

Play Title: **When the Son Returns**

CHARACTERS

- Mya: A secretary, enthusiastic and somewhat emotional. She's an angel.
- Darci: A leader in heaven, concerned but not too dignified. He's an angel.
- Carl: A young man from the Earth. (Part can be played by a woman also.)
- Stephen: An older man from the Earth, bit emotional and cynical.
- Leah: Stephen's wife. A quiet but positive and strong woman. Able to take charge.

SETTING

An office in heaven. There should be at least three chairs on stage and a small table or desk. On the desk are a lot of file cards. Furnishings are simple. All characters wear simple robes or ordinary clothing. Mya and Darci's clothing, however, should be white—as brilliant a white as can be found. While there is little reference made as to Mya and Darci being angels, this will be realized because of the difference in their clothing from the three from Earth.

SCENE I

(As the scene opens, Mya is sitting at the desk busy sorting cards. Her body language strongly indicate she is listening for something or someone. When Darci enters, she pushes her cards aside and rushes over to Darci.)

- Mya: (Excited.) Darci, Darci, tell me! Is it true? Is it really true?
- Darci: (Teasing.) Of course it's true. Everything in heaven is true. There's no deception here. Even the streets are 24 carat gold, although nobody could really tell the difference between that and gold plate. But—what are *you* talking about?
- Mya: Darci, don't play. You know what I'm talking about. Their talking about it everywhere.
- Darci: This isn't Earth and still—even up here there are rumors. What is it this time?
- Mya: Stop playing. You know what I'm talking about. Is it true? **THE SON'S COMING BACK!** He is, isn't He?

Darci: (Calmly.) Oh, so that's what you're so excited about. Yes, my dear. The Son is coming back from Earth. That was the main news we received at the Council meeting today.

Mya: (Dancing around.) Oh, Darci! That's wonderful! Everybody has missed Him so much! It'll be heavenly to have Him here again. Just like old times!

Darci: (Thoughtfully.) Not quite. You forget that when the Son went down to Earth, He became a human being.

Mya: Oh, but that was just for a little while, for his visit down there.

Darci: No, Mya. The Son *became* a human being. The Son, our High Priest, actually became a human being, was tempted, tested and tried in all the ways humans are afflicted. Although He never sinned, never failed one test, He was touched with the feelings of man-kind's infirmities. The human experience will be part of Him forevermore.

Mya: (A bit disappointed.) Oh well, some human beings are nice, too. Although I didn't find too many good ones in my card files here. (Gathering up cards.) Anyway, He'll always be the High and Holy Son of God to us here in heaven.

Darci: Of course He will. More honored than ever before. What He did down there was the victory of all victories! He not only saved all of mankind, He took the keys of hell back from the enemy and conquered death. Oh, He will be honored alright! (Slight pause.) The bells will ring when He arrives.

Mya: Darci, I know what I do here is important work for the Father, and I honestly want to complete it—or at least get it right, because it will never be completed. But, when the Son returns I'm going to want to go and spend time with Him. I've just got to see Him when He comes. I can't miss His coming. I can't. I really can't. (Grabs him by the hand.)

Darci: You don't have to plead. It's going to be a holiday for everyone. He may even arrive at any moment. But just so you won't be too shocked when you see Him, I have to tell you that men didn't treat Him very well when He was down on Earth.

Mya: The ungrateful wretches.

Darci: Those words don't even describe what they were like.

Mya: (Anxiously.) They didn't actually hurt Him, did they?

- Darci: Prepare yourself for a shock. We learned the whole story at the council meeting a little while ago. (Slight pause.) MEN KILLED HIM.
- Mya: (Shocked.) Oh, no!
- Darci: Oh yes. They didn't believe Him when He went to them with the good news. Even though they were waiting for the Messiah, when He showed up they didn't believe it was Him. They crucified him, hung Him on a cross, and put Him in a tomb.
- Mya: I can't believe it! Such cruelty! But Darci, how could the Father allow that to happen to His only Son?
- Darci: It was a plan. It all has something to do with God's love for man. The Son knew He'd have to suffer a horrible death when He went down there. But, The Father *did* raise the Son from death. Unfortunately, the Son still bears the marks of man's cruelty in His hands and feet. And there's a spear wound in His side.
- Mya: I feel like I'm going to cry!
- Darci: (Kindly.) Mya, no tears in heaven.
- Mya: But He'll soon be healed of His wounds, won't He? There's no suffering here.
- Darci: The wounds will remain forever and ever. They are marks of love now, signs of how precious these human beings are to the Father.
- Mya: It's all very strange.
- Darci: Yes, I know. We don't always understand God's ways. We trust Him, and His ways have always been perfect. (Knock on the door.) See who that is.
- Mya: (Goes to the door.) Yes. What is it that you want? (Carl, Stephen and Leah are standing there when she opens the door.) Yes, can I help you?
- Carl: (Steps forward.) Please, may I ask if his excellency Darci in? We must talk To him. (Marta looks to Darci for instructions.)
- Darci: Invite them in, Mya.

- Mya: All right. You may come in. Here's Darci. (She indicates him. They enter and immediately fall on their knees.)
- Darci: (Shocked.) Whoa. Hey! What's going on here?
- Stephen: (Still bowing low.) Your Excellency—
- Darci: Hey, wait. Hold up! Stand up. Stand up. (They all stand. Leah stands behind the other two.) That's better. In fact, let us get you some seats. Mya help me with the chairs, please.
- Mya: (Amused, sarcastically.) No problem, Your Excellency.
- Carl: We prefer to stand, Your Excellency. (The other two nod in agreement.)
- Darci: All right. But I'm going to sit down. And Mya, you take notes, please. (Mya sits down at her desk with her pad and pencil ready.) My name is Darci. I'm the one you're looking for. I have no title. We don't have titles here. Not even the Father wears a title. We simply call Him Father-God. (Slight pause.) I believe I recognize you Stephen, but the others are strangers to me.
- Stephen: This is my friend Carl, and Leah who was his wife on Earth. We're a delegation from the people who made it here from Earth. And we need your help. We thought bowing and referring to your status might win you over, you know get your attention in a positive way.
- Mya: (Breaking in.) It gets attention all right. But, up here the only person we bow to is the Father. And, we'll bow to the Son when He gets back.
- Darci: (Hurriedly interrupting Mya.) Yes, yes. Of course, you're right.
- Carl: The Son is the reason why we're here.
- Stephen: We heard He was due back at any time. In fact, it could even be today. (Before Darci could respond.) You've got to stop Him.
- Mya: Stop Him. I'd like to hurry Him up. It's wonderful news!
- Darci: (Raising his voice a little in an effort to be heard.) Stop Him? What makes you say something like that?

Carl: Please, let me explain.

Stephen: (Interrupting Carl.) Darci, you must listen to Carl. What he's saying is right. I might have arrived here a long time before them, but The Son was needed by us too.

Darci: I don't understand.

Carl: It's very simple. You see, we're from Earth, as we said.

Mya: It's not hard to tell that. Earth people only get into heaven by the skin of their teeth and it always shows.

Darci: Mya! (Lowering his voice.) Be quiet.

Carl: I know people from Earth don't always have a high standing with those of you in heaven. But, that's just the point. You see, we Earthlings are weak, sinful, easily led astray. Even the best of us.

Mya: That's why the Son had to go down to Earth in the first place.

Darci: (Shaking his head slightly.) She means The Son went to rescue the people of Earth from their own trouble and mistakes. They really couldn't see what a mess they were making of things.

Carl: And we are eternally grateful. But if he's coming back so soon, it will all be for nothing.

Darci: (Sounding alarmed.) What do you mean?

Carl: Simply that men will fall back into their old evil ways again. It isn't enough for the Son to spend a few years on Earth, even though He taught men many wonderful truths. He needs to stay on the Earth for a long, long while. (Pleading.) Don't you see? His work there isn't finished yet!

Stephen: Nobody knows the power of sin like a sinner. You angels don't know. Not really. I know you watch us and watch over us, but you've never lived the experience of temptation. If the Son comes back here, who's going to carry on His work?

Darci: Is that what's worrying you? You needn't be concerned. Everything has been taken care of. The Son has appointed some of His men to spread His message of love and forgiveness to every part of the Earth. There are eleven of them, I believe.

Stephen: There should be twelve. An even number. You know, He sent them out two by two.

Darci: (Embarrassed.) Well, there were twelve, but one of the men turned out to be a traitor and sold out the Lord to some evil men. And then the other eleven, I believe you called them apostles, well they chose a replacement for the weak evil one apostle.

Carl: The weak and evil apostle makes our point exactly. I have nothing else to say. (Folds his arms and steps back.)

Darci: But you mustn't judge the others by that. I'm sure there are other men on Earth who are like the eleven good apostles. Well-trained, fine humans, wise humans, I'm sure.

Stephen: Wise? Learned, well-trained? Good? It's clear there's no public record of what happens on Earth up here in heaven. You don't have a bible do you?

Darci: (Obligated to tell the truth.) Not exactly. The Council sees all and knows everything, well, that is everything the Father wants us to know. We all know the story of the Son, and of the men He personally chose to spread the Good News. They were fishermen and common people. One was a tax collector, so I suppose he had some education. (His voice drops as he becomes increasingly unsure of his opinion.) Only, maybe that was instruction in how to cheat people.

Carl: (Standing over in the corner looking every bit disgusted.) Aha! Finally, you're beginning to see the problem.

Mya: (Astonished.) Do these eleven member have a good leader?

Darci: Twelve. Twelve apostles. We've established there were twelve. And yes, there is a leader. A man named Peter. Very loyal. (Remembering) Well, he did deny knowing the Son three times at the time of the trial. And I believe once the Lord called him a devil...when He said "Get thee behind me satan." But I'm sure Pete was a good man.

Carl: (Loudly from the corner) Aha!

Mya: That's not too good a recommendation. But how about the others? Are they brave men? Did they stand by the Son in His trouble?

- Darci: (Reluctantly.) Not exactly. The truth is, they all ran and hid when the Son was arrested.
- Mya: (Shocked.) Oh, Darci.
- Carl: (Loudly from the corner.) Aha!
- Mya: (Upset.) Can't you say anything but "aha"?
- Carl: (Stepping forward again.) Yes, I can. And I'm going to say it now. Excellency—that is Darci—don't you see our problem? We were so hopeful when we learned the Son was going down to Earth to rescue our people. It seemed the answer to man's dreams. At last Earth was going to get a king who would teach us the truth and who would lead and guide men to better things. We shouted and sang for joy when the news came to us. But this new change destroys all our hopes. We know we can't expect the Son to stay on Earth forever. But if He could only stay for a hundred years, or a thousand years—what are years in eternity. Then there would be real hope for men. He could teach men how to behave and could make them obey Him. He does have divine power, after all. But he's only been on Earth some thirty-three years. That's not enough, not even the beginning of enough. Please, please do something.
- Darci: But what can I do? I am only one of the councilors. All power in heaven and on Earth is given to the Son. I have no power that is stronger than the Son's.
- Stephen: You could go to the Council and tell them what we've told you. The situation is hopeless as it stands now. Perhaps the Council would be interested in hearing from us. We could tell them what it's like to be a human being in a wicked world. Perhaps the Father would change the plans and have the Son to stay on Earth a while. Even if it's too late to stop His return, the Son might be willing to go back to Earth after a short stay here and He could take charge of things again.
- Mya: (Boiling.) You people from Earth take the cake! Enough is never enough for you is it! King David wrote a Psalm that said God was so mindful of man that He made him a little lower than the angels—and you've let that go to your head!
- Darci: (Slightly amused.) Oh, oh. You've stirred her up again.
- Mya: (Taking center stage and lecturing Stephen and Carl in turn.) They certainly have. Isn't it enough that the Son had to go down to your miserable little

planet for thirty-three years? Especially since there are other worlds for Him to care for. Isn't it enough that He even became a human being and had to suffer all that that entails? Being cold and hot and tired and hungry! Isn't it enough that you Earth people mistreated the Son and even put Him to death when He was on your Earth? The cruelest death ever experienced. And now you want Him to stay there another hundred years—a thousand years, maybe. Is there no limit to your presumption? To your insolence? To your selfishness?

Darci: (Impressed.) You're an eloquent speaker, my dear. Not a polite one, but very eloquent. Maybe you should be on the Council in my place.

Stephen: (Sadly.) I'm afraid she's speaking the truth. We are being selfish. We had a dream of a better world, but I guess human beings are hopeless. You are right, my dear.

Carl: (Sounding remorseful.) Maybe we shouldn't have come. I mean—who are we to tell the angels in heaven how things should be.

Mya: Well, now. Don't sound so defeated. I didn't mean to make you feel bad. I only want the Son back in heaven. I want to be near Him in the worst way.

Darci: It seems you've stepped on some dreams, Mya. Killed hope, and that's not nice.

Mya: (Quickly repentant.) But, I didn't mean to. Darci, maybe you should go to the Council and ask them to hear what the people of Earth have to say.

Darci: (Amused.) You certainly do blow hot and cold, Mya.

Mya: Well, I've started to feel as selfish as I have accused them of being. Maybe we should try to help the people of Earth. After all, they have the favor of God.

Darci: So they do. (Turning to Stephen and Carl.) Gentlemen, are you sure what you suggest is necessary?

Stephen & Carl: (Speaking in unison.) Oh, yes

Darci: (Turning to Leah who has been standing silently by.) And you, my dear—Leah, is it? Do you agree with them?

Leah: No. I don't agree at all.

Carl: What?

Stephen: I knew we shouldn't have brought her. Don't listen to her, Darci.

Darci: I'm afraid I must. Here, sit down here. (Pulls up a chair. Leah sits down while the men stand and glare.) Tell me what you think.

Leah: It's simple. I think they (pointing at the men) and the rest of the people from Earth who sent us to you are insulting God.

Stephen: How dare you!

Carl: Just like a woman!

Mya: Now I'm really confused.

Leah: I don't mean to confuse things. And, I'm not trying to be obstinate or stubborn. But after all, God made us human beings, men and women. He made us in his own image. That's what we were told, anyway.

Darci: That's correct.

Mya: It's in my records.

Leah: Then, it would seem that God should know best what people created in His image can do.

Stephen: You're forgetting man's sins.

Leah: No, I'm not. But the Son of the Most High went to Earth to bring men forgiveness for their sins. And, I'm sure He succeeded at doing that. The Son has done what needed to be done. We have forgiveness. The only thing left to do was to give men His spirit to guide them—

Darci: The Father has promised that. His Holy Spirit will be with man on the Earth as long as the Earth stands.

Leah: Then I think men, made in God's image, can carry on the Son's work. If man's sins are forgiven and God's spirit is there to help, many human beings will make the right choice to live for God. They will serve God out of love, and be obedient. Most of them will.

- Stephen: That's too hard to do, Leah. People are weak. Sure there are good people who can live for God. But the most won't. Besides without the Son and His apostles to preach the Word, how will people know their sins are forgiven and that the Holy Spirit will be there...
- Leah: (Interrupting. Scornful.) You have no confidence in man, do you? God has confidence in man. That's why He sent His only begotten Son into the world to die in the first place. He did it for man. God, Who can see beyond tomorrow, He knows man will make it. Mankind will shun evil and choose good. Sure, it will be a struggle. It has been a struggle. But, after the Son leaves Earth He will send the Holy Spirit of God to be with mankind. Forever. There is nothing better than that. No better support or guidance, nothing more powerful, no one more wise. The work of the Son on Earth is done. He said it Himself. He said, "It is finished." He finished the plan. The course is set. We win. With God's help a new and different people will come to be. What started with just one, the Son, will grow and grow and cover the Earth. Men and women will be born again to a new life. That's God plan and God is never wrong.
- Darci: It seems she has more courage than you two men.
- Carl: And more wisdom, too.
- Stephen: I'm not so sure.
- Darci: Well, you need to be sure. If I'm going to ask the Council to send the Son back to Earth, you need to be sure that is what is needed? Is that what you people from Earth want to do?
- Carl: No. No. I see things differently now—thanks to my wife. Well, to the woman who was my wife. I understand what she's saying. The Son knew His death on Earth wasn't in vain. It wasn't an attempt to accomplish the Father's will. It was the way. It was the true way. It was the way that lead to life eternal. I get it now. (Slight pause.) What's that? Do you hear that? (Sound of bells and shouting.)
- Mya: Listen! The bells. The noise. All heaven is shouting. He must be back! The Son must be here now!
- Stephen: (Excited.) Let us go and see Him. Let us go and kiss His wounds, tell Him how much His suffering for us means to us.

Mya: (Joyful.) Come Leah! Let's go and greet Him. Let's hurry. Hurry. (They rush out.)

Carl: Our brother is here. Our big brother has come! (The men leave also. Only Darci is left.)

Darci: (Crosses himself and bows his head.) Thank you, Father-God. The Son is back. (Raises his head, and lifts his fist into the air in the victory sign.) The whole of heaven can now rejoice! (He leaves the stage.)

(The choir can conclude the scene by singing a relevant song.)

THE END