

# **Tally Up**

**Do animals have souls? Ancient question needs an answer - quickly! Heaven's newest angel, Laverne has his first assignment. He is to bring in Heaven's first dog! Will this be allowed by the First Angelic Realm To Serve?**

**A fun and poignant telling of some unbelievable real-life stories of animals saving human lives, and the bonds between them. No doubt, your audience will want to have a vote.**

**8M, 3F, 4 Either  
Some walk on roles**

## **Great Stage Publishing**

# **Tally Up**

**by  
Kathy Campshure**

## **Great Stage Publishing**

## **Tally Up**

A Comedy/Drama in Three Acts

by Kathy Campshure

### **Description:**

For centuries, theologians have struggled with the concept of whether or not animals go to heaven. The debate is over! Laverne, heaven's newest angel, has finally gotten his very first assignment. Imagine the uproar that ensues when he's been asked to bring in heaven's first dog! Will he pull it off, or will the FARTS (**F**irst **A**ngelic **R**ealm **T**o **S**erve) vote down the addition of canines to heaven's scenes? If you've ever enjoyed the companionship of an animal, or marveled at real-life stories of animal heroes, you don't want to miss this presentation.



**Great Stage Publishing**

11702-B Grant Rd., #602

Cypress, TX 77429

[www.greatstagepublishing.com](http://www.greatstagepublishing.com)

[greatstage@comcast.net](mailto:greatstage@comcast.net)

### **Cast of Characters**

- Laverne:** Newest angel, male, preferably 45 or older.
- Amos:** Head angel, elderly gentleman
- Alex:** Intelligent & quick-witted in life, preferably 25 or older
- Sarah:** Level-headed, intelligent, with a sarcastic tendency; age is irrelevant
- Sam:** Simple, but loveable; age is irrelevant
- Trevor:** Self-confident to a point of being cocky; preferably 25 or older
- Mac:** Ex-mobster; preferably 30 or older
- Lisa:** Down-to-earth angel, likeable; age is irrelevant
- Milo:** Confident; age is irrelevant
- FATS:** Head of the Original Angels; age is irrelevant
- FARTS:** Angelic Realm (Group of Three); non-speaking roles; age is irrelevant
- Norm:** Elderly gentleman angel, simple and loving; portrayed as 80+ years
- Eve:** Norm's wife, also basic and compassionate; portrayed as 80+
- Good Humor Ice Cream Plant employees:** non-speaking walk-through roles; twenty people, but can be done w/less.

**The following must appear in all production programs**

*Tally Up* premiered in Oconto, WI, and was performed by the Machickanee Players

### **Setting & Props**

This play is set in Heaven. The set is basic with all-white walls (curtains can be used.) There are three entrances/exits—one at RC, one at LC and one UC. A set of stairs lead from DL to the audience area. Props include:

- nine plastic lawn chairs (white)
- a small rolling cart for charts
- a portable 'Assignment Station' large enough to conceal the person who delivers the angels' assignments
- a portable projector w/remote and a flash-drive with pictures of animals from the case studies
- assignment scrolls (sheets of paper rolled and tied with red ribbon)
- a Bible
- a Koosh ball
- a crossword puzzle book
- small spiral notebook
- assortment of files
- a clipboard

### **Sound Effects**

- Buzzer
- Bell
- Crowd murmuring (played quietly during the Good Humor Ice Cream Plant employee walk through)
- Dogs barking
- Donkey braying

*Note: All of the references in this play are to actual animals and documented cases of heroic deeds performed by those animals. The life story of Target, the first 'angel' dog, is true. The Enchanted Forest Wildlife Sanctuary in Alden, NY is run by Eve and Norm, and the snowstorm named 'Lake Storm Aphid' actually did dump 24" of snow on Buffalo, New York and the sanctuary in October 2006. Shana rescued the elderly couple, as described in this play. Photos of the actual animals featured in the slide show are available upon request.*

## **ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

TALLY UP is subject to a royalty and is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and other participating countries. All rights including professional, amateur, public reading, and any other forms of production are strictly reserved.

All rights are controlled by Great Stage Publishing and licensing agreements must be made in advance of production.

Rights to make copies of this publication for purposes of production are granted under signed license agreements. Producer agrees to only make copies needed for actors, director(s), stage manager(s), technicians, costumer(s) and others directly associated with the production. No transfer or "loaning" is allowed.

Whenever the play is produced the following notice must appear in all programs, printing and advertising of the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Great Stage Publishing"

Authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play. Author(s) name(s) shall be no less than 50% of size of largest type on the page.

No changes are allowed without express permission of the author. Contact Great Stage Publishing with all requests.

Great Stage Publishing  
11702-B Grant Rd. #602  
Cypress, TX 77429  
[www.greatstagepublishing.com](http://www.greatstagepublishing.com)  
[greatstage@comcast.net](mailto:greatstage@comcast.net)

## Act 1: Scene 1

*Lights up on an empty set. Three chairs are set center-stage facing the audience; two more are at either corner at DR and DL. Laverne enters from RC.*

**LAVERNE.** “Hello?” Pause. “Hello? Anybody here?”

*Amos backs into room from CL pulling a handcart stacked full of files. There is a clipboard balanced on the top of the pile. He sees Laverne and startles.*

**AMOS.** Hello. You must be (*checks clipboard*) Laverne.

**LAVERNE.** Yes, but—how did you know?

**AMOS.** (*Glancing at the clipboard.*) Laverne Burton. It's all right here. (*He checks off a name on the clipboard, then looks around.*) Where's Alex? Wasn't he assigned to you?

**LAVERNE.** Alex?

**AMOS.** Yes, younger guy, dressed all in white. He was supposed to escort you in and show you around. Sound familiar yet?

**LAVERNE.** Oh, he's back by the . . . by the . . .

**AMOS.** Tall, white, rounded entry point? That would be the Pearly Gates. At least, that's their official name.

**LAVERNE.** Yes, the Pearly Gates. That's where he is. He sent me on ahead and said he'd catch up. There was something he needed to do; he said it wouldn't take long.

**AMOS.** (*Shaking his head in mock frustration.*) Alex, Alex, Alex. What are we going to do about that young man? He knows better than to send you on alone. Don't take it personally, Laverne, it's no reflection on you. This happens every year about this time. Alex is a great angel; very dependable. But every fall, he and Pete can't pass within ten feet of one another without comparing notes on their Fantasy Football teams.

**LAVERNE.** (*In awe.*) Pete? You don't mean, *Saint* Peter?

**AMOS.** One and the same. He would have been the older gentleman at the Gate . . . probably wearing a Packer hat.

**LAVERNE.** You're kidding; a Packer hat?

**AMOS.** (*Discouraged.*) Yes, that's right. We don't understand it either. If anything, we thought he'd back the Saints.

**LAVERNE.** (*Settling into chair CR.*) So, I'm actually here—this is really Heaven.

**AMOS.** Not what you expected, eh? (*Extending his hand to Laverne.*) I'm Amos. I know how you feel. It's a little strange here when you first arrive, and it might take some getting used to, but you'll fit right in. I guarantee it.

**LAVERNE.** I suppose; I just can't . . . believe it, I guess. Heaven, wow. How long have you been here?

**AMOS.** Hard to answer that. Time here isn't exactly what you're accustomed to. The days here just sort of run together.

**LAVERNE.** Time without end, right?

**AMOS.** Exactly.

**LAVERNE.** But . . . isn't that boring? I mean, what do you do? Play harps and periodically fluff the clouds?

**AMOS.** (*Incredulously.*) I beg your pardon. We keep very busy up here; we track performance records, keep score, decide who's being naughty and who's being nice.

**LAVERNE.** (*Rising and crossing DR.*) Sounds more like the North Pole than Heaven.

**AMOS.** (*Checking the clipboard again.*) Funny, it doesn't mention your propensity for sarcasm here. I'll have to make a note of that. (*Begins writing.*)

**LAVERNE.** (*Curious; returning to Amos.*) What does it mention?

**AMOS.** Let's see, you grew up in Krakow, WI.

**LAVERNE.** Did they spell it right?

**AMOS.** Yup. That one we get. Now, Sobieski—that's another story. Be glad you weren't born there. Towns with names like that can lead to retraction delays.

**LAVERNE.** Retraction delays?

**AMOS.** Yes. That's a delay in locating and retrieving the soul. It's more than a little annoying. In fact, it can be quite dangerous for the poor deceased. The longer it takes for us to locate and subsequently claim them, the greater the risk becomes that they slip into the possession of the other side.

**LAVERNE.** The *other* side? You mean—

**AMOS.** We're not talking about Darth Vader. Hell—yes. The last time we fetched someone from Sobieski, a clerical error delayed us to a point where he was more than a little pink around the edges. A few more hours and he would have been a crispy critter. (*Laverne stares at him in shock.*) I'm just fooling with you. To be honest—and most of us here are—I can't remember the last time we even got someone from there.

**LAVERNE.** But . . . (*thinking hard*) my Uncle Zac died last year. He lived in Sobieski, on County S. You mean . . . (*Amos shakes his head slowly.*) Oh, my God.

**AMOS.** Where? (*He looks around furtively until Laverne joins in, then he smiles.*) I'm just funning with you, Laverne. Lighten up. You'd think with a name like Laverne you'd be used to people funnin' with you.

**LAVERNE.** Sure, I've been teased plenty—for my entire life. It was a lot like that old Johnny Cash song.

**AMOS.** A Boy Named Sue. Good tune.

**LAVERNE.** You know it? I mean, you actually have real music up here?

**AMOS.** I don't know what you mean by *real* music. The harps are real enough, let me tell you. Every now and then a cherub gets hung up in the strings of one of them behemoths. That's not a pretty sight. Anyway, we weren't familiar with that song until Johnny actually joined us. Since then, we have pretty regular sing-a-longs. Now I know most of his songs by heart.

**LAVERNE.** He's actually here? Can I meet him?

**AMOS.** Sure. Later. You've got all the time in the world now—or all the time in Heaven—to meet anyone you want.

**LAVERNE.** Who else is here, for singers I mean.



**AMOS.** Quite a few. We've got Andy Williams, John Denver, Loren Green. Most people think of that last one more as an actor, but he really does have a fine voice. Then there's Burl Ives and—

**LAVERNE.** Anyone more 'modern'?

**AMOS.** Sure. There's some, but a chaste lifestyle isn't exactly trending in the music industry today. So, if you've got your hopes up to meet Madonna for instance, I don't think that's going to happen. And I won't even discuss Guns 'n Roses or Justin Beiber.

**LAVERNE.** Why, what's wrong with Justin Bieber?

**AMOS.** I said I'm not going to discuss it.

*Amos crosses DL; Laverne crosses to DR and Alex enters CL. He is excited and writing quickly in a small notebook.*

**ALEX.** I rock! I am THE man! I am untouchable.

**AMOS.** Good week, Alex?

**ALEX.** *(Stopping dead and quickly stuffing the notebook into his back pocket.)* No. I mean, I was just . . .

**AMOS.** No need to worry. As you can see, Laverne is here, safe and sound. I think he's ready for the tour.

**ALEX.** *(Sheepishly.)* Oh, right. Laverne. Hey, sorry about sending you on by yourself, but . . . well—

**LAVERNE.** No problem. Amos here was kind enough to wait with me.

**ALEX.** Good. *(Trying to get back into Amos's good graces.)* Well then, shall we begin?

**LAVERNE.** *(Hesitantly.)* Sure. What are we going to do?

**ALEX.** You're kidding, right? There's a lot we need to cover so you can officially fit in here. There's the rules, the point system, collection guidelines—you can't even *think* about completing your first assignment until we've covered everything.

**LAVERNE.** What's an 'assignment'?

**ALEX.** That's when you go out and start collecting.

**LAVERNE.** What do I collect?

**ALEX.** Why, souls, of course. That's what we do. We're angels, after all. What else would we do all day?

**AMOS.** Play harps and periodically fluff clouds—although I, for one, am not sure exactly how often "periodically" is.

**ALEX.** Now where on earth did you get *that* idea from?

**LAVERNE.** It's the standard stereotype; it's what everybody thinks. You were human once, right? You've got to remember what we were taught about heaven.

**ALEX.** (*Remembering; crossing to Laverne at DR.*) Ah, yes. Well, I didn't pay very close attention to those catechism classes, if you know what I mean. Even though I was only nine at that time, there was this girl in the row ahead of me. Cindy Makowicz. It was all I could do to not stare at her; I never heard a word they said about the Bible, the saints, or any of the three testaments.

**AMOS.** (*Rolling his eyes.*) Two.

**ALEX.** What?

**LAVERNE.** Two. There are only two testaments—the old and the new, right Amos?

**AMOS.** Right.

**ALEX.** Yeah, well, with Cindy in the room, there were three. She was testament to all the trouble women were going to cause in my life. You know what I mean, right Laverne?

**LAVERNE.** (*Crossing DL.*) Me? Aw, well. I didn't always understand them, but I'm not sure I'd say they caused trouble—at least, no more than other things in life.

**ALEX.** You mean like traffic cops and income taxes?

*Sarah and Sam enter from CR. Sam stays CR as Sarah crosses and playfully cuffs Alex on the back of the head as she passes him to greet Laverne.*

**SARAH.** Did I hear the words "traffic cops and income taxes"? That can only mean one thing—Alex must be discussing his love life again. I swear, if I hear about gorgeous little Cindy Makowicz one more time, I'm going to throw up, and that would be quite the feat seeing I haven't eaten in 50+ years. (*Extending her hand to Laverne.*) Hi, I'm Sarah. I see you've met our resident pedophile, Alex.

**ALEX.** Pedophile!

**SARAH.** Well, what would *you* call it, swooning over an eight-year-old girl more than 140 years after the fact? (*Pulling Laverne by the arm to DC and motioning Sam over.*) And this is Sam. Sam, meet—

**LAVERNE.** Laverne. Laverne Burton.

**SAM.** Any relation to Richard?

**LAVERNE.** Richard?

**SARAH.** Richard Burton. Elizabeth Taylor's husband.

**LAVERNE.** No, no relation.

**SAM.** That's too bad. It would have been a great story. Probably worth a few extra points, too.

**LAVERNE.** Points?

**SAM.** Sure. The more famous you are—or if you know someone famous—the more points an angel gets for escorting you in. (*Matter-of-factly.*) You haven't read the manual yet, have you?

**LAVERNE.** I didn't even know there *was* a manual.

**ALEX.** He just got in, so we haven't had the chance to cover any of that yet. (*Brightening.*) Say, if the two of you aren't too busy, how about a group training session? You can help me show this new kid the ropes. (*Sitting in center chair DC.*)

**SARAH.** A group training session? I *hate* training sessions. That's so old . . .

**SAM.** Come on, let's do it, Sarah. You did say that you were bored. (*Moving behind chairs at C.*)

**ALEX.** And it's not like there's some place else you've got to be.

**SARAH.** What the heck; alright. (*Sitting at Alex's right.*) But no debates this time. I hate arguing with the two of you over trivial points and incidental details. Agreed?

**ALEX.** Trivial points and incidental details?

**SARAH.** Yes.

**ALEX.** Give me an example.

**SARAH.** Okay, how about the busload of nuns.

**SAM.** What about it?

**SARAH.** The last time we did one of your 'group training sessions', we wasted half a day discussing the merit points for that case study.

**SAM.** We did?

**SARAH.** Yes, we did. And don't pretend that you don't remember. The point manual clearly states that nuns killed by accidental circumstances are worth the maximum value of 100 points.

**ALEX.** So?

**SARAH.** So, you wanted to give them 125 points—100 points for being nuns killed by accident, and another 25 points for being over the age of fifty. You can't 'double-up' on the points.

**SAM.** Why not? They were nuns, *and* they were over fifty.

**SARAH.** See? There you go again. We haven't even started yet and you can't stick to the rules.

**LAVERNE.** Excuse me. Guys, what are you talking about? What are points?

**SARAH.** Listen, kid. Here's the scoop. You're an angel now, and as an angel, you'll be receiving assignments.

**LAVERNE.** Assignments?

**SAM.** Yes, every time someone good dies, an angel gets assigned to fetch them and bring them in.

**LAVERNE.** Like Alex did with me.

**ALEX.** Exactly.

**AMOS.** Not 'exactly'; you're not supposed to leave your new arrivals at the Pearly Gates while you discuss point spreads with Saint Peter.

**ALEX.** (*Gesturing to Laverne.*) He's here, isn't he? Safe and sound? I rest my case.

**SARAH.** You rest more than your 'case' most of the time; that's part of the problem.

**AMOS.** (*Turning to leave.*) Sounds like you're going to be busy for a bit; I know how tedious and 'involved' training sessions can be, so I'll just see my way out. Good luck with your lesson, Laverne. With this

**AMOS.** (cont.) group, I think you're going to need all the luck you can get. (*Exits CL*).

**ALEX.** (*Turning to Sarah, not missing a beat.*) So, you think that I rest more than my 'case' most of the time! I think you're just jealous because I get more assignments than you do.

**SARAH.** Is that so? Maybe someone thinks you need more practice than I do.

**LAVERNE.** Excuse me; hello? Are angels supposed to quarrel?

**SAM.** They're not quarreling.

**LAVERNE.** They're not?

**SAM.** Nah. Besides, the game's over. No one keeps score once you're here. And they don't mean anything by it. That's the only way they know how to communicate. It's almost like they're brother and sister, you know?

**LAVERNE.** It just doesn't seem right, fighting in heaven.

**SAM.** They're not 'fighting'. Trust me. Amos wouldn't permit fighting.

**ALEX.** Yeah, Amos; he'd skin us alive if he came back and Laverne wasn't trained. We'd best get started.

**SARAH.** (*To Sam.*) Grab his files.

*Sam retrieves the files from where Amos had left the cart and brings one for each of them, then sits at Alex's left. Alex, Sarah and Sam each begin flipping through their file and reading quietly to themselves.*

**LAVERNE.** (*Breaking the silence.*) So, how do we begin?

**SARAH.** (*Without looking up from her file.*) It's just a matter of us explaining what assignments are, and how the point system works.

**LAVERNE.** Oh. (*A long beat.*) So?

**ALEX.** (*Without looking up.*) So what?

**LAVERNE.** When do we get started?

**ALEX.** (*Still leafing through his file.*) Right away. (*Pause.*)

**LAVERNE.** Are those the files with the assignments? Should I grab one, too? *(He moves to fetch a file from the cart. Alex waves him back.)*

**ALEX.** Nah. These aren't assignments; they're the record of your life—what you did, who you met, stuff like that.

**LAVERNE.** I don't understand. What does that have to do with my training?

**SAM.** Nothing. We just like to read them. It's how we catch up on everything we've missed since we got here.

**SARAH.** *(Nudging Sam.)* It says here Laverne was in 4-H for 10 years.

**ALEX.** 4-H? Really?

**SAM.** I was in 4-H for a while when I was little. *(To Laverne.)* What did you take to the fair? A pig?

**LAVERNE.** No. We didn't have any pigs . . .

**ALEX.** A cow?

**LAVERNE.** No, we didn't have any cows, either. I wasn't raised on a farm; not really. We didn't have a lot of land, so there weren't any pigs or cows.

**SAM.** I bet you had chickens, then. They don't take up a lot of room.

**LAVERNE.** *(Moving away from the group.)* No, no chickens. I had a—

**SARAH.** Mule.

**SAM AND ALEX.** *(Together.)* A mule?

**ALEX.** *(To Sarah.)* You're kidding, right?

**SARAH.** Nope. It's right here. Laverne had a mule. Its name was 'Tulip'. *(Sam and Alex exchange a look and choke back laughter.)* He got it when he was six years old and—

**LAVERNE.** *(Snatching the file from Sarah and closing it, then tossing it back on the pile.)* Shouldn't we be starting with my lessons? I mean, how can I know how to handle my first assignment if we haven't covered how assignments work?

**ALEX.** Sarah, Sam, maybe we ought to listen to him and do what he says. You wouldn't know it to look at him, but our boy here has got quite the temper. (*Reading from his file.*) Says here he got a three-day detention from school in the 8th grade for forcing another student's face into the toilet bowl.

**SAM AND SARAH.** (*Together.*) Wow!

**ALEX.** Cool!

**SAM.** Really?

**SARAH.** What did the other kid do?

**LAVERNE.** (*Snatching Alex's file.*) It doesn't matter; it was a long time ago. You can read all about it later. Let's just cover assignments, okay? (*Struggling to change the topic.*) You mentioned a point system. How's that work?

*The three exchange a look.*

**ALEX.** (*Following a beat, rising and crossing to Laverne.*) Okay. It's actually quite simple. Every assignment you get earns you points based on the individual you escort in. The more points you earn, the higher your collective score becomes. Your individual score is then added to your team's score. The team with the highest score at the end of the current period wins.

**LAVERNE.** That does sound simple. So, when I'm done getting trained, I'll be put on a team and begin bringing people in, like you brought me here—minus the abandonment at the gate. But, how do we know what an assignment's worth?

**SARAH.** That's easy. The point value is listed on the assignment when it comes in. Assignments are random, so no one knows when their next assignment is coming, or how much it will be worth. That levels out the playing field and keeps it fair.

**LAVERNE.** But, if the assignments come in with the points already attached, and if those assignments are random, I don't see how it's a competition at all. It sounds more like the 'luck of the draw' than an assessment of our ability. What's the challenge in that?

**ALEX.** You'd be absolutely right if that was all there was to it, but we didn't tell you about the most important part. You see, when you get an assignment, you're only given the individual's identity, and the

**ALEX.** (cont.) eight major aspects of his/her life. Based on that info, you then make a call on whether or not they should be admitted.

**LAVERNE.** Are you saying that *I* have to decide whether or not someone gets to go to heaven?

**SAM.** (*Rising and joining them.*) Technically, it's "come" to heaven, as we're already here; but no, you don't have that kind of power.

**LAVERNE.** You've lost me. Then what, exactly, am I deciding?

**SARAH.** (*Rising.*) You're simply making a judgment call. Of course we don't have the authority to decide the salvation of a man's soul, thereby assigning them to heaven or hell, but God believes that we can benefit from at least reviewing the information and seeing if we would have decided correctly.

**ALEX.** For example, when you died and I got the assignment, I was allowed to review the eight major aspects of your life and make my own judgment call as to whether or not you should join us. Those eight aspects summarized your strongest character traits based on how you handled the major turning points in your life. In this instance, I chose correctly—meaning my decision concerning your worthiness concurred with God's, so I was permitted to escort you in and receive the points. Had I chosen incorrectly, the points would have been deducted from my and my team's score, and my teammates wouldn't have been very happy with me for a while.

**LAVERNE.** But, I would think that once you had access to and had reviewed the eight major aspects of someone's life it would be easy to decide whether or not they deserve to go to heaven. What am I missing?

**SARAH.** What you're missing is the 'why'. The assignment you get will reveal the eight major aspects and 'what' they did, but it won't tell you *why* they did it. By withholding that info, God adds an element of surprise and chance to the game. After all, it's all in fun—just a friendly little competition between us angels—so God saw to it that the outcome would not always be so 'cut and dried'.

**SAM.** (*Pacing DS.*) Let me give you an example. Let's say that the assignment sheet lists "heroic" as an aspect because the individual rescued a fellow human being from a burning car. You'd probably agree that this individual is a hero who absolutely deserves heaven's rewards. But, 'why' did he rescue that person? If he did it only



**SAM.** (cont.) because the other person owed him \$50,000--and his only chance of being paid was if that person were still alive—that changes his status of being heroic to being greedy and self-serving. So, as you gain experience with assignments, you get better at reading all of the info that *isn't* there, as well as what is.

**LAVERNE.** (*Sitting in center chair.*) It all sounds very confusing.

**SARAH.** It is, at first, but it gets a little easier with each assignment. You'll see.

**LAVERNE.** Okay, so when do I get started?

**ALEX.** No one knows; that's part of the fun. Sometimes we get an assignment every day; at other times, when plagues and natural disasters aren't occurring, there can be weeks between assignments. There are a lot of angels up here, you know, and we all have to take turns.

**LAVERNE.** Do I at least know whose team I'm on?

**SAM.** Sure do; you're looking at it. (*They link arms and stand before him.*) Welcome aboard!

*A buzzer sounds three times.*

**SAM.** Incoming.

**SARAH.** More than just incoming, that's the group buzzer.

**ALEX.** Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

**SARAH.** Yes. I heard a rumor, but I didn't believe it.

*There is the sound of soft crowd noises and a line of people file on through the door at CL, cross the stage, and immediately exit CR. Trevor enters with them, doing a victory strut.*

**TREVOR.** (*Handing a copy of his completed assignment sheet to Alex as he struts past.*) Read it and weep, my friend. I've got 20 here at 57 points each.

**SAM.** Good Humor ice cream plant explosion?

**TREVOR.** You got it, and how sweet it is! With these 1140 points added to our previous total, I believe the score is now 24, 628 to your paltry 21,400. Admit defeat, my friend. There's only 17 days left; there's no way you're going to catch us now.

**SAM.** Don't be so sure, Trevor. It's not over until Miss Piggy sings.

**LAVERNE.** 'Miss Piggy'?

**ALEX.** Don't ask.

**TREVOR.** Oh, it's over; you just don't want to admit it. How's that old saying go? Oh yeah, 'Better luck next time.' (*Laughing, he joins the stream of people and exits CR. Crowd noises fade.*)

**ALEX.** (*Crumpling the score sheet Trevor handed him.*) I hate him! He's such a pompous a—

**SARAH.** Angel? That is what you were about to say, isn't it?

**SAM.** No, I think he was going to say 'a—'. (*Sarah quickly crosses and places her hand over his mouth before he can complete the sentence*).

**SARAH.** Let's not dwell on it; it's only a slight setback.

**SAM.** Slight setback? 24,628 minus 21,400 is . . . (*Begins figuring in his head as he crosses DL.*) You get an 8, a 2, another 2 . . . They're 3,228 points ahead of us now. You better hope for another busload of nuns on a very short trip if you plan on catching them.

*Alex and Sarah plop down in chairs as Sam shrugs at Laverne.  
Lights down.*

## Act 1: Scene 2

*Lights up on Alex lounging in the center chair and working a crossword puzzle. Sam is pacing behind the chairs, tossing a Koosh ball into the air and catching it. Sarah is leaning against the wall at DR, filing her nails.*

**SAM.** Man, I hate it when it's slow.

**ALEX.** Patience is a virtue, my friend. (*Short pause.*) What's a four-letter word for 'Deity Possessive'?

**SAM.** 'His'?

**SARAH.** That's only three letters, you idiot. Can you not count or can you not spell?

**SAM.** How 'bout 'his's'?

**SARAH.** Are you for real? There's no such word as 'his's'. 'His' is already singular male possessive; you can't add an apostrophe 's' to it.

**SAM.** Great, just what I need. First, a slow day, then a flashback to my 5<sup>th</sup> grade English Composition class. Thank you very much.

**SARAH.** Don't mention it. (*They sit in silence for a minute before Sam starts to whistle off-key. Sarah and Alex exchange glances.*) Okay, so you can't spell and you're tone death. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about you?

**SAM.** (*Glaring at Sarah.*) How did you manage get here, anyway?

**SARAH.** I thought we covered that. I was riding in this greyhound bus, see? And out of nowhere—

**SAM.** Yeah, yeah. I know how you died. How'd you get *here*? Aren't angels supposed to be nice?

*Sarah makes a face at him and they resume killing time.*

**ALEX.** How about a two-letter word for 'Condition of being'?

**SAM.** No clue; you'll have to ask 'brainiac' there.

**SARAH.** 'Is'.

**ALEX.** Is what?

**SARAH.** *(After an eye roll.)* A two-letter word for ‘condition of being’—is.

**ALEX.** *(Writing it in.)* Cool; that fits.

**SARAH.** Of course it ‘fits’; it’s two letters! Am I the only one here with a measurable IQ?

**SAM.** Yup. And the only dumb thing you ever did was to get on that greyhound bus.

**ALEX.** Knock it off, you two. *(Beat.)* What’s a five-letter word for ‘change’?

**SAM AND SARAH.** *(In unison.)* Shut-up!

*Amos enters pushing a broom. He takes in the scene as he works his way around the stage. Stops at DL.*

**AMOS.** Slow day?

**SAM.** How could you tell?

**AMOS.** Lucky guess. *(Looking around.)* No Laverne?

**ALEX.** He's out there, *(still working the puzzle, nodding offstage)* walking off his frustration. When he's not walking, he's hovering around the Assignment Station, staring at it. What a goon—like staring at it will do any good.

**AMOS.** So, he hasn't gotten his first assignment yet?

**SAM.** Nope, and he's killin' us. Even with the plane load of humanitarians we got lucky with last week, we're still 1800 points behind Trevor & the Terrors.

**AMOS.** Trevor and the Terrors?

**SAM.** Pretty clever title, huh? I thought it up all by myself.

**SARAH.** It doesn't matter what you call them; they're still creaming us.

**ALEX.** *(Rising and crossing to sit in chair at DR.)* What's a seven-letter word for surrender?

**AMOS.** Forfeit.

**SARAH.** Absolutely not. I don't care how far behind we are.

**AMOS.** No, 'forfeit' is the seven-letter word for 'surrender'.

**SARAH.** Oh, I knew that. But we're still not giving up.

**SAM.** (*Sitting in chair LC.*) Yeah, we've still got a shot at this. There's four days left, and Laverne is bound to get his first assignment soon. Those points from that assignment are as good as 'in the bag'. We've got him trained real well—

**SARAH.** 'Really' well.

**SAM.** That's what I said.

**SARAH.** No, you said . . . Never mind.

**ALEX.** Twenty-one down, seven letters, starts with 'p'. Demonstrating uncomplaining endurance under distress.

**AMOS.** Patient.

**SAM.** (*Rising, to Amos.*) Patient? If we were any more patient, you'd have to check us for a pulse! On second thought, that probably wouldn't work. But we've been patient, you'd better believe it!

**AMOS.** No, 'patient' is the solution to twenty-one down. (*Laverne enters CR, appearing dejected.*) Well, speak of the devil. (*Everyone starts and jumps out of their chairs. Amos motions them back down.*) No devil, people; it's just an expression. Hello, Lavern. We were just discussing you.

**LAVERNE.** I'll bet. Were they telling you about how I'm holding the entire team back? Look at me (*spreading arms wide*). I'm the amazing assignment-less angel. It's been two weeks, and I've gotten notta, zilch, zip, zero.

**SARAH.** I wouldn't say that. You *almost* got an assignment. Remember that close call two days ago?

**LAVERNE.** (*Sitting in center chair.*) Sure I remember it; that was just a tease. How many 96-year-old Roman Catholic grandmothers go ski-diving for the first time in their lives and walk away without a scratch? Man, I thought I was married to the Assignment Station that day.

**SAM.** (*From behind Laverne.*) I saw the video on Youtube. It was a very nice jump.

**LAVERNE.** Let's face it; God doesn't trust me. If He did, I'd have gotten an assignment by now.

**AMOS.** Oh, I wouldn't say that. Maybe He's just waiting for the perfect assignment for you. Something that fits, you know?

**LAVERNE.** I wish I could believe that, but . . .

**AMOS.** What's to believe? Listen, I believe it enough for both of us. In fact, I'm so certain that your assignment is forthcoming that I'm going to go fetch the Assignment Station and bring it in here. It can stay for as long as you like--right up until you get that assignment you're waiting for. But between you and me, I don't think it's going to take very long.

**SAM.** Pete's not going to like that. He's real touchy about letting the Assignment Station out of his sight.

**AMOS.** You just let me worry about that. I gave him some pretty good tips on last week's Vikings' game; he owes me one.

**ALEX.** *(Rising and crossing to Amos.)* Wait a minute. I didn't get any tips on that game. How come?

**AMOS.** What's your favorite team?

**ALEX.** The Colts.

**AMOS.** Right. And do you know what St. Peter's favorite team is?

**ALEX.** That's easy. It's the Packers. Everyone knows that.

**AMOS.** Right again. So . . .

**ALEX.** Oh, I get it! If the Packers are his favorite team *(in unison w/Amos)*, he needs all the help he can get. *(Amos pats Alex on the back. Alex returns to DR with his crossword puzzle and Amos turns back to Laverne.)*

**LAVERNE.** *(Rising.)* Do you mean it? You can really bring the Assignment Station in here? I wouldn't want you to get into any trouble.

**AMOS.** You just let me worry about that. Sit tight. *(Laverne sits in chair at DL.)* I'll go get it. *(Turns to leave.)*

**ALEX.** Five letters, starts with 'A'. A French word for farewell.

**AMOS.** *(As he starts to leave.)* Adieu.

**ALEX.** Thanks.

**AMOS.** No, I'm just leaving. (*Running into Trevor as he goes to exit.*)

**TREVOR.** Amos, my man. Nice seeing you again.

**AMOS.** Later, Trevor. I've got to fetch something. If you're still here when I get back, we'll chat.

**TREVOR.** Sure thing, old man. Catch you later. (*Amos exits CL. Trevor spies the crossword puzzle and crosses to peer over Alex's shoulder.*) Oo, a crossword. Didn't know you were the intellectual type, Alex. I see a few empty spaces there, though. Need a little help? I was very good at those back in my day.

**SARAH.** (*Moving in to confront Trevor.*) What are you doing here, Trevor? If you came to gloat, it's a bit premature.

**TREVOR.** Gloat? Me? That's not my style.

**ALEX.** (*Still working the puzzle.*) Gloat. A five-letter word for smug, boisterous behavior. Thirty two across. It fits! Thanks, guys!

**SAM.** Besides, we're going to beat you!

**TREVOR.** Oh really? And how, exactly, are you going to do that?

**SAM.** As soon as Laverne here gets his assignment, we'll have more points than we need to kick your sorry butts.

**TREVOR.** Ah yes, Laverne. (*Crossing and extending his hand to Laverne, who rises.*) I don't believe we've been formally introduced.

**LAVERNE.** We met briefly when you brought in the Good Humor guys.

**TREVOR.** Right, I remember now. Forgive me, but it was a bit hectic that day, even for me. I mean, I'm an old hand at this, but sometimes it still gets a little overwhelming.

**LAVERNE.** I imagine it does.

**TREVOR.** Anyway, I'm Trevor, and you're—

**LAVERNE.** Laverne. Nice to finally meet you.

**TREVOR.** (*Shaking hands.*) You, too. So, still waiting for your first assignment, am I right?

**SAM.** Don't you have some place to be? Someplace else—far away?

**TREVOR.** I'm sensing a little bit of insecurity in this room. Is it something I said? Honestly, did I even once mention anything about—oh, let's say an 1800 point spread?

**SARAH.** Enjoy it while you can. Four days from now you're not going to be feeling so smug.

**SAM.** Yeah, just wait until Laverne gets his chance.

**TREVOR.** Come on. No offense, but Laverne is just one angel—and a new angel, at that. He'd need to escort in the Pope to get the kind of points your team needs to catch us. And I, for one, just don't see that happening.

**ALEX.** I need a six-letter word meaning "Capitulate; give in."

**SARAH.** Not now, Alex; we're busy. (*To Trevor.*) Go back to your team and enjoy your lead while it lasts. Besides, we're too busy to stand around and watch you gloat.

**TREVOR.** There's no need for animosity, Sarah. I get it; I'm leaving. (*To Alex as he passes.*) Submit.

**ALEX.** No way; we're not giving up. Laverne will come through, wait and see.

**TREVOR.** No, dummy. Your six-letter word for 'capitulate'; try 'submit'.

**ALEX.** Hey, it fits!

**SARAH.** Of course it fits; it's six-letters! Trevor—

**TREVOR.** Okay, I'm going already.

**SAM.** About time.

*Amos enters UC pushing a large cabinet; Sam and Sarah help him position it next to the chair at DL.*

**TREVOR.** (*Crossing to the Assignment Station.*) Is that what I think it is? Wow, someone's getting the red-carpet treatment. How'd you get that away from Saint Peter?

**AMOS.** It wasn't so hard. You just have to know how to ask. My compliments to your team. Your current score is quite impressive.

**TREVOR.** Just a bit of good luck, that's all.



**AMOS.** Impressive, none the less. The gentlemen here were telling me all about your friendly little competition.

**TREVOR.** A lot can happen in two weeks. You know what they say, "It's not over until the fat lady sings."

**SAM.** Miss Piggy.

**TREVOR.** Miss Piggy?

**SAM.** Yeah, it's not over until Miss Piggy sings. My mom used to tell me that. She said it was a lot nicer than saying 'fat lady'.

**TREVOR.** Right (*drawing out the word*). Anyway, I've got to be going. I've got a pep talk scheduled in fifteen minutes; can't afford to be late. It's not good for the team leader to be late; that tends to defeat the whole purpose of having a pep talk.

**SAM.** Well, by all means, don't let us keep you. (*Moving Trevor toward the door at CR.*)

**TREVOR.** (*Grabbing the door frame on the way out, he pushes his way back on stage and crosses to the Assignment Station again.*)

Listen, when you're done with the Assignment Station, can we borrow it for a while?

**SARAH.** Sure, we'll let you use it—in about two and a half weeks. (*Sarah forces him out the door at CL.*)

**AMOS.** You've got to like that guy; he's got real character.

**ALEX.** So did Hitler.

**AMOS.** You're absolutely right—just character of a different kind.

**LAVERNE.** We should have just let him take the assignment cabinet with him. It's no use. We're kidding ourselves if we think we've got half a chance to catch his team.

**AMOS.** (*Putting his hand on Laverne's shoulder.*) Don't give up so easily. You've still got time.

**SARAH.** Sure we do. The assignments will come in; you'll see.

*A buzzer sounds. Alex rises and he and Sarah 'high-five, and Sam pulls his fist down in triumph.*

**LAVERNE.** What's that?

**ALEX.** The assignment buzzer. We've got incoming.

*They all cross to the assignment station in anticipation.*

**SAM.** Who do you think it will be for?

**SARAH.** I hope it's for Laverne. It would be so great if he got his first assignment under his belt.

**ALEX.** Yeah, I agree.

*A bell rings and a hand rises out of the assignment station with a scroll. Sarah takes it and reads the name on the ribbon that is wrapped around it.*

**SARAH.** Not this time; Sam, it's for you.

**SAM.** *(Taking the scroll, unrolling and reading it.)* Well, I'll be gosh-darned. It's not the Pope, but it's a good one. Larry Hageman died; he's my assignment. Hate to break up this party, but I'm off. Wish me luck! *(He exits CR).*

**SARAH.** *(Noting Laverne's disappointment.)* Don't let it get to you. Your assignment is coming; I can feel it.

**ALEX.** Sure it is.

**AMOS.** You've got to keep the faith, remember?

**LAVERNE.** Keep the faith. Sure, I remember.

*The buzzer sounds again, and Sarah and Alex give each other a 'thumbs up'. All return to the assignment station. The bell rings and once again a hand rises up with a scroll. Sarah and Alex glance at each other before Sarah takes the scroll and reads the name. She shakes her head.*

**SARAH.** This one's for you, Alex.

**ALEX.** *(Taking the scroll, unrolling it and reading.)* Hot diggity dog! I got me a missionary. Wish me luck, all. We need every point we can get. *(He exits CR).*

**LAVERNE.** I know, I know. Keep the faith, right? My turn's coming, right?

**SARAH.** Of course it is. All angels get assignments; that's just the way it is.

**AMOS.** Sure; I never heard of one who didn't.

**LAVERNE.** So, I'll just be patient, right?

**SARAH AND AMOS.** (*In unison.*) Right.

*The buzzer rings again, and they remain at the assignment station as the bell rings and the hand once again rises with its scroll. Sarah takes it hesitantly and reads the ribbon.*

**SARAH.** Sorry, kiddo. This one's for me. (*She unrolls it and reads, then re-rolls it.*) Wow. It seems that 96 year old sky-diving grandmother died peacefully in her sleep.

**LAVERNE.** And I didn't get the assignment?

**SARAH.** 'fraid not. Sorry. (*Looking from Amos to Laverne hesitantly.*) I'll catch you guys later; wish me luck, okay?

**LAVERNE.** Sure. (*Sarcastically.*) Good luck. I'll just stay here and hold down the fort if that's alright with you.

*Sarah places a sympathetic hand on his arm and smiles hesitantly at Amos before exiting CL.*

**AMOS.** Why the long face, kid? You'll get your assignment when—

**LAVERNE.** When the time is right? Yeah, yeah. I'm sick of hearing that. You know what I think? I think God made a mistake making an angel out of me, and now that He's figured that out, He's afraid to give me an assignment.

**AMOS.** Mistake? Afraid? It's not very often that I hear those words to describe what God does. In fact, the last mistake I heard about was the avocado.

**LAVERNE.** Yeah, I heard about that, too. I saw that movie where George Burns says that God goofed up when He made the avocado because the pit was too large.

**AMOS.** Oh God.

**LAVERNE.** What?

**AMOS.** That was the title of the movie, "Oh God".

**LAVERNE.** Right. George Burns and John Denver. Denver was just a grocery store manager, and God had more faith in him than in me. I'm already an angel, and I can't get any assignment at all.

**AMOS.** I need to scan your file again. Were you this impatient in life, too, or is this a new personality development? Think about it--a missionary and a 96 year old catholic grandma, those aren't the most challenging assignments now, are they?

**LAVERNE.** No, but what about Larry Hagmen? There can't be that many celebrities that make it up here, right?

**AMOS.** Well, he's not here yet.

**LAVERNE.** True, still . . .

**AMOS.** Are you related to one of the apostles?

**LAVERNE.** What?

**AMOS.** I think you've got a doubting Thomas in your family tree somewhere.

**LAVERNE.** Very funny. Go ahead, make fun of me. How would you feel if you were me?

*The buzzer rings again but Laverne does not cross back to the assignment station. Amos looks from him to the station, but Laverne will not be coaxed over. The bell rings and the hand rises with its scroll. Still, Laverne refuses to relent and go to it. The hand turns from side to side, waves the scroll, then finally slaps it on the top of the station a few times.*

**AMOS.** Well, are you going to get it?

**LAVERNE.** *(Still dejected.)* Nah. You get it. It's probably for you, anyway.

**AMOS.** No, I think you should get it.

**LAVERNE.** No, go ahead.

*The hand clenches the scroll, trembles in frustration and slams the scroll several times.*

**AMOS.** Really, I think you need to get this.

**LAVERNE.** Well I don't.

*The hand makes a twirling motion before tossing the scroll out onto CS. It then makes a fist in Laverne's direction before disappearing back down into the assignment station.*

**AMOS.** That's a first. I don't think any angel has ever tried the patience of the assignment station before. Congratulations.

**LAVERNE.** Just pick up your assignment and go, Amos. I'm not in the mood for any more lectures.

**AMOS.** What makes you think it's for me? It could be your assignment.

**LAVERNE.** Doubt it.

**AMOS.** Only one way to know for sure.

**LAVERNE.** (*Glancing at the floor where the assignment scroll lay.*) You don't understand, Amos. I just can't take it anymore. It's worse than being in the fourth grade again and not getting picked for a side on the kickball team. If that assignment is for you and not me, I don't think I could bear it.

**AMOS.** Would it help if I told you it's not for me?

**LAVERNE.** Maybe. But how do you know that for sure.

**AMOS.** Trust me; I know.

**LAVERNE.** How?

**AMOS.** It doesn't matter. I just do.

**LAVERNE.** (*Edging closer to the scroll.*) Not for you, huh? Okay. (*He stoops to pick up the scroll, but stops and straightens back up.*) You're sure?

**AMOS.** Absolutely.

**LAVERNE.** (*Stooping again, then stopping with his hand inches from the scroll.*) Positive?

**AMOS.** Yes, I'm positive, certain, absolutely sure and unequivocally right. So, are you going to pick it up or not?

**LAVERNE.** Sure, sure. (*He picks up the scroll and reads the ribbon.*) Well, what do you know--it's for me. It's really for me! (*He rushes over to Amos to show him the name on the ribbon.*) See that, right there? It says "Laverne." See that, all in red letters? Isn't it the most beautiful thing you've ever seen? "Laverne." I don't believe it! Wow!

**AMOS.** Not to spoil your moment, but don't you think you should open it?

**LAVERNE.** What? (*Realizing what Amos means.*). Oh, yes; I suppose I should. (*He removes the ribbon with a wide smile spread across his face. He glances at Amos for his approval, then silently reads the assignment. His smile fades and turns to a look of anger. He crumples the scroll into a big wad, then looks around for some place to throw it.*) I knew it, I knew it! People have always suspected that God has a sense of humor. Why else would he have put trunks on elephants, or created a platypus? Well, this is proof! (*He waves the crumpled assignment in Amos face.*) This is hard evidence that God likes a good laugh at our expense.

**AMOS.** Would you care to explain what you're talking about, or are you going to wave that crumbled piece of paper around until I guess what has you so upset?

**LAVERNE.** Upset? You want to know what has me so upset? Well, I'll tell you what has me so upset. Alex gets a celebrity, Sam gets a missionary, and Sarah gets a 96-year-old catholic grandmother for their assignments. What do I get? What does the newest angel who has been waiting for weeks for his very first assignment get when the assignment finally comes in? Well, read it and weep. (*He pushes the crumbled assignment into Amos's chest. Amos straightens out the paper and studies it. Laverne pokes at the paper angrily with his index finger.*) See what that says? See it, right there? Do you hear God chuckling yet? Well, you should. That's right, when Laverne's very first assignment comes in, what do I get to bring to heaven? That's right. For my debut assignment, I get to fetch a dog. (*As lights go down. Whining.*) I don't want a dog.

*Lights Down.*

## Act 2

*Lights up on Alex, Sam and Sarah huddled together at CS. They are conversing excitedly.*

**SARAH.** Well, I still don't believe it; there's got to be some mistake.

**ALEX.** No mistake; I saw the scroll myself.

**SAM.** Besides, who ever heard of God making a mistake?

**SARAH.** But—a dog? It just can't be. Laverne couldn't have possibly gotten a 'dog' for his first assignment. I mean, look around—do you see any dogs here? What was God thinking?

**ALEX.** Come on, Sarah. If we're to be honest, God's intentions have historically been more than a little cryptic.

**SAM.** Cryptic?

**ALEX.** Unclear, borderline senseless.

**SAM.** Like bananas.

**SARAH AND ALEX.** *(In unison.)* Bananas?

**SAM.** Yeah. Well, not bananas themselves, but banana bunches.

**ALEX.** I know I'm going to regret this, but what about bunches of bananas is senseless?

**SAM.** They're upside down.

**ALEX.** What?

**SAM.** They're upside down. They don't hang down, they point up.

*Alex and Sarah exchange a look.*

**ALEX.** Alright then, back to—

**SAM.** And oceans.

**SARAH.** Oceans? Why are oceans senseless?

**SAM.** Think about it. If you were designing the planet earth, would you make all of the largest bodies of water salty? We can't even drink them!

**ALEX.** Can we get back to the topic of dogs and heaven?

**SAM.** We can talk about anything you want, Alex, but you're the one who changed the subject to God being septic.

**ALEX.** Cryptic.

**SAM.** Whatever!

*Trevor enters CL singing 'How much is that Doggie in the Window?'*

**TREVOR.** Am I interrupting something?

**SARAH.** What do you want, Trevor?

**TREVOR.** My, my, my—do I sense a little hostility here?

*Alex responds 'No' as Sam responds 'Yes.' They exchange a look, then Alex responds 'Yes' as Sam responds 'No.' Sarah pushes between them and Trevor.*

**SARAH.** (*Changing the topic.*) We were simply discussing how, to our more simplistic way of thinking, God's method of doing things doesn't always make sense.

**TREVOR.** (*Slowly, doubtfully.*) God's method of doing things doesn't make sense?

**SAM.** Yeah, like pandas, possums and seahorses. (*Trevor, Sarah and Alex all stare at him without comment.*) What's up with the pouches? After all, if any species should be able to carry its young around in a pouch, it should be people. That would free up a woman's hands for groceries, laundry baskets—

**SARAH.** Why does it have to be the *woman* who gets equipped with a pouch for junior? Why not the man?

**SAM.** Don't be ridiculous. It's always the female of the species that gets the pouch.

**SARAH.** Not in seahorses!

**SAM.** So, are you saying you want to be a seahorse?

**ALEX.** (*To Trevor.*) And why, exactly, are you here?

**TREVOR.** I—I seriously can't remember. (*Indicating Sam and Sarah.*) But whatever it was, it can't be half as interesting as this.

**SAM.** Okay, let's forget about pouches. What about necks? What was He thinking when He put those necks on giraffes and ostriches?



**ALEX.** (*Suppressing his anger.*) Maybe, considering the length of their legs, He wanted to make sure they could reach the ground to eat!

**TREVOR.** Oh yes, now I remember why I came. I heard Laverne finally got an assignment. Is that true?

**ALEX.** He's not here; you can ask him yourself when he gets back.

**TREVOR.** (*Strolling DL, nonchalantly.*) I see. That's okay; I totally understand your reluctance to discuss it. After all, it is a little . . . odd.

**SARAH.** I have no idea what you're talking about, but I'm sure Laverne will straighten it all out when he gets back.

**SAM.** And what about elephant trunks?

**ALEX AND SARAH.** (*To Sam, in unison.*) Shut up!

**TREVOR.** This, from a pair of angels? Tsk, tsk, tsk. If I didn't know better, I'd say you're still just stressed out about our friendly little competition and the current point spread.

**SARAH.** In case you hadn't noticed, that point spread is shrinking. In fact, when you factor in the 75 points I got for Granny—

**SAM.** And the 50 points I got for Mr. Hagemann—

**ALEX.** And my 75 points for the missionary, (*sitting in chair LC dejectedly*) you're only leading by 1600 points.

**TREVOR.** Come now, I'm really not here for a math lesson. It's the overall concept of the competition that is troubling me. Or, more precisely, I think it's troubling you. In fact, I get the feeling you're afraid the whole thing's 'gone to the dogs'.

**SARAH.** (*Approaching him threateningly.*) What have you heard?

**TREVOR.** Have I upset you? Was it something I said?

**AMOS.** (*Entering SL.*) Hello Sarah, Alex, Sam. Trevor, what a pleasant surprise; I wasn't expecting to find you here.

**TREVOR.** Just stopped by to say hello and 'sniff out' anything new.

**AMOS.** Laverne isn't here?

**TREVOR.** No. Do you want me to go 'fetch' him?

**SARAH.** (*To Amos.*) Don't mind Trevor; he was just leaving.

**TREVOR.** What, you're 'putting me out'? You're not concealing a rolled up newspaper anywhere, are you? Should I cover my nose?  
(*He does.*)

**AMOS.** That's about enough, you two. I'm concerned about Laverne. He was feeling a little down when I saw him last, so I thought I should check back.

**ALEX.** We haven't seen him. (*Beat.*) So, it's true?

**AMOS.** Yes, it's true. Laverne has his first assignment.

**ALEX.** That's not what I meant. Is he supposed to get a—

*Laverne enters CR He is carrying his scroll and whistling cheerfully.*

**AMOS.** Laverne, is everything—alright?

**LAVERNE.** Alright? It's great! Why do you ask?

**AMOS.** Well, the last time I saw you, you were a bit upset.

**LAVERNE.** Oh, that. Not to worry. I just needed some time to think it all through. After all, it isn't every day that an angel gets his first assignment. (*He sits in center chair.*)

**ALEX.** So, it finally came through?

**LAVERNE.** (*Proudly holding out the scroll.*) Sure did!

**SARAH.** I don't mean to pry, Laverne, but we're all dying to know. Is it true—are you supposed to get a . . . 'dog'?

**LAVERNE.** Yup, that does seem to be the case.

**SAM.** And you're alright with that?

**LAVERNE.** I guess so. I mean, I wasn't at first, but I've thought it over, and if that's what God wants me to do for my first assignment, who am I to argue?

**SARAH.** (*Indicating the scroll.*) Can I see?

**LAVERNE.** (*Handing her the scroll.*) Sure. It's all there, in black and white.

*She carries the scroll to DR and studies it for a moment, then to Alex and Sam.*

**SARAH.** Hey guys, come look at this. (*They cross to stand on either side of her and review the document.*) Are you seeing what I'm seeing? (*Pointing to the scroll.*)

**SAM AND ALEX.** (*In unison.*) Two *thousand* points? You have the opportunity to get two *thousand* points—for a *dog*?

**ALEX.** No wonder you're okay with it!

**LAVERNE.** (*Joining them to look at the scroll.*) That's what that '2' means.

**SARAH.** You didn't know?

**LAVERNE.** How could I have known? I've never seen an assignment scroll until today. It's a '2' followed by a 'k'; that's all I know.

**SAM.** Yeah, 'k' could stand for 'canine'. After all, he *is* getting a dog.

**SARAH.** Sam, 'canine' starts with a 'c', not a 'k'.

**SAM.** Well, maybe God doesn't know that.

**ALEX.** Only *you* don't know that, Sam; I'm sure God can spell.

**TREVOR.** Let me see that. (*Joining them.*) No way; this ain't happening. First, you want me to believe that Laverne here is supposed to bring in a dog for his first assignment, and now you want me to believe that same dog is worth 2000 points?

**ALEX.** Read it and weep, Trevor my man. Once Laverne brings that dog through those pearly gates, we win.

**TREVOR.** Come on; there's got to be some kind of catch.

**SARAH.** Looks pretty straight-forward to me.

**TREVOR.** No way. There hasn't been a dog in heaven yet, and there's not going to be one now if I can help it—especially not if it means you guys get 2000 points for the mutt.

**SARAH.** Face it, Trevor. This is an official assignment printed on a pretty official-looking scroll. How do you plan on stopping us?

**TREVOR.** For starters, I can file an official challenge.

**SARAH.** Tell me you're kidding.

**TREVOR.** Nope. Section two, page 384 of the Angels in Training manual states, and I quote, "Any angel can, with reasonable cause, challenge another angel's assignment prior to completion of said assignment as long as there is a basis for questioning the foundation and/or merit of that assignment. Any assignment that has been challenged will remain inactive, and no points will be awarded for the assignment in question, until said challenge has been settled."

**SAM.** (*Totally confused.*) What?

**ALEX.** (*Crossing to sit in chair at DL.*) If you ever wondered if lawyers make it into heaven, there's your proof.

**SARAH.** Really, and how many points are *they* worth?

**ALEX.** They've got to be rare; they're probably worth a bundle.

**LAVERNE.** (*Still confident.*) But not as much as a dog, and the first one's mine.

**TREVOR.** We'll just see about that. Consider your assignment challenged, my friend. There's no way I'm going to stand around while your team takes the lead for bringing in some mutt.

**ALEX.** (*Standing to confront Trevor.*) Trevor, you can't be serious. This is unheard of! No one has ever challenged an assignment before. Let's be reasonable—

**TREVOR.** I *am* being reasonable. If it wasn't reasonable, it wouldn't be in the manual. (*Confronting Laverne.*) You should be proud of yourself, Laverne. You've had quite the day. You got your first assignment, *and* your first challenge. Bet you guys aren't bored anymore. (*He exits CL.*)

*Laverne takes his scroll back and sinks into the chair at CS;  
the others gather around him.*

**LAVERNE.** (*Looking beseechingly at Alex, Sarah and Sam.*) Why me? Tell me, am I the only one who hears God chuckling now?

*Lights down.*