

# Home for Christmas

A Christmas Play

In one act

By

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**Home For Christmas**

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by Deborah A. Hodge

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Ten female roles, seven male roles  
80 minutes running time

### Cast of Characters

**Miss Jessica Russell** is in her late twenties. She is very capable relatively new head of the Ellendale orphanage. She is attractive but does not know it and does not work at it. Therefore, she often appears rather plain. She has beauty of character. She is very caring and compassionate. She grew up as an orphan. Therefore, she understands exactly how the orphans feel.

**Miss Susan Lawrence and Miss Angela Prewitt** each in their late thirties are housemothers at the orphanage. Both have worked at the orphanage for about ten years.

**Mr. Andrew Sutton** is 30 years old. He is a very handsome lawyer, and the only son of wealthy parents who recently died in a plane crash. He wants to continue his parents' tradition of helping provide a home for Christmas to orphans. He has recently become engaged to Lauren Davis, from California.

**Lauren Davis** is in her twenties. She is the beautiful, sophisticated, self-centered fiancée of Andrew Sutton, who is trying to keep him from knowing the real Lauren until after they are married. Because Andrew is a lawyer and has money, she considers Andrew a great catch and will do whatever it takes to keep him. She wants to be a member of high society and wants to be his wife for that reason. He is not interested particularly in high society or money and position. She is sure that she can change his mind after they are married. She is from California. He loves Pennsylvania, tradition and honoring his parents' memory. She hates Pennsylvania, abhors tradition, and she never met his parents.

**Bertram** is around fifty. He is the very traditional butler. He has been the Sutton family butler for almost thirty years. He has known Andrew Sutton since Andrew was a small boy. Upon the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Sutton, Bertram continued to take care of the family home along with his wife Gladys. He is very protective of Andrew.

**Gladys** is around fifty. She has been housekeeper/cook for the Suttons for thirty years. She also has known Andrew Sutton from his birth. She is also very protective of Andrew.

**Katie**-----Orphan about 16 years old.

**Sam**-----Orphan about 15 years old.

**Mia**-----Orphan about 12 years old

**Shelby**----Orphan about 14 years old

**Dylan**----Orphan about 16 years old

**Rebecca** in her late twenties is Lauren's best friend. She knows the truth about Lauren, but she is trying to help Lauren snare Andrew.

**Jared** is thirty years old and Rebecca's fiancé, and he comes from a wealthy family.

**Mr. Fischer** is thirty- three and is Sam and Shelby's father.

**Mr. and Mrs. Randolph** are in their forties and are wealthy friends of Andrew's. They are from Carson, where Sam, Shelby and Mr. Fischer are from.

### Place

Ellendale, Pennsylvania

### Time

A few days before Christmas

# Act One

## Scene 1

Scene Opens with Miss Prewitt and Miss Lawrence walking into Miss Jessica Russell's office. Miss Russell, the new director of the Ellendale Orphanage. They are discussing the Home for the Christmas Program.

**Miss Lawrence**—(frustrated)—I just do not know what else we can do.

**Miss Prewitt**--(upset) I know, but it's still not fair.

**Miss Russell**----- (understanding the source of distress)—No luck, huh.

**Miss Lawrence**---No luck. How about you? (Miss Russell shakes her head no.)

**Miss Russell**----- No, luck. I guess we're licked.

**Miss Lawrence**-----It's such a wonderful program.

**Miss Russell**----Yeah, an orphan gets to be part of a real family for the Christmas holidays. I wish I could have had that when I was an orphan growing up.

**Miss Prewitt**-----Yeah, our kids look forward to it. It's such a shame that we have five that we could not place in a home for Christmas.

**Miss Russell**----I think that we've exhausted all the possibilities. (Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt shake their heads affirmatively.)

**Miss Lawrence**---- (in frustration)--I was sure Mr. and Mrs. Howard would take at least one more.

**Miss Prewitt**---- I thought the same about the Prestons.

**Miss Russell**----And, I hoped that the Crawfords would help too, but they said that they just couldn't.

**Miss Prewitt**-----It was a good plan.

**Miss Russell**----Yeah, it was.

**Miss Lawrence**—Too bad that it didn't work.

**Miss Russell**-----Well, we will just have to make this the best Christmas we can for the five who didn't get a home for Christmas.

**Miss Prewitt**----I knew it would be difficult to replace the Suttons, but I didn't know it would be impossible.

**Miss Lawrence**—They were such nice people. It's such a shame that they're gone.

**Miss Russell**---Yeah, they were nice. I only knew them for a short time, but I could tell that they were very, very nice.

**Miss Prewitt**----Too bad no one else is as wealthy and as generous as the Suttons were.

**Miss Lawrence**---Yeah, they would have taken anyone we weren't able to place.

**Miss Prewitt**----I wonder if Andrew is coming home for Christmas.

**Miss Russell**----Andrew?

**Miss Prewitt**----Andrew Sutton...Mr. and Mrs. Sutton's son. Remember you meet him at the funeral.

**Miss Russell**----I did.

**Miss Lawrence**---He was such a nice boy when he was growing up.

**Miss Prewitt**---Yeah, the Suttons were very proud of him.

**Miss Lawrence**---He grew up to be a lawyer. Didn't he?

**Miss Prewitt**----Yes, he did. I'm sure he has many clients.

**Miss Lawrence**---Many female clients... Brown hair, deep blue eyes, nice smile.

**Mrs. Prewitt**-----He always was very, very handsome.

**Miss Russell**---- Now I remember. Yeah, he was handsome.

**Miss Lawrence**----Still very nice too, I would imagine.

**Miss Prewitt**-----He lives in Los Angeles, doesn't he?

**Miss Lawrence**---Yes, he does. With his parents being dead for two months, it would probably be too difficult for him to come home for Christmas this year. (Each nods her head in agreement. The phone rings.)

**Miss Russell**---- (answers the phone) ---Hello... Yes, this is Jessica Russell... (a strange look of unbelief comes over her face.)---I'm sorry, who did you say this was?..... (The tone of her question and the look on her face, capture the interest of Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt.).....Andrew Sutton..... yes, I know who you are...(Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt are waiting with great anticipation.)... You'd like to do what?.....(With a broad smile on her face) I see... you'd like to participate in the Home for Christmas Program..... Yes, we still have five orphans that need placement..... You'd like to have

how many in your home?.....(She holds up four fingers in response to his answer. Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt react with disappointment.) Is that a firm number?.....  
.....Could you see your way clear to take all five?... (Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt perk up with interest.)...Guests....oh, I see. Yes, you would need more servants, wouldn't you?  
.....I'm sorry too.....(Suddenly, Miss Russell thinks of a solution)....Mr. Sutton, what if I could get you extra servants for the holidays?.....Yes, that's right....I can assure you if you would be willing to take all five orphans for the holidays you will have the servants you need.....I promise.....You will.....That's great...(Writing on a note pad).....Have them there on the morning of the twenty-second.....The servants names are Gladys and Bertram.....Yes, sir...I'll take care of it. We'll see you on the twenty-second.. (She hangs up the phone with an enormous smile on her face. None of the three women can contain their joy.)

**Miss Prewitt**-----I don't believe it.

**Miss Russell**-----(in triumph) Believe it.

**Miss Lawrence**----And, you talked him into taking all five.

**Miss Prewitt**----Way to go Miss Russell!

**Miss Russell**----Jessica.....I told you; call me Jessica. .

**Miss Prewitt**---Old habits are hard to break.

**Miss Lawrence**----Yeah, we did not dare call our old boss anything other than Miss Cavendish.

**Miss Russell**-----Well, your new boss prefers Jessica.

**Miss Lawrence**----Okay then Jessica.....that promise that you made about extra servants....

**Miss Russell**-----Yeah, that.....Could you two please help me keep that promise?

**Miss Lawrence**-----I figured that's what you meant.

**Miss Prewitt** --(Looking at Miss Russell)-----You're expecting Susan and me to be servants?

**Miss Russell**-----I'm expecting all of us to be servants.

**Miss Prewitt**----- You're expecting us to give up Christmas with our families to play servant for Andrew Sutton.

**Miss Lawrence**---No, Angela, she's expecting us to give up our Christmas with our families for the five kids' sake.

**Miss Prewitt**----- (haltingly)----Well, I guess, that's different.

**Miss Lawrence---**We'll all be giving up Christmas with our families so that five orphans can actually be in a real home for Christmas.

**Miss Russell-----** That's technically not true. I'm not giving up anything. I don't have a family. Remember, I'm an orphan too.

**Miss Lawrence---** Well then, this whole thing will be a home for Christmas experience for you too..

**Miss Russell-----** Yeah, it will.

**Miss Prewitt-----** So, we'll be doing "the servant thing" for the kids and you.

**Miss Russell-----** I guess that's right.

**Miss Lawrence----** (eagerly) --You can count on me.

**Miss Prewitt----**(also, eagerly)----Me to.

**Miss Russell---** Thank you. I appreciate the sacrifice and the kids will too.

**Miss Prewitt-----** You are very welcome. Susan and I can visit our families after Christmas.

**Miss Lawrence----** So, Jessica, what's the plan?

**Miss Russell----** Mr. Sutton wants the kids over at his house early on the 22nd and the extra servants too. His servants, Gladys and Bertram will be expecting us. Mr. Sutton and his guests will arrive later that afternoon.

**Miss Prewitt-----** What do you mean his guests?

**Miss Russell-----** Yes, he's bringing his fiancée and a couple of friends.

**Miss Lawrence----** Fiancée? (Looking at Miss Prewitt)---She wasn't with him at the funeral, was she?

**Miss Prewitt-----** I don't remember anyone with him.

**Mrs. Lawrence---** This Christmas might be very interesting. I'd like to see the woman who landed him.

**Miss Prewitt-----** I'd like to see what kind of man he has become.

**Miss Russell-----** I'd like to give five orphans an opportunity to be in a home for Christmas.

**Miss Lawrence---** Don't you mean six?

**Miss Russell ---** (Smiling at what Miss Lawrence just said) ----Okay six... Let's go tell the kids the good news.

## Scene Two

Setting : The Sutton Home. Gladys and Bertram are putting the final Christmas presents under the tree and making final preparations for the guests.

**Gladys**----- (enters carrying presents) I hope we bought the right kind of presents for the children.

**Bertram**----- (enters following Gladys. He also has presents.)-----I'm sure that we did. We used the information provided by the orphanage so we should be fine. I'm sure they will appreciate whatever they get.

**Gladys**-----I know and that's what makes Christmas so enjoyable. I'm so glad Mr. Andrew decided to carry on his parent's tradition concerning the Home for Christmas program.

**Bertram**----- (Looking at his watch) It's almost time for the children and the servants to arrive.

**Gladys**----- (Nervously) How does everything look?

**Bertram**-----Trust me. They won't mind if everything isn't perfect.

**Gladys**-----Oh dear, what's not perfect?

**Bertram**----- (firmly) -----For the hundredth time, it looks superb.

**Gladys**-----Everything just has to be perfect.

**Bertram**-----Everything is perfect...Quit stressing.

**Gladys**-----I can't help it. Mr. Andrew is bringing his fiancée to see the house for the first time.

**Bertram**-----So you're trying to impress the young woman.

**Gladys**-----Yes, I'm trying to impress the young woman. If I can, maybe, she and Mr. Andrew will move back to Ellendale after they are married.

**Bertram**----- (shaking his head) I think, your expectations are unrealistic.

**Gladys**-----Why?

**Bertram**----- Miss Davis is a native Californian.

**Gladys**-----So?

**Bertram**-----I cannot see her giving up the California sunshine and warm climate for Pennsylvania.

**Gladys**-----And, what's wrong with Pennsylvania?

**Bertram**-----Absolutely, nothing if you like cold winters and snow.

**Gladys**-----You mean it doesn't snow in California.

**Bertram**-----Not where Miss Davis lives?

**Gladys**-----Oh.....so it might be difficult to convince her that she should live here.

**Bertram**-----I'm afraid so.

**Gladys**-----But, surely anyone Mr. Andrew loves would have to love what he loves, and he loves Pennsylvania.

**Bertram**-----Then, why did he move to Los Angeles?

**Gladys**-----Because of the job offer with the big law firm out there.

**Bertram**-----You're exactly right!

**Gladys**-----But I'm sure that he'd like to move back someday.

**Bertram**-----The key word is **someday**.

**Gladys**-----Well, Can't I wish for someday to be soon?

**Bertram**-----Sure you can, but I wouldn't count on it. (Doorbell rings. Bertram proceeds to answer the door. It is Miss Russell, Miss Lawrence, Miss Prewitt and the 5 orphans.)

**Bertram**----- (To Miss Russell) ----Good morning madam. I take it you all are from the orphanage.

**Miss Russell**----Yes, we are and you must be Bertram.

**Bertram**-----That is correct madam. Won't you come in. (Miss Russell and the group walk in. Miss Russell then begins to introduce Miss Lawrence, Miss Prewitt and the orphans.)

**Miss Russell**----(Gesturing toward each one)-May I introduce Miss Susan Lawrence, Miss Angela Prewitt, Sam, Shelby, Katie, Dylan, and Mia. (The children are busy observing and reacting to the home especially the tree and the presents.),,,, And, I am Jessica Russell.

**Bertram**-----And, may I introduce Gladys.

**Gladys**-----It is very nice to meet you all.... (to the children)... It will be wonderful having you all for Christmas. May I take your coats? (The children pull off their coats and give them to Gladys. Gladys puts them in the closet.)

**Bertram**-----And, when will the servants arrive madam?

**Miss Russell**---They have already arrived. (Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt raise their hands acknowledging that they are servants.)

**Bertram**-----Oh, I see..... but, I understood that there would be three.

**Miss Russell**---I make three.

**Bertram**-----Oh, I see.

**Miss Russell**----We are at your disposal.

**Bertram**-----Very good madam. Let me see if I have your names correct. (Pointing to each one. Each one nods as he correctly identifies them.) You are Jessica. You are Susan and you are Angela.

**Miss Prewitt**-----Wow, you're good.

**Bertram**---(With very dry humor in a very serious commanding tone.)---That's why I am the butler, madam and you are the servants. (The women don't know how to take his statement.

**Gladys**----Oh, Bertram knock it off. These ladies will think that you are serious.

**Miss Lawrence**----You mean he wasn't.

**Gladys**-----He wasn't.

**Miss Lawrence**----Wow, Bertie. You sure had me going.

**Bertram**----- (Very indignantly and with great authority.)---Madam, my name is Bertram, not Bertie and I am in charge. Therefore, you will address me properly.

**Miss Prewitt**---(Looking at Gladys)----There he goes again. He's a real kidder, isn't he?

**Gladys**-----I'm afraid he not kidding this time. He's touchy about his name.

**Miss Lawrence**---I'm sorry Mr. Bertram. I didn't know, my bad.

**Bertram**-----Your bad, indeed

**Gladys**-----Bertram, don't be like that.. She said that she was sorry. She didn't know that you were so touchy about your name.

**Bertram**----- (Glaringly) Now she knows.....

**Gladys**-----Now she does. So cut her some slack....

**Miss Russell**---Bertram, we're all new at this servant thing. We'll try to learn quickly what's proper and what's not.

**Bertram**-----Very good madam....I will show the young people to their rooms and Gladys will show you to the kitchen and prepare you for your duties. (The orphans follow Bertram and the women follow Gladys)

(After a few minutes, Dylan returns to the living room and goes to the Christmas tree to examine the presents. He stops when he hears the other orphans coming. As they enter the room, he speaks.)

**Dylan**-----Man, did you get a load of this place?

**Mia**-----It's better than I could ever have imagined.

**Shelby**-----I've never slept on a bed like that before.

**Sam**-----I've never been in a house like this before.

**Katie**-----I sure thought we'd be spending Christmas at the orphanage while everyone else was in a home.

**Mia**-----Me too, but look at us now.

**Shelby**-----Yeah, I bet everyone else would be jealous if they could see us now.

**Katie**-----Yeah!

**Dylan**-----Let's don't get so carried away.

**Katie**-----What do you mean? This is great.

**Dylan**-----Yeah, it is, but we haven't met the Sutton guy. What if he isn't so great?

**Mia**-----That's the great thing about having Miss Russell here. If Mr. Sutton isn't nice, she'll fix it

**Katie**----- But, look at this place. He opened up his home to us for Christmas. He didn't have to, did he? He'd just about have to be nice.

**Sam**----- Dylan might be right. Some rich folks don't really like other folks, they just like to brag about helping them.

**Shelby**-----Surely, Mr. Sutton isn't like that.

**Sam**-----We'll see.

**Dylan**-- (Changing the subject)—Did you all get a load of those presents?

**Sam**---Let's go check them out.

(Everyone hurries to the tree to find a present with his or her name on it. While the orphans are discussing their discoveries, Miss Russell enters in servant attire. She wants to inspect the orphans' appearance and give last minute instructions.)

**Miss Russell**-- (Seeing them at the tree with presents in their hands)-----What are you kids up to?

(As they turn toward her, the kids are amazed at her appearance. She usually dresses in frumpy business attire, with her hair pulled back and usually has, reading glasses on. She actually is more attractive in servant attire and she has no glasses and her hair is down.)

**Mia**-----Miss Russell, you sure look different.

**Miss Russell**----I do.

**Dylan**-----Yeah, you do.

**Miss Russell**----How do I look different?

**Katie**-----Your hair is down and you're not wearing your glasses.

**Miss Russell**----Gladys suggested I wear my hair down and the glasses are just for reading. I usually forget to take them off.

**Dylan**----- (very impressed by how attractive she looks. He is about to tell her she looks hot when Katie decides that would not be appropriate.)-----Well, you sure look different. You look hot.

**Katie**----- (Interrupting Dylan's hot.) You look happy. You look...very happy.

**Miss Russell**----I do.

**Katie**-----Yes, you do.

**Dylan**-----And you look very nice too.

**Miss Russell**----I do.

**Mia**-----We have never seen you look quite so nice.

**Shelby**-----You look very nice.

**Sam**-----Yes, you do.

**Miss Russell**----Thank you. I'm here to see how nice you look. (She inspects each one while they are still inspecting her.)-- You look fine.

**Katie**-----Thanks, Miss Russell.

**Miss Russell**—(Oblivious to his real meaning) Thanks, but about calling me Miss Russell. While we are here, you need to call me Jessica, Miss Lawrence, Susan and Miss Prewitt, Angela.

**Mia**-----Wow, really.

**Miss Russell**-----Yes, really. After all, we are servants while we are here.

**Dylan**----(Trying her name on for size by sounding out each syllable) Jes...si...ca...I can handle that.

**Miss Russell**-----And, remember you are in Mr. Sutton's home. Be on your very best behavior. (They all shake their head affirmatively. They all answer sure or uh huh or shake their head yes.)

**Mia**-----Miss Russell, we're all a little nervous.

**Miss Russell**-----That's to be expected.

**Shelby**-----What if Mr. Sutton doesn't like us? What if he's not nice?

**Miss Russell**-----I'm sure he'll love everyone of you just like I do.

**Katie**-----He's nice, isn't he Miss Russell?

**Miss Russell**-----I'm sure he is and I'm sure his fiancée and friends are too.

**Sam**-----That's right. There will be other people here too.

**Mia**-----Oh,..... I wonder if they'll like us.

**Miss Russell**-----I'm sure everyone will love you all. After all what's not to love.

**Sam**----- (Looking at everyone)—Yeah, what's not to love?

**Dylan**-----Maybe, Katie. (Katie slaps at him while everyone laughs. Rubbing where she hit him, Dylan continues.) I was just kidding. Can't you take a joke.

**Katie**—(Retorts)—You are a joke. (Everyone simultaneously reacts with laughter and the doorbell rings.)

**Miss Russell**—(Loving reprimands them as she heads toward the kitchen.)—Best behavior remember. (The orphans nod their heads that they remember.)

(Bertram appears from the kitchen followed by Gladys, Susan, and Angela and stops Miss Russell's retreat to the kitchen. The women continue to follow him until he stops them and

lines them up with Gladys first, then Jessica, Susan and Angela. He then continues to the door. He opens the door to find Andrew Sutton and his fiancée with their luggage.)

**Bertram**----Good evening sir.

**Mr. Sutton**---(Mr. Sutton enters with his fiancée.) Merry Christmas Bertram

**Bertram**-----Merry Christmas Sir.

**Mr. Sutton**---Merry Christmas Gladys and everyone. May I introduce you all to my fiancée Lauren Davis. (All of the women nod and say “madam” in acknowledgment.)

**Bertram**----Very nice to meet you madam.

**Miss Davis**---( Entering with Mr. Sutton)---- Thank you. I have been so looking forward to meeting you. Andrew has told me so much about you.

**Bertram**----That’s very kind of you madam.

**Miss Davis**---(to Gladys)---And, this must be Gladys.

**Gladys**---(Flattered by her recognition)—Yes, mum. We are very glad to have you here. We have been looking forward to meeting you.

**Miss Davis**---And, I have been looking forward to meeting you. Andy constantly talks about what a good cook you are. I can’t wait to sample it.

**Gladys**-----Thank you mum.

**Miss Davis**---(to Jessica, Susan and Angela)---I’m afraid I didn’t know about you.

**Jessica**-----No, mum. We’re new. I’m Jessica. This is Susan and this is Angela.

**Miss Davis**---Oh, I see.

**Mr. Sutton**----- (Greeting Jessica, Susan and Angela) It’s very nice to meet you. Thanks for helping us during the holidays.

**Jessica, Susan and Angela**--- Thank you sir.

Mr. Sutton-----Bertram, two other guests will be arriving later this evening.

(Mr. Sutton and Miss Davis turns their attention to the orphans seated in the living room. Bertram motions to Gladys and the others to get the luggage. They exit to gather it and take it to the proper rooms.)

**Mr. Sutton**—(With genuine interest)--- And, who do we have here?

**Bertram**-----Sir, May I present to you, Katie, Mia, Shelby, Sam and Dylan.

**Mr. Sutton**---It's very nice to meet you all. I am very pleased that you could share my home this Christmas. I hope you'll make yourself at home while you are here.

**All of the Orphans**----Thank you.

**Mr. Sutton**---I was expecting Miss Russell to be with you.

**Mia**-----She is with us.

**Mr. Sutton**----She is...

**Katie**---(points at Miss Russell who is gathering luggage to take upstairs)----That's Miss Russell

**Miss Russell**----.(As she puts the suitcases down walks toward Mr. Sutton with her hand extended to shake his hand.)----Hello, Mr. Sutton, I'm Jessica Russell.

**Mr. Sutton**-----Nice to meet you.....(Shaking her hand as he looked at her servant's outfit.)...I wondered how you were able to guarantee the servants I needed.

**Miss Russell**---May I introduce to you my colleagues at the orphanage.....This is Susan Lawrence and this is Angela Prewitt.

**Mr. Sutton**-----Well, I can see that I'm in the presence of three dedicated women. Thank you.

**Miss Russell**---We all thank you for being so generous at Christmas. Dylan, Sam, Katie, Shelby and Mia appreciate it very much and so do we.

**Mr. Sutton**-----It's my pleasure. Miss Russell, Miss Lawrence and Miss Prewitt this is Lauren Davis, my fiancée. I'm sure that she appreciates your dedication too.

**Miss Davis**-----(Very unconvincingly)....Of course, I do.

**Bertram**-----Sir, dinner will be ready shortly. If you would like to freshen up before dinner, your rooms are ready.

**Miss Davis**-----Thank you Bertram that would be great.

**Mr. Sutton**------(to Lauren) Let me show you to your room madam.

**Miss Davis**-----Thank you kind sir.

(With his arm around Lauren, Andrew escorts her to her room. The orphans and the servants except for Bertram watch.)

**Katie**-----Wow, isn't he handsome. (All the girls, including the women agree.)

**Dylan**-----Isn't she beautiful?

**Sam**-----She certainly is! (Everyone agrees.)

**Mia**-----It's just like a fairy tale!

**Shelby**----And, we get to be a part of it.

**Katie**----- For a little while, we do.

**Jessica**--- They both seem very nice. This ought to be a wonderful Christmas for you.

**Katie**---(to Dylan)----I guess, you were worried about nothing.

**Bertram**—(to the ladies) Ladies, remember who you are...To the kitchen, we have a dinner to serve.

**Jessica**-----Yes, sir we do.

(All of the servants exit to the kitchen. The curtain closes.)

### Scene Three

(Dinner is over. Miss Davis, Mr. Sutton and the children enter.)

**Sam**-----That was the best food I've ever had.

**Dylan**----Me to!

**Miss Davis**----(Before Katie, Mia or Shelby could say anything.) Me three!  
(Everyone laughs at the way she chimes in.)

**Mr. Sutton**----Didn't I tell you that Gladys was the greatest cook in the world?

**Miss Davis**----Yes, you did.

**Katie**-----You were exactly right Mr. Sutton.

**Mr. Sutton**---Call me Andy please.

**Miss Davis**----And, call me Lauren.

**Andy**----Dylan, how old are you.

**Dylan**---Seventeen.

**Andy**---So, you've got about another year in high school.

**Dylan**---Yeah, about.

**Andy**----Then, what?

**Dylan**---Then, I'll get a job and move out on my own.

**Andy**----What about college?

**Dylan**----College is hard for orphans.

**Andy**----Hard?

**Dylan**----Money, besides I don't have the grades.

**Andy**----Surely, money would be available for someone in your situation if you wanted to go.

**Katie**----Not as much as you'd think.

**Lauren**---That's such a shame.

**Andy**----Look, if any of you want to go to college, I'm sure that I could help you find a way.

**Sam**----College....I'm just worried about tenth grade.

**Shelby**---You should be. You don't even try.

**Andy**----And, why is that?

**Sam**-----What's the use? Nobody cares.

**Mia**-----That's not true. Miss Russell cares.

**Shelby**----Miss Lawrence and Mrs. Prewitt care too.

**Sam**----I guess.

**Andy**---I'm sure that's right. They all three seem very dedicated to you. After all, they consented to be servants so you could be here for Christmas.

**Katie**----That's right. They did.

**Sam**-----I know, I just miss my dad.

**Andy**---Your dad?

**Sam**----Yeah, he left us at the orphanage a year ago.

**Lauren**----Left you at the orphanage.

**Sam**-----Yeah, after mom died and he lost his job and couldn't find another one. He decided to leave us at the orphanage.

**Andy**-----Us?

**Sam**-----Yeah, Shelby's my sister.

**Shelby**----Mr. Sutton, dad promised to come back to get us when things got better, but I guess, they didn't get better.

**Andy**-----What kind of work did your father do?

**Sam**-----He was a mechanist.

**Andy**-----Tool and die?

**Sam**-----Yes, sir.

**Andy**-----And, he couldn't get a job?

**Sam**-----No, sir. He tried for months.

**Shelby**----Dad, was so sad after mom died.

**Sam**-----Yeah, he started drinking after mom died. I think that's why he lost his job and why he couldn't find another one.

**Andy**-----Have you heard from him at all?

**Shelby**---(Very sadly)---No sir not a word.

**Andy**----(to Shelby)---You miss him too, don't you?

**Shelby**----(Shaking her head yes)---Uh huh.

(Doorbell rings. Bertram enters from the direction of the kitchen and answers the door. Andrew and Lauren's friends have arrived.)

**Bertram**-----Good evening.

**Jared Smith**---- (flanked by Rebecca Landry)----Hi, I believe Mr. Sutton is expecting us.

(Before Bertram can answer Andrew and Lauren rise and go to the door to greet them.)

**Andrew**-----So you finally made it. I bet traffic was terrible.

**Jared**-----You know it.

**Rebecca**----We crawled along until we got out of New York City and made it fine until Newark.

**Jared**----(Taking off his coat and handing it to Bertram)----But, once we left Newark, we made good time.

**Andrew**---We're just glad to have you here for Christmas.

**Lauren**—(to Rebecca)---How was the shopping in New York?

**Rebecca**---(Taking off her coat and handing it to Bertram)---It was great.

(After Bertram hangs the coats in the closet, he goes to the kitchen.)

**Lauren**-----You'll have to show me all the things you bought.

**Rebecca**---- (joking, but sounds serious) I couldn't do that.

**Lauren**--- (puzzled) And, why not?

(Jessica and Susan enter to take Jared and Rebecca's luggage to their rooms. While they are gathering up the bags, they hear the conversation. Jared notices Jessica's attractiveness.)

**Rebecca**---- (chuckling) A couple are gifts for you and Andrew for Christmas.

**Lauren**---- (As she takes Andrew's hand, she, and Andrew smile) Oh, I see. (Teasingly)--Well, I hope you got me something very expensive.

**Rebecca**----You know it. I was spending Jared's money. (Jared darts a look in Rebecca's direction)---(to Jared as she takes him by the arm.)—I was just kidding.

**Jared**-----Yeah, I bet you were.

**Rebecca**----How about that, a fiancée who begrudges his wife to be a little extravagant (Jared looks at her again with a look of displeasure at the statement.) I bet you don't have that kind of problem with Andy, do you?

**Lauren**----- (With Andrew's arm around her, Lauren looks up at him.)-----No, I don't. Andy is the most generous man I know.

**Jared**----- (to Andrew)-----Way to go Andy. Make the rest of us guys look bad.

**Rebecca**---- (to Jared)-----I'm not sure you need any help in that department.

**Jared**----- (to Rebecca) Nice one.

**Andy**---- (changing the subject)-----Jared, Rebecca may I introduce you to my other guests for Christmas. This is Katie, Shelby, Mia, Sam and Dylan.(the orphans respond politely as their names are called.)

**Jared and Rebecca**----It's very nice to meet you.

**Andy**----You two haven't eaten, have you?

**Rebecca**----No, we haven't. I tried to get Jared to stop, but no, why pay for a meal when there's a free one waiting.

**Jared**-----I knew that Andy would have dinner for us, besides I have to save up to help pay for that extravagant wedding and honeymoon you want.

**Rebecca**----Well, sorry! I can't help it if my parents aren't loaded like yours.

**Jared**-----The way you spend money, they won't be for long.

**Andy**--- (trying to defuse the situation and looking to Lauren for help.) I figured you would not stop to eat.

**Lauren**----- (jumps in) I bet you are starving.

**Andy**-----I had Gladys save you some dinner. I'll let her know that you are here. Lauren, would you please show them to the dining room?

**Lauren**----Sure, follow me you two.

(Andrew exits to the kitchen and Lauren, Jared and Rebecca exit to the dining room.)

**Katie**---Wow, can you say cut the tension with a knife?

**Dylan**----Boy, I can't imagine those two getting married.

**Shelby**---They sure don't seem to be as nice as Andy and Lauren, do they.

**Everyone else** ---Uh huh! (Jessica enters with a plate of cookies and overhears Mia's next comment.)

**Mia**----I couldn't imagine Andy or Lauren ever being like that. They are so nice and so much in love.

**Jessica**---What are you kids discussing so intently?

**Sam**-----About how Andy and Lauren are a lot nicer than Rebecca and Jared. (Making fun) and how much they love each other.

**Katie**----- (to Sam)----Don't act so childish!

**Jessica**---- Remember best behavior....besides, you don't know Rebecca and Jared.

**Dylan**-----I know they don't seem to like each other, much less love each other.

**Jessica**-----I'm sure that's not true....Sometimes first impressions are wrong.

**Dylan**-----And, sometimes they're not.

**Jessica**-----But, you could give them the benefit of the doubt. You wouldn't want them to judge you on a first impression.

**Katie**-----Okay, we'll give them the benefit of the doubt. (Everyone agrees.)

**Mia**-----Jessica, do you think it will be all right if we go upstairs and watch television.

**Katie**----Andy said to make ourselves at home.

**Jessica**----If that's what he said, I am sure it would be fine for you to go watch TV in your rooms.

(As they rise from their chairs to go to their bedrooms to watch TV, Andy comes back.)

**Andy**-----What's up?"

**Dylan**-----We're going to go to our rooms and watch TV until bedtime.

**Andy**----That's cool. How would you all like to go horseback riding in the morning?

(Everyone looks at him in disbelief and respond with a wow.)

**Sam**-----Really!

**Katie**-----Could we?

**Andy**-----Sure, I'm sure the horses would appreciate the exercise.

**Dylan**-----Horses? Where are they?

**Andy**-----They are at the stables just down the road.

**Sam**-----Do you think they have enough horses for all of us?

**Andy**-----Sure, I do!

**Mia and Shelby**---You mean they're your horses.

**Andy**----Yep!

**Everyone**----Sure!

**Andy**----Well, we'll take them out after breakfast tomorrow. Okay?

**Everyone**----Yeah.

**Andy**----I'll see you in the morning. (All the children say goodnight to Jessica and Andy. Jessica turns to leave.)...Jessica, could I talk to you for a minute?

**Jessica**----Yes, sir.

**Andy**----Please drop the **sir** business.

**Jessica**----But, I'm a servant.

**Andy**-----Not really. You're a nice young woman pretending to be a servant.

**Jessica**----Thank you, sir. (Andy gives her a look of disapproval for the sir. She realizes what she has said.) Thank you.

**Andy**----What I wanted to talk to you about was Sam and Shelby's father? I understand that he left them in the care of the orphanage about a year ago.

**Jessica**----Yes, that's right. It was right after I came to the orphanage.

**Andy**----And, you haven't had any contact with him in a year.

**Jessica**----None. Since he had led us to believe that he would return to get them in about six months, and he didn't, I personally tried to locate him, but had no luck.

**Andy**-----Is he from Ellendale?

**Jessica**----Carson. I couldn't find anyone who seemed to know what had become of him. He lost his house after he lost his wife and his job.

**Andy**-----The kids said that he drinks.

**Jessica**-----Yes, he had a drinking problem when he brought them to us. That's one reason that he brought them to the orphanage, he knew he needed treatment and would not be able to care for them.

**Andy**----Did you check with the local treatment centers?

**Jessica**----Yes, I did. He had tried to get treatment from one of them, but he had no money so they turned him down. After that, he vanished. I didn't tell Sam and Shelby what I found out I just couldn't.

**Andy**----I think I'll try to find him. Maybe, I can put some of my parent's money to good use.

**Jessica**----Really? You'd do that for Sam and Shelby.

**Andy**----Sure, I would.

**Jessica**----I can't believe how generous and compassionate you are, Mr. Sutton.

**Andy**----I am no more generous and compassionate than you. I'm only trying to do what you tried to do. Maybe, I'll be successful and maybe, I can reunite Sam and Shelby with their dad.

**Jessica**---That would be wonderful. I don't know how to thank you. (Susan and Angela enter from the kitchen and over hear the last part of the conversation.)

**Andy**----There is no need for thanks. Why don't you go riding with the kids and me tomorrow?

**Jessica**----But I'm a servant.

**Andy**----Not, tomorrow. Not if you don't want to be.

**Jessica**----I don't know. What will Bertram say?

**Andy**----Bertram!

**Jessica**----He's strict about this servant thing.

**Andy**----That's not a problem. You're forgetting that I am the boss and I insist that you join us.

**Jessica**----Okay, but I'm still not sure about this.

**Andy**----I am. (As he starts to leave) I guess, I'd better get back to Lauren and our guests.

(Once he leaves, Susan and Angela approach.)

**Susan**----Way to go Jessica!

**Jessica**----What!

**Susan**-----I think Mr. Andrew Sutton is rather taken with you.

**Jessica**----What!

**Angela**-----I think so too.

**Jessica**-----And, you think that because?

**Susan**-----He invited you to go riding tomorrow.

**Jessica**-----There will be other people.

**Angela**-----We saw the way he was looking at you all night.

**Jessica**-----And, what way was that?

**Susan**-----Like a small boy admiring a much-wanted lollipop.

**Jessica**-----Nonsense, the boy already has a lollipop named Lauren.

**Susan**-----Sometimes, boys throw the old lollipops away for new ones.

**Jessica**-----You, two are so wrong. (Immediately after this statement, Andy comes in. Susan and Angela move away where Jessica can see them, but Andy can't. They have expressions of "I told you so" while Andy is talking to Jessica.)

**Andy**-----I'd like to tell you again, how glad I am that you and the kids could be here for the holidays.

**Jessica**-----Thanks.

(Andy leaves and Susan and Angela sing the song Lollipop to Jessica as the curtain closes.)

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