

THE MANGER TREE

BOOK, MUSIC & LYRICS

BY

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Narrator 3
Narrator 4
Woodman 1
Woodman 2
Woodman 3
Woodman 4
Woodpecker 1
Woodpecker 2
Manger Tree



Tree 1 }
Tree 2 } Plus other trees to make the forest.
Tree 3 }
Squirrel *
Hedgehog *
Ladybird *
Rabbit *

Robin * *Can be more than one, depending on size of school.

Owl
Angel 1
Angel 2
Angel 3
Angel 4
Angel 5
King Herod
Carpenter 1
Carpenter 2



Non-speaking parts include

Mary
Joseph
Donkey
Choruses
Shepherds
Wisemen

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Scene One A Forest



Scene Two Nativity Scene



Scene One ~ A Forest

(Music plays whilst trees get onto stage. Suggested music is "The Holly and the Ivy" and "O Christmas Tree". When everything is set on stage song one commences.)

Song One - In the Green of the Forest

In the green of the forest
Where the trees grow tall
And the flowers brightly blossom
On the deep green wall,
There's a tree sadly standing
Very plainly dressed
And it knows that it's different
From all the rest.

Manger tree, manger tree
Don't feel so alone,
Manger tree, manger tree
You know your time will come.

(Instrumental section - Enter Narrators)

There's a tree sadly standing
Very plainly dressed
And it knows that it's different
From all the rest.

Manger tree, manger tree
Don't feel so all alone,
Manger tree, manger tree
You know your time will come.
You know your time will come.
You know your time will come.

Narrator 1: In this forest live many trees. Tall trees, small trees.

Narrator 2: Trees with thick trunks, trees with thin trunks,

Narrator 3: Trees with long branches, trees with short branches.

Narrator 4: Little leaves, large leaves, rough bark, smooth bark.

Narrator 1: And proud trees - trees who will give their wood to build great houses, beautiful boats, the grandest furniture.

Narrator 2: And poor trees - trees who will give their wood to burn, build rough sheds and rickety fences.

(Enter the Woodmen. They admire the forest, walk around then move to the big tree.)

Woodman 1: What a fine tree.

Woodman 2: A lovely specimen.

Woodman 3: King Herod will want such a tree to build his grand staircase.

Woodman 4: Many other trees in this forest will be used for his new palace.
Woodman 1: We shall search the forest for the finest trees. King Herod will pay us well.
Woodman 2: We must do a good job and choose well.

(They walk through the forest - they see a small, twisted tree.)

Woodman 3: Look at that little tree - it would only be good for lighting his fire.
Woodman 4: What a useless, little tree - it wouldn't even burn for very long.
Woodman 1: I hope I don't sneeze - I might blow it over - ha, ha, ha.
Woodman 2: What a good for nothing tree - let's cut it down now.

(Woodmen raise axes. Enter Woodpeckers who 'fly' around, pecking at the Woodmen.)

Woodman 1: Hey! Get off!
Woodman 2: Don't peck me, you vicious bird. Let's get out of here.

(The Woodmen scuttle off stage)

Woodpecker 1: Horrible woodmen. What nasty things they said about you. Silly men.
Manger Tree: I'm used to it. All the trees say the same. I'm twisted and small - I'll never be used for any great purpose. Perhaps I am useless.
Woodpecker 2: You are not useless. Think about all the things you give to us.

Song Two - My Best Friend

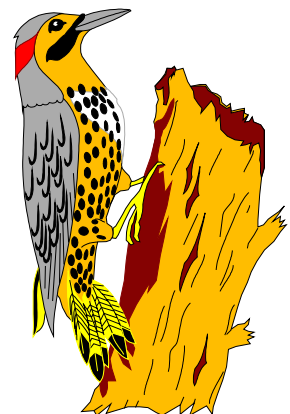
Solo 1: You give me food, you are my home
You give me shelter from the storm
You keep me safe in your embrace
You give me shade when I am warm.

Chorus: These things you lend
You're my best friend
Until the end
You're my best friend.

Solo 2: Upon your branch, I rest and sleep
Until the morning shines on me
Away I'll fly - when I return
I know that you'll be here for me.

Chorus: These things you lend
You're my best friend
Until the end
You're my best friend.

Tree 1: Yuk! What a soppy song.
Tree 2: It makes me feel quite sick!



Tree 3: What wimpy woodpeckers you are. **(All the trees laugh)**

Woodpecker 1: You can laugh, but this little tree is special - more special than you will ever be.

Tree 1: I don't think so. He will be made into firewood.

Tree 2: Or part of a barn door.

Tree 3: Or some smelly old stall. **(All the trees laugh again)**

Trees: Not like us! **(Trees move forward)**

Song Three - We're big, we're strong!

Chorus: We're big, we're strong
Our branches reach so high
We are so tall
Our leaves can touch the sky.

Verse 1: Beech trees, pine trees
You've never seen such fine trees
You can burn the rest
'Cos we're the very best.



Chorus: We're big, we're strong
Our branches reach so high
We are so tall
Our leaves can touch the sky.

(Instrumental)

(The trees could perform a bit of synchronised swaying using their arms.)

Chorus: We're big, we're strong
Our branches reach so high
We are so tall
Our leaves can touch the sky.

Verse 2: Oak trees, ash trees
We are all such flash trees
Sycamore or plane
We'll sing it once again.

Chorus: We're big, we're strong
Our branches reach so high
We are so tall
Our leaves can touch the sky.
Our leaves can touch the sky.
Our leaves can touch the sky.

Woodpecker 2: Well, he's home to us and he's loved by all of our friends.

(Animals pop out onto the stage.)

Squirrel: Like us - we run around in his branches. ***(They scurry about the stage)***

Hedgehog: And us - we root about near his trunk looking for food.

Ladybird: And us - we eat the greenfly from his leaves. He feeds us well.

Woodpecker 1: And all the other creatures who live in his shade.

(Enter many other creatures and perform routine.)

Song Four - Creatures of the Forest

Verse 1: We are the creatures of the forest,
All different shapes and sizes
Feathered ones and furry ones
So pretty we'd win prizes.
There's snails and slugs and bumbly bugs
Who live beneath the litter
And very, very lazy ones
Who sleep all through the winter.

Chorus: Come along, you'll find us here
Owl and Squirrel, Fox and Deer
See us any time of year
Creatures of the forest.

Verse 2: We are the creatures of the forest
Our homes beneath the trees
Centipedes and Millipedes
And Moths and Bumble Bees
Wasps that sting and Birds that sing
And Ants that rush and scurry.
And those that like to sleep all day
And never seem to worry.

Chorus: Come along, you'll find us here
Owl and Squirrel, Fox and Deer
See us any time of year
Creatures of the forest.
Come along, you'll find us here
Owl and Squirrel, Fox and Deer
See us any time of year
Creatures of the forest.

Rabbit: Well, I'm tired after all that singing. I'm having a nap.

Robin: Me too. Come on everybody, time for bed.

(The animals slowly lie down on stage and sleep, except for Owl.)

Narrator 3: The night comes and the forest sleeps.



Narrator 4: Except for the wise old owl who keeps guard for everyone and the fireflies who dance in the dark.

(Firefly dance with torches)

Narrator 3: In the silence of the night, some angels appeared.

(A few seconds of silence is followed by the angel chorus appearing on stage. Narrators 3 and 4 exit.)

Song Five - O Little Tree

O Little tree
I come to thee
To bring a message from above
That's filled with hope
And filled with love
O little tree.
O little tree
Although you're small
You are more precious than them all
For God's own Son
The chosen one
O little tree.

(Instrumental. During instrumental, angels form a circle around the tree - one or two could sprinkle silver glitter in the air, near the tree. Caution! watch eyes!)

O little tree
Although you're small
You are more precious than them all
For God's own Son
The chosen one
O little tree.

Angel 1: Little tree, you are a special tree

Angel 2: You have been chosen to hold a special baby

Angel 3: You shall be His first resting place on earth.

Angel 4: You will give Him warmth and comfort

Angel 5: He will sleep safe in your embrace.

(Angels and Fireflies exit - short reprise of 'Firefly' music. Music changes and animals stir. Enter King Herod and Courtiers and Woodmen to a fanfare [if possible]. Two of the Woodmen carry axes, two carry spades.)

King Herod: Indeed, these are fine trees.

Woodman 1: They are made of strong, hard wood, your Majesty.

Woodman 2: Your palace will stand forever if it is made from these trees.

King Herod: Their strong beams will provide my floors and ceilings, my staircases and furniture. There has never been a finer forest.

Woodman 3: Except for one, small blemish, your Majesty.

King Herod: And what is that?

Woodman 4: This small, twisted tree. It is a very poor specimen.

Woodman 1: It's no use for anything.

King Herod: Well, chop it down - it is only in the way here.

Woodman 2: Shall we chop it down right now, your Majesty?

Woodman 3: Don't put off 'til tomorrow what can be done today.

King Herod: Yes, get rid of it. Chop down this little, useless tree.

Woodman 4: ***(To the audience)*** I hope those nasty birds don't come back. ***(Looks around, fearfully. Woodmen 'chop' at tree.)***

Song Six - The Chopping Song

They chop, chop, chop at the tree, tree, tree
'Til their sweat falls on the ground.
They chop, chop, chop at the trunk, trunk, trunk
But the tree just won't fall down
No, the tree just won't fall down.

They chop, chop, chop at the trunk, trunk, trunk
But the tree just won't fall down
No, the tree just won't fall down.

Woodman 1: This is strange.

Woodman 2: Our axes won't even cut it.

King Herod: Perhaps it's a lot tougher than it looks; but it is still small and ugly.
Burn it down!

Woodman 3: We'll have to be careful not to burn down the other trees.

King Herod: If you burn down these prize trees, you'll be burning too.
(The Woodmen face the audience and gulp.)

Trees: Quite right too!

King Herod: Burn it down!
(Music - Flames enter and dance around the tree.)