

## TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT

This is a series of excerpted scenes from the full script, which runs to 75 pages--about 70 minutes in performance.

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.

If you wish to secure the performance rights to this script, pre-recorded music tracks and pre-recorded sound effects, contact [Sales@RuyaSonic.com](mailto:Sales@RuyaSonic.com)

# THE NATIVITY PLAY

(70-minute version)

A radio drama by  
Anthony E. Palermo

**RUYASONIC**  
940 S. Windsor Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90019  
(323) 938-0415 [Palermo@RuyaSonic.com](mailto:Palermo@RuyaSonic.com)  
[www.RuyaSonic.com](http://www.RuyaSonic.com)

TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT  
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## BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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Billing shall be in the following form:

(name of producer)  
presents

### THE NATIVITY PLAY

Written by  
ANTHONY E. PALERMO

Long bio:

**ANTHONY E. PALERMO** (PLAYWRIGHT) is a radio dramatist, performer, and educator based in Los Angeles. His work is heard on NPR and Satellite Radio as well as in audiobooks and on-stage with L.A. Theatre Works, California Artists Radio Theater, numerous theatre troupes, and on national tours. His holiday-themed plays, *A Christmas Carol*, *It's A Wonderful Life*, *Auntie Scrooge--a BACKWARDS Christmas Carol*, and *The Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow* have seen productions around the world since 1998. Tony's sound effects work on Yuri Rasovsky's *Sherlock Holmes Theatre* contributed to its winning the 2006 *Audie Award*--the Oscar of audiobooks. Tony directed the 60th anniversary production of Norman Corwin's *On a Note of Triumph*--for which he also re-created Bernard Herrmann's orchestral score. Recently, Tony provided live SFX for shows such as Eric Idle's *What About Dick?*, CART's *Ray Bradbury's Leviathan '99*, LATW's *Hamlet* and *Frost/Nixon*, as well as performing 65 solo shows at the California State Fair. Tony's *Sonic Storytelling Studio* at San Francisco's Exploratorium is a permanent exhibit that has seen thousands of visitors since 2006. His *Sparx Audio Adventures* assembly programs and workshops are popular with schools and colleges across California, the U.S. and the world. Tony also hosts the RuyaSonic Radio Drama Resources website, offering info on writing, directing, scoring, engineering, and sound effects. [www.RuyaSonic.com](http://www.RuyaSonic.com)

Short bio:

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

NOTE: Up-to-date text of the bios is available at [www.RuyaSonic.com/tp2bio.htm](http://www.RuyaSonic.com/tp2bio.htm) You can cut & paste the text into your playbill or program and thus not have to worry about typos.

# The Nativity Play

(70-minute version)

NARRATOR	The narrator (Male or Female)
MARY	16 year-old farm girl (F)
JOSEPH	20 year-old carpenter (M)
ANGEL #1	Angel messenger(Gabriel) (M/F)
ANGEL #2	Angel messenger(M/F)
ANGEL #3	Angel messenger (M/F)
ANGEL #4	Angel messenger(M/F)
ELISABET	Mary's aged kinswoman (F)
ZAKARIAS	Elisabet's husband (M)
HEROD THE GREAT	Tyrannical "King of the Jews" (M)
MALKIOR	Persian Magi (M/F)
GASPAR	Indian Magi (M/F)
BALTAZAR	Assyrian Magi (M/F)
JOAKIM	Mary's blustery father (M)
HANNAH	Mary's sympathetic mother (F)
AUNT MORAG	Mary's stern aunt (F)
INN-KEEPER	Crusty inn-keeper (M/F)
SIMEON	Pious old man (M)
ANNA	Old Prophetess (F)
ESDRAS	Joseph's carpentry mentor (M)
AMBASSADOR LIVIUS	Roman Ambassador (M)
BO'AZ	Old, wizened shepherd (M/F)
EFRAYIM	Cynical shepherd (M/F)
SHEP	Young shepherd (M/F)
RACHAB	Inn-keeper's kindly slave (F/M)
CHASIDA	Mary's friend (F)
LIAT	Mary's friend (F)
OFFICER	Nazareth constable (M)
ETAN	Herod's minister (M/F)
QUEEN MALTACE	Herod's wife (F)
HIGH PRIEST DIVREE	Herod's High Priest (M)
MASTEMA	Abusive construction foreman (M/F)
THIEF	Bitter thief (M/F)
LAMBS/INFANTS	Bleating lambs, infants (F/M)

Small cast: 16 actors (4 male, 5 female, 7 male-or-female)

Large cast: 34 actors (9 male, 8 female, 17 male-or-female)

See appendix for suggestions about doubling roles.

Two sound effects artists are also required.

Visit Tony Palermo's Radio Drama Resources website: [www.RuyaSonic.com](http://www.RuyaSonic.com)

## PLOT SYNOPSIS:

I offer two radio-drama versions of *The Nativity Play*—a 70-minute and a 30-minute. Both dramatize Mary and Joseph's life, mixing reverence and humor to make for an uplifting and entertaining show.

**The 70-minute version** begins B.C. (*Before Christ*) with several shepherds lamenting life after The Fall and wishing for a Redeemer, then to a Nazareth marketplace where a charitable and pious Mary meets Joseph, the Annunciation, the Visitation to Elisabet and Zakarais, Joseph's carpentry work on King Herod's palace, the birth and naming of John The Baptist, Mary's return home, Joseph's Dilemma, his angel dream, and a reconciliation between Joseph and Mary. Act 2 includes scenes depicting King Herod's tyranny, the Roman Census, 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, Herod questioning/tricking the Magi, the Adoration of the Magi, Herod's fury, the Slaughter of the Innocents, The Flight to Egypt and the Return from Egypt. This version includes the full canticles from Luke: Mary's "Magnificat," Zakarias' "Benedictus," Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis"--all in English, of course.

**The 30-minute version** contains most of the scenes from the 70-minute version, but trims lines and omits several scenes entirely; No Nazareth marketplace meeting of Joseph and Mary, no Joseph's carpentry at Herod's palace, no John The Baptist naming ceremony (thus cutting Zakarias' "Benedictus" canticle), no strife with Mary's family over her situation, no dramatization of Joseph getting advice to "quietly divorce Mary." It also eliminates two scenes depicting King Herod's tyranny, Joseph and Mary deciding to journey to Bethlehem, and cuts one of Joseph's angel dreams--and shortens Mary's "Magnificat" and Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis" speeches.

The short version is intended for productions with time limitations: worship services, theaters, classrooms or radio stations. There are many more Biblical references, more emotion and humor in the 70-minute version. However the 30-minute version still holds up as an emotional and spiritual experience.

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](http://www.ruyasonic.com)

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

NARRATOR: [CUE] 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, of forgiveness, of peace...

NARRATOR: [CUE] And a Light of joy!...the birth of Jesus Christ. A birth into the world and a birth within our hearts.

NARRATOR: [CUE] However, our tale does not begin on Christmas morning. No, it winds through the months before the birth of the Divine Child.

SFX TRACK: [FX-01] WINTER WINDS, SHEEP, THUNDER--UNDER NEXT  
SCENE

NARRATOR: [CUE] This world--B.C. Before Christ--was in need of redemption. We begin here--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, SHEP, BO'AZ, SHEEP #1, NARRATOR)

SFX: SHEP PLAYS A JAW HARP--UNDER, UNTIL HIS LINE

EFRAYIM: (SHIVERS) Ohh! Winter! Such terrible weather for a herder of sheep!

BO'AZ: (APPROACHING) 'Tis true, Efrayim!  
("eff-ray-EEM") So cloudy! I have not seen such weather since... well.... since Noah.

SHEP: (AMAZED) Noah? Of the Ark?

BO'AZ: Yea! It looked like rain then, too!

EFRAYIM: (SKEPTICAL) What? Noah? Tell me, Bo'az?  
("BO-ahhz") How old are you?

BO'AZ: Me? Errrrr... quite old! I forget... hmm...  
three-score and ten? Seventy? No...  
Eighty...?

SHEP: But Noah and the Ark? That was thousands of  
years ago! Time out of mind!

BO'AZ: Yes! Hmmm, Shep. ("SHEP") Let me recall...  
(COUNTS ON FINGERS) Eighty... eighty-one...  
eight-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!

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

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS-INDIGNANTLY) Baaaaa!

EFRAYIM: Such is our lot, young one. And yet, to be a  
herder of sheep is no despicable occupation.

BO'AZ: Yea! David--the great King David--was once a  
"mere" shepherd boy. But the Lord favored  
him, and David did great deeds... (SIGHS)  
But that was so long ago...

EFRAYIM: But that is what we need to-day! A new David! Look about you: poverty, oppression! We lie crushed--beneath the heel of that tyrant, Herod!

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(several pages later...)

BO'AZ: Yes. We are sheep... preyed upon by wolves.

SHEP: That venomous Herod! And the Romans!

BO'AZ: Herod and the Romans are only the most obvious evil-doers. The wolves are man-kind! Wickedness burns in every heart! For we are separated from the Lord... alas... (SIGHS) for-ever.

SHEP: (SIGHS) Then life is hopeless.

EFRAYIM: That is why we labor here, close to nature. Better the real wilderness--this mountainside--than the wilderness of spirit, amidst the towns and villages.

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

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!

NARRATOR: [CUE] These simple shepherds tend their flocks, keeping them safe from harm. But life differs--elsewhere. In Galilee--far north of Bethlehem--lies Nazareth, a quaint farm village, with its fields, its groves and its market. But--unlike the pastoral hillside of the shepherds--in Nazareth's marketplace, the "wolves" walk on two legs...

SFX TRACK: [FX-03] NAZARETH WINTER AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

SCENE 3 - WICKEDNESS AND MERCY IN NAZARETH  
EXT. NAZARETH MARKETPLACE - AFTERNOON (JANUARY)  
(CHASIDA, THIEF, OFFICER, LIAT, MARY, AUNT MORAG)

CROWD WALLA: (ANGRY CROWD)--"HOLD HIM", "WE HAVE HIM",  
"YOU DOG!"--UNDER

THIEF: (STRUGGLING) Let go! Unhand me!

CHASIDA: Thief! Thief! Stealing pomegranates, eh?

OFFICER: No mercy for you, thief! Ten lashes!

LIAT: Give him twenty lashes, Officer! Chasida ("cha-SEE-dah") and I spied him before! He would steal from all of us! The dog!

CROWD WALLA: (ANGRY TAUNTS)--THEY QUIET UNDER MARY

MARY: (RUNNING UP) Stop! Those were my pomegranates! I brought them here to sell.  
(TO MORAG) Did I not, Aunt Morag?  
( "MORE-ahhg" )

AUNT MORAG: Mary speaks the truth! (TO OFFICER) Officer! This thief has several of her pomegranates in his hands! See?

LIAT: Look! He has no thumbs! The punishment for stealing!

MARY: Wait! (TO THIEF) Sir. If you have nothing to trade, can you labor in exchange? Some farm chores? My father shall...

THIEF: Chores...? Farm chores? (ARROGANTLY) For peasants like you?

AUNT MORAG: Mary! This thief deserves whipping!

MARY: No! Scripture says, "Despise not a thief if he steals to satisfy his soul when he is hungry."

OFFICER: But Scripture also says, "Punish the wicked for their iniquity!" So, um... fifteen lashes for stealing!

CROWD WALLA: (ANGRY TAUNTS)--THEY QUIET UNDER MARY

MARY: No! No! (TO ALL) It is not stealing if I give him the pomegranates, is it? A little less for us shall suffice! (TO THIEF) Here, take the pomegranates. Take them. I insist.

THIEF: (SOURLY) Insist? A peasant-girl insists? Bah!

MARY: We do not have much, but we have... enough.

THIEF: (NASTILY) Well, this is how I regard your "enough." (SPITS)

CROWD WALLA: (GASPS)

THIEF: (NASTILY) And your fruit!

SFX: THIEF THROWS DOWN POMEGRANATES. STOMPS THEM INTO THE DIRT.

CROWD WALLA: (ANGRY TAUNTS--AD LIB) "YOU DOG!" "BEAT HIM"

CHASIDA: You deliberately crushed them! All of them!

THIEF: (DEFIANTLY) Hah! Pomegranates grow on trees!

OFFICER: That scorn shall reap nine extra lashes, swine! (HITTING THE THIEF WITH EACH WORD) "Thou. Shalt. Not. Steal!"

THIEF: (TO ALL) Go! Flog me! A curse upon all of you! (CRIES OUT IN AGONY) Ahhhhh!

SFX: OFFICER HAULS THIEF AWAY. CROWD PELTS HIM.

CROWD WALLA: (ANGRY, THEY HARRY HIM OFF-STAGE, AD-LIB)

AUNT MORAG: (ANGRY) Mary! You simpleton!

MARY: (PEEVED) Aunt Morag, I am not! But that man welcomed the flogging! Why did he do that?

CHASIDA: (STERNLY) It is you who confound me, Mary! Throughout Nazareth, it is said: (SNOOTY) "Mary--sixteen and still un-wed." "Tsk, tsk, tsk." "Mary... a spinster!"

LIAT: You sift and sift and sift! We all married at thirteen or fourteen! Do you think yourself more worthy?

MARY: No, but my father said...

AUNT MORAG: Your father! Saddled with a "too-old" daughter--a burden to the family.

MARY: I am not a burden! I work hard.

AUNT MORAG:                    You sacrificed your family's hard work by giving that fruit to that thief--who ground them into the mud!

CHASIDA:                        (DISGUSTED) Filthy vagabonds! (NOTICES JOSEPH) Look! Another! (TO JOSEPH) You, there...! Tramp! Why are you here?

JOSEPH:                         (APPROACHING) (TO MARY) I... errr... saw how that man crushed your pomegranates.

MARY:                            Yes?

JOSEPH:                         (ON MIC) Errr... May I have what is left of them?

MARY:                            Now? But they are crushed into the dirt.

JOSEPH:                         I am hungry. But I have no valuables to barter with.

LIAT:                             (TO MARY) Caution, Mary. Another vagrant. Thieves run in packs.

MARY:                            (TO JOSEPH) Sir, I have no pomegranates other than these ruined ones. But... you may have them.

JOSEPH:                         Thank you. (EATING THEM) I would... I would... errr... be willing to work to repay you.

AUNT MORAG:                    Repay? For these? Do not lie, young man. (TO CHASIDA) Chasida! Run for the Officer.

CHASIDA:                        (EVIL LAUGH) Yes! (TO LIAT) Liat! ("LEE-yot") Go! (EXITING) And bring Yakob!

LIAT:                             I shall! (EXITING) And his men!

AUNT MORAG:                    Come along, Mary! (PAUSE) Mary...?

MARY: (TO JOSEPH) Sir... You would not shirk farm chores? Have you any skills?

JOSEPH: Uhh... well... some...

MARY: Tool skills? Here... pound this nail--so I can hang a fruit basket upon this tree.

SFX: JOSEPH TAKES HAMMER. POUNDS 1-2-3, BUT HITS HIS THUMB!

JOSEPH: (IN PAIN) Owww!

MARY: Lo!... You are not a carpenter... Are you?

JOSEPH: Sadly, not a carpenter. (SIGH) Just a laborer. I haul stones. I shovel dung. I dig wells.

MARY: Dig wells?

AUNT MORAG: (STERNLY) Mary! That is enough! Come along!

MARY: (TO JOSEPH) Sir? I feel... you will do. Come to our farm... I am Mary. What is your name?

JOSEPH: Umm... my mother named me Joseph.

AUNT MORAG: Oh, Mary! You fool! (SLAPS FOREHEAD)

**SCENE 4 - THE HIRED HAND****EXT. NAZARETH MARKETPLACE - DUSK (MARCH)****(NARRATOR, JOSEPH)**

NARRATOR: [CUE] And so... a poor farm girl in Galilee gave a young vagabond... a chance. Joseph labored as a hired hand on her family's small farm. And--in time--Mary found him an apprenticeship with the master carpenter of Nazareth.

**SFX:** (DISTANT) JOSEPH HAMMERS 1-2-3, BUT HITS HIS THUMB!

**JOSEPH:** (DISTANT) Owww!

**NARRATOR:** [CUE] And--much to the consternation of Aunt Morag--it came to pass that Mary and Joseph did fall in love and become betrothed to one another. But as was the custom in those times, Mary did remain with her family until the day when Joseph could provide her with a home. So she did labor--spinning flax, milling barley and baking bread.

SCENE 5 - THE ANNUNCIATION  
EXT. OLIVE GROVE - NIGHT (LATE MARCH)  
(NARRATOR, MARY, ANGEL #1)

**SFX TRACK:** [FX-04] MARCH WINDS, CRICKETS--UNDER SCENE.

**NARRATOR:** [CUE] One night--weeks later, in the early Spring--Mary searched for a lamb, which had wandered off from his pen. She came unto a verdant olive grove--a place of great peace and contemplation...

**LAMB #2:** (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

**MARY:** Ah! There you are, my little one! Whatsoever brought you here, so far from home?

**LAMB #2:** (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

**MARY:** (PICKING UP THE LAMB) We were all searching for you... But I have found you! Let us return. Father shall...

**SFX TRACK:** FADE WINDS AND CRICKETS--UNDER

**LAMB #2:** (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

MARY: Hush! (WHISPERS) It has become so quiet...  
Look! (PUZZLED) Oh! The moon grows bright!  
What... what be this? This... light?

ANGEL #1: [REVERB] Rejoice, Mary! Hail thou--that art  
highly favored! The Lord is with thee!  
Bless-ed art thou among women!

MARY: (FEARFUL) Bless-ed...? Me...? Oh, sir. What  
manner of salutation is this? Who...?  
Wha...?

ANGEL #1: Fear not, Mary. Rejoice! For thou hast found  
favor with The Lord.

MARY: (PUZZLED) Favor...? But...

ANGEL #1: Behold! Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and  
bring forth a son!--the anointed one--the  
Christ! And thou shalt call his name...  
Jesus.

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SCENE 7 - THE VISITATION TO ELISABET  
EXT. ELISABET'S COURTYARD - DAY (EARLY APRIL)  
(NARRATOR, MARY, ELISABET, ZAKARIAS)

NARRATOR: [CUE] After eight days of travel, Mary came  
unto the home of Elisabet and Zakarias.  
Despite being old and stricken in age,  
Elisabet would--in three months time--bear  
the future John The Baptist. It was to this  
house that Mary did arrive...

MARY: Ahh! (EXCHANGING KISSES) Elisabet! Zakarias! Peace be unto you and your household. Oh, Elisabet! My mother told me you were with child. What a blessing!

ELISABET: But, Mary! Blessed art thou! And blessed is the fruit of thy womb!

MARY: (STARTLED) My...? Then... you know of the miracle? How could the...

ELISABET: (JOYFULLY) Miracles abound, my dear! When you spoke--just now--the babe within me leaped for joy!

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS IN ASSENT) Hmm-mmmm!

MARY: Oh, Zakarias, you must be so proud.

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS "Yes but...") Mmm-mmmmmmm.

MARY: (TO ELISABET) Elisabet, what has happened? Why joy admixed with sorrow? ...from Zakarias? Can he not speak?

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS "No") Mmm.

ELISABET: Oh, but Mary, that is part of how I came to be with child! Six months ago, Zakarias was chosen to offer incense in the Temple Sanctuary. But once he was within, he had a vision! An... (AMAZED) an angel of the Lord... appeared unto him.

MARY: (PUZZLED) To Zakarias? (AMAZED As with me!) An angel of the Lord? I saw--

ELISABET: Wait! And the angel promised that I... would--after twenty years of being barren--conceive a son!

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS IN ASSENT) Hmm-mmmm!

MARY: (REALIZING) Oh, Elisabet! We have so much to talk about! I knew I could only speak to you about this. You see... that very thing did happen unto...

ELISABET: But wait! When the angel told him, Zakarias doubted the prophecy! He did! And--in rebuke for his lack of faith...

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS "Hey!") Hmm!

ELISABET: (INSISTING) ...his lack of faith, Zakarias was rendered mute!

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS a troubled "yes") Mmmm!

MARY: And so he cannot speak?

ELISABET: He cannot. But I have come to realize... (SMILES) that--in a husband, silence... is a virtue!

ZAKARIAS: (HUMS "Hey!") Hmm!

ELISABET: (CHUCKLES) Heaven-sent!

MARY: (LAUGHINGLY) Oh, Elisabet!

ELISABET: But, come... Mary... tell us of your life. Your mother and father--are they well?

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SFX: ZAKARIAS MARKING ON SLATE: "LET US PRAY"

ELISABET: Wait! Zakarias writes... (READS) "Let us give thanks." Oh, yes. Pray, my dear.

MARY: I... I-I... Yes! The Spirit! Uplifting me...  
(JOYFULLY)  
Ohhh! My soul doth magnify the Lord!  
And my spirit rejoices in God--my Savior.  
For he has regarded the meekness of his  
handmaiden. And from henceforth, all ages  
shall call me... blessed.  
The Mighty One hath done to me great things,  
and Holy is his name;  
And his mercy is upon them that honor him--  
from generation to generation.  
(MORE...)

MARY: (CONT'D) He hath shown strength in his arm:  
He hath scattered the Proud in the conceit  
of their hearts;  
He brought down the rulers from thrones, And  
he exalted... the Humble.  
The Hungry he hath filled with good, And the  
Rich he hath sent away... empty!  
He--having mind of his mercy--helped Israel,  
his child...  
as he promised--to our fathers, to Abraham--  
and to his seed--for--ever! (HUMBLY) Amen.

NARRATOR: [CUE] And so, Mary did thank the Lord for  
the blessing he had bestowed... a new  
covenant for all man-kind.

SCENE 8 - THE CARPENTERS LABOR  
EXT. CAESAREA MARITIMA SHORE - DAY (EARLY APRIL)  
(NARRATOR, ESDRAS, JOSEPH, MASTEMA)

SFX TRACK: [FX-09] SEASIDE AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

**NARRATOR:** [CUE] But--on the shore of the Great Sea-- Joseph did now labor at Herod's palace in Caesarea. He served the old carpenter, Esdras ("EHZ-druhs"), who, while he had lost the sharpness of his sight, had lost not the sharpness of his tongue...

**SFX:** JOSEPH SAWING WOOD--UNDER. STOPS WHEN HE SPEAKS

**ESDRAS:** (ANGRILY) Joseph! You ox! This plank must be a cubit in width! That is not a cubit!

**JOSEPH:** (JOKINGLY) But Master Esdras, how can you tell? You are blind!

**ESDRAS:** (MOCKINGLY) Yes!...but noooo! I can still feel, can I not? This plank is a span too narrow! (RHETORICALLY) Oh..., why did I accept you as my apprentice?

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**ZAKARIAS:** (CONT'D)  
To give knowledge of Salvation unto his people for the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, by which the day-break from Heaven... shall visit us, shining light to those who sit in darkness... and in the shadow of Death, And guide our feet... into the way... of peace. Amen!

**INFANT JOHN:** (CRIES) Waaaahhh!

NARRATOR: [CUE] And thus, John The Baptist was set upon his path... to be the fore-runner of Christ: Savior of all men.

SCENE 10 - MARY RETURNS TO NAZARETH  
EXT. MARY'S FAMILY'S FARM COURTYARD - DAY (EARLY JULY)  
(NARRATOR, JOAKIM, MARY, HANNA, AUNT MORAG)

SFX TRACK: [FX-10] SUMMER BARNYARD--UNDER SCENE

NARRATOR: [CUE] Mary had remained in the house of Zakarias and Elisabet for three months, but now did return home unto Nazareth. However, her family was much vexed to find her with child. Alas, good news is not always greeted as such...

JOAKIM: (ANGRY) Mary! You have brought disgrace upon us!

MARY: Father! I have done nothing wrong!

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ESDRAS: You have traded one bitter fruit for another, Joseph. Such is life. (PAUSE)  
Tomorrow, we shall go to the scribe. And prepare a writ of divorcement. The Law of Moses must be upheld!

SCENE 13 - JOSEPH'S ANGEL DREAM  
INT. ESDRAS' WORKSHOP - NIGHT (JULY)  
(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, ANGEL #2)

SFX TRACKS: [FX-12] WORKSHOP NIGHT AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

NARRATOR: [CUE] Esdras was resolute. His many years had taught him to doubt all; to trust little. But Joseph still felt kindly towards Mary. And it came to pass--at evening-tide--that Joseph's sleep was much troubled.

SFX: JOSEPH TOSSES IN BED--UNDER

JOSEPH: (MUMBLING) No! No! Mary! (AD-LIB) Mother!

NARRATOR: [CUE] His mind was awash with stirred feelings and great dread. And--at this dark moment--lo!, an angel of the Lord spoke to him in a dream...

ANGEL #2: [REVERB] Joseph--of the House of David! Hearken now unto my voice! Fear not to take unto thee Mary as thy wife, for the child conceived within her is of the Holy Spirit!

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(several pages later...)

SCENE 14 - THE RECONCILIATION  
EXT. OLIVE GROVE - NIGHT (JULY)  
(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, MARY)

NARRATOR: [CUE] And Joseph did walk until he came to find himself in a grove of olive trees. And there--under the stars--did he ponder she who had died while giving birth to him...

JOSEPH: (HEAD BOWED) Mother, I wonder about you, down in Sheol. You died--aged but fifteen years--birthing me. Why was your life so short? Why is my life so full of woe?

SFX: BRIEF WIND GUST

JOSEPH: Mother, you did name me Joseph--which means "God give increase"--but all I see... is loss. I did leave Bethlehem. I am betrothed to a woman... who bears not my child. Why, Mother...? Why?

SFX: BRIEF WIND GUST

JOSEPH: Did you not love me? Does the Lord not love me?

MARY: (DISTANT) I love you, Joseph. I always have.

JOSEPH: (STARTLED) Mary! How do you come to be here?

MARY: (APPROACHING) I, too, could not sleep, Joseph. My life at home is troubled. I came here to pray. It is special--this grove.

JOSEPH: I came here because I saw this grove in a dream--one that I do not understand.

MARY: This is where the angel of the Lord appeared unto me--just after we were betrothed. You had left for Caesarea. The angel promised that the Holy Spirit would infuse me with God's grace.

JOSEPH: (STUNNED) An angel! Appeared unto you?

MARY: I was also puzzled--at first. He proclaimed that the Lord had chosen me to bear his Son--a redeemer. And that... his name shall...

JOSEPH: ...his name shall be... Jesus.

MARY: (GASPS) Ahh! (STUNNED) Yes! Jesus. Jesus! How can you have known such...?

JOSEPH: Then my dream was true! In it, a voice said you had conceived of the Holy Spirit and that the child shall be named Jesus!

MARY: An angel in your dream, my husband?

JOSEPH: Yes! And that this son would "save his people from their sins."

MARY: Then... do you... forgive me, Joseph?

JOSEPH: (STUNNED) Forgive... you? (REALIZING) Oh, Mary. Please forgive me! For I did doubt you. Esdras pressed me to divorce, yet... I cannot but love you. (THEY EMBRACE)

MARY: See how the stars shine? God's grace is painted across the sky.

JOSEPH: Beautiful!

MARY: And the stars are there all day! We cannot see them, but we know they are there. That is how I love you, Joseph... And that is how the Lord loves his people. Always there.

JOSEPH: (HUMBLY) May I prove worthy of your love, Mary.

MARY: As we vowed at our betrothal, Joseph:  
"We shall be happy together, drink deep and lose ourselves in love."

JOSEPH: "My lover is mine... and I... am hers."  
(THEY KISS)

**NARRATOR:**

And so... Mary and Joseph were reconciled under the light of Heaven. They found themselves--through faith and surrender. And it would come to pass that together, they should carry forward the Lord's purpose of the reconciliation of God and Man!

--END OF ACT 1--

--START OF ACT 2--

SCENE 1 - THE MONTHS PASS

INT. HEROD'S JERUSALEM PALACE - DUSK (DECEMBER)  
(NARRATOR)

NARRATOR: [CUE] Now fully wed, Mary and Joseph did spend the next months preparing for the birth of the Divine Child. But, as Winter approached, cold winds did blow and the days grew shorter. Yet, a darkness... of a different sort ruled Jerusalem, where sat King Herod-The-Great--old, and well-stricken in age--yet, full of the arrogance which treasure and sword had won him...

SCENE 2 - HEROD'S PLOY FOR THE CENSUS

INT. HEROD'S JERUSALEM PALACE - NIGHT (DECEMBER)  
(ETAN, HEROD, AMBASSADOR LIVIUS, QUEEN MALTACE, NARRATOR)

ETAN: (PROSTRATES HIMSELF BEFORE HEROD) Lord Herod, sire! I announce Ambassador Livius--just returned from Rome.

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Hail, Herod! I bear salutations from Caesar Augustus.

HEROD THE GREAT: (COUGHS) Livius! (SARCASTICALLY) The court of Herod The Great is always eager to lick the (COUGH) boot of Rome.

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: I admire the boldness of your hypocrisy, you old fox. (TO MALTACE) Ahh, fair Queen Maltace. Is your husband... ailing?

QUEEN MALTACE: Perhaps, Livius. One of the court physicians thought Herod suffered from scabies... "mites." Another thought gangrene... but...

HEROD THE GREAT: They could not decide. (COUGHS) So I executed them both. Yet, still, I cough and I itch.

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(several pages later...)

HEROD THE GREAT: But... hear me out, Livius--there is a craftier way to convince the Jews to participate in this census. And avoid riots.

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: That would suit Rome well, Herod. Explain...

HEROD THE GREAT: We Jews--and I am half-Jewish myself--are proud of our heritage.

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: As are the...

HEROD THE GREAT: ...Romans. (COUGHS) Yes. But I could declare that this census is to certify the genealogies of the Twelve Tribes of Israel... Who begat whom, et cetera.

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Go on...

HEROD THE GREAT: The Jews--in order to document their family lines--would flock to their ancestral villages, clamoring to be enrolled. Any resistance would be a "sin against God."

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Very well, Herod. But even though Winter begins soon, Caesar wishes you make it so.

HEROD THE GREAT: (TO ETAN) Etan! (CLAPS HANDS 2X) Draft a royal edict commanding the enumeration. It shall take place over the upcoming Winter Solstice.

ETAN: Yes, sire.

HEROD THE GREAT: (TO LIVIUS) My ploy shall cause the Jews to enroll--despite the weather and travel involved.

QUEEN MALTACE: See, Ambassador! Rome benefits exceedingly from Herod's brilliance!

HEROD THE GREAT: But, Livius... When the new taxes are collected, I expect my share shall be enlarged... (COUGHS) in appreciation of my cunning.

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(several pages later...)

WALLA: (DISTANT) TRAVELERS MURMUR--UNDER SCENE

JOSEPH: (SIPPING WATER) Hmmm. This well-water, Mary, is bitter, but welcome nonetheless. Here...

MARY: Thank you, Joseph. It will do--for now. There is sweet water ahead. And better days in our future...

JOSEPH: (SIGHS) You think of the future, my wife... I merely feel this moment. (QUIETLY) But if you do carry the Son of God--the Messiah--what thence shall come?

MARY: You must trust the Lord, Joseph. Share my faith!

JOSEPH: I do! But to be parents of... (WHISPERS) the Messiah...? Are we worthy of such a task? Will he be a prophet? A priestly-king?

MARY: It is puzzling, yes...

JOSEPH: I am a mere carpenter! You, a farmer's daughter! How can we foster... a king? Raise... a king? What do we know of ruling over people?

MARY: Rule? (SIGHS) We only know how to serve others.

JOSEPH: And what could we possibly teach the Messiah?--He that shall bring justice to all.

MARY: Justice? I know only mercy.

JOSEPH: I worry. How can we--poor people--be the ones to...

MARY: The Lord has called upon me--upon us--to serve him. I surrendered myself to God. And though his ways are beyond our knowing, I shall not waver from the path he set me upon.

JOSEPH: Indeed... I shall serve you--and The Lord--as well as I am able. Let us continue now...

SFX TRACK: [FX-15] BETHLEHEM WINTER WIND--UNDER SCENE

## SCENE 5 - NO ROOM AT THE INN

EXT. BETHLEHEM INN - NIGHT (DECEMBER 24TH)

(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, INN-KEEPER, MARY, RACHAB)

NARRATOR: [CUE] Joseph and Mary journeyed through the wilderness. And--at the end of nine days travel--after going up through the Valley of Hinnom, they arrived at the tiny village of Bethlehem. But it was crowded with other pilgrims, seeking to enroll. Joseph and Mary came unto the only inn to be found in the village.

SFX: JOSEPH KNOCKS ON DOOR--IT OPENS.

GROUP WALLA: RAUCOUS TRAVELERS DINING--UNDER

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! People are sleeping in the courtyard--even on such a windy night. 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) I cannot help you. Go!

SFX: INN-KEEPER SHUTS DOOR--WALLA STOPS ABRUPTLY.

JOSEPH: (TO HIMSELF) Oh... What shall I do? (CALLS OUT) Mary?

MARY: (DISTANT) Yes, Joseph.

JOSEPH: They have no room. We shall have to look elsewhere.

MARY: (DISTANT) There is not much time...

RACHAB: (APPROACHING) Wait! Sir! Ahaz ("AY-hez")-- the inn-keeper--is my master, but I think you could lodge in the stable.

JOSEPH: The stable? But my wife...

RACHAB: The stable is dirty, yes. But it is dry--and out of the cold. Go down that path, there!

JOSEPH: Thank you. Thank you for your generosity...

RACHAB: Rachab ("raw-CHOB") is my name. Ahaz may beat me for my "generosity", but you need somewhere to stay. I was homeless once, myself.

JOSEPH: Thank you, Rachab.

RACHAB: If you should require anything, come 'round the kitchen. (WHISPERS) But avoid Ahaz. He angers easily. Now, go!

JOSEPH: (EXITING) Mary! We have found respite...

RACHAB: (TO HERSELF) Ohh! What a life they must lead, the poor wretches. And bringing a child into such a world! (SIGHS) Fools...

SFX TRACK: [FX-17] LATE NIGHT AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

## SCENE 7 - THE BIRTH OF JESUS

INT. CAVE/STABLE - AFTER MIDNIGHT (DECEMBER 25)

(NARRATOR, INFANT JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH)

NARRATOR: [CUE] 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! (3X-QUICKLY)

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

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

MARY: (TO JOSEPH) Joseph! Come see!

JOSEPH: (APPROACHING) Ohhhh! How wonder-ful!

NARRATOR: [CUE] Then Mary washed the Holy Child. And did take a small vial of olive oil, and dabbed some upon his head, and kissed him. A new light had come unto a weary world. And it was good...

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ANGEL #3: [REVERB] Behold, shepherds!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATING--FRIGHTENED) "Baaahh!"

BO'AZ" Shep! Wake! Wake up! We must flee!

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

ANGEL #3: [REVERB] Fear not, shepherds!

EFRAYIM: (WHISPERS) What is it? A star?

SHEP: (WHISPERS) Stars do not make sounds! They just twinkle.

ANGEL #3: [REVERB] Behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy!

EFRAYIM: (FRIGHTENED) J-J-Joy?

ANGEL #3: [REVERB] Unto you is born this day--in the city of David--a Savior!

SHEP: City of David? That is here! Bethlehem!

BO'AZ: (TO SHEP) Hush! (TO ANGEL) A... a savior?

ANGEL #3: [REVERB] A redeemer! Christ, the Lord!

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

ANGEL #3: [REVERB] You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

SHEEP #1: (BLEATING) "Baaahhh!"

SHEP: A... a manger? A trough to feed animals?

BO'AZ: (SHUSHES SHEP) Shhh! The... the stars! Look! Angels! (AMAZED) ...Angels!

ANGELS: [REVERB] "Glory to God in the highest! And-- on Earth--peace and good will toward men."

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(several pages later...)

SHEP: (APPROACHING) Oh! How small! How helpless he is!

BO'AZ: (TO MARY) Thank you, both of you. (STUNNED)  
How amazing! I recall... from the book of  
Isaiah:  
"For unto us, a child is born,  
And his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince... of Peace."  
(TO EFRAYIM) Come, Efrayim. Gaze upon... the  
Savior!

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

BO'AZ: (TO JOSEPH & MARY) Forgive my friend here.  
This is not the... "conquering" Messiah he  
expected.

ALL: (GENTLE LAUGHTER) Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...

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

SHEP: Go, Efrayim! Hold the child!

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

INFANT JESUS: (NEWBORN CRY) Waaa-aaaa! (3X)

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.

SHEP: (TO JOSEPH) I regret.... we have no gifts...  
other than our praise.

JOSEPH: Thank you! Your joy is our reward.

BO'AZ" Our joy comes from full hearts. Bless you!

NARRATOR: [CUE] And the shepherds returned unto their flocks, glorifying and praising the Lord for all they had heard and seen....

SCENE 9 - PRESENTATION AT THE TEMPLE

EXT. JERUSALEM TEMPLE COURTYARD - DAY (EARLY FEBRUARY)

(NARRATOR, SIMEON, JOSEPH, MARY, INFANT JESUS, ANNA)

SFX TRACK: [FX-20] TEMPLE COURTYARD AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

NARRATOR: [CUE] And--after waiting the days prescribed by the Law of Moses--the Mary and Joseph did journey, up to Jerusalem. There, to present the child at the Temple. And also--for the purification of Mary--they offered sacrifice of a pair of turtle doves. But upon leaving the Temple, an old and pious man approached them. The Holy Spirit was upon him...

SIMEON: (TO JOSEPH) Peace be unto you, kind sir.

JOSEPH: And to you...

SIMEON: I am Simeon. And I have long awaited the Savior. May I see the child?

MARY: (STUNNED) Errr... Yes. (HANDING HIM THE CHILD) His name is... Jesus.

SIMEON: (TO THE CHILD) Ahh... Jesus. How suitable a name!  
(LOOKING UP) Bless the Lord!  
Now may I depart this life in peace,  
for mine eyes have seen thy salvation  
which thou hast prepared for all to see!  
A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of thy people, Israel.

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(several pages later...)

ANNA THE PROPHETESS: Be not afraid! The Lord watches over you.  
Listen with your hearts. Feel for others. Be  
ever-willing to give of yourself. This  
child--fragile as he is--shall, one day, do  
so! And he shall transform the world!

MARY: Thank you for your blessing, madam.

ANNA THE PROPHETESS: But depart thee from Jerusalem with haste!  
Some would postpone the redemption of the  
world... for their own needs... Go!

NARRATOR: [CUE] The age-d prophetess spoke the truth!  
For, that very day--at Herod's palace  
nearby--there arrived three foreigners from  
the East. Herod was suspicious--as always--  
and more so, for these were Magi  
("MADGE-eye")--skilled in the science of  
astrology and ancient lore...

## SCENE 10 - HEROD AND THE MAGI

INT. HEROD'S JERUSALEM PALACE - LATER THAT DAY (EARLY FEBRUARY)  
(ETAN, HEROD, AMBASSADOR LIVIUS, QUEEN MALTACE, MALKIOR,  
GASPAR, BALTAZAR, HIGH PRIEST DIVREE, NARRATOR)

ETAN: (TO HEROD) Sire... the visiting Kaldeans ("kal-DEE-anz")... Baltazar--of Assyria, Malkior--of Persia, and Gaspar of India! They have traveled far to seek an...

HEROD THE GREAT: (TO ETAN) Silence, Etan! (TO MAGI) Hail, esteemed Magi. The Court of Herod bids you welcome. (COUGHS) As does Divree, here--the High Priest of the Temple, and Livius Octavianus ("ock-tah-vee-AHN-us")--the Roman ambassador. (MOCKINGLY TO LIVIUS) Livius, these travelers from the East are not Roman subjects, (COUGHS) are they?

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: No, Herod. (SMUGLY) Not... yet.

HEROD THE GREAT: (TO MAGI) Still you are welcome here. I am told you astrologers desired an audience with me. Why, may I ask?

BALTAZAR: We seek the King of the Jews.

HEROD THE GREAT: Well, that is I! Herod The Great! (COUGHS) I am the King of the Jews. (TO LIVIUS) Am I not, Livius?

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: (AMUSED) Appointed king by the Roman Senate, over thirty years ago...

GASPAR: (TO HEROD) With no disrespect, sire, we seek he that is born King of the Jews--as foretold in prophecy!

HEROD THE GREAT: (CATCHING ON) Ah! I take it you mean a...  
future King of the Jews?

MALKIOR: Yes. The Anointed One! The Messiah!

QUEEN MALTACE: But my lord, Herod, is the Messiah! He that  
rebuilt the Temple of Solomon!

HEROD THE GREAT: (ANGRY) Maltace! (SUDDENLY CALM) My wife...  
shall hold her tongue. (TO BALTAZAR) The  
Messiah? ... Oh... (SLYLY) "Wonderful!"  
(COUGHS) So you come to greet this new  
Messiah?

BALTAZAR: Yes. 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 star has led us to the Messiah and we...

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(several pages later...)

ETAN: Sire, should I have soldiers follow these  
foreigners? To find this "Messiah" and...  
kill him?

HEROD THE GREAT: No, Etan. What can a newborn "king" do?  
Raise an army overnight? I am Herod The  
Great! If I am to be overthrown, let it be  
by the light of day! (COUGHS)

NARRATOR: [CUE] Later that evening in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph--having completed their Temple obligations--were at rest. Joseph had done some carpentry for the inn-keeper--in exchange for a humble room--for Mary and the infant, Jesus. The family would return unto Nazareth once the winter rains had abated...

SFX TRACK: [FX-21] SHED AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

SCENE 11 - THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

INT. INN-KEEPER'S SHED - DAY (FEBRUARY)

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

MARY: Joseph, I am troubled by that prediction today. The one the old man made. About "a sword shall pierce my soul."

JOSEPH: Mary... the Lord called upon you to bear this child. He will not let you suffer. As the old woman said, "the Lord watches over you."

MARY: Yes. (CHEERING UP) As we watch over the Lord--this... "little lord." (TO CHILD) Ahh, my child?

INFANT JESUS: (COOS, GURGLES) Ooooooh!

JOSEPH: There are many years ahead. Once we have returned unto Nazareth, I shall build a proper home and...

SFX: MALKIOR KNOCKS AT DOOR (3X)

JOSEPH OPENS THE DOOR.

JOSEPH: Yes? (TAKEN ABACK) Oh, pardon me...

MALKIOR: Peace be unto you, sir. Are you Joseph, the carpenter? The kitchen slave said we could find Joseph--and his family--in this shed.

JOSEPH: I am Joseph. This is my wife, Mary. And our infant son... Jesus. He is but a few weeks old.

MALKIOR: Newborn! Just a few weeks? (TO OTHER MAGI) We are correct, my brothers. He is here! (TO JOSEPH) May I--and my companions--enter?

MARY: (TO MALKIOR) Yes, but..? Such finely dressed foreigners as yourself... seek to visit us? How...?

BALTAZAR: We are Magi--astrologers from the lands of Persia, India and Assyria.

GASPAR: We have followed a star in the heavens, that has led us here--to the Messiah.

INFANT JESUS: (COOS, GURGLES) ooh--ooooh!

MALKIOR: Although we--ourselves--are not Jews, we come... to pay homage to the great Messiah of all nations.

JOSEPH: Homage? I... uhh...

MARY: Do! Do come in. We are but a poor family, yet you are welcome here. Truly!

MALKIOR: (TO OTHER MAGI) Behold! A Messiah not of glory and palaces, but of humility ...and loving-kindness!

GASPAR: (REALIZING) Of course! The Lord... come to Earth... as a son of man.

BALTAZAR: (PROSTRATING HIMSELF) Bow! Bow, my friends,  
before the Redeemer, the Christos!  
(“KREEST-os”)

JOSEPH: Fine visitors, we have nothing... nothing to  
offer you. No wine, no food.

MALKIOR: Let us just behold him, please.

BALTAZAR: It is we who bring offerings to you--to him!

GASPAR: Here... gifts!

MALKIOR: (OFFERING) Gold dust... That he may  
transmute the baseness of man-kind into the  
gold of Heaven!

GASPAR: (OFFERING) Frankincense... the perfume of  
the Sanctuary--to drive away the stench of  
Evil.

BALTAZAR: (OFFERING) Myrrh... to infuse the scented  
oil for anointing this Divine Child.

INFANT JESUS: (COOS, GURGLES) ooh--ooooh!

MARY: We thank you. Thank you for these gifts--and  
that you... believe so. (SIGHS) May the  
Lord's blessing be upon you and all your  
people.

NARRATOR: [CUE] And the Magi--having bestowed their  
gifts, and feeling great joy--did go.  
(PAUSE) But, while they had promised to  
bring the wicked King Herod news of the  
Messiah, they were warned--each--in a dream,  
not to return to his palace. And so, they  
departed--by another route--to the East.

(PAUSE) And thus, Herod's anger was greatly kindled against them...

SCENE 12 - HEROD'S FURY

INT. HEROD'S JERUSALEM PALACE - THAT NIGHT (FEBRUARY)  
(HEROD, AMBASSADOR LIVIUS, ETAN, QUEEN MALTACE)

SFX: HEROD BANGS A GOBLET DOWN ON A TABLE

HEROD THE GREAT: (SEETHING) They lied! (COUGHS) They betrayed my trust, Livius!

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: (AMUSED) Can it be? The Magi deceived... Herod The Great?

HEROD THE GREAT: You mock me, Livius! As did they, (COUGHS) who promised to return. How could those astrologers know...?

QUEEN MALTACE: We have lost our chance to find this new Messiah--and kill him! And his destiny is to overthrow you--and the Romans! Are we doomed, Herod?

HEROD THE GREAT: Oh, hardly, my queen. (CLAPS HANDS 2X)  
(TO ETAN) Etan! Go! Dispatch troops to Bethlehem. Have them kill all newborn sons. This "Messiah" will surely be among them.

ETAN: Newborns, sire?

HEROD THE GREAT: Yes... ...wait! One of those Magi (COUGHS) told me the star may have risen two years ago! Have... (COUGHS) Have the troops kill all male children up to two years of age! ...And anyone who resists! Go!  
(CLAPS HANDS 2X) Herod so commands!

ETAN: (EXITING) Yes, sire. All males up to two years...

QUEEN MALTACE: Herod! Butchering peasant children? No!

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Herod! Why such worry? You are age-d and ill! You shall be dead before this child could ever threaten your rule!

HEROD THE GREAT: (BITTERLY) The Jews have always despised me--(COUGHS)--throughout my reign. No matter what I did--were it bringing peace, (COUGHS) prosperity, even rebuilding the Temple of Solomon! They reviled me. Hated me! (COUGHS)

QUEEN MALTACE: But many rulers are hated!

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Yes--even Caesar.

HEROD THE GREAT: However... since they detest me so... if this Messiah of theirs has come, I shall put him to the sword! ...Just to spite the Jews! And extinguish their hope!

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: (IRONICALLY) Such is your "justice"?

HEROD THE GREAT: Yes! I may be dead soon, but Herod The Great shall outlive their Messiah! History... shall remember... Herod! (COUGHS)

SCENE 13 - THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS  
INT. INN-KEEPER'S SHED - NIGHT, MINUTES LATER (FEBRUARY)  
(NARRATOR, ANGEL #4)

NARRATOR: [CUE] Yet, before Herod's troops could depart on their wicked assignment to Bethlehem, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph--in a dream... saying...

SFX TRACK: [FX-22] SLAUGHTER DREAM--UNDER ANGEL AND NARRATION

ANGEL #4: [REVERB] Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt! And be thou there until I bring thee word--for Herod will seek the child, to destroy him.

NARRATOR: [CUE] Immediately, Joseph arose. And he, Mary, and the child did flee that night. And departed toward Egypt--as the angel of the Lord had instructed.

NARRATOR: [CUE] Then went Herod's soldiers unto Bethlehem... And there, did slaughter the innocents... sparing none! Evils were multiplied in the earth. And much lamenting was heard among the Bethlehem-ites.

SCENE 14 - THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

EXT. ROAD TO EGYPT - NIGHT, HOURS LATER (FEBRUARY)

(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, MARY, ANGEL #4, INFANT JESUS)

SFX TRACK: [FX-23] DESERT WINDS--UNDER SCENE

NARRATOR: [CUE] But Mary and Joseph did join a caravan south... and so, escaped the violence. And later, Joseph did explain to Mary, once safely away...

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(several pages later...)

NARRATOR: [CUE] The family dwelt for a time in the land of Egypt. And it came to pass that the tyrant, Herod The Great did die. And an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying...

ANGEL #4: [REVERB] Arise! And take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: For they are dead which sought the young child's life.

NARRATOR: [CUE] And, so, Joseph, Mary and Jesus did return unto the land of Israel. And came and dwelt once more in Nazareth.

(PAUSE) 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!

The full script runs 75 pages, about 70 minutes long.

==THE END==

## Radio Skills School

### Microphone Technique:

- 1) Sensitive and dead areas. Don't touch!
- 2) Proximity effect. (Boomy if too close.)
- 3) Proper distance for radio acting.
- 4) Dynamics and distance. (Back off to yell.)
- 5) Off-mic use for distant sounds. Asides.
- 6) Popping "P"s and S-S-S-Sibilance.
- 7) Mic safety. (hitting, blowing, dropping)
- 8) Assume every mic is always ON.
- 9) Quiet script page turning.

### Radio Acting:

- 1) Quiet in the studio.
- 2) Don't cough, laugh, or talk during production.
- 3) Watch the director. Wait for your cue. (Q)
- 4) Speed equals excitement. Don't bore the audience.
- 5) Jump in if there's dead air.
- 6) Wait for director's signal at end of show.

### Radio Direction "Sign Language"

- 1) "Wait." Open hand.
- 2) "5-4-3---" Finger count down.
- 3) "You're on." Pointing finger.
- 4) "Quicken the pace." Finger draws circles.
- 5) "Stretch it out." Pulling taffy.
- 6) "Louder." Pull ear.
- 7) "Quieter." Finger to lip (Shhhh-style)
- 8) "Cut." Finger slits throat.
- 9) "Come in" or "Back off" microphone.

CASTING EVALUATION: *The Nativity Play*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Small cast: 16 actors (4 male, 5 female, 7 male-or-female)

Large cast: 34 actors (9 male, 8 female, 17 male-or-female)

_____	NARRATOR	The narrator (Male or Female)
_____	MARY	16 year-old farm girl (F)
_____	JOSEPH	20 year-old carpenter (M)
_____	ANGEL #1	Angel messenger(Gabriel) (M/F)
_____	+ BALTAZAR	Assyrian Magi (M/F)
_____	ELISABET	Mary's aged kinswoman (F)
_____	+ ANGEL #3	Angel messenger (M/F)
_____	EFRAYIM	Cynical shepherd (M/F)
_____	+ ZAKARIAS	Elisabet's husband (M)
_____	+ INN-KEEPER	Crusty inn-keeper (M/F)
_____	SHEP	Young shepherd (M/F)
_____	+ ESDRAS	Joseph's carpentry mentor (M)
_____	+ GASPAR	Indian Magi (M/F)
_____	THIEF	Bitter thief (M/F)
_____	+ JOAKIM	Mary's blustery father (M)
_____	+ MALKIOR	Persian Magi (M/F)
_____	BO'AZ	Old, wizened shepherd (M/F)
_____	+ ANGEL #2	Angel messenger(M/F)
_____	+ ETAN	Herod's minister (M/F)
_____	LIVIUS	Roman Ambassador (M)
_____	+ MASTEMA	Abusive construction foreman (M/F)
_____	HEROD THE GREAT	Tyrant "King of the Jews" (M)
_____	+ OFFICER	Nazareth constable (M)
_____	HANNAH	Mary's sympathetic mother (F)
_____	+ LIAT	Mary's friend (F)
_____	+ QUEEN MALTACE	Herod's wife (F)
_____	AUNT MORAG	Mary's stern aunt (F)
_____	+ RACHAB	Inn-keeper's kindly slave (F/M)
_____	SIMEON	Pious old man (M)
_____	+ DIVREE	Herod's High Priest (M)
_____	ANNA	Old Prophetess (F)
_____	+ CHASIDA	Mary's friend (F)
_____	+ ANGEL #4	Angel messenger(M/F)
_____	LAMBS/INFANTS	Bleating lambs, infants (F/M)



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.
- HEROD THE GREAT: (COUGHS) Livius! (SARCASTICALLY) The court of Herod The Great is always eager to lick the (COUGH) boot of Rome. But, you have not come to merely warn me of the latest rumors of these "zealots" with their false-messiahs. (COUGHS) I smell... gold!
- OLD BO'AZ: Yea! David--the great King David--was once a mere shepherd boy. But the Lord favored 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) forever.
- 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.
- ESDRAS: (FRUSTRATED) Joseph! You are as unstable as water! You have lost Mary! You are un-lucky! In days past, Scripture said, "Bring her forth and let her be burnt." Well, yes... but noooo!

- ELISABET: Oh, but Mary, that is part of how I came to be with child! Six months ago, Zakarias was chosen to offer incense in the Temple Sanctuary. But within, he had a vision! An... (AMAZED) an angel of the Lord... appeared unto him. And the angel promised that I would-- after twenty years of being barren--conceive a son!
- AUNT MORAG: Bethlehem!? It is a long journey. Weeks! And in the rainy season! There could be bandits! Only a fool would attempt it! Joseph, if Mary travels with you... she may need help. (POMPOUSLY) Therefore, I shall accompany you!
- 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.
- ANNA THE PROPHETESS: Be not afraid! The Lord watches over you. Listen with your hearts. Feel for others. Be ever-willing to give of yourself. This child--fragile as he is--shall, one day, do so! And he shall transform the world!
- ANGEL #4: Arise, Joseph! And take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: For they are dead which sought the young child's life.
- SHEEP #1: (BLEATING) "BAAAHHH!"  
(BLEATING--FRIGHTENED) "BAAAHHH!"  
(BLEATS-DERISIVELY) BAAAAH.

## SOUND EFFECT ROLES: *The Nativity Play*

Several SFX artists can work as teams in the two roles below.

### SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #1:

Jaw harp twanging

Zakarias marking on slate

Whip cracks

Lumber being dropped

Joseph tossing in bed

Boards falling on thumb

Banging goblet down on table

### SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #2:

Thief throws pomegranates down, crushes them into the dirt

Hammering, hits thumb

Sawing

Brief wind gust

Knock on door, door opening/closing

## LIVE SOUND EFFECT COOKBOOK: *The Nativity Play*

### JAW HARP TWANGING

Twang a jaw harps while inhaling/exhaling rhythmically. The breathing will increase the volume of the sound greatly)

### MARKING ON A SLATE

Get a small stone tile and scratch on it with a small rock.

### WHIP CRACKS

Use slapstick SFX device. OR snap a clipboard clamp.

### LUMBER BEING DROPPED, BOARD BEING DROPPED ON THUMB

Drop several planks of lumber (1x3) onto a piece of stone flooring tile--about 16x16. For the thumb hit drop a single plank on the stone flooring tile.

### JOSEPH TOSSES IN BED

Take a fluffy bed-pillow and, grabbing it from diagonal corners, bunch and un-bunch it together repeatedly--as if throwing punches.

### BANGING GOBLET DOWN ON TABLE

Take a can of beans and bang it down onto a wooden surface. To enhance the effect, put a fork on a plate on the surface near where you will bang the can of beans. This way, the fork will rattle on the plate when you bang the can down.

### THROWING POMEGRANATES DOWN, CRUSHING THEM IN DIRT

Get a small tub of (fresh) cat litter and throw three oranges down onto the litter. Then take a single orange and grind it against the cat litter.

### HAMMERING, HITS THUMB

A hammer tapping on wood or SFX table. For the thumb hit, pound on a carrot.

### SAWING

Rub a threaded plastic plumbing pipe against a stiff surface.

### WIND

Crank wind machine SFX device--slowly--or make mouth sounds close to a mic.

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

## ENGINEER'S NOTES: *The Nativity Play*

### Electronic Effect:

A reverb effect on one microphone would be nice. This is to depict the heavenly quality of the angels. It is not essential. Many mixing boards now come with on-board reverb effects. This would be assigned to a single mic, but you'd want to be able to switch off the reverb effect so that mic could be used by other actors.

### Playback devices:

This show uses many pre-recorded sound effect background ambience tracks (crickets, rain, birds, etc). This may require TWO playback devices, so you can cross-fade between them at transitions.

### Pre-Recorded SFX tracks

01	Winter Winds, Sheep, Thunder
02	Wintry Winds, More Thunder
03	Nazareth Winter Ambience
04	March Winds, Crickets.
05	Flourish, Then Wind & Crickets
06	Wind Picks Up, Thunder
07	Cloudburst, Rain
08	Farm Morning Ambience
09	Seaside Ambience
10	Summer Barnyard
11	Nazareth Summer Ambience
12	Workshop Night Ambience
13	Crickets, Wind
14	Desert Winds
15	Bethlehem Winter Wind
16	Stable Ambience
17	Late Night Ambience
18	Wintry Winds, Sheep
19	Stable Ambience
20	Temple Courtyard Ambience
21	Shed Ambience
22	Slaughter Dream
23	Desert Winds