

THE MAGICAL NATIVITY TABLEAU

A Christmas Musical for
Young Children

By

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Joe

Sarah

Mum

Granddad

Joseph

Mary

Shepherd 1

Shepherd 2

Shepherd 3

Shepherd 4

Shepherd 5

Gabriel

Wiseman 1

Wiseman 2

Wiseman 3

Scene – Inside Granddad’s Living Room

(Mum and Joe are putting up decorations and Christmas cards. Sarah is taking nativity figures from a box and placing them in a little stable at the front of the stage area. Granddad is asleep in a comfy chair.)

Narrator 1: It was Christmas Eve. Mum, Sarah and Joe were staying overnight at Granddad’s house, as they did every year. The star at the top of the tree looked beautiful, tinsel glittered all around and the children’s stockings hung over the fireplace, ready for Santa.

(By the end of the song, Joe has come over to the nativity scene to see what Sarah is doing.)

Song One – Don’t Forget!

(Chorus)

As you’re opening your stocking on Christmas morning
Or as you’re looking out for Santa upon his sleigh,
Or when the turkey’s in the oven, the pudding steaming,
Please don’t forget the reason for Christmas Day!

For Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Bethlehem
Was born in a stable they say, they say,
For Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Bethlehem
And that is the reason for Christmas Day!

As you’re sitting round the telly watching Star Wars
(Or other topical show/film)
Or as you’re playing with your Granddad, a silly game,
Or as you’re pulling shiny crackers with Aunt Sally,
Please don’t forget the reason for Christmas Day!

For Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Bethlehem
Was born in a stable they say, they say,
For Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Bethlehem
And that is the reason for Christmas Day!

Narrator 2: The children were putting the final touches to Granddad’s nativity tableau, his pride and joy. Every Christmas, Sarah and Joe would help him to carefully unpack the figures and place them in the wooden stable on Christmas Eve.

Joe: **(Whingeing)** Can I put the baby in the manger, Sarah?

Sarah: It’s *my* turn, Joe.

Joe: **(Begging)** Please, please, please!

Sarah: Oh... all right then. **(She hands Joe the baby, who puts it in the manger. Mum comes over to look.)**

Mum: That looks great!

Sarah: Granddad, look! (**Loud snores from Granddad's direction.**)

Narrator 1: As usual, Granddad was asleep.

Sarah: (**Goes over and shakes Granddad. Speaks quietly.**) Granddad!
(Granddad snorts and carries on snoring)

Sarah: (**Shakes Granddad, louder**) Granddad!
(Granddad snorts again and carries on snoring. Joe comes over to the other side of Granddad's chair.)

Joe: (**Shouts**) Granddad! Come and see the stable.

Granddad: (**Waking up with a bit of a start.**) Oh dear... have you finished? I must have dozed off.

(Granddad stretches with a yawn, gets up and makes his way over to the nativity scene.)

Granddad: That's grand!

Sarah: It's very old isn't it, Mum?

Mum: Very.

Joe: Is it old as Granddad?

Granddad: (**Indignantly**) Careful, sonny!

Mum: (**Laughing**) It's *much* older than Granddad. Grandma played with it when *she* was little, and her mum played with it when she was little.

Joe: And did *her* mum play with it when she was little?

Mum: (**Smiling**) Probably.

Joe: (**Looking at the stable**) Wow! *Really* old.

Granddad: Your Grandma always said it wasn't Christmas until the stable was out! She thought there was Christmas magic in it!

Sarah & Joe: (**Together in awe**) Christmas magic!

Mum: (**To children**) Enough of Christmas magic! It's time to go to bed ... or Santa won't come!

Sarah & Joe: (**Joe hugs Mum, Sarah hugs Granddad, then vice versa.**) OK. Night night, Mum, night night, Granddad!

(They kiss and hug each other and all go off the stage area to sit at the sides.)

Narrator 2: Outside, the night sky was full of beautiful stars. One of the stars seemed much bigger and twinkled and sparkled more brightly than the others.

Music Two – Sparkly Stars

(Big Star & other stars.)

(Big star leads the other stars on stage and they circle the nativity tableau and dance around it. The dance finishes with Big Star waving his/her wand over the little stable. Lights could be dimmed and torches or a spotlight could be shone on the stable to light it up. When the stars have gone, Joe and Sarah creep into the lounge, looking around as if in the dark.)

Narrator 1: A magical light from the big star shone in through the window and lit up the little stable.

Joe: I *did* see a bright light! A *really* bright light! It *must* have been Rudolph's nose!

Sarah: **(Gestures towards stockings)** Don't be silly! Look. The stockings are empty. Santa hasn't been yet.

Joe: **(He looks out of the window)** Well I saw something... Wow! Look at the stars tonight. They're really sparkly!

(The orchestra can play some kingly music on bells. Sarah joins him and points.)

Sarah: **(Joins him by window)** And that one is enormous! And it's shining right down... **(She points from the star over to the tableau)**.. on the little stable.

(Joseph, Mary and donkey start to walk towards them from SR (stage right))

Joe: **(Pointing to Joseph and Mary, gasping)** Huh! Look!

Narrator 2: Right in front of their eyes Mary and Joseph came alive. Sarah and Joe watched in wonder.

Joseph: Excuse me. Do you have a place for us to stay tonight? My lovely Mary is expecting a baby soon.

Mary: **(Holding her tummy)** Any minute now, I think! We've tried all the other innkeepers and they have no room.

Joe: We're not innkeepers!

Sarah: **(Nudges Joe)** Yes, we *are*, silly. **(Seriously, to Joseph)** Er... we don't have any rooms left, but you can sleep in our stable if you like **(points to manger and chairs set out USC {up stage centre} for Mary and Joseph)**. It's warm and dry.

Mary: That's very kind of you. Sorry to get you out of bed.

Joseph: **(To Joe)** By the way, I *do* like your pyjamas! We don't get nice pyjamas like that where we come from.

Joe: **(Showing off a little)** Oh... thank you.

(Sarah and Joe sit at the side of the stage to watch. The animals come on, each with a very simple movement or dance to their verse of the song, before arranging themselves around the manger. As they come on, the nativity tableau can be removed from CS {centre stage} to one side.)

Song Three – We'll Keep You Warm

(Chorus)

"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"Darling little baby, sleep well tonight"
"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"Darling little baby, sleep well tonight."

"We'll keep you warm," said the sheep,
"We'll keep you warm," said the sheep,
"Darling little baby, keep well tonight."
"We'll keep you warm," said the sheep,
"We'll keep you warm," said the sheep,
"Darling little baby, keep well tonight."

"We'll be your friends," said the donkeys,
"We'll be your friends," said the donkeys,
"Darling little baby, have joy tonight."
"We'll be your friends," said the donkeys,
"We'll be your friends," said the donkeys,
"Darling little baby, have joy tonight,"

"We'll give you love," said the doves,
"We'll give you love," said the doves,
"Darling little baby, dream well tonight."
"We'll give you love," said the doves,
"We'll give you love," said the doves,
"Darling little baby, dream well tonight."

(Sarah and Joe stand at the side and step forward.)

- Joe: Wow! Dancing donkeys! **(They giggle)**
- Narrator1: As the children watched, something else happened.
(Shepherds run on, holding lambs and crooks.)
- Shepherd1: **(Looking around)** I think this is it!
- Shepherd 2: Yes, this looks like the place. **(To Joe and Sarah)** Excuse me, is this where we'll find the baby Jesus?
- Joe: **(Stuck for words)** Er...

Sarah: Yes, that's right... Bethlehem.
Joe: **(To Sarah)** This isn't Bethlehem!
Sarah: **(Under her breath)** It is, tonight. **(To Shepherds)** So... how did you know where to find baby Jesus?
Shepherd 3: Well... it was a bit scary really!
All Shepherds: **(Loudly)** Very, very scary!

(Gabriel comes on to join Shepherds, Sarah and Joe go off and watch at side.)

Song Four – Scary, Scary, Scary

(Shepherds, Gabriel and chorus)

We were resting on a hillside
Surrounded by our sheep,
When suddenly strange voices,
They woke us from our sleep!
Someone up above us
Sang a sweet refrain,
And it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!

An angel stepped out from the dark,
His wings were shining bright,
We said

Shepherds only:
(spoken crossly to Gabriel)
Gabriel: **(solo, sung)**

“Who do you think you are?
You gave us quite a fright!”
“God has sent me down here,
And Gabriel's my name!”
But it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!

He said, “Please don't be frightened,
I come to bring you joy,
Tonight was born in Bethlehem
A very special boy!
I didn't mean to scare you,
I hope this will explain.”
But it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!

And then the angel Gabriel,
He flew into the sky,
We don't know why he chose us,
We'll always wonder why!
But that is why we've come here,
To see the little babe,
But it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!

(Sarah and Joe come back on)

Joe: **(To Shepherds and Sarah)** Yup! That would have scared me!

(Shepherd 3 sees Jesus and points.)

Shepherd 4: There he is, over there!

(The Shepherds start towards the manger where they offer their lambs to Mary and Joseph and then take their places in the tableau.)

Shepherd 5: **(As the others walk away, to Joe.)** Thank you for your help. **(Points to Joe's slippers)** By the way, I like your sandals. We don't get sandals like that where we come from!

Joe: **(Proud, points to his toes)** Oh... thank you. **(To Sarah)** What nice shepherds!

Narrator 2: Grand music started to play and some unusual characters appeared.

(Grand music is heard. [introduction to song] and the Three Wise Men walk on with their camels. They each carry gifts. They march around in a rather pompous manner to their song. Sarah and Joe sit at the side to watch.)

Song Five – Here Come The Wise Men!

(Chorus)

Here come the wise men
Dressed in all their finery
Riding on their camels,
Travelled from afar.

We are wiser than you!
It's very true, we're wiser than you!
We are wiser than you!
Three wise men on their camels!

We carry presents
For the baby Jesus,
Really quite expensive
Gifts we bring!

We are wiser than you!
It's also true, we're *richer* than you!
We are wiser than you!
Three wise men on their camels!

(Sarah and Joe come on. The Wise Men look towards them.)

Wise Man 1: **(Kneeling/bowing)** We have travelled far with gifts for your baby.

Sarah: It's not *my* baby! I'm only a little girl!

Joe: I thought you were meant to be *wise* men. **(Giggles)**