

IF I HAD A MILLION

by Robert Simms

LYNN Young businesswoman
JEFFREY Young businessman
BILL Businessman of any age

The scene is the coach-class compartment of an airplane. LYNN, JEFFREY and BILL are seated in a row of three seats with LYNN in the window seat and Bill on the aisle.



As the scene opens, LYNN is peering out the windows. JEFFREY appears interested both in the scenery outside the window and in LYNN. Bill is reading a magazine oriented to business success.

LYNN: *(Looking out and below)* I always thought all the houses looked like a Monopoly® board.

JEFFREY: Not the way I play.

LYNN: Me neither. I never won.

JEFFREY: *(Holding out his hand to shake)* Jeffrey.

LYNN: *(She shakes)* Lynn. *(Turning back to window)* Look at that place down there. It's huge! I want one of those someday.

JEFFREY: I can dream.

LYNN: What if you had a million dollars. What would you do?

JEFFREY: First of all, update the daydream. Forty years ago a million would do. Now you have to think at least \$10 million.

LYNN: Okay, ten. What would you do?

JEFFREY: Just out of the blue, lump sum?

LYNN: Yeah. And tax free. Somehow—don't ask me how.

JEFFREY: Ain't no way, but okay. Ten million. For starters, I'd get out of debt. That would take about \$175 thousand counting house, car and credit cards. I'd trade up to one of those estates down there—well, maybe something in the one million dollar range.

LYNN: That's big enough.

JEFFREY: Yeah. Then I'd go for a Porche, get rid of the Beamer.

LYNN: Definitely.

JEFFREY: I'd probably take about three or four million and put it in gold or some really good stock, so I could plan on having a million or so a year in income the rest of my life. Of course, if I had kids, I'd have to send them to

college, stuff like that. And I'd never eat at a burger joint again.

LYNN: (*Laughing*) Yeah!

JEFFREY: How about you?

LYNN: Oh, probably much the same. I don't have the house, right now. I have an apartment. I'd definitely move out into something of my own—maybe something in the half-million range.

JEFFREY: What else?

LYNN: Well, I'd definitely have to lose the Chevy.

JEFFREY: Can I interest you in a Beamer?

LYNN: I think I'll go with a Ferrari.

JEFFREY: Ooo!

LYNN: And I'd probably get an advisor to recommend a good IPO so I could double my money quick.

JEFFREY: Or lose it.

LYNN: With ten million, I could spare a million.

JEFFREY: True.

LYNN: I'd take a cruise every six months—oh, by the way, no more work.

JEFFREY: Of course. I forgot to say that. Quit my job, first thing.

LYNN: And I'd simply have to have all new clothes. Perhaps on my first trip to Paris...

JEFFREY: (*Fingering his lapels*) Armani suits.

LYNN: Why? If you're not going to work?

JEFFREY: What else will I wear to swanky restaurants every night.

LYNN: I see your point.

BILL: (*Looking over from his magazine*) What about giving?

JEFFREY: What?

BILL: (*Offers his hand*) Bill.

JEFFREY: (*Shakes it*) Jeffrey.

LYNN: Lynn. (*Bill nods pleasantly*)

BILL: What about giving?

JEFFREY: What kind of giving?

BILL: Charitable. Worthy causes. Church.

JEFFREY: I don't go to church.

BILL: (*to LYNN*) You?

LYNN: (*Vaguely embarrassed*) Uh, yeah, I mean, yes, I go.

BILL: Would you give any money to the Lord?

LYNN: (*Realizes she hasn't given it any thought at all*) Oh, well, of course.

Something. Probably several thousand dollars. Sure.

JEFFREY: (*Trying to keep up*) Me too—well, probably not church, but United

Way or something.

BILL: (*Speaking mostly to Lynn*) Of course, with \$10 million, you could do a lot of good. A tithe would be a million dollars. Think how many missionaries that would send. It could feed hungry people and build churches. You could set up a foundation with several million and fund those things for years to come.

LYNN: (*Embarrassed, and wishing BILL would stop*) Well, yeah...

BILL: (*To Lynn, happily*) Maybe one of those churches would reach Jeffrey, here, and then he could use his ten million to serve God, too. (*To JEFFREY, with a smile*) Just a suggestion, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: (*Letting it roll off good-naturedly*) Sure.

BILL: Less consumption and luxury makes more available to benefit other people and causes.

JEFFREY: Well, yeah. (*With newfound generosity*) I'd help some people. Sure.

LYNN: Oh, me, too. (*She turns a bit toward the window. As a Christian, she is sorry she has come across no more concerned about giving and spiritual things than her non-Christian seat mate.*)

JEFFREY: But you mean to say that if you had ten million dollars you wouldn't live it up?

BILL: Oh, everybody spends some money on himself. There's nothing wrong with that.

JEFFREY: (*Thinks he has found BILL in hypocrisy*) You're hedging.

BILL: No, I'm saying that if the Lord blesses you, you're free to enjoy some of it personally, but there are more important things to be done with money.

JEFFREY: I think if you had \$10 million you would go hog wild, just like me. And come on, 'fess up: you don't tithe, either, do you? That's for Sunday School children.

BILL: (*genuinely*) I'm sorry I interrupted your conversation. Sometimes I just can't help myself.

LYNN: Why don't you leave him alone, Jeffrey?

JEFFREY: He started this business about tithing and church and helping people. I just want to see if he practices what he preaches. This is all good natured fun, isn't it Bill?

BILL: I didn't say what I did to draw attention to myself.

JEFFREY: Too late. The spotlight is on you.

BILL: Okay. Ten years ago when I became a Christian I was making \$50 thousand a year. I decided to give ten percent of what I made to the Lord through the church. In fact, I decided that if I ever made any more than \$50 thousand—adjusted for inflation and so on—I would give half of everything over \$50 thousand to God's work in some way. I've done that ever since.

LYNN: *(Ashamed, to JEFFREY)* I hope you're satisfied.

JEFFREY: *(At first a bit stunned, but then recovers)* That's easy to say in theory, but I bet if you had the ten million dollars your tune would change.

BILL: You're wrong.

JEFFREY: How so?

BILL: I passed ten million five years ago. *(BILL smiles warmly. JEFFREY picks up his magazine and acts quickly engrossed in it. LYNN has reached into her purse and pulled out a tissue, which she now dabs at her eye.)*

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