

the beginning of

**FOUR EXTREMELY ATTRACTIVE ANGELS
FLOATING AROUND FANTASIZING ABOUT
THE LATE RICH ORLOFF**

(from **SINFULLY RICH**)

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

Place: The hereafter

Time: Not yet

Characters: MONICA, an angel in heaven
CARLA, a devil down under
NATALIE, stuck in purgatory
ANNIE, well, it depends on in the incarnation
THE AUTHOR'S VOICE

As the play begins, we hear a heart beat, which stops and is replaced by the sound of a hospital monitor flatlining. The sound fades, and then...

THE AUTHOR'S VOICE

I'm dead. I'm really dead..... I'm still dead.....
What to do, what to do... Hmmmm... Not enough
plays are written posthumously... But what to write.
Write what you know. I know I'm dead. Hmm...
Four extremely attractive... angels... floating
around... fantasizing about... the late Rich Orloff...
a play by... the late Rich Orloff.

The lights go up on: Four women. Despite the author's imagined title, one is an angel, one is a devil, one is dressed plainly, and the fourth transcends easy description.

MONICA

If only I could get my wings around
the late Rich Orloff...

CARLA

If only I could get my fork into
the late, great Rich Orloff...

NATALIE

If only I could last forever with
the late, great, *straight* Rich Orloff...

ANNIE

I'm just glad he's dead.

All four women sigh deeply.

MONICA

Before I died – may I rest in peace – I thought I was an angel. Now that I *am* one, it's *so* much better. If, like me, you're into the performing arts, there's no place like heaven. Every night there are concerts, ballets and thousands of plays and musicals to choose from. Every seat's a good seat and, best of all, you're never seated behind someone taller than you. God really does work in miraculous ways.

I've only been in heaven a month when Rich Orloff arrives. He has this great literary glow that seems to backlight his wings. When the heavenly theater community learns he's arrived, a complete retrospective of his work starts rehearsals at the National Theatre of the Dead. The cast includes, among others, Sarah Bernhardt, Edwin Booth, all the *dead* Barrymores, and making his English-speaking debut, Moliere. The directing team includes Stanislavski, Strasberg, Kazan, and Orson Welles, who's even fatter than he used to be because, let's face it, dead people don't have to worry about their weight.

Just to be close to Rich, I audition for well, *anything*, and I end up as understudy to Marilyn Monroe, who confides to me she plans to put out for a better part. Halfway through rehearsals, Rich attends a run-through. He's so pleased with what he sees that he only has 325 pages of notes. By page 200, Stanislavski is in tears. On page 253, Elia Kazan falls to his knees. "Have mercy on me!" he pleads with Rich, "for I am but an interpretive artist, not a creative one."

Rich puts his hand on Kazan's shoulder and says, "I *am* in heaven."

After rehearsal, Marilyn walks up to Rich and says, "I'll do *anything* for a better part."

Rich replies, "Sorry, Marilyn, but I refuse to be Arthur Miller's sloppy seconds."

Then Rich walks up to *me* and offers to:
(suggestively)

take me under his wings.

I just want to molt.

Rich and I fly off, and he ruffles my feathers in all the right ways. Rich teaches me a great lesson: As great as all the culture is in Heaven, the best part of afterlife – is the afterglow.

Monica sighs deeply.

ANNIE

I'm just glad he's dead.

CARLA

I've been in hell over twelve hundred years, and had I known how endlessly painful and horrific it would be, I would've never had a three-way with Charlemagne and a donkey. Who knew that's what the Bible meant when it referred to coveting thy neighbor's ass.

The temperature in hell is over twenty thousand degrees. Hitler keeps saying, "At least it's a dry heat." What an idiot; he thinks nobody recognizes him without his mustache.

When Rich arrives, I'm shocked. Not that he ended up in hell – no surprise there – but he seems so *calm*. He arrives with a large suitcase and a smile. Satan tells Rich, "For your sins on Earth, you will be forced to service the most degenerate sluts, whores and deviates for the rest of time."

Rich replies, "And the downside is?"

Satan points to me and says, "Start with her." For the next six months, we go at it non-stop. I've climaxed 689 times, but Rich is still holding back. "I'm dead," he says, "what's the hurry?"

Finally I say, "I need a break." Rich whispers a suggestion into my ear. I *like* it. Rich picks up his suitcase, and I escort him to the hottest, smelliest, most revolting, and most disgusting section of hell. It's where you find the critics.

They are all treading in a swamp of pure crap, which for once is not a metaphor. Rich walks to the edge of the swamp, gazes at the fetid display of inhumanity before him, and opens his suitcase. It is *packed* with newspaper clippings.

Rich clears his throat and says, "And now I'd like to critique some of *your* writing."

I say, "But that could take *forever*."

Rich just smiles. And for the first time I think, hell is going to be cool.

Carla sighs deeply.

ANNIE

I'm just glad he's dead.