

The
Christmas
Story

Music & Lyrics
by
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Book
by
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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Mary

Joseph

Innkeeper

Shepherd 1

Shepherd 2

Shepherd 3

Angel

Melchior *A Wiseman or King*

Caspar *A Wiseman or King*

Balthazar *A Wiseman or King*

Gatekeeper

Herod

Innkeeper's Wife

Crowd 1-4

Priest 1

Priest 2

Scribe

Chorus & Choir

CONTENTS

Dramatis Personae		3
Song One	No Room For Mary	5
Song Two	The Inn at Bethlehem	6
Song Three	The Broken-Hearted Donkey	7
Song Four	Angels' Alleluia	9
Song Five	The Friendly Star	10
Song Six	Gifts They Bring	12
Song Seven	Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar	13
Song Eight	Who Is This Child?	14
Song Nine	Three Night Riders	15
Song Ten	Did You Hear?	16
Song Eleven	Bethlehem Baby	17
Song Twelve	While Bethlehem Sleeps	18
Song Thirteen	Mary, Alleluia	19
Song Fourteen	Because of Him	20
Production Notes		21

Narrator 1: It was a cold, dark night and many people were travelling; returning to their birth town for the census that was taking place.

Narrator 2: Some had travelled a long way, through the hot desert sand.

Narrator 3: All were tired and hungry and looking for somewhere to rest...

Narrator 1: But all the rooms and lodgings were already taken...

Narrator 2: Amongst them was a young couple; tired and weary. She was soon to give birth and was exhausted from the long journey.

(The scene lights up to show many travellers, wearily plodding the road. Amongst them are MARY and JOSEPH with a tired-looking donkey.)

Song One – No Room For Mary

Long ago two strangers came to town.
They travelled far just like the Bible says
And then they searched all over Bethlehem
To find a room for the night where they could stay.

No room for Mary; Nowhere at all.
But the world came to love
The child from above
Who was born in a cattle stall.

Joseph walked the streets of Bethlehem.
He had to find a place somehow, somewhere.
He knocked on doors, but no one seemed to care
When Mary smiled Joseph said a silent prayer:

No room for Mary; Nowhere at all.
But the world came to love
The child from above
Who was born in a cattle stall.

To the inn they slowly made their way.
But it was full; no room at all that day.
There's just one place the kind innkeeper said
It's all I have but it's yours, my cattle shed.

No room for Mary; Nowhere at all.
But the world came to love
The child from above
Who was born in a cattle stall.

(The crowd carry on walking as MARY and JOSEPH break away and move downstage.)

Mary: I must rest for a while, Joseph. I am so tired.

Joseph: I'm sure you are, my dear. It's been a long, tiring day. We must be nearly at Bethlehem, now. The poor donkey looks exhausted as well.

Mary: He must be as tired as me. He's had to carry me all this way.

Joseph: I'll see if I can find anywhere nearby, where we can stay for the night.

(JOSEPH approaches the crowd.)

Joseph: **(To one of the crowd)** Excuse me, do you know of anywhere around here, where we might stay.

Crowd 1: Sorry. I'm not from around here. I wouldn't know.

Joseph: Thanks. **(To another)** Do you live around these parts.

Crowd 2: No – I'm from Nazareth.

Joseph: That's where we have come from. Mary is having a baby soon and needs to rest.

Crowd 3: You won't find anywhere around here to stay for the next few days – apart from under the stars.

Joseph: There must be somewhere that we can stay.

Crowd 4: Are you joking? Look around you – this is the result of Herod and his bright ideas!

Crowd 1: **(Aping Herod)** "Let's have a census" he said. "Let's count the people" – Brilliant! But then he wants us all to go back to our home towns for the pleasure...

(The INNKEEPER approaches JOSEPH from out of the crowd.)

Innkeeper: Greetings, friend.

Joseph: Greetings.

Innkeeper: I heard you say that you were looking for somewhere to stay.

Joseph: **(Hopes raised)** Do you have a room?

Innkeeper: Not a chance, I am afraid. However, I might be able to give you some shelter from the cold of the night. I have stables at the back of my Inn.

Song Two – The Inn at Bethlehem

Joseph: Innkeeper sir, have you a bed?
Where we can rest our sleepy heads
Mary my wife must rest awhile,
For we have travelled many 'a mile.

Innkeeper: All of my rooms are full kind sir,
Sorry I can't help you.
This is our busy time of the year,
There's nothing I can do.

Joseph: Innkeeper sir, don't turn away,
Surely you know somewhere to stay.
Innkeeper: Well there's a place but very small,
Yes you can share my cattle stall.

Choir/Chorus: While all the world was fast asleep,
On that first Christmas morn.
There in a stall in Bethlehem,
The Holy babe was born.

(JOSEPH beckons to MARY to join him. She gets up and crosses to JOSEPH followed by the DONKEY.)

Innkeeper: Come, follow me.

Mary: Where are we going?

Joseph: The Innkeeper has somewhere we can shelter for the night.

Innkeeper: Bethlehem is crowded. There are no rooms to let, I'm afraid. But I have a stable. It isn't much, but it's better than being outside on a cold night like this.

Mary: Thank you. You're very kind.

Joseph: We can have another good look around tomorrow, but tonight we must rest.

Innkeeper: Follow me.

Joseph: You go along, Mary and I'll be with you in a moment.

(The INNKEEPER leads MARY away, as JOSEPH returns to the DONKEY; the CHORUS sing "The Broken Hearted Donkey". During the song, Joseph pats and reassures the donkey.)

Song Three – The Broken-Hearted Donkey

Clippety clop, clippety clop
Got to keep going on an on to Bethlehem.
Clippety clop, I'm ready to drop
Daren't even stop, I must plod on to Bethlehem.

Once there was a donkey, a broken-hearted donkey
Neglected and rejected, no-one loved him.
Then one day a stranger, a kind and gentle stranger
Said, "I need you for a special journey."
And who's the lovely lady who stroked my face and smiled,
Befriended me and whispered please go steady?
And for my lovely lady who rides upon my back
I'll tread with care down every mountain track.
"Who do I carry?" said the donkey with each stride.
Who do I carry on this long, long, ride?"

Clippety clop, clippety clop
Got to keep going on an on to Bethlehem.
Clippety clop, I'm ready to drop
Daren't even stop, I must plod on to Bethlehem.

When Bethlehem was sighted, the donkey was delighted
Excited for he'd reached his destination.
And while the world was sleeping, the angels were a-keeping
Constant watch on Mary's new creation.
And when the donkey saw the baby in the straw
Mary's holy child, the King of Heaven
He nestled to his side, with joy knelt down and cried
With happiness for all the help he'd given.
"Look who I carried," said the donkey full of pride
"I carried Mary on the long, long ride.

(MARY and the INNKEEPER have arrived at the stable. Mary is preparing to settle down for the night. At the end of the song, JOSEPH joins them with the DONKEY.)

Innkeeper: I'm sorry it's not much, but I hope you get some rest. Help yourself to straw and hay. The animals won't bother you. Goodnight. **(He exits)**

Joseph & Mary: Goodnight.

Narrator 1: And so they settled down for the night.

Narrator 2: But they weren't alone.

Narrator 3: The donkey went inside to shelter from the cold...

Narrator 1: As well as the cattle eating straw from the manger.

Narrator 2: That night, Mary's baby was born, right there in the stable.

Narrator 3: Not far away, in the fields just outside Bethlehem, there were some shepherds looking after their flock.

Narrator 1: They had just eaten their meal and were feeling sleepy...

Narrator 2: ...When suddenly...

(The lights fade on the NARRATORS and come up on the SHEPHERDS gathered around a little camp fire, finishing off their meal.)

Shepherd 1: It's a beautiful night.

Shepherd 2: Time to turn in

Shepherd 3: That's all you think of – eating and sleeping.

Shepherd 2: ... and counting sheep! Especially when I can't sleep! **(They all laugh)**

(There is a flash of light and an ANGEL appears to them. The SHEPHERDS cower in fear.)

Angel: Fear not. I bring you good news. A child is born in Bethlehem.

Shepherd 1: What child?

Angel : He is Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
Shepherd 2: Son of God! Here in Bethlehem. Are you sure?
Angel: You will find him in a stable, lying in a manger.
Shepherd 3: We must go, straight away and see for ourselves.
Angel: He is to be a King. The greatest King, that ever lived.
Shepherd 1: This is fantastic! We must take a present with us.
Shepherd 2: Just a minute – am I having a dream or what? Somebody pinch me.
(One of the other SHEPHERDS gives him a shake.) Well. If I am not dreaming, who are you?
Angel: I am an angel, sent by God, to bring you this Good News.

(At this moment more ANGELS appear to sing the “Angels’ Alleluia”.)

Song Four – Angels’ Alleluia

Chorus: Gloria in excelsis,
Gloria in excelsis deo,
For Jesus Christ has been born
In Bethlehem this Christmas morn.

Angels: Alleluia sing
Let’s rejoice and tell the world
That today will be the first Christmas morn.
Alleluia sing
For mankind can live again,
For a child in Bethlehem
Has been born.

Chorus: Gloria in excelsis,
Gloria in excelsis deo,
For Jesus Christ has been born
In Bethlehem this Christmas morn.

Angels: Alleluia sing
Celebrate the news we bring
Everyone must know of Jesus Christ’s birth.
Shepherds leave your sheep
You must go to Bethlehem
It’s the greatest place tonight here on earth.

Chorus: Gloria in excelsis,
Gloria in excelsis deo,
For Jesus Christ has been born
In Bethlehem this Christmas morn.
In Bethlehem this Christmas morn.

Shepherd 2: I'm sure that I'll wake up in a minute!

Shepherd 3: Stop doubting your eyes – this is real.

Shepherd 1: I said it was a beautiful night.

Angel: You must go – now!

Shepherd 2: Well, if this is for real, we must take a present with us. What can we give Him?

Shepherd 3: Let's take some of the fleeces. That will keep Him warm on a cold night like this. **(Starts to exit)**

Shepherd 1: Hang on a minute! How will we know where to find this child?

Angel: The baby was born in a stable and is lying in a manger. Follow the star!

Shepherd 2: **(Still having some doubts)** I thought you said this baby was the Son of God. Why is he in a manger in a stable?

Shepherd 1 & 3: **(Together)** Stop doubting!

Shepherd 2: Well, come on then – what are you waiting for? Let's follow the star!

Song Five – The Friendly Star

The sheep are still, the shepherds watch,
A fire is burning bright,
And overhead a friendly star
Shines out with wondrous light.

Then Angel voices fill the sky,
“A King is born today.”
The friendly star says “Follow me,
And I will light the way.”

“Leave your sheep on the hill,”
says the friendly star.
“They will graze in safety still,
and Bethlehem,
Bethlehem is not far.”

(After the song, the shepherds exit. They could go out through the auditorium, following the route that the travellers made at the start of the show. If so, they will need to enter by the same route later, when they visit the stable.)

Narrator 1: And so the Shepherds hurried off to see the baby King.

Narrator 2: Meanwhile, three Wisemen had also heard of the birth and were travelling from the East to see for themselves.

Narrator 3: They had studied the scriptures and prophecies and were following a bright star.

Narrator 1: The star led them first of all to Jerusalem, where King Herod ruled.