross to ANNA, who holds out a tray of cookies and allows them each to choose one.)

MARY

(after taking a bite)

These are really good, Anna.

SHEPHERD

They sure are.

JOSEPH

Can I have another one?

ANNA

(holds out tray)

Help yourself.

(JOSEPH and some of the others take a second cookie.)

ELLEN/ELLIOT

The cookies are amazing, Anna. It's a shame the out of towners won't get to try them.

ANNA

Yeah, well I guess there's always next year.

(pats the carafe)

Now the only question is, what to do with the ten gallons of double chocolate hot chocolate I have set and ready to go?

(All nod sadly as MRS. PARKER enters, holding a Bible.)

MR./MRS. PARKER

Why is everyone looking so glum?

NATALIE/NATHAN

Isn't it obvious?

GERTIE/GARY

We're bummed there isn't going to be a Christmas pageant this year.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

You've got to be upset after all the hard work you put into that show.

MR./MRS. PARKER

(takes a cookie)

I don't know how anyone can be sad when they're enjoying one of Anna's famous cookies.

(takes a bite)

Yep...I was right...pure happiness in every bite.

ANNA

I appreciate the compliment, but you don't have to put on a happy face for us, Mrs. Parker. We know how much the annual Herald Christmas pageant means to you.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

It's a real shame you lost your angels after everything you did to get them ready for the show.

MR./MRS. PARKER

Sure, I'm disappointed...who wouldn't be? But you know what I realized?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

What?

MR./MRS. PARKER

This pageant...

(crossing to small stage)

...this story we tell year after year up here on this stage...it's not about the costumes or the set.

(touches the set)

It's not about the number of out of towners who flock to see it every year...it's not about the refreshments or the souvenirs. It's about a group of people...coming together to hear the miracle of Christmas...the birth of the one who

MR./MRS. PARKER (CONT)

would spread peace and love throughout the land. And the way I see it is, we don't need a group of angels to proclaim the good news here tonight.

(looking around at everyone)

We can all come together now and share with one another the story of Christmas.

(smiles)

What do you say?

NATALIE/NATHAN *(smiles)*

I know what I say!

(gets down on all fours, happily)

Baa!

(All laugh.)

MR./MRS. PARKER

Which baa was that?

NATALIE/NATHAN

That was my happy baa.

MR./MRS. PARKER *(smiles)*

That's good enough for me.

(turns to ANNA)

Anna...do you still have some of that delicious double chocolate hot cocoa?

ANNA

Do I ever!

MR./MRS. PARKER

Then why doesn't everyone grab a cup and join me up here on stage for a reading of the Christmas story?

ANNA

Come and get it!

(All except MRS. PARKER turn to ANNA as she begins passing out cups of hot cocoa. As she does, a baseball comes rolling on stage, or is tossed, and lands at MRS. PARKER's feet. She picks it up.)

MR./MRS. PARKER

(looking at the baseball)

What is this?

(HOLDEN enters, wearing his baseball mitt.)

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY *(smiles)*

That would be a curveball.

(All stop and turn to look at HOLDEN, surprised)

MR./MRS. PARKER *(stands)*

Holden! What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be at the Winter Classic?

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

No way. The only place I should be is right here.

MR./MRS. PARKER

But what about the big game?

(HOLDEN looks offstage. A moment later COACH BILL enters and stands next to HOLDEN, perhaps puts his arm around him.)

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

A wise man once told me....

(looks at COACH BILL and smiles)

...somethings are more important than a game.

COACH BILL *(smiles)*

I told you the Herald Angels would come through for this town.

(ANNA and NATALIE cross to COACH BILL and give him a hug.)

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Well...where are the rest of the Angels?

COACH BILL

Oh, they're coming. They just had to get ready first.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

Get ready for what?

(The HERALD ANGELS enter, led by CHAZZ and CONNOR. They are wearing their angel costumes, including their wings, but with baseball cleats and hats on. Their halos are positioned over their hats. They hold small harps, which they strum, as they enter solemnly and angelically.)

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

An angel appeared to them, and the glory shone all around them, and they were absolutely terrified.

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

But the angel said to them ,"Do not be afraid! Listen carefully, for I proclaim to you good news that brings great joy to all the people."

(CONNOR and CHAZZ stop and step away from one another. CADEN steps through them and smiles at MRS. PARKER.)

CADEN/CADY TAUMANS

Today your Savior is born in the city of David

MR./MRS. PARKER

(rushes over to CADEN)

Caden! You used your voice!

CADEN/CADY TAUMANS

Someone special convinced me it needs to be heard. And what better place than right here on this stage, singing about the beauty and wonder of the Christmas miracle?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

So, does that mean the annual Herald Christmas pageant is back on?

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

(crosses to MRS. PARKER and holds up his mitt)

What d'ya say coach?

MR./MRS. PARKER

I say...

(looks at the baseball, smiles, then tosses it to HOLDEN)

Let's play ball!

(HOLDEN smiles. MRS. PARKER picks up HOLDEN's angel costume and hands it to him. HOLDEN hands her the ball and mitt and dons the angel costume. JANE crosses to COACH BILL, holding out her recorder as the rest of the HERALD ANGELS, MARY, JOSEPH, SHEPHERD, and NATALIE cross to the stage and get ready for the performance. ANNA puts the cookies out on the refreshment stand as GERTIE unpacks the bobbleheads.)

JANE/JIM STEVENS

So, Coach Bill, tell the readers of the Herald Herald what it was like to walk away from the Angels' first invitation to the Winter Classic.

COACH BILL

You know, it was a lot easier than you might think, especially when we knew what was waiting for us back home.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

So, moving forward...what does the future of the team look like?

(COACH BILL looks at HOLDEN, who looks up and smiles.)

COACH BILL

The Herald Angels are an amazing team led by an incredible captain who definitely knows what his priorities are. This might have been our first invitation to the Winter Classic, but with a team like this, I know it's not going to be our last.

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(turns off her recorder)

Thanks, Coach.

(COACH BILL crosses to ANNA and helps her put out the cookies.)

JANE/JIM STEVENS

(looks down at her recorder, then up at COACH BILL and smiles)

Now that's a headline.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(to CHAZZ and CONNOR)

So you guys actually went to the Winter Classic, right?

CHAZZ/JAZZ VANKER

Yep. We went there, looked around for a few minutes and realized the place we needed to be was right here in Herald.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

Then I have to ask...did they have hot dogs at the game?

CONNOR/CONNIE MATTHEWS

You know it!

(CHAZZ and CONNOR high five as NATALIE crosses to SALLY.)

NATALIE/NATHAN

Does that mean we can have hot dogs at the Herald Angels games this summer?

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(sighs)*

I suppose I can make an exception.

NATALIE/NATHAN

Yes!

(rushes over to tell ANNA)

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(calling after her)

But only for baseball games!

(GERTIE picks up a bobblehead and crosses to SALLY.)

GERTIE/GARY

Sorry, Sally, but with the pageant back on, I'm going to have to give the people what they want and sell my Bobbin' Appleheads as is. I doubt I'll have any left to use for your campaign.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(relieved, but acts disappointed for GERTIE's sake)

Aw, that's too bad. I had just come around to the idea of a Mayor Sally Bobbin' Applehead.

(ELLEN crosses to SALLY and puts her arm around her.)

ELLEN/ELLIOT

Oh, don't worry, Sally. I have tons of crabapples laying around at the B and B. I'll bring a bunch over to Gertie later tonight so she can get to work right away.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON *(appalled)*

No, really...I wouldn't want you to go to any trouble on my account.

ELLEN/ELLIOT

(with a smirk)

No trouble at all...isn't that right, Gertie?

GERTIE/GARY *(excitedly)*

No trouble at all! In fact, I just came up with a few more ideas for those wings.

(puts her arm around SALLY and steers her toward the benches, talking as they cross)

If you wanted to go with a medieval vibe, we could paint the wings in bright colors and make you look like a dragon.

(fiddling with the bobblehead)

Or if you wanted to get a haircut, I thought we could wrap the wings over the top like this, and it could look like a really cool mohawk.

SALLY/SAL THOMPSON

(crying out)

Gertie, I'm not getting a haircut!

(SALLY looks over at JANE and mouths "help me", to which JANE just smirks and wiggles her fingers as if saying, "hello". SALLY sighs and allows GERTIE to guide her to a bench where they continue their conversation as the rest of the action plays out. Over the next couple of lines ANNA, ELLEN, GERTIE, SALLY, and JANE take seats on the benches. ADDITIONAL TOWNSPEOPLE can also enter and take seats.)

MR./MRS. PARKER

(to JOSEPH)

How's it going up there?

JOSEPH

Everything's ready. We're all in costume and the set is back together.

(MRS. PARKER crosses to HERALD ANGELS, who all stand together in their places onstage.)

MR./MRS. PARKER

What about you? Are you guys ready?

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

We're as ready as we'll ever be.

MR./MRS. PARKER

Then I guess its time for the Herald Angels to sing!

CHAZZ AND CONNOR

Proclaim it!

(The HERALD ANGELS all play "air guitar" on their harps. All laugh.)

HOLDEN/HOLLY GRAY

Let's do this!

HERALD ANGELS *(singing)*

Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn king!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies.

HERALD ANGELS (CONT)

With angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."

CADEN/CADY TAUMANS

(singing alone)

Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn king.

(All applaud as lights fade to black.)

(End of play.)



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