

Born in a Barn



Gareth Williams

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A Play in Three Acts

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Cast of Characters

GOD: Creator of mankind.

GABRIEL: God's messenger, an angel.

MARY: A young woman about to be married.

JOSEPH: Mary's intended.

INNKEEPER: Runs an inn in Bethlehem.

SHEPHERDS: Two (or more) people watching sheep.

WISE MEN: Three experts in astrology from lands east of Judea.

HEROD: King of Judea at the time of the birth of Jesus.

JESUS: Son of God via Mary and Joseph. Can be played by a doll.

ACT I: Mary becomes pregnant in Nazareth.

Scene 1: God explains that the world is full of sinful people and that he has a plan.

GOD: Recently, I've witnessed the downfall of Man.
People are sinning as fast as they can.
It looks a bit hopeless, but please understand:
I'm God, and I've come up with a most cunning
plan.

So this is my story of a new beginning.
How I sent down my son to stop people sinning.

Scene 2: Angel Gabriel tells Mary she will bear Jesus.

(Mary arrives.)
(Gabriel joins her.)
(Mary looks at Gabriel, terrified.)

GABRIEL: Mary, calm down, I mean you no harm.
I'm an angel from God, (to the audience), with
considerable charm.
One thing is certain, there is no maybe;
The Holy Spirit will give you God's baby.

MARY: What?????

GABRIEL: My message's delivered, it's time to go.
But don't worry Mary; I'll square it with Joe.
And one last thing before I leave us;
Do me a favour, and call him Jesus.

(Gabriel leaves.)

Scene 3: Pregnant Mary stresses about what to tell Joseph.

MARY: The Holy Spirit has thrown me a "whoa".
Inside my belly a baby will grow.
I'm feeling quite sick and it's starting to show.
Heaven help me! What will I tell Joe?

Scene 4: Mary tells Joseph about the baby.

(Joseph arrives.)

MARY: Joseph, I love you - this is so hard to say.
A ghost has put me in the family way.
A baby is coming; it's not what we planned.
Can I count on you? Will you still be my man?

(Mary leaves.)

Scene 5: Joseph plans to abandon Mary.

(Joseph looks thoughtful.)

JOSEPH: I love the way Mary can light up a room;
But news of this baby has filled me with gloom.
The confusion and shame make me feel such a
chump.
I feel sorry for Mary, but she'll have to be
dumped.

Scene 6: Gabriel explains to Joseph.

(Gabriel appears.)

GABRIEL: Joseph, I know this will sound kind of weird,
but Mary's condition is not what you feared.
It doesn't belong to an ordinary man -
Mary's baby is a part of God's plan.

(Gabriel leaves.)

Scene 7: Mary and Joseph make up and set off for Bethlehem for the Census.

(Mary arrives.)

JOSEPH: Mary, I've thought long and hard about what to do.

And a message from God gave me a clue.

I'll stick with you Mary; you'll be my wife.

We'll bring up the baby and have a good life.

But Roman law can't just be flouted.

Let's head to Bethlehem to get ourselves counted.

(Mary and Joseph leave).

ACT II: Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

Scene 1: Finding a room.

(Mary and Joseph arrive in Bethlehem and approach an inn seeking shelter.)

JOSEPH: Innkeeper, have you somewhere to stop?
We've travelled for miles and we're both fit to drop.

INNKEEPER: I'm sorry you two, but in here there is nothing.
MARY: But we're desperate, you see, the baby is coming.

JOSEPH: Have you nowhere we can go to get warm?
INNKEEPER: You're welcome to get your heads down in the barn.

(Mary and Joseph go into the barn behind the inn.)

Scene 2: Jesus is born in a barn.

JOSEPH: I'll make us a bed down here on the floor.
You get nice and cosy on top of the straw.

(Mary lies down.)

MARY: (Anguished, clutching her stomach).

Owwwwwww...

Joseph, stay with me, I'm awfully sore.
It's happening fast, I don't know what's in store.

Ahhhhhh...

JOSEPH: I'm here with you Mary, holding your head.

MARY: I didn't expect to give birth in a shed.

(Mary sobs.)

I'm so sorry Joseph for starting to weep;
I need a midwife, all I've got are these sheep.

Ooooooch..

(Mary lifts the delivered baby to her chest.)

JOSEPH: Well done Mary, you're so strong and brave.
You've done such a wonderful job for this babe.

MARY: We've both been entrusted to take care of Jesus.
JOSEPH: I'll go fetch a blanket and something to feed
us.

(Joseph helps Mary and Jesus leave the stage.)

Scene 3: Angels tell shepherds the news.

(A group of shepherds arrive and sit down.)
(An angel appears before them.)

GABRIEL: Hey guys, calm down, I mean you know harm.
I'm an angel from God, (to the audience), with
considerable charm.
I've got some news - it might seem quite odd.
In that barn over there is the new son of God.

(The angel leaves.)
(The shepherds leave in the other direction.)

Scene 4: Shepherds visit Jesus.

(Joseph, Mary and Jesus are resting on the ground.)
(The shepherds arrive and bow down.)

SHEPHERD 1: An angel brought us some wonderful news.
So we thought we'd pop in to say 'hi' to you.

SHEPHERD 2: Your baby is surely a magnificent king.
Good luck to you Jesus, as you lead us from sin.

(The shepherds leave.)
(Joseph, Mary and Jesus leave.)

Scene 5: Wise men see a new star.

(The wise men are stood staring at the sky.)

WISE MAN 1: I've studied the charts, I've read all the best.
But I'm baffled by that bright new star in the
west.

WISE MAN 2: All things have a meaning - (to the audience) I
read that somewhere.
We must find the answer - a truth we can share.

WISE MAN 3: It must be a sign, put there by God.
Lets follow it over to the land of Her-od.

(The wise men leave.)

Scene 6: Wise men visit Herod.

(Herod arrives and sits.)
(The wise men approach Herod.)

WISE MAN 1: Greetings, king Herod, we bring news from the
east.

HEROD: Sit down, wise men and join in the feast.

(The wise men sit down with Herod.)

WISE MAN 2: We followed a new star, a blazing sky ring.

WISE MAN 3: It's a sign, we believe, of a new Jewish king.

HEROD: A new king you say? I must meet that guy.
When you find him be sure to drop by.
To tell me where I can find the great king.
I'm sure in my palace his praises we'll sing.

(The wise men leave.)

Scene 7: Herod's plan to kill Jesus.

(Herod addresses the audience.)

HEROD: A new king, on my patch! That just will not do.
One king is perfect; there's no room for two.
When those foolish "wise men" come back this
way.
The young pretender with my sword I will slay.

(Herod leaves the stage laughing maniacally.)

Scene 8: Wise men visit Jesus.

(Joseph, Mary and Jesus are resting on the ground.)
(The wise men arrive and bow down.)

WISE MAN 1: Nice baby you've got there - we think he's a
king.

WISE MAN 2: We've brought him some presents; gold, smellies
and things.

MARY: We call him Jesus - he came down from God.
JOSEPH: We'd tell you the story but it's all a bit odd.

WISE MAN 3: We can see he's the real deal, look after him
well.

WISE MAN 1: So when he's older he can save us from Hell.

(The wise men leave.)
(Joseph, Mary and Jesus leave.)

ACT III: Fleeing to Egypt.

Scene 1: Angel warns Joseph about Herod's plan.

(Joseph is asleep.)

(An angel appears and stands over him.)

GABRIEL: Joseph, listen up, this dream really matters.
If you don't move on sharpish you're going to
get
battered.
With Mary and Jesus to Egypt you'll travel.
And don't get caught or God's plan will unravel!

(The angel leaves.)

Scene 2: Mary, Joseph and Jesus flee to Egypt.

(Joseph wakes up.)

(Mary arrives with Jesus.)

JOSEPH: Mary, that angel's been back in my dreams.
He said Bethlehem's not as nice as it seems.
We must go to Egypt, come on, lets make tracks.
If Herod's men catch us we're going to get
whacked!

(Joseph, Mary and Jesus leave.)

Scene 3: God explains how his plan continued...

(God arrives.)

GOD: So this ends the story, part one of my plan.
Next time I'll tell you about Jesus the man.
Part two is great, here's a bit of a teaser.
If you want to know more, come back at Easter.

(God leaves.)

(Curtain.)