

TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT

This is a series of excerpted scenes from the full script, which runs to 11 pages--about 15 minutes in performance (with songs).

If you purchase the rights to the play, I will send you a full script—as a PDF—from which you can make as many copies as are needed by your cast & crew. There is no per-script-fee.

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THE NATIVITY PLAY

Pageant version

with Narration & Dialogue

Written by

Anthony E. Palermo

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TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT
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Billing shall be in the following form:

(name of producer)
presents

THE NATIVITY PLAY
(Pageant version)

Written by
ANTHONY E. PALERMO

Short bio:

ANTHONY E. PALERMO (PLAYWRIGHT) is an Audie Award-winning performer, dramatist, composer and educator who has produced dramas and workshops for broadcast, stage, and schools. Tony hosts the RuyaSonic website, offering info on writing, directing, scoring, engineering, and sound effects. www.RuyaSonic.com

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The Nativity Play

(Pageant version)

CAST

Without doubling roles: 15 actors: 1 male, 2 female, 12 male-or-female

NARRATOR	The Biblical-style narrator (Male or Female)
MARY	16 year-old farm girl (F)
JOSEPH	20 year-old carpenter (M)
LAMB #1	Bleating sheep (M/F)
ANGEL #1	Angel messenger(Gabriel) (M/F)
INN-KEEPER	Crusty inn-keeper (M/F)
RACHAB	Inn-keeper's kindly slave (F/M)
ANGEL #2	Angel messenger (M/F)
BO'AZ	Old, wizened shepherd (M/F)
EFRAYIM	Cynical shepherd (M/F)
TAVEE	Young shepherd (M/F)
SHEEP #1	Bleating sheep (M/F)
MALKIOR	Persian Magi (M/F)
GASPAR	Indian Magi (M/F)
BALTAZAR	Assyrian Magi (M/F)

-Also-

TRAVELERS in Bethlehem, other SHEPHERDS

ANGELS

SHEEP, GOATS, OXEN, DONKEYS, other farm animals

Suggested carols to be interwoven with narration:

- 1) God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
- 2) Ave Maria (verse 1 only. Sung by Angel #1 only)
- 3) O Come, O Come Emmanuel
- 4) O Little Town of Bethlehem
- 5) The Coventry Carol [verse 1 only. Sung by Mary only)
- 6) Away in A Manger
- 7) The First Noel (verse 1)
- 8) Angels We Have Heard On High
- 9) The First Noel (verse 2 & 3 only)
- 10) O Come All Ye Faithful

Lyrics for these carols are included in the appendix to this script.

NOTE: Songs may easily be skipped or other songs substituted.

PLOT SYNOPSIS:

I offer three stage-play versions of *The Nativity Play*—a 70-minute, 30-minute and 15-minute and two different pageant versions--one with dialogue and narration and one with just narration. All dramatize Mary and Joseph's life, leading to the birth of Jesus--mixing reverence and humor to make for an uplifting and entertaining show.

The Pageant version -- (with narration and some dialogue) begins with several shepherds lamenting life after The Fall and wishing for a Redeemer, then shifts to Nazareth, where a pious and charitable Mary receives the Annunciation, then--9 months later--the Journey to Bethlehem, No Room at the Inn, the Birth of Jesus, the shepherds and the Host of Angels, the Adoration of the Magi, and a final blessing. This pageant version features 9 familiar Christmas carols, interspersed between and amidst the narration and dialogue.

The Pageant version -- (narration only) begins with a welcoming, then proceeds through The Annunciation, then--9 months later--the Journey to Bethlehem, No Room at the Inn, The Birth of Jesus, the shepherds and the Host of Angels, the Adoration of the Magi and a final blessing. This features 9 familiar Christmas carols, interspersed between scenes.

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The 15-minute play version features longer dialogue and several extra scenes not depicted in the pageant versions. It begins with several shepherds lamenting life after The Fall and wishing for a Redeemer, then shifts to Nazareth where a pious and charitable Mary receives the Annunciation, then--9 months later--the Journey to Bethlehem, No Room At The Inn, the Birth of Jesus, the shepherds and the Host of Angels, the Adoration of the Magi, Herod's fury, the Slaughter of the Innocents, The Flight to Egypt and the Return from Egypt.

The 30-minute version begins B.C. (*Before Christ*) with several shepherds lamenting life after The Fall and wishing for a Redeemer, then shifts to Nazareth where a pious and charitable Mary receives the Annunciation. Then, Mary's visit to Elisabet and Zakarais, Mary's return home, Joseph's dilemma, his angel dream, and a reconciliation between Joseph and Mary. Act 2 includes the Journey to Bethlehem, No Room At The Inn, the Birth of Jesus, the shepherds and the Host of Angels, the prophecies of Simeon and Anna, the Adoration of the Magi, Herod's fury, the Slaughter of the Innocents, The Flight to Egypt and the Return from Egypt. This version has trimmed versions of the canticles from Luke: Mary's "Magnificat" and Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis"--all in English, of course. (Optionally this version inserts 10 carols into the drama.)

For information about the stage-play versions of *The Nativity Play*, visit www.ruyasonic.com/stageplay-the-nativity-play-script.html

For a full listing of Anthony E. Palermo's plays, including *Christmas Carol, It's a Wonderful Life!* and *Auntie Scrooge - a BACKWARDS Christmas Carol*, visit www.ruyasonic.com

SCENE 1 - THE WELCOMING
EXT. THE HOLY LAND - DUSK (JANUARY)
(NARRATOR)

THE NARRATOR ENTERS to introduce the story.

NARRATOR: Welcome, one and all, to our recounting of The Nativity;
How--amidst darkness and despair--there came a Light
from Heaven; A Light of salvation, a light of forgiveness, of
peace...
And a Light of joy!...the birth of Jesus Christ. A birth into
the world and a birth within our hearts...

SONG: [CAROL-01] “GOD REST YE, MERRY GENTLEMEN” (VERSE 1)
SUNG BY ALL PERFORMERS
(OPTIONALLY INCLUDING AUDIENCE)

NARRATOR: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. However, our tale does
not start upon Christmas morning. We begin--B.C.--Before
Christ. It is a world in need of redemption. Behold! ...one
Winter’s night--on a hillside near Bethlehem, amidst
“certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay...”

SCENE 2 – THE SHEPHERDS’ LAMENT
EXT. BETHLEHEM HILLSIDE – NIGHT (JANUARY)
(EFRAYIM, TAVEE, BO’AZ, SHEEP #1)

THE SHEPHERDS ENTER.

EFRAYIM: (SHIVERS) Oh! Winter! Such terrible weather!

BO’AZ: (APPROACHING) Yes! So cloudy! I have not seen such
weather since... well.... not since Noah.

TAVEE: (AMAZED) Noah? Of the Ark?

BO’AZ: Yes! It looked like rain then, too!

EFRAYIM: (SKEPTICAL) What...? Noah...?

TAVEE: How old are you?

BO'AZ: Me? Hmmm, Let me recall... (COUNTS ON FINGERS)
Eighty... eighty-one... eighty-two... a thousand! Yes! Yes! I
am very old. Very old!

EFRAYIM: (SCOFFS) A thousand? Bah! You are a mere shepherd--and
all that you say is but ill-spun wool!

ALL THREE SHEPHERDS: (LAUGHTER--AD LIB) oh-oh-oh!

TAVEE: Ah, but what a filthy, cold life this is!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS-INDIGNANTLY) Baaaaa!

EFRAYIM: Better to be here--in the real wilderness--than amidst the
wilderness of spirit, in the towns and villages.

TAVEE: Oh, what a dismal world! A night-mare! How shall I ever
sleep?

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS--INNOCENTLY) Baaaahh.

BO'AZ: (CHIDING) Um... Well... have you tried... have you tried...
counting... sheep?

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS-DERISIVELY) Baaaah.

ALL THREE SHEPHERDS: (LAUGHTER--AD LIB) oh-oh-oh!

THE SHEPHERDS EXIT.

SCENE 3 - THE ANNUNCIATION
EXT. OLIVE GROVE - NIGHT (LATE MARCH)
(NARRATOR, MARY, ANGEL #1)

NARRATOR: But far north, near the village of Nazareth, a pious young
woman named Mary came unto a verdant olive grove--a
place of great peace and contemplation...

MARY and LAMB ENTER.

LAMB: (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

MARY: Ah, my little lamb! I have found you! Come, we shall return home to...

LAMB: (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

MARY: (GASPS) Aaaahhhh!

ANGEL #1 ENTERS.

ANGEL #1: Rejoice, Mary! The Lord is with thee! Bless-ed art thou among women!

MARY: (FEARFUL) Bless-ed...? Me...?

ANGEL #1: Fear not, Mary. Rejoice! For thou hast found favor with The Lord. Behold! Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son!--the anointed one--the Christ! And thou shalt call his name... Jesus.

MARY: (REALIZING) The Messiah...? (GRATEFUL) Oh, heavenly messenger... (UNSURE) I... I... Yes! (TEARFULLY JOYOUS) Behold... the handmaid of the Lord! Let it be unto me... according to thy word. (BOWS HER HEAD IN PRAYER) Yes.

SONG: [CAROL-02] "AVE MARIA" (VERSE 1)
SUNG BY ANGEL ONLY
(OPTIONALLY, CHORUS JOINS)

ANGEL #1 EXITS.

LAMB: (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah!

MARY falls to her knees, lowers her head, clasps hands in prayer.

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(several pages later...)

MARY rises slowly and EXITS during song.

SONG: [CAROL-03] “O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL” (VERSE 1 & 2)

SUNG BY CHORUS

SCENE 4 - COME UNTO BETHLEHEM

EXT. BETHLEHEM INN - NIGHT (DECEMBER 24TH)
(NARRATOR)

During narration and song, JOSEPH and the now 9-months pregnant MARY quietly ENTER, optionally with donkey.

NARRATOR: Months later--as Winter neared--there came a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed--each returning unto their tribal village. And so it was, Mary's husband, Joseph--being a Bethlehem-ite--went out from Galilee. And he took with him his young wife, who was now great with child.

SCENE 6 - NO ROOM AT THE INN

EXT. BETHLEHEM INN - NIGHT (DECEMBER 24TH)
(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, INN-KEEPER, MARY, RACHAB)

NARRATOR: And--at the end of nine days travel--they did arrive at the tiny village of Bethlehem. But it was crowded with other travelers, there--also--to be counted. Joseph and Mary came upon the only inn to be found in the village.

JOSEPH leaves Mary and approaches the door. He knocks (3X).

The INN-KEEPER opens it and leans out.

RACHAB--quietly--ENTERS. She stops and observes the conversation.

JOSEPH: (APPROACHING) Excuse me, inn-keeper, sir. Do you have lodging available for my wife and myself? We have traveled--many days--from Galilee and are weary.

INN-KEEPER: (WEARY) No! There is no room. No room! Every straw pallet is full! There is no room for any-more travelers!

JOSEPH: But, you see, my wife is expecting a child.

INN-KEEPER: Sleep in the fields below. Or the road!

JOSEPH: She is due to bear the child... soon. Perhaps to-night.

INN-KEEPER: (TAKEN ABACK) Uhh.. I am sorry. (EXITING) But... I cannot help you. Go!

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT (several pages later...)

SCENE 7 - THE BIRTH OF JESUS
INT. CAVE/STABLE - AFTER MIDNIGHT (DECEMBER 25TH)
(NARRATOR, INFANT JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH)

SETTING:

The Stable/Cave can be just some wooden poles with a cross-beam, and perhaps, even a peaked roof--like a traditional Christmas crèche. It is open-faced --with a manger. Straw can litter the stable floor.

NARRATOR: While a rustic stable was hardly where one imagined the Savior of man-kind to come into the world, this was all the poor couple could provide. (PAUSE) Yet... just after midnight, it came to pass that Mary gave birth to her child...

INFANT JESUS: (NEWBORN CRY) Waaaah!

MARY: (HOLDING HIM UP) There, there, now... my beautiful boy...

NARRATOR: And she named her son, Jesus--thereby fulfilling the prophecy of the angel of the Lord.

MARY: (TO JOSEPH) Joseph! Come see!

JOSEPH rushes in, joining Mary, who continues to follow the actions described by the narration.

EFRAYIM: And so many sheep!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATING) “Baaahhh!”

ANGEL #2 ENTERS--holding the Star of Bethlehem aloft.

ANGEL #2: Behold, shepherds!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATING--FRIGHTENED) “Baaahhh!”

TAVEE: (WAKING) ZZZZZ--Wha...? (SCREAMS) Ahhh!

ANGEL #2: Behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy! Unto you is born this day a Savior! Christ, the Lord!

EFRAYIM: (STUNNED) The... the... Messiah! He has come!

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT
(several pages later...)

BO’AZ: How amazing! (TO EFRAYIM) Come, Efrayim. Gaze upon... the Savior!

EFRAYIM falls to his knees, stupefied by the child.

EFRAYIM: (TIMIDLY) I... I... (TO MARY, WHISPERS) Thank you.

MARY rises and picking up the child, offers him to EFRAYIM.

MARY: (TO EFRAYIM) Here, then! Hold him.

TAVEE: Go, Efrayim! Hold the child!

EFRAYIM: (TAKING THE CHILD) I... I...

INFANT JESUS: (NEWBORN CRY) Waaa-aaaa!

EFRAYIM: (GASPS) Ohhh! (PANICKED, GIVES CHILD BACK TO MARY) Here...!

ALL: (HEARTY LAUGHTER) Ha-ha-ha-ha!

BO'AZ: If this humble... infant can be the Messiah, then, surely, any of us may enter... the Kingdom of Heaven.

JOSEPH: Bless you! Your joy is our reward.

TAVEE: Our joy comes from full hearts. Praise be unto the Lord!

SHEPHERDS withdraw, EXITING . MALKIOR, GASPAR & BALTAZAR ENTER at verse 2.

SONG: [CAROL-09] “THE FIRST NOEL” (VERSES 1, 2 & 3)

SUNG BY MAGI & CHORUS

(OPTIONALLY, AUDIENCE JOINS)

SCENE 9 - THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

INT. STABLE - DAY (FEBRUARY)

(MARY, JOSEPH, INFANT JESUS, GASPAR, MALKIOR, BALTAZAR,
NARRATOR)

NARRATOR: And it came to pass, that there arrived from the East, three Magi (“MADGE-eye”)--skilled in the arts of astrology and ancient lore.

MARY: Do! Do come in.

JOSEPH: We are but a poor family, yet you are welcome here. Truly!

MALKIOR: We are Magi (“MADGE-eye”) from the lands of Persia, India and Assyria.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT
(several pages later...)

NARRATOR:

And as the prophet Isaiah foretold: “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: And they that dwell in the shadow of death..., upon them hath the light shined.” (PAUSE) Thus... did a new chapter in the life of Man-kind open; One with endless promise, divine mercy and eternal gain! (PAUSE) Rejoice, all people! The Savior had come-- for now and ever-more!

SONG: [CAROL-10]

“OH, COME ALL YE FAITHFUL” (VERSES 1 & 2)

SUNG BY ALL PERFORMERS

(OPTIONALLY, AUDIENCE JOINS)

==THE END==

The full script runs 11 pages, about 15 minutes long (with songs).

Music listing with publishing info

Most songs are to be sung by the whole cast--and optionally, with the audience joining in. Two songs are intended for solo performers: #2 "Ave Maria" and #5 "The Coventry Carol."

- 1) God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Traditional (1833) public domain
- 2) Ave Maria (verse 1 only. Sung by Angel #1 only)
by Franz Schubert (1825) public domain
- 3) O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (verse 1 only)
Traditional Latin hymn, translated by John M. Neal (1851) public domain
- 4) O Little Town of Bethlehem
by Phillips Brooks (1868) public domain
- 5) The Coventry Carol (verse 1 only. Sung by Mary only)
Robert Croo (1534) public domain
- 6) Away in A Manger (there are two different melodies)
Words by unknown (1885) public domain
Melody 1 by William J. Kirkpatrick (1897) public domain "The Cradle Song"
Melody 2 by James R. Murrey (1887) public domain "Mueller"
- 7) The First Noel (verse 1 only)
Traditional (1833) public domain
- 8) Angels We Have Heard On High (verse 1)
by James Chadwick (1862) public domain
- 9) The First Noel (verses 2 & 3 only)
Traditional (1833) public domain
- 10) O Come All Ye Faithful
John Francis Wade, ca 1743
Translator: Frederick Oakely, 1852 (public domain)

All these carols are in the public domain and sheet music can be found in a variety of keys--often on-line.

For full lyrics, MIDI files and history of these carols, see:

http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/HTML/full_index_of_hymns_and_carols.htm

SONG #1 - God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

God rest ye merry gentlemen; let nothing you dismay.
Remember, Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.

CHORUS:

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy!

SONG #2 - Ave Maria [Sung by angel only]

Ave Maria Gratia plena
Maria Gratia plena
Maria Gratia plena
Ave, ave dominus
Dominus tecum

Benedicta tu in mulieribus
Et benedictus
Et benedictus fructus ventris
Ventris tui Jesus

Ave Maria!

SONG #3 - O Holy Night

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining.
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.

A thrill of hope, the weary soul rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees,
Oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

SONG #4 - O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep,
The silent stars go by.

Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

**SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS
POINT
(several pages later...)**

SONG #10 - O Come All Ye Faithful

O come all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels.

CHORUS:

O come, let us adore Him (3x)
Christ, the Lord.

Sing, choir of angels,
Sing in exultations,
Sing all ye citizens of Heaven above:
Glory to God in the Highest.

CHORUS:

O come, let us adore Him (3x)
Christ, the Lord.

CASTING EVALUATION: The Nativity Play Pageant

Date: _____

15 actors: 1 male, 2 female, 12 male-or-female

_____	NARRATOR	Biblical-style narrator (Male or Female)
_____	MARY	16 year-old farm girl (F)
_____	JOSEPH	20 year-old carpenter (M)
_____	LAMB #1	Bleating sheep (M/F)
_____	ANGEL #1	Angel messenger(Gabriel) (M/F)
_____	INN-KEEPER	Crusty inn-keeper (M/F)
_____	RACHAB	Inn-keeper's kindly slave (F/M)
_____	ANGEL #2	Angel messenger (M/F)
_____	BO'AZ	Old, wizened shepherd (M/F)
_____	EFRAYIM	Cynical shepherd (M/F)
_____	TAVEE	Young shepherd (M/F)
_____	SHEEP #1	Bleating sheep (M/F)
_____	MALKIOR	Persian Magi (M/F)
_____	GASPAR	Indian Magi (M/F)
_____	BALTAZAR	Assyrian Magi (M/F)

-Also-

TRAVELERS in Bethlehem,

other SHEPHERDS

HOST OF ANGELS

SHEEP, GOATS, OXEN, DONKEYS, other farm animals

=====
Audition ratings: A through F

Actor Name	Rating	Bold?	Emotion?	Accents	Role?	Notes

CASTING MONOLOGUES: *The Nativity Play*

All actors are asked to read some lines, called “sides,” aloud, to audition. The director will cast the roles in our production based upon these readings. Please take a moment to read the lines below several times, both silently and aloud. These monologues can also provide some “back story,” giving an idea of who the characters are and what kind of story we are producing. Since radio actors often play several parts, we encourage the use of different voices or accents when auditioning for the different roles.

NARRATOR: I am the Narrator and I speak in a measured style, often using a biblical syntax. For example: But--on the shore of the Great Sea--Joseph did now labor on Herod’s palace at Caesarea. He served the old carpenter of Nazareth, Esdras (“EHZ-druhs”), who, while he had lost the sharpness of his sight, had lost not the sharpness of his tongue...

MARY: Scripture says, “Despise not a thief, if he steals to satisfy his soul when he is hungry.” It is not stealing if I give this man the pomegranates, is it? A little less for us shall suffice! I am not a simpleton, Aunt Morag! But that man welcomed the flogging! Why did he do that?

JOSEPH: He said, “no Galilean carpenter would work terebinth.” Well, I am not of Galilee. I am a Bethlehem-ite! I shall gladly work this terebinth lumber. But Wait, Mary! All Spring I did work in Caesarea and learned much about carpentry. And... today... (JOKING) I have invented... the wheel! (HOLDS UP SQUARISH WHEEL) Look!

ANGEL #1: Rejoice, Mary! Hail thou--that art highly favored! The Lord is with thee! Bless-ed art thou among women! Behold! Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son!--the anointed one--the Christ! And thou shalt call His name... Jesus.

BO'AZ: (OLD SHEPHERD) Yea! David--the great King David--was once a mere shepherd boy. But the Lord avored him, and David did great deeds... (SIGHS) So long ago... Herod and the Romans are only the most obvious of evil-doers. The wolves are man-kind! Wickedness burns in every heart! For we are separated from the Lord... alas... (SIGHS) for-ever.

BALTAZAR: From the East, we saw a new star rise--a brilliant light in the Heavens--and we have followed it here. You see, the stars portend, "As above, so below"--therefore the Messiah shall come from Bethlehem. But you are wise, great Herod... for a king.

RACHAB: Wait! Sir! Ahaz ("AY-hez"), the inn-keeper--is my master, but I think you could stay in the stable. Ahaz may beat me for doing this, but you need some-where to stay. I was homeless once, myself. If you should require anything, come 'round the kitchen. (WHISPERS) But avoid Ahaz. He angers easily.

SHEEP #1: Baaaaaah!
(BLEATS-INDIGNANTLY) Baaaaa!
(BLEATS--INNOCENTLY) Baaaahh.
(BLEATS-DERISIVELY) Baaaah.