

## Spirit Level Information

Roles and their description in the text:

<b>Jack Cameron</b>	– An attractive middle aged man.
<b>Susie Cameron</b>	– His wife, slightly younger than Jack and has an air of sophistication.
<b>Mark Webster</b>	– Middle aged to elderly, pompous and pedantic. He is a leasing agent for the property.
<b>Simon Willis -</b>	
<b>Flic Willis</b>	- (Simon's wife). They are young, eager and casually dressed but their clothes are more department store than designer.
<b>Marcia Bradshaw</b>	- (Flic's mother). A difficult and forbidding woman and a terrible snob.
<b>Guardian Angel</b>	– Middle aged female, dressed in tweedy old clothes.

## About the play/story:

Jack and Susie Cameron are spirits who have returned to the country cottage where they once lived. This is because they were refused entry into heaven – Jack is an atheist.

In life Jack was a famous crime writer and Susie his sophisticated wife. In death they have been quite bored scaring off the estate agent and prospective tenants.

Until Simon and Flic come along. Simon is an aspiring crime writer himself and idolises Jack Cameron and Susie loves the idea that Flic is pregnant. Flic's monstrous mother, Marcia, is doing her best to separate them. Simon gets writer's block, so Susie draws Jack in to helping him – so Jack and Susie become drawn in to Simon and Flic's lives.

Nothing works so Susie calls down her guardian angel, who, much to her surprise, actually show up! But she is nothing like the angelic figure we would expect.

But she does show Jack and Susie a rather unorthodox way to help Simon with his writing which also ends up producing some hilarious scenes of utter confusion.

The plays crescendos to Christmas arriving with a snow storm and a baby and some nice twists at the end.

This is an entertaining comedy that audiences should enjoy from the opening moments without working too hard.

The dialogue is clever and fast paced and the audience is listening to multiple conversation through much of the play. So there is no time to rest.

The two couples have much of the workload, particularly Jack and Susie who are on stage most of the play.

But all of the roles are interesting and memorable.

### **Audition Date and time**

Monday 19 April at 7:30 pm at The Peninsula Theatre, Woy Woy

Auditions are open sessions and there is no need to book. However, any questions are welcome to [graham.vale@westnet.com.au](mailto:graham.vale@westnet.com.au)

### **Rehearsals and Performances**

Rehearsals commence in the foyer on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30 pm (Tuesday and Thursday)

They will continue in the theatre after bump out of Ladies in Lavender (1<sup>st</sup> June).

Performances open on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> August and conclude on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

### **Audition Pieces follow**

SUSIE Under the circumstances I do think you could make a bit of an effort to entertain me.

JACK What would you like? A bouncy castle in the garden?

SUSIE *(going to the French windows)* I have this permanent feeling that I'm in quarantine.

JACK You chose to come here. The world was your oyster.

SUSIE What does that expression mean? It doesn't make sense. 'Here's a million pounds. Where do you want to go?' 'Oh, please, can I go to an oyster?'

JACK It's metaphorical.

SUSIE Meta what?

JACK Metaphorical. A figure of speech. A word is transferred from one object to another to imply comparison.

SUSIE So what does an oyster compare with?

JACK *(opening his eyes and sitting up)* Any bloody thing you want it to. Why can women never understand that when a man has his eyes closed it means he doesn't want to listen to endless prattle.

SUSIE Prattle? Prattle? That's a bit archaic, isn't it?

JACK I like archaic words, *(He thinks.)* Prattle . . . Shenanigans . . . Bosoms . . .

SUSIE Bosoms?

JACK *(quoting)* 'The breast of a human being, especially of a woman'.

SUSIE I know what they are. Jack, I've got two of them. Standard issue.

*(She looks through the French windows and sees something.)*

SUSIE Oh no!

JACK What?

SUSIE Look!

*(JACK goes to the window.)*

JACK Where?

SUSIE *(pointing)* In the fruit trees. See?

JACK Oh . . . this really is too much.

SUSIE Well, it has been three weeks since –

*(She listens.)*

There's someone at the front door.

*(JACK goes to the doorway right and looks out.)*

JACK Oh, we are honoured. The boss man himself.

FLIC We're here to look at the cottage.

JACK Philistine . . .

SIMON He's signed it! He has actually signed it!

SUSIE He's signed them all, darling.

MARK Well . . . as a matter of fact . . . Cobbler's Cottage was owned by Jack Cameron.

SIMON Oh my God . . . Oh my God. You mean he . . . sat in this room . . . looked out of that window . . . climbed those stairs . . .

JACK Shall we stop at the bathroom door?

*(SIMON collapses onto the sofa.)*

MARK *(warming to his theme)* This was his country retreat – his hideaway – the place where he wrote all his books.

SIMON Wow . . .

FLIC Did he live alone?

SUSIE No.

MARK No, no, he lived here with his wife. Susie, a most charming lady . . .

SUSIE Ah . . .

SIMON Did you know them?

MARK Intimately.

JACK Watch his nose grow.

MARK Oh yes, I've spent many a happy evening in their company. Dinners . . . parties . . . summer soirées . . .

*(He goes to the French windows and looks out. With the air of one who has lost great friends.)*

JACK One dinner when he bored for England, goosed you, and finished my cognac.

MARK You know how they died, of course.

SIMON They drowned, didn't they?

MARK Yes. It was . . . tragic.

FLIC What happened?

*(FLIC and SUSIE both go to sit in the armchair, FLIC gets there first. SUSIE sits on the arm.)*

MARK They were holidaying in the Italian Lakes and apparently they decided to hire a boat and row to the far side of the lake for a picnic. Sadly –

SUSIE Very sadly, actually.

MARK – there was some kind of accident. What exactly happened we'll never know. Maybe a sudden squall – maybe one of them leaned over too far –

*(He pauses. Enjoying the drama. SIMON and FLIC imagine the happening.)*



## MARK, Jack and Susie, Flic and Simon

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ACT ONE

SUSIE Or maybe one of them tried to chill the Chianti and fell in.

JACK And his idiot wife tried to save him and drowned them both.

MARK That night, when they didn't return for dinner, a search party went out to look for them. The boat was found drifting and their bodies –

SUSIE I hate this bit.

MARK Their bodies were washed up some days later.

FLIC Ugh. Fishes eat bodies, don't they?

JACK / SUSIE (*bitterly*) Yes.

SIMON What a waste . . . all that talent . . .

SUSIE And my Versace dress.

FLIC But in a way, you know, dying together. It's very romantic,

JACK Is she mad?

FLIC (*to SIMON*) I hope something like that happens to us.

SUSIE Yes, she is.

SUSIE All women cry at weddings. It's tradition.

FLIC She was missing Daddy.

SIMON She was wishing you'd married that nerd with the Porsche.

FLIC Ferrari, and William is not a nerd.

SIMON Any man who sniffs the wine cork is a nerd. She thinks – and makes it perfectly obvious – that I am not and never will be good enough for you.

JACK I wouldn't argue with that . . .

SIMON But for your sake I will be polite.

FLIC Thank you.

SIMON For as long as I can.  
(*He kisses her.*)  
You smell nice.

FLIC Miss Dior. Oh, that reminds me, have you been moving things around on my dressing table?  
(*JACK looks at SUSIE.*)

SIMON Yes, I was looking for the nail scissors.

(*SUSIE looks at JACK.*)

FLIC And did you get the bank statements out of the drawer?

SIMON Probably.

FLIC And did you put my blue dress on the –

SIMON Flic, Flic, listen to me –  
(*He takes the tray puts it down and holds her hands.*)  
– the only people who live here are us. Okay?

FLIC What do you mean?

SIMON You know what I mean.

FLIC It's just that sometimes I feel . . .

SIMON You don't feel anything. You *hope* that Jack and what's-her-name Cameron are floating around watching us. Which I find very spooky and will you please stop.  
(*JACK and SUSIE stand either side of them.*)

FLIC Susie. Her name is Susie, (*Pause.*) Do you think they're happy?

SIMON I don't know? You were the one who went to Sunday school. What did they hand out about heaven?

FLIC Perfect happiness.

SIMON They're you go then. They're perfectly happy.

MARCIA Come home. You know your room is always there waiting for you.

FLIC *(amused)* What about Simon?

MARCIA *(dismissively)* Oh, him too I suppose. Please do. Felicity. It's a very lonely house without you. And Daddy.

*(She takes a hankie and dabs her eyes. SUSIE pretends to be sick. FLIC goes to MARCIA and sits on the arm of the chair.)*

FLIC Oh, please, Mummy.

SUSIE Yes. Please, Mummy.

FLIC It has been three years. *(She hesitates.)* Don't you think after all this time you should be . . . moving on?

MARCIA Moving on? How can I possibly move on? He's always with me. He's here now.

*(JACK and SUSIE look round.)*

Sometimes I think I can hear him talking to me.

JACK Come on, Daddy, now's your chance.

MARCIA Thirty years . . .

JACK With her? Poor sod,

*(SIMON enters through the French windows. Sees MARCIA. Braces himself.)*

SIMON Marcia.



MARCIA *(offering a cheek which he gingerly kisses)*  
Simon. Are you well?

SIMON Very well, thank you.

MARCIA Any sign of regular –

FLIC *(swiftly)* Isn't it exciting that a famous author once lived here?

MARCIA Yes . . . Odd that he chose to live in such humble surroundings.

SUSIE Tell her about the London flat! Tell her!

SIMON This was his country hideaway.

MARCIA Hideaway is right. Impossible to find and then that rutted cart track.

JACK To keep people like you away, love.

MARCIA And you say they drowned?

FLIC Yes, so sad.

MARCIA What I don't understand is how they could be so foolish as to go out in a boat without taking full safety precautions.

SUSIE We didn't know the Italian for life jacket.

MARCIA So tell me, Simon –

FLIC *(swiftly)* Why don't I go and make the tea?

SIMON Or would you rather have a drink?

MARCIA It's a little early for me, but please – if you feel the need.

SIMON I didn't. But I do now.

*(He goes to the drinks tray. MARCIA gives him a chilling look.)*

SIMON *(holding up a bottle)* Flic?

MARCIA Felicity is pregnant.

SIMON I know. I was there when it happened.

FLIC *(eager to change the mood)* How's the garden, Mummy?

MARCIA Missing Daddy dreadfully.

SIMON *(raising his glass and drinking)* Cheers!

JACK Boy's got guts . . .

FLIC Is old Ben still helping you?

MARCIA When sober. I think I would like some tea, dear.

FLIC Oh, right. I'll . . . I'll just put the kettle on.

*(She moves right and gives an anxious look back. SIMON and MARCIA smile sweetly at her. She exits right.)*

MARCIA So tell me, Simon, what news on the job front? Any sign of regular employment?

SIMON I have regular employment, Marcia. You know that.

MARCIA I meant paid employment.

SIMON Ah. Well, I've applied for a paper round.



*(The ANGEL puts her spectacles on and smiles at them.)*

ANGEL That's better. Which of you called me out?

SUSIE *(astounded)* Can you . . . see us?

ANGEL Of course I can. *(She gives JACK a piercing look.)* Only too clearly.

*(Susie remembers her earlier call to her Guardian Angel.)*

SUSIE Oh! Are you my Guardian Angel?

ANGEL It was you, was it? Sorry about the delay but since the cutbacks the old days of one to one are over and I was in the middle of a case conference when you called. What a nice outfit. Silly me, I went a complete blank when I had to choose Why did I pick tweed? You know how it seats.

SUSIE Well, that depends, if you have a good lining you can –

JACK Excuse me – you're a Guardian Angel?

ANGEL I certainly am. *(Looking in her bag.)* I've got a badge somewhere . . .

JACK *(amused)* And you were at a . . . case conference?

ANGEL Yes. And if you find it amusing I assure you I do not. We had a sudden influx – deluge – of social workers. Flaunting their degrees – all from polytechnics – and uttering the most dreadful vowel sounds. Since when it's been a nightmare. All they do is set

up workshops in political correctness and talk about hidden agendas. At the moment they're trying to negotiate a good behaviour contract with Rasputin, who's loving the attention and blaming his mother.

JACK                Rasputin? In heaven?

ANGEL              Rule number 9532861. Never judge a book by its cover.

SUSIE               Am I allowed to ask what you do – did? When you were . . .

ANGEL              Alive? Ah, I taught stinks and bilge at Saint Cedd's. I'd still be there now if I hadn't lost my concentration, lit the bunsen burner and –

*(A phone rings.)*

Excuse me.

*(She takes a gold mobile phone from her bag and speaks into it.)*

Yes? . . . What? . . . Where? . . . No, I can't I'm in –

*(She speaks to JACK.)*

Where am I?

JACK                Err . . . Hampshire.

ANGEL              Thank you. *(Into the mobile.)* Hampshire, and there's no way I can get to Glamorgan tonight. I'll hit the rush hour . . . What's the problem? . . . Oh, send that girl with purple hair and the ring in her navel. She thrives on domestic violence.

*(She puts the mobile phone away.)*

Go here, go there, never a please or thank you. That's told them.

JACK                Rush hour? No feathery clouds and shafts of sunlight.

ANGEL              Once upon a time, yes. Pleasant float down and maybe wave to the odd angel on the way. These days – well, if I hadn't grabbed onto a meteor I'd still be up there. Now, you called me down so what do you want? Quick as you can, dear.

SUSIE               *(hesitantly)* I'm awfully sorry but actually I called you down for fun.

ANGEL              *(outraged)* Fun? Fun? My in-tray's overflowing, my pending file is bursting at the seams and you call me down for fun? Oh, really, I must get to Glamorgan.

*(She gets her mobile phone out of the bag.)*

SUSIE               Oh please! I know it was silly of me –

ANGEL              *(tapping in a number)* Very silly. Remember the boy who cried wolf?

SUSIE               But since I called you there's been a bit of an emergency and –

ANGEL              *(in mid-tap)* Emergency?

SUSIE               Yes, you see what's happened – the young couple who live here – she's trying to write a book and he's expecting a baby – no, other way round. And his mother – no, sorry, – her mother is being absolutely –