

DIM ALL THE LIGHTS by Angela Wilson

A comedy with drama.

Synopsis:

ACT ONE:

It's three weeks before Christmas, and ANGIE, a single mom with no Christmas money and even less Christmas spirit, visits her smarmy musician "friend", CHARLIE, at his job in the Holiday Inn karaoke lounge. He has a Christmas "job" for her—a date with the most wonderful guy she'll ever meet.

His name is CHRIS AMBER and he needs a girlfriend for Christmas. He needs a girlfriend to show off to his ex-wife, Jackie, who calls only once a year, on Christmas Day, to lord it over him.

Angie is NOT interested.

A few hours later, however, she has changed her mind, because someone else has offered her the same job to date the same man. And the job pays a lot of money.

The date is on. But shortly after meeting Chris it is obvious why someone has to be paid to go out with him. He wears a colostomy bag and bleeds like a stigmata, can't control his language and falls in love at first sight. Oh, yeah, he's also bipolar and he can't get it up anymore. Oh yeah, and he reads backwards and his mother has to drive him everywhere. Oh yeah, and it's his last Christmas. He's dying of cancer and has three weeks to live. Still, Angie is intrigued because Chris Amber plans to love her, tell her every lie she ever wanted to hear, and he's perfectly harmless. She can't lose. Angie and Chris plan for the second date.

ACT TWO:

It's now the day before Christmas Eve. In Scene One, we meet Chris' sloppy drunk, disapproving, controlling, promiscuous mother, CHRISTINE. Angie is NOT what Chris needs at this late hour, according to Christine. In fact, she is concerned about the continuing relationship. Chris is starting to show fast signs of decline, is in pain, can't control his impulses and refuses to focus on the important issue at hand- getting a legitimate divorce from his ex-wife, Jackie, who stands to inherit a great sum of money upon Chris's death- money that Christine thinks rightfully belongs to her. Angie is also concerned about her growing feelings for Chris. If he really is a short timer (because surely he's *not really* dying) she generally likes to date someone longer than that. Her feelings are even more challenged when Chris gives her a check in the amount of \$250,000 for Christmas, telling her to wait until he dies to cash it. Knowing this will upset Christine, Chris gives Angie a check to give to Christine as well, preferring not to give it to her himself. Christine's greed is boundless and she doesn't hide it in spite of the situation. Chris hopes she will feel remorse for her behavior after he dies. A nasty scene ensues

in the bar, and Angie lets slide that Chris has written her a \$250,000 check. Christine brutally slaps Chris in retaliation.

SCENE TWO:

Christmas Eve. Angie, Christine, Chris and Charlie wait for Jackie's call. They have plenty of time to bicker. . Chris tries to have a real Christmas, one with reminiscing and sentiment, a Christmas where you forget the bad parts of life. Angie finds herself more and more in love with Chris. When Jackie finally calls, Chris reveals that he considers himself lucky to have loved her, to now love Angie, and to have a family in Christine and Charlie. With all the talk of money, Chris has to ask if there is anyone who really loves him. He never finds out. Their bickering ends when Chris collapses.

SCENE THREE:

Christmas Day. Christine and Angie are together after a terrible night at the hospital. They have brought Chris home. Christine hopes for another chance to convince Jackie to divorce Chris. The bickering starts up again, only this time Christine asserts her rights as "family" and orders Angie to leave, that she doesn't belong.. Angie tears up one of the checks, insisting that she doesn't want money, she wants love. Upon second thought, Angie tears up the second check, reiterating that "we all love Chris, right?" Christine, realizing that one of the check was hers, is devastated.

That night, Chris flies away. The next morning, Angie returns with a Christmas tree, to light in Chris's memory. Charlie, Angie and Christine light the Christmas tree the way Chris likes it, and without money and greed to strangle the goodness, a gesture is made toward reconciliation, as if they are family.

Cast of Characters:

2M

Chris Amber: early thirties

Charlie Keenan: early thirties

3F

Angie Alonso: thirties or forties

Christine Amber: fifties

Tina: twenties

Time and Setting: Act One: three weeks before Christmas. A bar.

Act Two: Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, at the Amber's

The Playwright is a Member of The Dramatists Guild, Inc.

Dim All The Lights

Angela Wilson

a play in two acts

Act One

SCENE ONE

AT RISE: CHARLIE KEENAN delivers a pre-show performance, one song that ingratiates him with his audience, in the superficial way that lounge singers ingratiate themselves. ANGIE enters.

ANGIE

You got a Christmas job for me, eh? Thank God you called. I'm desperate! What is it?

CHARLIE

He's the most wonderful guy you'll ever meet.

ANGIE

Oh no.

CHARLIE

And it's very simple. He really wants to have a girlfriend for Christmas this year.

ANGIE

Please no.

CHARLIE

Just so's when his ex-wife, Jackie, the whore, calls, he can tell her, hey, Jackie, you whore, not interested, I have a girlfriend. Merry Christmas and go screw yourself. Will you do it? I know you need the extra money.