

THE ANGEL

A play with eight scenes

Marissa I. Galvan Valle

For Papo and for my Guardian Angel

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Author's Signature:

Marissa Ileana Galván Valle Figueroa Carlo

Characters: (In order of appearance.)

1. Christina
2. Gabriella
3. Policeman
4. Doctor
5. Magdalene
6. 5 mimes

FIRST ACT

The scene begins at a window on the fourth floor of an old, weathered building. Christina walks past the window, hesitates, and returns. She gazes outside, her expression clouded with thought. Slowly, she unfastens the creaky window and pushes it open. A gust of wind rushes in, ruffling her hair and carrying faint city sounds. Christina closes her eyes, letting the breeze wash over her face. A haunting melody begins to play in her mind—a song of a love that left her shattered, a love she can't seem to live without. Her lips quiver, her hands tightening on the window frame as she shakes her head, trying to dismiss the music. But it grows louder, relentless.

She opens her eyes and steps onto the ledge, her movements deliberate yet trembling. The height overwhelms her, and she leans back against the wall, her breath ragged. The song surges in her head now, the words echoing like a cruel mantra. Tears spill down her cheeks as she steps forward again, teetering on the edge, arms outstretched. Just as she takes a breath, preparing to leap, a soft, almost luminous figure of a girl in white emerges beside her. The girl's voice, gentle yet commanding, slices through the cacophony of Christina's despair.

GABRIELLA

I've always liked high floors. On hot days, I love sticking my head out the window to feel the breeze. It's so refreshing.

CHRISTINA

What are you doing here?

GABRIELLA

The same as you—just looking at the view. The world looks so much better when you take it in without a frame around it... Don't you think?

CHRISTINA

I don't know. I'm not here for the view.

GABRIELLA

Then you must be feeling warm.

CHRISTINA

No.

GABRIELLA

Then why are you—?

CHRISTINA

Look, if someone sent you here to try and stop me, they're wasting their time.

GABRIELLA

Stop you? From what? I'm just here enjoying the breeze too.

CHRISTINA

I'm not enjoying anything!

GABRIELLA

No?

CHRISTINA

No! I just want to jump in peace.

GABRIELLA

Jump? Is that what you're planning to do?

CHRISTINA

This is the last thing I need to complete the reasons why I'm doing this. If you're going to try to convince me otherwise, I'd prefer you just be direct. I'm tired of my mother's passive-aggressive psychology.

GABRIELLA

And why do you want to jump?

CHRISTINA

Thank you. That's better. *(Pause)*

GABRIELLA

Are you going to answer me?

CHRISTINA

No. I'd like this to remain a private moment, if you don't mind.

GABRIELLA

Then I hope you left a note or something...

CHRISTINA

A note?

GABRIELLA

Yes, to let people know why you're doing this—or where you're going. That's what people usually do.

CHRISTINA

Ah, so you prefer the classic approach?

GABRIELLA

Not really. I just think it's important to leave things clear before we go up there... or down there. That's what the Lord wants.

CHRISTINA

I don't think the Lord—or anyone else—cares about my reasons. So, please, leave me alone. If you stay here, there's a good chance you won't get to finish explaining why the "Lord" doesn't approve. And I'd much rather end up buried in the ground.

GABRIELLA

I wasn't going to explain anything. That's not our job. What we're here to do is talk about consequences... and hope.

(A policeman sticks his head out of the window and screams to someone who is inside.)

POLICEMAN

Here they are! *(To them)* Stay where you are! We'll get help!

CHRISTINA

Oh no... Well, I guess my private moment is about to be the headline on the 6:00 news.

GABRIELLA

Let's talk about the consequences...

CHRISTINA

I don't want to talk about consequences! I've thought about them already, and I know the best thing I can do is disappear from this world.

GABRIELLA

But where there's life, there's hope.

CHRISTINA

Oh, come on, don't give me that nonsense. I've heard it all before—about love, about how beautiful life is. And you know what? It's all a lie. People don't love unconditionally. They don't care if you live, die, or just stop existing. Every word of it is a lie.

GABRIELLA

If that's true, if love isn't unconditional, then why am I here? I don't know you, but I saw you standing here, and I thought... maybe this person needs some company. So I came. And just so you know, I don't have wings. If I fall, I'll hit the ground like anyone else. I just don't want you to make a mistake—one you can't take back.

CHRISTINA: *(Tearing up)*

You... you're just like everyone else. You just want to be on the news, to be a hero. You don't actually care about me! How dare you say otherwise?

GABRIELLA

If I wanted to be a hero, I'd have a rope tied around my waist, or there'd be firemen down there with safety nets. Trust me, I don't want to be remembered as the idiot who died trying to rescue someone. (*Glancing down*) By the way, there they are now! Hi!

CHRISTINA

Oh God, no, no, no! This isn't what I wanted. I just wanted to be left alone, that's all. (*She begins crying. Gabriella approaches her and gently strokes her hair. Christina flinches at first but eventually relaxes.*) It's been a long time since someone did that. My father used to stroke my hair when he thought I was sad... but he died too young. (*Pause*) Do you want to know why I'm here today? I'm in love. And he doesn't love me anymore.

I was with him for two years. At first, I couldn't believe it. I kept asking myself, "Why is he with me? Why would someone like him want to be with someone like me?" It was perfect. I finally escaped my mother's house, and he made me feel supported, loved. It was... beautiful. But last night, he told me he wanted to get back with his ex-girlfriend.

Now I have to go back to my mother's house because I have no money. And I can already hear her yelling, lecturing me about what I should've done differently. I can't stand it. I know it's stupid. There are bigger problems in the world, but I'm so tired of being humiliated. I just want peace. And all I have left are empty memories and bitter words. I don't want it anymore. I can't do it anymore.

GABRIELLA

You know... you're very poetic.

CHRISTINA: (*Surprised, then laughing*)
Really? I didn't know that. Thanks for telling me.

GABRIELLA

Don't you have any friends?

CHRISTINA

I do... but they're also his friends. And now that I think about it, they're more like casual acquaintances from college. My mother always says I'm shy. And it's true—I'm reserved, introverted. I don't like sharing my problems with anyone. Honestly, I hate it when people do that.

GABRIELLA: (*Smiling*)
Well... I guess that's changing.

CHRISTINA: (*Laughing*)
You're right. I guess I needed someone to talk to.

GABRIELLA

I understand. But there's no need to throw yourself out of a window just to talk. If you need to, you can talk to me anytime. I'm easy to find.

CHRISTINA

Easy? Nothing about this is easy.

GABRIELLA

It never is. But that's the fun of life. You take each problem and look for solutions. Do you like math?

CHRISTINA

I'm studying engineering. Does that count?

GABRIELLA

You're an expert! All you have to do is apply the theory to your everyday life.

CHRISTINA

You know... you have a very peculiar way of looking at life.

GABRIELLA

We all do. It's part of the job description.

CHRISTINA: *(Hesitant)*

And who are you?

GABRIELLA:

I'm an angel.

(The policeman returns with a doctor.)

DOCTOR

Gabriella, dear, could you come back inside, please? Remember, you haven't earned your wings yet!

GABRIELLA

Shhhhh! I know, I know... but did you have to say that in front of everyone? *(Pauses, turning to Christina)* By the way, what's your name?

CHRISTINA

Christina.

DOCTOR

It's fine to chat, but let's keep the conversations inside the building, okay?

GABRIELLA

It's just that I was feeling warm, and Christina was kind enough to join me.

DOCTOR

That's fine, but it's time to come back in now. Remember, there's a time for everything.

GABRIELLA: *(To Christina)*

He likes to think he's in charge, and I let him believe it—it keeps him happy. *(To the Doctor)* Coming! *(Turns back to Christina)* So... are we going in together?

CHRISTINA

(Keeps looking at her for a few moments) Okay.

(Christina steps inside first, followed by Gabriella. The doctor gently takes Gabriella by the hand and leads her away. Gabriella waves goodbye as Christina watches. The policeman approaches Christina.)

POLICEMAN

Thank you for staying with her until the doctor arrived.

CHRISTINA

Who is she?

POLICEMAN

She's a mental health patient. She was with a group touring the campus when she wandered off. The doctor says she believes she's an angel and has a fascination with tall buildings. When I looked up and saw you, I figured she must be here.

CHRISTINA

But... it was me.

POLICEMAN

I imagine you have a lot of questions. There are reporters downstairs waiting for you.

CHRISTINA

What? No! I don't want to talk to anyone. This was all a mistake—I just need to leave. Is there a way to get out without anyone seeing me?

POLICEMAN

I think those stairs lead outside, but miss... you shouldn't be so modest about this.

CHRISTINA

I'm not being modest, trust me. I just want some peace. *(Starts to walk away, then pauses.)* Do you know where they've taken her—the patient?

POLICEMAN

I believe she's at the city psychiatric ward.

CHRISTINA

Thank you. *(She steps out, and the policeman watches her leave in amazement.)*

POLICEMAN

There really are still good people in this world. (*Lights out.*)

SECOND ACT

(Kitchen in Christina's house. Magdalene is reading the newspaper. Christina enters, looking tired, as if she hasn't slept.)

MAGDALENE

You look tired. Didn't you sleep? People are supposed to wake up refreshed, but you... well, you've always been special, haven't you?

(Christina sits down and starts eating cereal.)

Not feeling chatty today, I see. I guess that happens when people become famous.

CHRISTINA

What are you talking about?

MAGDALENE

Your picture in the paper. *(Reads the headline.)* "Magdalene Santos' daughter saves mental health patient." You should've given an interview.

(Christina takes the newspaper from her hands.)

Maybe I could interview you for my podcast. I didn't know you had heroic tendencies.

CHRISTINA

I don't.

MAGDALENE

Then, if you don't mind me asking, what were you doing on the fourth floor of that building?

CHRISTINA: *(Without looking up from the newspaper.)*

I wanted to jump.

MAGDALENE: *(Sipping coffee.)*

I see fame hasn't taken away your sense of humor.

CHRISTINA

And I see you still don't take me seriously.

MAGDALENE

Well, it's easier to treat this as a joke. The alternative is too alarming.

CHRISTINA

That I wanted to kill myself? Then, yes, you should be alarmed.

MAGDALENE

Excuse me?

CHRISTINA

The newspaper got it wrong. She—the “crazy person”—saved me.

MAGDALENE

That can't be true... Why would you want to do something like that? Don't tell me it's because of that bastard.

CHRISTINA

I don't want to talk about it.

MAGDALENE

But these are things we should talk about, especially if you've thought about ending your life. There are psychological reasons people get to that point, and you need to figure them out.

CHRISTINA

Here comes Doctor Santos with her remedies. I've been in therapy for most of my life, and it still didn't stop me from getting to yesterday. Psychology can't do anything else for me.

MAGDALENE

I don't care. You're not thinking clearly. I'll call Doctor Connor to see if he can fit you in today.

CHRISTINA

Didn't you hear me? I don't want to talk anymore. It's like saying words without meaning them.

MAGDALENE

What does that even mean?

CHRISTINA

Every time I go to one of those “famous” sessions, I feel like I'm talking to a wall. It's just filling the doctor's time so they can collect their fee. That's what I mean—talking without meaning.

MAGDALENE

Fine. Then we can arrange a meeting with that idiot ex-boyfriend of yours to sort this out—with my help, of course.

CHRISTINA

You're not the messiah of psychologists! There's nothing to “fix.” He left. That's it. I don't want to talk to him, and he doesn't want to talk to me.

MAGDALENE

That happened because you acted like a slut. If you'd married him—

CHRISTINA: (*Standing up*)

I'm leaving.

MAGDALENE

You're not going anywhere without my supervision.

CHRISTINA

I'm 24. I don't need a babysitter.

MAGDALENE

Your mental state is fragile, and you're a danger to yourself—maybe even to others.

CHRISTINA

Don't worry, Mother. My urge to shut out the world is long gone. Right now, the only person I don't want to see is you.

MAGDALENE

You're not leaving, and that's final. To think I was proud of you for saving someone's life. Now it seems like you don't even want to save your own.

CHRISTINA

I'm leaving. (*She heads for the door.*)

MAGDALENE

Christina! (*She stops.*) If you walk out that door, I'm sure the reporters will love to hear how you deceived them. Imagine their headlines: "Supposedly Sane Woman Saved by Mentally Ill Girl." Don't you think they'd find that fascinating?

CHRISTINA

Yes.

MAGDALENE

I'm calling Doctor Connor now to see if he can see you today.

CHRISTINA

Fine.

MAGDALENE

Good. Now, go to your room and lie down while I speak with him.

CHRISTINA

I'm not tired.

MAGDALENE: *(Picking up the phone)*
What did you say?

CHRISTINA: *(Looking at her mother holding the phone)*
That I'll go lie down.

MAGDALENE:
Smart choice. I'll wake you when it's time to go.

(Christina exits. Magdalene begins dialing. Lights out.)

THIRD ACT

(Christina enters the doctor's office. She looks nervous and uncomfortable, her mind seemingly elsewhere as she waits. The doctor enters.)

DOCTOR

Good morning. I'm very glad you're here. I didn't get the chance to properly thank you the other day—your actions saved Johanna's life.

CHRISTINA

Johanna?

DOCTOR

Yes, that's her name... but she might have introduced herself as Gabriella.

CHRISTINA

From Gabriel, the angel...

DOCTOR

You're quick. Anyway, thank you. Johanna has a bad habit of doing things like this. That's why I must keep reminding her that she doesn't have wings. Can you imagine what would happen if she thought she could fly?

CHRISTINA

(Small smile) Yes... Has she said anything about what happened?

DOCTOR

Not much. At first, she insisted she'd earned her wings.

CHRISTINA

And what did you tell her?

DOCTOR

That she'd have to do a very good deed to earn them.

CHRISTINA

(Smiling faintly) With that explanation, she'd be doing good deeds for the rest of her life. *(Pauses)* Why does she think she's an angel?

DOCTOR

We're not entirely sure. Her mother died about a year ago, and her father brought her here in that state. He left crying... and never came back. We've tried to bring her back to reality, but it's been difficult. She has moments of clarity, especially when she's sad or talking about her father.

CHRISTINA

I don't know if it's possible, but I'd really like to see her.

DOCTOR

We're very strict about visitations.

CHRISTINA

Please. I just want to make sure she's okay.

DOCTOR

(Sighs) All right. I'm only doing this because I found out that you are the daughter of Magdalene Santos. She is amazing and I follow her podcast religiously. But please, keep it brief. And I should warn you—don't be surprised if she doesn't remember you. One of her symptoms is the ability to block out negative experiences.

CHRISTINA

Understood.

DOCTOR

Wait here for a moment. *(He exits. Christina, growing restless, starts pacing and examining the books on his shelves. After a while, he returns with Gabriella.)* Here she is. Johanna, this is—

CHRISTINA

Chris...

GABRIELLA

Gabriella.

CHRISTINA

What?

GABRIELLA

My name isn't Johanna. It's Gabriella.

DOCTOR

(Smiling) All right, Gabriella. Do you remember...?

GABRIELLA

Christina. *(She embraces Christina, who stiffens at first.)* Could we have a moment alone? I have a message for her.

DOCTOR

Gabriella, you know that's not allowed.

GABRIELLA

Just five minutes. It's a short message.

DOCTOR

(To Christina) Are you okay with this?

CHRISTINA

I'll do whatever you think is best.

DOCTOR

(Looking at Gabriella) Just this once. But remember—no angel stories. *(To Christina)* I'll be in the next room if you need me. *(He leaves.)*

GABRIELLA

The doctor worries too much. How are you?

CHRISTINA

I'm fine.

GABRIELLA

Don't be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy. I mean no harm.

CHRISTINA

And what's the good news?

GABRIELLA

(With quiet intensity) That everything will be fine.

CHRISTINA

(Laughs bitterly) I'm sorry, but everything is *not* fine.

GABRIELLA

I didn't say it is. I said it will be. You know, I've been talking to the Lord about you. He told me I've been appointed your guardian angel—to take care of you, pray for you, and be there whenever you need me. I told Him I'm not fit for the job since I don't have wings, but He said to do it anyway because you need me. That's how I know everything will be fine.

CHRISTINA

I wish I could believe you. But I don't think you can help me.

GABRIELLA

Why not?

CHRISTINA

Because nothing has shown me otherwise.

GABRIELLA

Ah, like Thomas. I understand. We live in a world that needs to see to believe. It's easy for me—I've seen. But the Lord understands your doubts.

CHRISTINA

(Looking at her watch) I need to go. I have a therapy session at three. *(Hesitates)* You haven't told anyone what really happened, have you?

GABRIELLA

What really happened?

CHRISTINA

You don't remember?

GABRIELLA

There are always two stories: what happened, and what people say happened.

CHRISTINA: *(Growing impatient)*

Have you told anyone that you saved me?

GABRIELLA

No. Angels don't brag about their good deeds.

CHRISTINA

But you know everyone thinks...

GABRIELLA

That I was the one about to jump? Yes, I know. But I'd rather give you the benefit of the doubt. It's all part of the divine plan.

CHRISTINA

Thanks for that, but plenty of people already think I'm crazy.

GABRIELLA

What matters is that *you* don't believe it. Give yourself a second chance to rewrite your life. Don't run. Don't be afraid. The Lord is with you—that's what matters most.

CHRISTINA

But you...

GABRIELLA

I know what it feels like to be afraid and to hide. That's why I'm telling you—don't let fear control your life. The Lord is with you, Christina. Always. *(The doctor enters.)*

DOCTOR

Well, Gabriella, your time is up.

GABRIELLA

Angels know when to stop talking too. Goodbye, Christina. Remember what I said. *(She leaves. Christina watches her.)*

DOCTOR

Are you all right?

CHRISTINA

Yes. *(Pause)* Can I see her again?

DOCTOR

You seem very affected by the visit.

CHRISTINA

It's not that. You said she doesn't have anyone. I'd like to visit her. She's special.

DOCTOR

I'm not sure that's healthy for you. You seem very nervous.

CHRISTINA

I just didn't know what to expect. Please, give me a chance. I only want to help.

DOCTOR

All right. But if I see any change in Johanna's condition, I'll have to stop the visits.

CHRISTINA

Understood. Thank you.

DOCTOR

Again, I'm only allowing this because you're your mother's daughter. She's an extraordinary doctor. Please give her my regards and invite her to come. We would love to have her visit. Maybe she can help Johanna out.

(Christina exits. The doctor sits at his desk as the lights dim.)

FOURTH ACT

Main room of the facility. Everything looks white. There are some patients around. In a corner, Gabriella is singing. Christina comes in and listens to her.

GABRIELLA

If your heart sings like the angels do
the world will become much better for it
because the great truth of God's love for us
will fill us with light evermore.

No fear will abide because this great truth
will come and free us in the end.
If your heart sings like the angels do
the world will be filled with God's love.

Christina realizes Gabriella is there.

GABRIELLA

Christina, it's good to see you.

CHRISTINA

Good to see you too. Where did you learn that song?

GABRIELLA

The Lord gave it to me.

CHRISTINA

It's very pretty.

GABRIELLA

I think it's full of truth. I sing it when I feel sad, to remind myself that I'm not alone
and that God loves me very much.

CHRISTINA

Are you sad?

GABRIELLA

Even angels have bad days. But let's not talk about that. How are you? Are things
better?

CHRISTINA

You could say that, but it's mostly because I've been avoiding my mother. That
makes everything much better.

GABRIELLA

Who is she?

CHRISTINA

Who?

GABRIELLA

Your mother.

CHRISTINA

You don't know? You might be the only person on the planet who doesn't. Dr. Magdalene Santos, the great celebrity psychologist. She has her own podcast and everything.

GABRIELLA

And how is she as a person?

CHRISTINA

As a person? I guess she's like everyone else... except a little more neurotic.

GABRIELLA

(Alarmed) Neurotic? Then how can they let her practice medicine?

CHRISTINA

No, that's me exaggerating. She's not neurotic. She's... *(pauses to think)* a mother.

GABRIELLA

A mother like Mary or a mother like Jezebel?

CHRISTINA

Like who?

GABRIELLA

Don't you read your Bible? Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Jezebel, the mother of Ahaziah.

CHRISTINA

I know about Mary, but Jezebel...

GABRIELLA

Jezebel, the evil queen. She was ambitious and ruthless, murdering those who didn't agree with her. The Lord punished her.

CHRISTINA

Hadn't heard of her.

GABRIELLA

As a mother, she was dominant and manipulative. She doubted her son, emotionally abused him, and controlled him until he eventually fell from a window.

CHRISTINA

(Evading and wanting to change the subject) I guess my mother's a mix of both.

GABRIELLA

She must be intimidating. *(Pauses)* My mother was the sweetest woman. She always talked to me about God's love, and I adored her... until...

CHRISTINA

Until what? What happened?

(Silence. Gabriella struggles with sudden sadness.)

GABRIELLA

Your mother has hurt you.

CHRISTINA

Wait, what? Why do you say that?

GABRIELLA

Because she can't forget.

CHRISTINA

(Smiling) Nor forgive. Sometimes I wish I could tell her so many things. I'd like to say that I've changed, that she needs to stop judging me for things I did in the past. She thinks she knows me so well that she guesses what I'm thinking or about to say, and she never gives me a chance. She's so "wise" and so dedicated to her work, studying the deepest recesses of the human mind, but she doesn't have a clue about me.

GABRIELLA

What have you done about it?

CHRISTINA

Me?

GABRIELLA

Yes, I imagine the Lord has given you a life beyond your mother's criticism.

CHRISTINA

I guess so. If not, I'd have gone... *(pauses, then changes her words)* As I said, I'm studying engineering.

GABRIELLA

Do you like it?

CHRISTINA

(Thinks for a moment) I think so. It pays well enough.

GABRIELLA

That took too long. You don't like it.

CHRISTINA

Now you're the one with a lack of faith.

GABRIELLA

I just call it as I see it.

CHRISTINA

Oh, really? And what do you see?

GABRIELLA

(A reflective tone) A very unhappy woman who lives for others and resents it. She looks for escape in relationships or practical careers, but she always ends up trapped by others' expectations. That's why she's not happy.

(Christina is silent, visibly hurt.)

CHRISTINA

There was a time I thought about being a doctor, but I faint at the sight of blood.
(Smiles faintly, then turns serious) So, that's what you see?

GABRIELLA

I'm sorry if I hurt you.

CHRISTINA

Hey, the truth hurts, right? But you don't know what it's like to live in someone's shadow, always trying to meet their expectations. Sometimes I feel like my mother had me just to experiment on me. And you know the worst part? Everyone admires her. They say, "There goes Dr. Santos; she's so amazing." No one notices that behind her brilliance is someone else. And no one sees me.

GABRIELLA

Maybe you're looking for the wrong people to see you.

CHRISTINA

Wrong people?

GABRIELLA

Yes, the ones who don't want to see you or don't need to. God will make your light shine for those He chooses. The rest don't matter. They miss out, and that's their loss. The ones who care will see you. People don't see an angel when they look at me. They see a sick, crazy person. But God doesn't reveal me to just anyone. That's His purpose. Those who take the time to know me, like you, receive all the love He's given me to share.

CHRISTINA

You're good. Your speeches are amazing. I wish I could believe you, but it's hard. My mother is too much. Even here, she's present. The doctor keeps asking me about her opinion of your case.

GABRIELLA

My case?

CHRISTINA

Yes. Can you imagine? Of course, I always lie. My mother doesn't even know I'm here. If she did, I'd be in trouble.

GABRIELLA

(Silently hurt) Leave.

CHRISTINA

What?

GABRIELLA

I want to be alone.

CHRISTINA

What did I do?

GABRIELLA

Go.

(Gabriella looks up, then back at Christina, then up again.)

GABRIELLA

I thought you saw me. But you're just like everyone else.

CHRISTINA

Don't say that.

GABRIELLA

(Talking to the sky) I'm just a sick girl to pity, with no chance of leaving this place.

(Pauses) Why did you take my mother? Why did you let him take her from me?

(The doctor enters and calms the other patients. Gabriella quiets, visibly scared.)

DOCTOR

What happened?

CHRISTINA

I don't know.

DOCTOR

I warned you.

CHRISTINA

I didn't do anything.

DOCTOR

Johanna, if this happens again, Christina can't visit.

GABRIELLA

No, please! Her visits help me feel closer to God. Please!

DOCTOR

Ok, but don't let this happen again.

(The doctor exits. Gabriella moves closer to Christina.)

GABRIELLA

Forgive me.

CHRISTINA

I'm sorry too.

GABRIELLA

(Softly. Repeats this several times) In our meekness, we see God's hands best and have faith that everything will be alright.

CHRISTINA

How can you be like this?

GABRIELLA

(Tears streaming.) God loves me.

(Lights off.)

FIFTH ACT

Christina and Gabriella are sitting in the garden of the facility. Christina is writing and when she finishes, she gives the paper to Gabriella to read.

CHRISTINA

I really don't know why I'm doing this.

GABRIELLA

Shh, I'm reading. *(Finishes)* See? I told you—you're extremely poetic.

CHRISTINA

And I told you, you're weird. Don't exaggerate. I've never written anything like this in my life, and now I'm the great poet? Let me see... *(Takes the paper)* This doesn't even rhyme.

GABRIELLA

It doesn't need to rhyme to be heartfelt and translucent.

CHRISTINA

(Imitating her tone) Heartfelt and translucent ... Tell me, Gabriella, what did you study?

GABRIELLA

Before being an...?

CHRISTINA

Yes, before being an angel.

GABRIELLA

I loved reading and writing, so I studied literature... but I didn't finish. I also loved music, so I'd read with the radio on, letting soft music complement my reading. I think I got that from my mom. She loved to do the same. *(Silence)*

CHRISTINA

The only thing I seem to do is make you sad.

GABRIELLA

No, no. Remembering is a mix of emotions. There's sadness, yes, but also longing, happiness, peace, restlessness... a little bit of everything. Remembering her is good for me.

CHRISTINA

Every time you talk about your mother, I feel a little envious.

GABRIELLA

Envy isn't good for you.

CHRISTINA

I don't mean it in a bad way. It's just that she left you so many beautiful memories.

GABRIELLA

She's teaching me how to be an angel. It's one of her tasks in heaven.

CHRISTINA

You can hear her?

GABRIELLA

Of course! I hear her all the time—but not with my ears. I hear her with my feelings. People would hear so much more if they listened with their hearts. The past, present, and future come together when you do, and everything becomes clearer.

CHRISTINA

Look who's talking about being poetic!

GABRIELLA

I'm an angel—it's part of the job.

CHRISTINA

Speaking of jobs, I'm curious. You once told me I wasn't happy studying engineering. Now's your chance to use that prophetic voice again—what do you think I should study?

GABRIELLA

(Gets serious) You're doing it again.

CHRISTINA

What?

GABRIELLA

You're asking others to decide for you. You need to choose your own path.

CHRISTINA

It was just a fun question.

GABRIELLA

No, it wasn't. You're still worried about what others think of you. That's not what I've been trying to teach you.

CHRISTINA

You don't have to be so serious.

GABRIELLA

What do you want to study?

CHRISTINA

I don't know.

GABRIELLA

Don't be afraid. What have you dreamed about?

CHRISTINA

Why are you asking so many questions?

GABRIELLA

Because I want you to decide. What makes you happy? What do you truly want for yourself?

CHRISTINA

I... I'd like to make music.

GABRIELLA

Yes! Do you feel better?

CHRISTINA

(Laughs) You are... *(Pauses)*

GABRIELLA

We're friends, aren't we?

CHRISTINA

I believe so.

GABRIELLA

Then leave the fear behind.

CHRISTINA

Okay.

GABRIELLA

Do you trust God?

CHRISTINA

(After a moment) Yes.

GABRIELLA

Then leave the fear behind.

(They sit quietly until the doctor enters.)

DOCTOR

How are you?

GABRIELLA

Everything's fine, doctor.

DOCTOR

Good. Would you mind if I spoke with Christina alone for a few minutes?

GABRIELLA

Not at all. *(Exits)*

DOCTOR

Your mother must be proud of you.

CHRISTINA

Why?

DOCTOR

For the volunteer work you're doing with Johanna. I must admit, I had my doubts at first, but she seems to be improving, and I think you've played a big part in that.

CHRISTINA

You think she's improving? How?

DOCTOR

She's eating better, smiling more...

CHRISTINA

But she still thinks she's an angel.

DOCTOR

She mentions it less.

CHRISTINA

Really?

DOCTOR

Yes. Maybe you've consulted your mother on this, but I believe your conversations with Johanna are helping her.

CHRISTINA

That's only half true. Talking to her helps me, too.

DOCTOR

I'm glad you see it that way.

CHRISTINA

Don't you think it's incredible that someone who's suffered so much can still hold so much goodness in her heart?

DOCTOR

We don't know everything she's been through, but yes. Has she told you anything?

CHRISTINA

It's a miracle.

DOCTOR

Christina, Johanna is a very sick person. Don't forget that.

CHRISTINA

You've told me she's improving.

DOCTOR

Yes, but her illness still dominates her thoughts.

CHRISTINA

Maybe. But I've decided to believe she is who she thinks she is.

DOCTOR

Is that your mother's advice?

CHRISTINA

(Smiles) My mother treats people based on what she thinks they are, which is why I don't think she's a good psychologist. Isn't it damaging to approach someone with a diagnosis of prejudices?

DOCTOR

(Uncomfortable) I suppose it is. I need to see other patients. Take care.

(Exits. Gabriella enters.)

GABRIELLA

See? That's how you sound when you talk without fear.

CHRISTINA

I hope he's not mad. That wouldn't be good.

GABRIELLA

I don't think he is. He'll probably think about what you said. *(Pauses, looking at Christina)* Now I envy you.

CHRISTINA

Envy isn't good for you.

GABRIELLA

Don't use my words against me. You were brave. You spoke with your heart, without fear.

CHRISTINA

I had a good teacher. You were brave when you came out that window to talk to me.

GABRIELLA

That was different. I felt the Lord protecting me because I was doing His will. But when it mattered most, I was a coward.

CHRISTINA

What are you talking about? What are you afraid of? Why do you call yourself a coward?

GABRIELLA

I don't want to talk about it. That's the problem—I've never talked about it.

CHRISTINA

Talk to me.

GABRIELLA

It's about my mother. She wouldn't have died if I'd said something. It's my fault.

CHRISTINA

No, it's not.

GABRIELLA

Yes, it is! If I'd spoken up, she could've escaped him. That man—my father—killed her. He locked me here because he couldn't face me afterward. I became an angel to ask her to forgive me, but I don't even have wings!

CHRISTINA

(Looks at her and takes her by the shoulders) Gabriella, listen to me. You've always told me not to live by what others say. Now it's your turn. The doctor says you have no wings, but I've seen them.

GABRIELLA

Really?

CHRISTINA

Yes. They're as big as your love for your mother and for God.

GABRIELLA

Do you think so?

CHRISTINA

I know so! Close your eyes. Can you see heaven?

GABRIELLA

(After a pause) Yes.

CHRISTINA

Can you hear your mom?

GABRIELLA

Yes!

CHRISTINA

Tell her what you need to say.

GABRIELLA

Mom, forgive me! Forgive me for staying silent... forgive me because I couldn't save you! *(Pause)* She says she forgives me.

CHRISTINA

You see? Even angels need help sometimes.

(Gabriella embraces her. Lights off.)

SIXTH ACT

Christina enters the white room of the facility and finds the doctor speaking to a patient.

CHRISTINA

(A little timid) Good morning.

DOCTOR

Good morning, Christina. How are you?

CHRISTINA

I'm fine, thanks.

(Uncomfortable silence)

I... wanted to apolo—

DOCTOR

It's been two weeks since your last visit. We were starting to miss you.

CHRISTINA

How is she?

DOCTOR

She's been feeling a little sick lately, but her mental health is better. She spends her time reading and listening to music.

CHRISTINA

That's what she loved doing before she came here.

DOCTOR

I know, she told me.

(Pauses)

You know, I still don't know what to think about this. Sometimes I think she's worse, and other times I think she's better. But one thing's for sure—it's been interesting. I've learned a lot from watching your relationship with her.

CHRISTINA

Really?

DOCTOR

More than you know. Gabriella is in the garden. I'll go get her for you.

CHRISTINA

Gabriella?

DOCTOR

Yes. That's one of the things I've learned.

(He leaves. CHRISTINA smiles. GABRIELLA enters, looking a little tired.)

CHRISTINA

Hi.

GABRIELLA

Hi, Christina.

(She embraces her.)

CHRISTINA

The doctor told me you're feeling a little sick.

GABRIELLA

I think I'm just tired. I've been reading too much and not sleeping well.

CHRISTINA

Then you need to take care of yourself. Sleep is important.

(Smiling)

I have a surprise for you—I hope it makes you feel better.

GABRIELLA

What happened?

CHRISTINA

Guess who's going to study music.

GABRIELLA

You did it?

CHRISTINA

Yes! And I even got a scholarship.

GABRIELLA

Did you tell your mother?

CHRISTINA

Oh, yes. She wasn't happy, of course, but she had to accept it. She said I was fickle and couldn't imagine where I got the idea. I told her I've always loved music and it's her fault—she's the one who paid for my piano lessons as a kid to “soothe my nerves.” *(Laughing)*

I even told her to thank God her investment was finally paying off. I auditioned with *Clair de Lune*, and they accepted me! That's why I haven't been here for so long. What do you think?

GABRIELLA

That you're as crazy as your mother says you are—and that I'm happy for you.
(Pauses)

But that doesn't mean you have permission to disappear for long periods.

(CHRISTINA turns her back on GABRIELLA)

What's wrong?

(Silence)

You're leaving.

CHRISTINA

The program I'm interested in is at a university out of state. It was a unique opportunity... but I promise I'll stay in touch. I'll write you poetic letters that you can proudly read, and I'll visit whenever I can.

GABRIELLA

Better not.

CHRISTINA

Why?

GABRIELLA

My work here is done.

CHRISTINA

That doesn't mean we have to stop talking.

GABRIELLA

It means other people need me now.

CHRISTINA

I'm one of those people. Don't be mad at me... if you want, I won't go...

(Realizing)

See? I'm doing it again. I still need my guardian angel.

GABRIELLA

When you've finished studying, we'll talk again.

CHRISTINA

(Suddenly angry)

Goodbye.

(She starts to leave but stops.)

I thought we were done with this angel nonsense. The doctor told me you don't talk about it anymore.

GABRIELLA

When you're an angel, you're an angel for life.

CHRISTINA

I don't understand.

(Pauses)

But I'll respect your wishes, even if it is in protest. Take care, my guardian angel.

(Pause)

Are you sure this is what you want?

GABRIELLA

May God bless you forever.

(CHRISTINA looks at her sadly one last time before leaving. GABRIELLA sits down, looking exhausted. She falls asleep. The lights go off, then on again. GABRIELLA stands up with her eyes closed. When she opens them, she is surrounded by the other patients, now dressed as mimes. She looks trapped and scared. Then she sees a man approaching—it's her father. She freezes, then runs toward him in anger, hitting him. He does not fight back and eventually collapses to the ground. GABRIELLA, tired, also falls. When she sees him lying there, she feels compassion, helps him up, and embraces him. He leaves. GABRIELLA feels someone behind her and turns—it's her mother. She smiles and embraces her mother tenderly. Her mother caresses her wings, and GABRIELLA realizes she has them. She looks up to heaven, thanking God. GABRIELLA then caresses her mother's wings. They embrace again. Her mother helps her sit down, and GABRIELLA falls asleep in her mother's arms. The lights go off.)

SEVENTH ACT

(Doctor's office. He is working on some papers. Four years have passed. CHRISTINA knocks on the door and enters. She looks older and walks with more confidence.)

CHRISTINA

Good morning, Doctor.

DOCTOR

Christina! How nice to see you.

CHRISTINA

It's been a long time.

DOCTOR

Yes, but I understand why you stayed away... Gabriella told me.

CHRISTINA

I'm glad she spoke to you.

DOCTOR

Yes. At first, it was hard for her not having you around, but she adjusted. She moved to a much better place emotionally and mentally.

CHRISTINA

That's great news.

(Pauses)

Have you considered releasing her?

DOCTOR

Releasing her?

CHRISTINA

Yes. If she's doing so much better, I don't see why she needs to stay here. Where is she? I have so much to tell her.

DOCTOR

Your mother hasn't told you?

CHRISTINA

Told me what?

DOCTOR

(Speaks gently) I should have called you personally.

CHRISTINA

(Slowly realizing) Gabriella... Gabriella died?

DOCTOR

Two months ago.

(Silence)

I called your house and spoke to your mother. She said she would tell you.

CHRISTINA

(Suppressing her emotions) She never approved of my visits to Gabriella. She thought I was just rebelling against her. It's always about her. I guess this was her last word on the subject.

(Pauses)

Why didn't she tell me?

DOCTOR

I'm so sorry, Christina.

CHRISTINA

She took away my chance to say goodbye. I couldn't even come to the funeral. I couldn't tell Gabriella how much she meant to me.

DOCTOR

Christina, please try to calm down. Gabriella thought about you every single day. You gave her happiness when she was sad, and you gave her companionship when she was lonely. That's the greatest gift anyone can receive.

CHRISTINA

(Sobbing softly) I couldn't say goodbye.

DOCTOR

You gave her something else as well—peace and justice. The information you shared about her father allowed the authorities to find and arrest him. He's in prison now, reflecting on what he's done. When I called him to tell him about Gabriella's death, he cried like a child. He has to live with two deaths on his conscience.

CHRISTINA

(Quietly) I'm glad.

(Pauses)

Where is she buried?

DOCTOR

In the national cemetery, beside her mother. She passed away from leukemia. I don't know if you remember, but she began showing symptoms around the time you left. I believe God had already chosen her to be an angel long before she believed she was one. And I think God chose an angel for His angel.

CHRISTINA

(Smiling faintly) An angel?

DOCTOR

Something I learned from her, and from you.

CHRISTINA

Thank you.

(Silence)

I have to go.

DOCTOR

How are you feeling?

CHRISTINA

I'm trying to hold onto advice someone very wise once gave me. An angel taught me that in my meekness, I can best see God's hands lifting me up and that I'll be okay.

(Pauses)

Thank you for everything.

(She begins to leave.)

DOCTOR

Christina?

CHRISTINA

Yes?

DOCTOR

You're welcome to come back anytime. We still need volunteers who know how to give hope to our patients.

CHRISTINA

I will. Thank you.

(She exits. Lights off.)

FINAL ACT

(Cemetery. CHRISTINA enters with a rose in one hand and a radio in the other. She walks among the tombstones, searching until she finds the one she's looking for. She pauses, taking a deep breath.)

CHRISTINA

Gabriella... I finally found you.

(Looks up at the sky)

You must be laughing at me because you're not really here, are you? You're up in heaven, flying around with your precious wings. But, since you know I'm poetic, I had to come here for this—my little symbolic act—to feel like I've properly said goodbye.

(She places the radio near GABRIELLA's tombstone.)

In I have a song I played for you. People loved it, and I thought you might like to hear it too.

(She plays Claire de Lune.)

People are going to think I'm crazy, but I don't care.

(She closes her eyes and listens to the music for a moment, smiling faintly.)

God gave me this song. These days, I'm trying to listen with my feelings—like you always told me to. It hasn't been easy... I'm no angel. But I think I'm getting there. Sometimes, I even think I hear your voice. And you know what? I think I'll hear it for the rest of my life.

You told me to forgive my mother because holding onto resentment isn't good for me. And I'm trying. I really am.

(Pauses, taking a deep breath.)

You know something? Even though I never got to see you again, I feel happy. Because now I can feel the wind. And I can see beyond the square shape of a window. And you know what I see? More life. So much more life.

(Looks up again, tears streaming.)

God, thank you. Thank you for sending her into my life. Thank you for giving me a guardian angel.

(She places the rose gently on the tombstone.)

Thank you for using what the world considers invisible or useless to do your will.
Thank you for giving all of us the chance to sing like angels.

*(She gazes at the rose and begins to cry quietly, her shoulders trembling as the music fades.
Lights off.)*

THE END