

The Story of Angels in the Snow! Berlin, 1959.

Dieter and Kurt, innocent young college students, are in a forest clearing at dawn near the River Spree in West Berlin, hoping to find Elise and Helen and the other busy young environmentalists. Tricked into planting trees and jeered at by the handsome Manfred, Dieter and Kurt manage to make connections nonetheless.

We experience the carefree lives of the two couples, see them laugh, dance, repent the past, and try to save the world; share Christmas with them, watch their progress toward each other, and begin to hear ominous overtones. Act I music is light, almost carefree; Act II music is more serious, even foreboding. We meet the young, ambitious Erich Honecker and Communist party chairman Walter Ulbricht and learn of their plans to build an “anti-fascist protective barrier” between the east and west sectors of Berlin: A Wall.

Dieter and Elise fall in love, make snow angels, marry, and are expecting their first child when, on Kurt and Helen’s wedding day, the Berlin Wall goes up overnight. Kurt and Dieter, who were ministering to their families and friends, are trapped on the East side behind the Wall. Leaving a pregnant Elise, a grieving Helen and a lustful Manfred behind them, the men settle in for what they hope will be a short vigil. A year passes and they all begin to realize their lives have changed forever. The Christmas Trilogy marks their separation as Act I ends.

Twenty-one years later, the Berlin Wall still stands, and the couples are still separated. Baby Katrina has grown to be a beautiful 21-year old woman. Helen, stricken and walking with a cane, and Elise, now a striking German legislator, work tirelessly in the West – Elise often with Manfred, her co-conspirator in their surreptitious nocturnal political resistance. Dieter and Kurt have become major forces of opposition in the East - Kurt by defiantly playing his trumpet on the square, Dieter by his courageous civil disobedience – often costing him his blood. They have adopted a young Jewish boy, Wolf, now 23, whom they rescued from East German execution during his family’s failed escape attempt - his parents, Moshe and Leah, survivors of the death camps in World War II, were killed just steps behind him as he ran for his life.



Dieter wrangles relentlessly with Erich Honecker, now the Supreme Leader of East Germany, seeking to tear down the Wall, to try to win Kurt the right to go to the failing Helen on the other side, and to bring freedom to the East German people. Elise, in the West, chains herself to the Wall, speaks in the chamber and struggles with her feelings for Dieter, far away, and Manfred, everpresent.



Wolf and Katrina, both world-class runners, finally meet each other during the Martin Luther Games in West Berlin, and Wolf is able to escape the watchful eyes of the guards for a few hours; he manages a quick trip to Elise’s West Berlin home for a wonderful holiday dinner, where Wolf sings the story of his parents’ martyrdom at The Wall, and he and Katrina fall in love. But when he returns to Dieter’s loft in the East that night, his euphoria turns dark when he tells Kurt that the very ill Helen has sent the message that she will meet Kurt “on the other side.” Frantic, Kurt will not be dissuaded from trying cross the Wall to her that very night - and is shot dead, strung across the barbed wire. Helen dies in her wheelchair. Katrina goes to the river to mourn.



Dieter is chained and beaten in the East, even as Manfred tries to convince Elise to help him explode a bomb at a nuclear reactor in the West. Dieter leads a quarter million protesters carrying candles in the snow on a peace march, even as Elise, finally, chooses non-violence and rejects Manfred and chooses Dieter. Erich Honecker is hounded from power and flees, ending up on Dieter’s doorstep, dying of cancer, seeking sanctuary, if not absolution.



Soon - to the cheering of thousands and the sounds of hammers and chisels, a baby is passed over the Wall – into the waiting arms of her grandmother, who has never seen her. Elise faces down a rifle trained on her chest and climbs to the top of the Berlin Wall - only to meet Dieter who is ripping the Wall apart from the other side. Their eyes meet. They go into each other’s arms forever. Wolf finds Katrina. *Die Wendt* has finally come. With the whole company, they sing “No More Walls!” They lift their eyes in memory, through the light snow, into the brilliant blue sky. Fervently, they sing, “No More Walls Again.”

