

# RAW PROVOCATIVE HUMANE PLAYS

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*The Christmas Angel of Marfa, TX*  
by Jerzy Gwiazdowski

*A barn that has been converted into an art studio, full of welding equipment. LUTHER, 38, hurries in. CRAIG, 55, in a business suit, follows.*

**Luther** Absolutely not! Are you out of your mind?

**Craig** Wait, just hear me out. Luther. Mr. Giovannone.

**Luther** Are you out of your mind?

**Craig** No. Well- I might be. But listen to me: Although I might be out of my mind, I'm also very rich.

**Luther** Yeah. Rich and crazy. Those usually go together.

**Craig** I know that you think they do.

**Luther** You don't know *bupkis*. And you might be rich. Congratulations. But I don't work for rich guys anymore, buddy. I definitely don't work for crazy people, or perverts. I work for the people of Marfa, Texas. So I think the best, smartest thing for you to do in this scenario would be to turn around and get back on a plane.

**Craig** I'll pay.

**Luther** Yeah. I'm sure you will. Listen, pal. Everyone's got their kinks. Lord knows I do. But this, here? This is my work now. And I'm under enough pressure without letting you use it for your escapist fantasy role-playing mumbo-jumbo.

**Craig** No. That's not what it's about.

**Luther** Sure. That's what the last guy said.

**Craig** It's not. I just want a chance.

**Luther** A chance for what?

**Craig** A chance to sit on top of your giant metal Christmas tree and get my wife back.

**Luther** Listen...

**Craig** Craig.

**Luther** Listen, Craig: You don't live here. If you wanna be the Christmas Angel of Marfa, you gotta live in Marfa. I'm sorry, but I ain't accepting applications from Missouri.

**Craig** Minnesota.

**Luther** Mozambique. Whatever. You gotta live here. In the community. I'm under fire as it is. It's a *community* art project. And, this part should go without saying, you must be in grades one through five. Not one through MBA.

**Craig** I never went to college.

**Luther** Really? Me too. Me neither.

**Craig** Sure you did. I mean, you didn't graduate, I guess. But you enrolled at RISD. That's why I'm here. You went to school with my wife.

**Luther** Your wife?

**Craig** Yeah. She was Sarah Turbitt, then.

**Luther** That rings no bells.

**Craig** Well, she remembers your work. She said it was some of the most incredible art she's ever seen. When you started getting some attention the last few years, she was thrilled. We actually bid on a piece of yours last year.

**Luther** Yeah?

**Craig** Yeah. I think it was called "*Carcass of a Rejected Reality Television Host, Number XIV?*"

**Luther** You bid on that? That ended up in the Connecticut Governors' Mansion.

**Craig** I know. I still haven't heard the end of it.

**Luther** You *must* be rich. That was the last one to go on the block.

**Craig** I know. And I couldn't convince a soul to let one of your pieces go for under twice what they'd paid for it. At least I found your Nativity ceremony online. Sarah made my whole side of the family watch it last Christmas.

**Luther** So, you flew down here to do some shopping?

**Craig** Please, Luther. All I want is to give her a gift that means something.

**Luther** *Reality Host*- that was it. No commissions. No private buyers. I only do work for this community, now.

**Craig** I know. I want to be part of that work.

**Luther** Why? Why come down here?

**Craig** I'm a busy guy, Luther. That's how I got to where I am. I'm lucky enough, and stubborn enough, to do something I love for a living. But recently, I've gotten a little caught up. I let the work become more important than anything else. I left her alone, and I didn't even realize it until it was too late. Sarah won't see me. She won't take my calls, she won't respond to my texts. She won't answer the door. Being a part of this ceremony is the only way I know she will see me. I know she's going to be tuned into Celebrate Marfa dot org this year, watching the livestream of the Nativity ceremony. Alone. And I want her to see me, and know that she isn't. And know that there isn't anything I wouldn't do for her.

**Luther** These are fairly elaborate lengths.

**Craig** Yeah. I suppose they are. But I don't know what else to do.

**Luther** Well. I'm sorry, Craig, but I'm already on thin ice here. They want a traditional tree ceremony. Which is difficult to pull off when your tree is made outta salvaged parts from an abandoned amusement park. You know how many permits I had to get to stick a kid in aluminum angel wings on top of that thing? We've already picked a sweet little girl who wrote a very nice essay and also happens to be the daughter of the Chief of Police. I don't think he'd appreciate her being bumped for an Insurance bigwig from Minnesota.

**Craig** I'm not in insurance.

**Luther** No? What do you do, bundle mortgages? Hostile takeovers?

**Craig** No, I'm in the cookie sector. You know "Love You Lemons?" "Brown Sugars?" That's me.

**Luther** You work for Grandma Daisy?

**Craig** I am Grandma Daisy.

**Luther** You're pulling my leg.

**Craig** I'm not. *(extending his hand)* Craig Heath, CEO.

*Luther hugs him.*

**Craig** *(cont'd)* Oh...

*Luther kisses Craig on both cheeks.*

**Luther** Why didn't you say so? Grandma Daisy!

**Craig** I... didn't know you were such a fan...

**Luther** Fan? You saved my life! When mine left me? Last year? I ate box after box of those things. Who is the old broad on the outside? Your Mother?

**Craig** Nobody. Just a drawing. I was going to go with a photo of my mother, but she tested unsympathetic with focus groups.

**Luther** That's cold, man.

**Craig** No, they were right. She wasn't. We had to go with an image that was a little more...

**Luther** Traditional?

**Craig** Yeah.

*A beat.*

**Luther** What's your suit size? Forty-eight long?

**Craig** Forty-six.

**Luther** If you say so. *(thinks for a moment)* Okay Craiggoo. I can't make you the Angel, but there is one role in the Nativity scene I still have to fill. It would at least get you into the ceremony so the missus could see you. How's that sound?

**Craig** What's the role?

**Luther** Official Sponsor.

**Craig** Oh.

**Luther** Underwrite the insurance, the whole deal. Then you'll really be this town's angel. Every year.

**Craig** ...Sure.

**Luther** And send me a few boxes of "It's Only Pecan Roll." Year round. Can you do that?

**Craig** I can. You're not concerned about the influence of corporate money?

**Luther** I'm very concerned. But this is the influence of corporate cookies. That, I can allow. Do we have a deal?

*Luther extends his hand.*

**Craig** Where does the corporate sponsor fit into the Nativity scene?

**Luther** Far right of the Holy Family. When I was growing up, that's where my family always put the ass.

*Craig shakes Luther's hand.*

**Luther** *(cont'd)* Alrighty. Follow me. Let's work on your ears.

*Luther begins to exit.*

**Craig** Luther.

*Luther stops.*

**Craig** *(cont'd)* Thank you.

**Luther** Hey. Thank YOU, Grandma Daisy. And Merry Christmas.

**Craig** Merry Christmas.

*Luther hops outside, full of energy. Craig follows him, full of hope.*

*Blackout.*

*END OF PLAY.*