

MARY'S SONG

Stage Version

by

Jim Pappas

www.OrionsGate.org

Music

by

Jeff Wood

Original music track available on CD.

Suggested Donation \$25.00

(Please ask about music)

This play has been performed scores of times by my own drama team Company One, Inc.

The play premiered in the early seventies in a Napa Valley Theatre in California. From its beginning it has been received with pleasure by people of all faiths.

SCENE I

(Begin with visuals sequence and opening song. Behind a scrim, by dim light John & Mary are seated at a table)

John: What were you humming?

Mary: Wha...?

John: You were humming a song. What was it?

Mary: Oh, just a song from my childhood.

John: You were smiling too. What were you thinking about?

Mary: About days gone by, when I was young.

John: Tell me about them.

Mary: Oh, you don't want to hear the memories of an old...

John: Yes I do. Very much. Please?

Mary: Where could I start?

John: Well, how about with Joseph. How did you come to be engaged.

Mary: Oh, John, it was like a dream come true. I was working inside the house one day when my Mother called me...

SCENE II

Mother: Mary. Oh, Mary dear.

Mary: Yes, Mother?

Mary: I've run out of water early today. Would you please run down to the well for some more?

Mary: Certainly. (She mimes the picking up of a rather large pot)

Mother: Mary!

Mary: Mother?

Mother: You can't carry that big pot. You're only a child.

Mary: Mother, I'm a woman now. I can carry the big one.

Mother: I don't want you to strain yourself. You take the small pot.

Mary: Yes, Mother.

Mother: And I don't want you stopping along the way to talk to strangers either.

Mary: Why do you say that, Mother?

Mother: I heard about you speaking to Joseph the other day. That is not a wise thing to do, my dear.

Mary: But I was only being polite and returning his greetings.

Mother: It doesn't take ten minutes to return a greeting. You go straight to the well and come right back.

Mary: Yes, Mother.

Mother: A girl has to guard her reputation or she'll end up with some nobody like,...uh, well like Levi the potter.

Mary: Yes, Mother.

Mother: Besides, you might be the mother of the Messiah, if you're good enough.

Mary: Mother, I don't want to be the mother of the Messiah.

Mother: Of course you do. To be the "Chosen One" is the dream of every girl in Israel!

Mary: Not for me.

Mother: Why on earth do you say that?

Mary: I am not worthy.

Mother: Tush!

Mary: And besides, the scroll of Isaiah says that the Messiah will be born of a virgin.

Mother: So?

Mary: Well, if it bothers you to have me speak to a man on the street, how will you feel if I am suddenly with child and have no husband?

Mother: Hmmm. You know, I hadn't thought of that.

Mary: There are a lot of things people haven't thought about. And that's why I don't think I could be strong enough to be the "Chosen One".

Mother: God will give His bride extra strength.

Mary: I'm sure He will, but I hope it's not me.

Joseph: (Calling from a distance)
Helloooo. Anybody home?
(Mary smiles happily until mother notices)
I say, is anyone home?

Mother: Please go get the water, Mary.

Mary: Yes, Mother.

Joseph: (Enter Joseph) Why, good morning to you, Mary.

Mary: Uh,...good morning, sir.

Joseph: My, you're looking fine today.

Mary: Thank you, sir.

Joseph: You know, I was thinking about that question you asked me the other day.

Mary: (A bit nervous under Mother's critical eye) Uh,...question, sir?

Joseph: Yes, you know, about the relationship of tradition to the scriptures.

Mary: Oh. Oh, yes.

Joseph: Well, it seems to me, after much thought and prayer that we should always put the voice of God over...

Mother: The water, Mary.

Mary: Yes, Mother. Pardon me, sir. (Exit Mary)

Mother: May I help you, sir?

Joseph: (He is looking after Mary, lost in thought)

Mother: I said, may I help you, Joseph?

Joseph: What's that? Oh, yes. I uh need to speak to Reb Joichim, Ma'am.

Mother: Does he need some more work done?

Joseph: I don't know, Ma'am. I hope so.

Mother: He was very happy with the yoke you made for him. He says the oxen almost enjoy going out to plow now.

Joseph: Thank you, Ma'am. Is he in?

Mother: You'll find him out harvesting.

Joseph: Thank you, Ma'am. Have a good day.

SCENE III

Timna: (A young friend at the well) Hi, Mary!

Mary: Good morning, Timna.

Timna: Saw you talking to Joseph yesterday.

Mary: I just happened to meet him on the way home.

Timna: Umm hmm. And I suppose it "just happened" that your new way home goes right past his shop.

Mary: Well...

Timna: Even though its way out of your way.

Mary: Well...

Timna: You still hope to marry him, don't you.

Mary: Well, why not?

Timna: For one thing, he has no money.

Mary: But he is kind and gentle.

Timna: Too kind! Why, he gives away half of his work to the poor for nothing! How will he ever get wealthy like that?

Mary: He's rich in faith. He doesn't need to be wealthy.

Timna: I'd rather have the rabbi's son.

Mary: So would every other girl in Nazareth.

Joichim: Except you.

Mary: Except me.

Timna: Does your mother know you have eyes for Joseph?

Mary: I don't think so. But I have talked with Papa.

Timna: You have!?

Mary: Uh huh.

Timna: What'd he say?!

Mary: (Nonchalantly) He said no.

Timna: Well, you don't seem to be too broken up about it.

Mary: Papa has a way of saying 'no' that really means 'maybe'.

Timna: So there's still hope?

Mary: Uh huh. Joseph has been over to our house lots of times on business lately, and I think Papa likes him. Why, he's there right now, and who knows what they're talking about.

Timna: What a dreamer!

Mary: So? God loves to make our dreams come true.

Timna: Ohhh, Mary. God doesn't care about our dreams.

Mary: Yes, He does. More than we can imagine.

Timna: And suppose God doesn't let you marry Joseph?

Mary: Uh,...well... if God takes away something we really want, it's only because He wants to give us something better.

Timna: Oh. So if you don't get Joseph, you'll get something better, huh?

Mary: Uh huh. And that means I'll get Joseph.

Timna: Ohhhh, Mary. How do you know?

Mary: Because there is no one better. Why, right this minute they're talking together and he's probably asking for my father's blessing.

SCENE IV

Joichim: My blessing!

Joseph: If you would, sir.

Joichim: But she's so young. Only a baby!

Joseph: To you she will always be a baby. But to me she is the finest woman in all of Nazareth. In all the world for that matter.

Joichim: Hmm. Uh,..tell me. Are you ready to remarry so soon after the passing of your first wife?

Joseph: The time of mourning is past. Life is meant to be lived and Mary is the one I want to live it with.

Joichim: And what about all the other young men in Nazareth? What shall I tell them?

Joseph: Tell them that a man has come for her.

Joichim: Hmmm. And a humble one at that!

Joseph: True humility is not found in calling oneself a worm.

Joichim: No?

Joseph: No.

Joichim: And what is 'true humility'?

Joseph: Remembering that we do have gifts and talents and remembering that they are from God; to be used for His glory.

Joichim: Hmmm. Well, let us get down to more practical matters. What dowry can you give?

Joseph: Well, uh...the usual.

Joichim: Hmmp! There are some, such as the rabbi's son, who could tripple that!

Joseph: Yes. And there are some, such as the rabbi's son, who could not lead your donkey to water without droning it.

Joichim: Mmmmm, true. But nevertheless, money is a consideration.

Joseph: Do you want her to be high-priced? or happy?

Joichim: Well, of course, rich would be nice,...but happy would be better. We must make her happy.

Joseph: Then it's settled. When shall we have the betrothal ceremony?

Joichim: Wait, wait, wait! I didn't give consent!

Joseph: You said to make her happy.

Joichim: Well, yes but...

Joseph: Well, how can I make her happy, if I don't marry her?

Joichim: Hmmp! (He chuckles wryly about having lost a battle he didn't want to win.) You are a sly fox, Joseph Bar Jacob. A very sly fox. But you know, I think I like you. You have er... uh...possibilities. I will tell Mary of her engagement. She will be surprised. (Joseph smiles largely) She will be surprised, won't she?

Joseph: Let's just say that Mary and I understand each other, Reb Joichim.

Joichim: I see. And what about my wife? Does she know?

Joseph: You wife is your problem. I'll let you surprise her.

Joichim: (Not eager for the task) Hmmmm. Thank you so much. Uh,...tell me, how does it happen that you and our little Mary understand each other so well?

Joseph: One can say a thousand words with one smile, Reb Joichim.

Joichim: Is that so?

Joseph: Yes, sir.

Joichim: I wish you would tell my wife that.

Joseph: You tell her. Farewell, father.

Joichim: Farewell, my son. God go with you. (Exit Joseph) He's a clever one all right. A fox on two legs. Oh well, at least little Mary will have a fur coat to keep her warm. (Exits chuckling at his own simple joke)

SCENE V

(That evening)

Joichim: Ahem!

Mother: (Looks up curiously and then over at Mary with question mark eyes).

Mary: (Shrugs her shoulders)

Joichim: Uh...wife.

Mother: Husband?

Joichim: Have you noticed how our daughter is getting old?

Mother: Old?! She's but a child in her teens!

Joichim: But very mature for her years.

Mother: No more than any other girl her age.

Joichim: But no less either, right?

Mother: What are you trying to say, husband?

Joichim: I think I see wrinkles starting around her eyes.

Mary: (Squints to create wrinkles)

Mother: Bah! You're getting wrinkles in the head. Mary's beautiful!

Joichim: This is no time for humor, wife. It is time to seek a husband for her before it is too late.

Mother: I see Mary has been talking with you.

Joichim: He should be someone young and strong.

Mother: He should be rich.

Joichim: Someone kind and gentle.

Mother: And rich.

Joichim: She is a tender child. He should be wise.

Mother: And wealthy

Joichim: And healthy.

Mother: Uh huh.

Joichim: A good sense of humor will smooooth over lifes little problems.

Mother: A good sense of business will make them disappear.

Timna: Wife!

Mother: Joichim?

Joichim: I think, after much prayer and diligent searching, that I have found the perfect one for our little Mary!

Mother: The Rabbi's son!

Joichim: The Rabbi's son!!

Mother: Why not?

Joichim: All he can do is read books. // Why...why he could not lead my donkey to water without drowning him.

Mother: The merchant's son!

Joichim: No, better.

Mother: Better than the merchant's son?!

Joichim: Much better!

Mother: Who?

Joichim: (Looking first towards heaven and then secretively) Wife, ...I have been blessed by God with an idea about who is the perfect one.

Mother: By God!

Joichim: (Looking heavenward for forgiveness) I think so. Yes, I am almost sure.

Mother: Who is it?

Joichim: He is young.

Mother: Who?

Joichim: But not too young.

Mother: Who?

Joichim: Very confident...

Mother: Who is it?

Joichim: But not overly so...

Mother: Who is it?

Joichim: Kind and gentle.

Mother: Joichim! Who is it!?

Joichim: A man who is raising six good children.

Mother: Six children!

Joichim: And who has treated his first wife kindly.

Mother: First wife!

Joichim: A leader in our synagogue.

Mother: Joichim. Tell me who it is!

Joichim: His boys are named James and Joses and Simon and Judas. (Matt 13:56)

Mother: You mean those ruffians over...

Joichim: Yes! And his daughters are...

Mother: You mean Joseph?

Joichim: Yes! Joseph!

Mother: Joseph Bar Jacob! The carpenter?

Joichim: Yes, Joseph Bar Jacob! The carpenter.

Mother: The carpenter!

Joichim: Best one in town.

Mother: The only one in town.

Joichim: Hmm? Well,...that because he's so good. Another carpenter would starve.

Mother: He's poor.

Joichim: God is testing him. Things will change.

Mother: No!

Mary: Please mother.

Mother: There is no logical or sound reason under heaven why our Mary should have to settle for a mere carpenter. She could have the best.

Mary: He is the best.

Mother: You keep out of this.

Joichim: You're forgetting something, my sweet.

Mother: What?

Joichim: They love each other.

Mother: Oh, I should have none. Well that doesn't matter. She could learn to love a rich man.

Joichim: But how much better if they begin with love. (Pauses to think) Uh,...just as it is better to have a chicken than an egg. (The humor is lost on everyone)

Mother: He'll never be anybody.

Mary: Mary, I don't want a king. I want Joseph. Please, Mother?

Mother: (She is weakening)

Joichim: Remember, Sweet, this is God's idea.

Mother: He must know something we don't.

Joichim: I think so. We shall make the arrangements.

Mother: I still think it's a mistake.

Joichim: It's God's will.

Mother: That's what I can't understand.

Joichim: What do you mean?

Mother: I can understand you and Mary making such a foolish mistake,...but I thought....(She looks towards heaven bewildered as the lights drop)

SCENE VI

(At the well)

Gossip 1: Engaged to who?

Gossip 2: To Joseph, the carpenter.

Gossip 3: He's a nice enough man.

Gossip 1: Yes, but all those kids!

Gossip 2: She'll do fine. She's a good girl.

Gossip 3: And a hard worker.

Gossip 1: Joseph must have friends in heaven to get one like her.

2 & 3: Amen!

Gossip 3: His first wife weren't no peasant neither.

Gossip 2: Too bad she was so sick that way.

Gossip 1: Life is sad. It will be good when the Messiah comes.

All: Amen!!

Gossip 1: May it be soon.

Gossip 3: When's the betrothal ceremony?

Gossip 2: Next week. It'll be a full moon.

Gossip 3: Oh, how romantic! How can I ever bear the suspense?

Gossip 1: You'll do fine, Priscilla. Just fine.

Gossip 3: I do wish my dear one were still here. But since he ain't, I wish the old potter'd look my way.

Gossip 1: The potter!

Gossip 2: Levi!

Gossip 3: And what's wrong with the potter?

Gossip 1: Oh, nothing...

Gossip 2: Much...

Gossip 1: Just a little strange...

Gossip 2: And a little old...

Gossip 3: And who am I to be asking for a spring chicken?

Gossip 1: Can't argue that.

Gossip 2: True.

Gossip 3: But all he ever does is work on his stupid pots. He never looks my way with love.

Gossip 2: Or even curiosity.

Gossip 3: Being a woman is such a trial.

Gossip 1: I guess that's why God made us so patient.

Gossip 3: I'd rather have fewer trials. (Exit)

SCENE VII

Visual/vocals/mime

The vocals is the song All My Dreams . During the song Mary dances, does the movements to a wedding ceremony, is greeted by girlfriends and at the end kneels beside her bed to pray.

Mary: Lord, all of my dreams have come true and I thank you for watching over my life. Be with Joseph and bless his sleep with happy dreams. Give him peace and joy... (The room lights up with a supernatural brightness of an angel. She reacts with fear and awe)

Gabriel: Good evening, blessed one.

Mary: What do you want with me?

Gabriel: God has smiled upon you.

Mary: I...I don't understand. Who...

Gabriel: Don't be afraid, Mary. God has found you to be pure and honest in all that you do. Therefore, you will conceive and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be a great man, and will be called the Son of the Most High. He will rule Israel and His kingdom shall have no end.

Mary: I, have a son?

Gabriel: Yes.

Mary: But I am not even married! How can this be?

Gabriel: The Spirit of The Holy One will come upon you, and the power of the Most High God will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born of you will be called Holy, the Son of God.

Mary: I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word.

Gabriel: With God, all things are possible. Even your cousin Elizabeth, old as she is, is going to have a child. It is the sixth month with she who has always been barren. Farewell, Mary. God is with you.

Mary: Farewell, good angel. Tell God I will do whatever He asks. I am the handmaid of the Lord.

SCENE VIII

Levi: Good day, Joseph, Bar Jacob.

Joseph: Good day, Levi.

Levi: And how go things with you?

Joseph: Well, I'll tell you, my friend. If things were to go much better, I couldn't stand it.

Levi: You mean with your new bride and all.

Joseph: Ah, don't I wish. But we are only betrothed, Levi. Only betrothed.

Levi: Hmm. You know, I hear funny things about your pretty little Mary, Bar Jacob.

Joseph: (He bristles slightly) Like what?

Levi: Oh,...just things. (Spoken as he plays in the dirt with his foot)

Joseph: What things?

Levi: Very interesting things. Things worth knowing about.

Joseph: I'm listening.

Levi: If I may say so, sir, a little copper in the palm does wonders for lubricating the tongue.

Joseph: What! I should pay to hear idle tales?

Levi: More than idle tales, sire. Much more.

Joseph: Bah. I'll wait and hear it from the village gossips.

Levi: Maybe so, maybe no. Gossip speeds swiftly on the wings of an arrow, while truth travels slowly on the back of a turtle. You might be an old man by the time it reached you.

Joseph: (Dropping a small coin in his hand) This better be good, Levi.

Levi: (He bites the coin to assure its genuineness) T'is said, by those who know, that your pretty Mary joined a caravan this morning.

Joseph: What!

Levi: Bound for Jerusalem.

Joseph: Did I pay to hear lies?

Levi: Honest truth, sire. And there is worse to tell.

Joseph: Go on.

Levi: Perhaps another penny?

Joseph: Perhaps I shall let you keep the one you have.

Levi: Uh...heh heh. Yes, yes, of course.

Joseph: Go on, Levi.

Levi: It is also said that last night, very late, there was a light in Mary's room.

Joseph: She always reads scriptures before bed, Levi. You're wasting my time.

Levi: T'was a very bright light, sire. They say it most hurt their eyes to look upon it.

Joseph: I have work to do, Levi. Best you move on.

Levi: There's something queer going on, sire. You'd best find out what t'is.

Joseph: I'll be sure to ask Mary about it.

Levi: Like I said, sire. She's clean gone.

Joseph: We'll see. You'll want to move out of the doorway while I close up.

Levi: Begging your pardon, sire, but...

Joseph: (Shutting door) Have a good day, Levi.

SCENE IX

Mary: Aunt Elizabeth... Aunt Elizabeth. Uncle Zechariah.

Zechariah: (Enter Zechariah who is unable to speak)

Mary: Uncle Zechariah! How are you?

Zechariah: (He responds only with helpless gestures)

Mary: I can't hear you. Are you all right?

Elizabeth: Mary! Where did you come from? It's been...(Her speech is interrupted by a violent kicking from within)

Mary: Aunt Elizabeth! Its true! The angel told me about you and I just had to see you. Do you understand what's...

Elizabeth: (Raising her hand and speaking under inspiration) Blessed are you above all women, and blessed is the fruit of your body. And who am I, that I should be visited by the mother of my God? For when you called my name, the child leaped and kicked within me for joy. He too knows who dwells beneath your heart, sweet Mary. And blessed too are you because you believed the promises of God.

Mary: (Speaking under inspiration) My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior, for He has regarded the low estate of His handmaid. For behold, from now, until forever, all will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and Holy is His name.

SCENE X

Elizabeth: And so, there was Zechariah, burning incense in the temple when an angel of the Lord appears to him and tells him that we are to have a son who will prepare the way

for the Messiah. And what does he say? He says, "I and my wife are very old, and she is barren besides. How can we have a son?" And the angel says to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand beside the throne of God and I was sent to bring you glad tidings. But all you can do is look at the difficulties. Therefore, to help you believe, you shall be unable to speak until all I have told you comes to pass." And he hasn't said a word since.

Mary: Oh my! How awful! (Zechariah nods agreement)

Elizabeth: Oh, it's not so bad. He talked too much anyway. (He disagrees) Oh, yes you did. If you'd only held your peace when the angel came, you'd be talking now.

Mary: It is but a small price to pay.

Elizabeth: Indeed. And he'll be talking soon enough anyway

Mary: It is hard to believe God sometimes, isn't it? We must learn to take Him at His word, for He is honest.

Elizabeth: Speaking of believing; how will your handsome prince react when you tell him about your secret?

Mary: Oh, I know Joseph, and I know just what he'll say. Why, he'll be just as happy as I am.

Elizabeth: He won't doubt you?

Mary: Oh no. He trusts me with all his heart.

Elizabeth: Well, if he does, he's more trusting than my husband. He wouldn't even believe an angel.

Mary: Joseph will believe me.

Elizabeth: Perhaps because you're an angel in disguise.

Mary: I wish. But I need God's grace just as much as anyone. Now more than ever.

Elizabeth: Perhaps it is knowing your weakness that makes you strong. Well, we'd better get some sleep. Come, Zechariah, let us thank the Lord for all His gifts to us this day.

SCENE XI

Mary: (Voice Over) "I enjoyed my stay with Elizabeth and Zechariah, but my heart was

still in Nazareth, in a carpenter's shop. After Elizabeth's baby was born I felt I must return and I joined the next caravan going towards Nazareth. The journey home seemed long, not only because I tired more easily now, but because of my eagerness to see Joseph and to share with him the new life that was stirring within me. The days passed slowly until, at last, I found myself looking into the small shop where Joseph worked."

(Joseph is working intently and does not see her for a time. Finally, some movement on her part catches his eye)

Mary: Hello.

Joseph: Mary!

Mary: How've you been?

Joseph: Lonely.

Mary: I'm sorry.

Joseph: Where'd you go?

Mary: To Judah.

Joseph: Why?

Mary: Something came up.

Joseph: Was it so important that you couldn't say goodbye?

Mary: Yes.

Joseph: You could have left a note.

Mary: A note would have only confused you. I had to tell you in person.

Joseph: Three months later.

Mary: Yes.

Joseph: So tell me.

Mary: Joseph, remember how we studied in the book of Daniel and discovered that we are living near the time of Messiah's coming?

Joseph: Yes.

Mary: Oh, Joseph, it's so wonderful! We were right! God is preparing the way for the coming of the Messiah.

Joseph: Are you sure?!

Mary: Positive. He's working miracles.

Mary: Go on! Go on!

Mary: You remember my cousin Elizabeth?

Joseph: The old, old lady, with no children?

Mary: Yes.

Joseph: What about her?

Mary: She just had a baby!

Joseph: At her age! Impossible!

Mary: That's one of the miracles.

Joseph: What's that got to do with the Messiah?

Mary: Her baby is to prepare the nation for His appearing!

Joseph: You mean He's really coming? In our lifetime?

Mary: Sooner than that. He will be born among men within this year.

Joseph: Are you sure?

Mary: More sure than you can imagine.

Joseph: Praise God! Praise God! I shall live to see Messiah walk the earth.

Mary: You will do better than that, Joseph.

Joseph: How's that?

Mary: You will be His father.

Joseph: His father!! Me?

Mary: Yes.

Joseph: Don't talk foolishness, Mary. How could I be His father?

Mary: Because I am to be His mother.

(Joseph is shocked)

Do you understand?

Joseph: No...No, I don't understand.

Mary: Joseph, listen. Remember how we read in Isaiah that a virgin would conceive a child by the Holy Spirit and bear God's Son?

Joseph: Yes. I remember.

Mary: Joseph, (Tenderly) Joseph, I am she.

Joseph: What?!

Mary: Yes. I have been chosen. I will be His mother!

Joseph: Of Messiah!

Mary: Yes! And you are to be His father!

Joseph: Mary!

Mary: And we are to name Him Jesus. Isn't that a fine name! Jesus!

(She is growing more and more happy and animated) Oh, Joseph! I'm so excited! Oh, I could just sing and dance for joy! I feel so...

Joseph: Mary!!

Mary: (Still happy - not sensing his unbelief) Yes, Joseph?

Joseph: Do you know what you're saying?

Mary: Of course! An angel came to me and told me I was to be the chosen one.

(Reverently) And its true.

Joseph: And do you have any proof that this angel spoke to you?

Mary: Oh yes! The greatest proof.

Joseph: Being?

Mary: Being that I am with child right now.

Joseph: You're...?

Mary: Yes, Joseph. With God's baby.

Joseph: You're pregnant?

Mary: Yes, Joseph. Pregnant.

Joseph: Please leave me alone, Mary.

Mary: What?

Joseph: I said leave me by myself. I need to think.

Mary: What is there to think about? We'll get married right away and raise God's Son.

Joseph: It's not that simple, Mary.

Mary: What could be more simple?

Joseph: Please go, Mary.

Mary: (Beginning to realize his unbelief) Joseph, don't you believe me?

Joseph: I don't know what I believe.

Mary: Believe me!

Joseph: I can't.

Mary: You must!

Joseph: I can't, Mary.

Mary: You've got to. He needs you.

Joseph: I want to! With all my heart I want to!

Mary: Then do it. Believe me!!

Joseph: (He sighs) Tell me. This wonderful event - did it happen in Judea, or before you left?

Mary: Before.

Joseph: Before. Before. Then... I must know the man.

Mary: Joseph! I'm not that way! You know that!

Joseph: Do I?!

Mary: Yes!

Joseph: Would you care to share his name with me.

Mary: There is no name. Joseph, haven't you been listening to me?

Joseph: Enough to know that you're with child and that I'm not the father!

Mary: Because it is God's child I bear.

Joseph: Mary, please! Don't add blasphemy to your sins!

Mary: Joseph, you don't understand.

Joseph: No, Mary, I don't understand. All I know is that I let myself believe in you. Let myself build dreams around you. Then you suddenly disappear without a word and return pregnant and calling yourself the mother of God.

Mary: It's all true!

Joseph: Go away, Mary.

Mary: Joseph...

Joseph: Now, Mary! Please! (Exit a reluctant and broken hearted Mary)

SCENE XII

(Visuals combined with Joseph's theme - use shots of Joseph out on the moor lands or cliffs as if contemplating death)

Joseph: God! Can no one be trusted? Can it be that the most pure can be so changed? Then let me live alone. I will never trust again. After this, I don't know if I can trust you. Are you there? Do you hear? Do you care that my dreams lie broken in the dust? Do you answer? Do you?

Mary: (Praying in her room) Dearest Father God, please help Joseph to understand. What I have told him is impossible with men, and he is right to be doubting. Please speak to his heart as you have spoken to me. Help him to believe and send him back to me, I pray. Hear my prayer, O God. Amen.

Gabriel: (Voice over - Joseph stirs in his sleep as the angel speaks)
Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary for your wife, for the child she bears is of the Holy Spirit of God; You shall call the child Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. He has come to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah saying: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel.!"

Joseph: (Awakening) Oh, my Mary! Forgive me! Got to tell her it's all right. Got to tell her!

SCENE XIII

Joseph: Mary! Mareeeee! (Knock on Joichim's door - Joichim sleeps on)

Mother: Joichim!

Joseph: Joichim, open up! Everything's all right.

Mother: Joichim, wake up!

Joichim: Huh? Wha...?

Joseph: Joichim, open up!

Mother: Husband, get up. Joseph is about to knock the door down.

Joseph: Joichim!

Joichim: What does that nut want in the middle of the night?

Joseph: Joichim, are you home?

Joichim: Coming! Coming! Leave me part of the door to open, will you.

Mary: What is it, Papa?

Joichim: How should I know? He's your fiance.

Mary: Joseph?

Joseph: (Knocking now with his fist) Joichim would you... (Joichim open door in mid-sentence) ...open the...

Joichim: Well?

Joseph: ...door. Uh...heh heh...good evening, Reb Joichim.

Joichim: Evening!!

Joseph: Er...rather...morning. Good morning, sir.

Joichim: Morning! It's the middle of the night. Are you feeling well?

Joseph: Oh, yes sir. I've never been happier in all my life.

Joichim: Well, why can't you let the rest of us enjoy our lives too instead of...

Mother: What's wrong, Joichim?

Joichim: Oh, I don't know. Joseph is so happy to have Mary back that he can't sleep.

Mother: Well, if he thinks we're going to put up with this kind of nonsense for the rest of the engagement...

Joseph: Mother, Father, may I speak to Mary, alone? I need to...

Mother: Alone! Just the two of you?

Mary: We're engaged, Mother.

Mother: I should say not. If there's anything decent to be said, you can say it right here in front of witnesses.

Joichim: Wife, I think we can let them have a little...

Mother: Husband, there can be no compromise in these areas of conduct.

Joichim: But my sweet...

Mother: Besides, I got this idea from God.

Joichim: From God?

Mother: Yes, I think so. In fact, I am almost sure. We must guard Mary's reputation until Joseph comes to carry her away.

Joichim: What can I say.

Joseph: We can't talk?

Joichim: I guess not. Time to say a thousand words with one smile.

Joseph: All I have to say is that everything is all right now, Mary.

Joichim: "All right now." What was wrong?

Mother: What?

Joseph: God spoke to me in a dream. I believe.

Joichim: Believe what?

Mary: Oh, Joseph, I'm so happy for you!

Mother: What's going on?

Joseph: We're getting married.

Joichim: So what's new?

Joseph: We're getting married right away.

Mother: When?

Joseph: This week.

Both: This week!!

Joseph: Why not?

Mother: This is too sudden. We will marry you on the date we have already set.

Joseph: There is no time. I'll bring the Rabbi to talk in the morning.

Mother: We can't get a wedding together in a few days.

Mary: We don't want a big wedding, Mother. We just want to be married.

Joichim: This is an unheard of breach of tradition.

Joseph: And we'll do it this afternoon.

Mary: We don't want many people, Mother. Just our families and a few close friends.

Joichim: You're serious!

Joseph: It has to be this way. You'll understand some day.

Joichim: I want to understand now!

Joseph: Soon. Mary, how soon can you be ready?

Mary: Yesterday.

Joseph: Father, Mother, since we're to be married in just little while, couldn't we just talk together for a little while, alone?

Mother: (Starts to speak but Joichim takes charge)

Joichim: We'll discuss it inside...

Mother: But...but...but...

Joichim: (Taking her by the arm) Won't we, dearest.

Joichim: Come outside, Mary. The stars are out.

(Visuals - mime wedding with narration over)

Mary: (Voice Over)"Our wedding was simple as befitting our station in life. And yet, to me, Joseph looked like a king. It all seemed as a dream to me: the engagement, the angel, our months apart, and now our wedding. Why God had chosen such as we to care for His Son, only He could know. I only knew that the God of the stars had stopped to rest within me on His way to earth. The King of kings was cradled beneath my heart and the idea was wonderful and exciting beyond any dream. Sometimes it was confusing as well. How does one worship a God that is living within you?"

SCENE XIV

Gossip 1: There she goes.

Gossip 2: She's looking pretty chubby for just being married for a couple of months.

Gossip 3: No wonder they got married so sudden.

Gossip 2: I thought something was fishy 'bout that.

Gossip 1: Yeah, me too!

Gossip 2: She sure surprised me though.

Gossip 3: How's that?

Gossip 2: Well, of all the girls I've ever known, she's the last I'd ever expect to have an engagement baby.

Gossip 3: I suppose it's true that they say.

Gossip 1: What's that?

Gossip 3: That nothing good ever comes out of Nazareth.

Gossip 2: I guess it's true, all right.

Gossip 1: Look, here come the town gossips.

Gossip 3: Hey, what's Levi doing with'm. Levi! (Exit girls enter men)

Man 1: Hey, you guys seen Joseph's "new" wife yet?

Man 2: Sure have. Both of her.

Levi: T'is a crime, if you ask me.

Man 1: He sure had me fooled.

Man 2: Yeah, me too. I thought that he was pretty sincere about his religion.

Man 1: What with him being an elder in the church and all.

Man 2: Yeah.

Man 1: Well, I guess the truth is out now.

Man 2: Yeah, way out.

Levi: Well, you know that they say.

Man 1: (After a long pause) No, Levi, what do they say?

Levi: "Most babies take nine months, but the first one can come along any old time.! Hee hee hee..."

Both: Aw, Levi! Booo! Go home, would'ja.

SCENE XV

Joichim: (Bursting into the carpenter's shop) Soooo!

Joseph: Good day, Reb Joichim.

Joichim: Now I understand!

Joseph: Is something wrong, Father?

Joichim: Don't call me Father.

Joseph: Is something wrong, Sir?

Joichim: Don't play innocent with me, carpenter!

Joseph: (Joseph is cool and calm throughout) I suppose you're referring to Mary's being pregnant.

Joichim: You guessed!

Joseph: I don't blame you for being angry. I felt the same way myself when I found out.

Joichim: Why should you be mad, when it's your fault!?

Joseph: You know yourself, sir, that Mary and I were never alone before our engagement.

Joichim: (Mumbles some sort of agreement)

Joseph: And you also know that she left town immediately after our engagement.

Joichim: So?

Joseph: Just this. We have been married for three months, but Mary is six months with child.

Joichim: (Joichim slowly does the math on his fingers and a look of anger and shock comes to his face)

Joseph: I know what you're thinking. I thought the same until God spoke to me in a dream. The child she carries belongs to no man.

Joichim: What are you saying?

Joseph: She carries the Messiah.

Joichim: You are mad!

Joseph: No! The child she bears is Holy. No man, not me, not anyone has so much as touched Mary. Nor will anyone touch her until the child of God is born.

Joichim: I don't believe you.

Joseph: I don't blame you. I didn't believe either. But it's true just the same. The time foretold by Daniel the prophet is here. The Virgin foretold by Isaiah is our Mary.

Joichim: (Just beginning to grasp it all) Can it be so? Can it be?

Joseph: It is so. I swear to you by all that is Holy. She carries the Christ within her.

Joichim: (Beginning to fill with hope and joy) My Mary! My little Mary? The chosen one? Can it truly be?

Joichim: It is.

Joichim: My wife! She has been sick over this thing. You must tell her what you have told me.

Joseph: Bring her here for the evening meal. We will set her mind at ease.

Joichim: I hope so. Her heart has been broken.

Joseph: She will be happy soon. After all, it is the dream of every woman in Israel to be the mother of "the chosen one"

Joichim: I hope so. Farewell.

Joseph: Farewell, Father. (Joseph resumes work. Joichim exits and then returns hesitantly)

Joichim: Joseph?

Joseph: Father?

Joichim: You're... you're not lying to me are you? I mean she is...

Joseph: Father, if I were the greatest liar in all the earth, I could never lie about this.

Joichim: Yes, yes, of course! You are an honest man. Farewell.

Joseph: Farewell.

SCENE XVI

Mary: Joseph?

Joseph: Yes?

Mary: Would you tie my shoe for me?

Joseph: Getting hard to reach, eh?

Mary: Yes, a little.

Joseph: Well, now you know how it feels to be a fat merchant.

Mary: Poor man.

Joseph: How long now?

Mary: A week or so.

Joseph: Well, I'm ready for him. Look!

Mary: Joseph! It's beautiful!

Joseph: It's gotta be. It's for a king.

Mary: Joseph, you're the nicest man. I thought you were making that cradle for one of your rich customers.

Joseph: I don't have a customer rich enough to buy a cradle like this.

Mary: Ow.

Joseph: What's wrong?

Mary: Oh, nothing. Jesus is just exercising. Wanna hear his heart?

Joseph: Sure. And have him kick me in the ear?

Mary: He's not very strong yet.

Joseph: Neither are my ears. Say, what's for supper?

Mary: I'm trying a new kind of bread. Which reminds me. Would you like to take it out of the oven for me?

Joseph: How come?

Mary: It's sort of like tying shoes.

Joseph: Oh. Sure, be right there.

Mary: It'll be a few minutes yet. I'll call you.

Joseph: All right. (Begin Mary's exit) Hey!

Mary: Yes?

Joseph: I think I love you.

Mary: You think?

Joseph: Uh...that is, I think I love you more today than yesterday.

Mary: Oooh. And I love you this much! (Stretching out her arms)

Joseph: Is that all?

Mary: That's the farthest I can reach. If you want more you'll need to find a girl with longer arms.

Joseph: No thanks. Call me when the bread's ready.

Mary: All right.(Exit - Joseph resumes work - enter Joichim)

Joichim: Joseph!

Joseph: Good day, Father. How are things with you?

Joseph: Fine. I was just dropping by to see if there's anything "new" around the shop.

Joseph: Mary thinks it'll be a week or so.

Joichim: Oh, I wasn't asking about the baby. I mean after five or six, what's one more?

Joseph: Sure, what's one more. Just 'cause this one's the Messiah... (Enter Levi)

Levi: Messiah? What this about the Messiah?

Joseph: Uh...we were just saying that it'll be nice when he arrives.

Joichim: Yes. And may it be soon.

Levi: Amen to that! Say, have you heard the news?

Joichim: Caesar's died!

Levi: No, sir. I'm afraid its bad news. Especially for you, Bar Jacob.

Joseph: How's that?

Levi: Caesar.

Joseph: What about Caesar?

Levi: He has passed a new edict. All the men of Israel must return to the city of their ancestors to be enrolled for the taxation.

Joseph: When?

Levi: Immediately, sir.

Joseph: I can't go now! Mary's time is any day now!

Levi: You have no choice, sir. Caesar has set a time to be enrolled and woe be to he who is not.

Joichim: Caesar is a fool!

Levi: True, sir. But a fool wit a million soldiers must be obeyed as if he were wise.

Joseph: Thanks for the news, Levi.

Joichim: Any more glad tidings, Levi?

Levi: Oh, no, sir. That's all for today. Farewell.

Both: See you later, Levi.

Joichim: What now, my son?

Joseph: Well, either I take Mary with me, or leave her here and let the child be born without me.

Joichim: I suggest the latter. It's eighty miles to Bethlehem.

Joseph: I can't let Him be born without me!

Joichim: He started without you. He can probably finish without you.

Joseph: I'll ask Mary if she can make the trip.

Joichim: Let me know that you decide.

Joseph: Be right back. (Begin exit - turn back) Father?

Joichim: Yes?

Joseph: If she does decide to go, may we rent your donkey?

Joichim: No. ...

Joseph: (Disappointed) Oh

Joichim: But! you may borrow him.

Joseph: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Joichim: You may not be thanking me for long. He is not too bright. Even for a Donkey.

Joseph: All he has to do is be able to walk.

Joichim: Well, that he can do, if you give him time to think about it. I'll go get him.

Joseph: But we haven't decided yet.

Joichim: I know my daughter. I'll go get the donkey. Here, you'll need this.

Joseph: Your staff? What for?

Joichim: For the donkey.

Joseph: (He has a question on his face) What for?

Joichim: To get his attention!

SCENE XVII

Joichim: Farewell, my children. God go with you.

Mary: Goodbye, Father. Goodbye, Mother. Mother, don't be sad. We'll be back in just a couple of weeks.

Mother: No you won't. I feel something terrible coming. I'll never see you again.

Mary: Yes you will. Just be sure to keep us in your prayers.

Joichim: Shall we pray together, son?

Joseph: Please.

Joichim: Father God of the Universe. We pray for your gentle presence to travel with these dear children. Lead them on tenderly and safely in the paths you have chosen for them. Be with the Little One and may our lives be spared until we shall hold Him for ourselves. Hear our prayer, Oh Lord, Amen.

All: Amen.

(Mary hugs mother and father one last time - Joseph gently leads her away as she turns to wave one last time.

Mary: God be with you.

Mother: And with you, my child. And with you.

SCENE XVIII

Soldier: Name?

Joseph: Joseph.

Soldier: Father?

Joseph: Jacob.

Soldier: City?

Joseph: Nazareth. (Soldier looks up in disdain)

Soldier: Hmmph. Occupation?

Joseph: Carpenter.

Soldier: Caesar won't get much outta you, will he?

Joseph: No, sir. Not if I can help it.

Soldier: That your wife?

Joseph: Yes sir.

Joseph: She's in labor now, sir.

Soldier: Her name?

Joseph: Mary.

Soldier: Cute girl. How long you been married?

Joseph: Uh...beg your pardon?

Soldier: How long you been married?

Joseph: Oh, I donno, exactly. It seems like forever. We're very happy.

Soldier: Seems like a million years with my wench too. But not because we're happy.

Joseph: Yes sir. May I go now?

Soldier: I suppose.

Joseph: Can you suggest an inn, sir?

Soldier: You gotta be kiddin'.

Joseph: Beg your pardon, sir?

Soldier: This place is packed with people come for the census. If you find a tree to tie your donkey, you'll be lucky.

Joseph: Yes sir. (To Mary) Did you hear?

Mary: We'll find a place.

Joseph: I'll try this inn.,

Mary: Please hurry.

Joseph: (Knocks)

Inn Keeper 1: (Begin noise of inn as he opens the door) Yeah?

Joseph: Beg your pardon, sir, but my wife is going to have a baby tonight and we need a place to stay for...

Inn Keeper 1: Look for yourself, friend. (Opening door-noise of group within swells)
You wanna have yer kid in the middle of that?

Joseph: Thank you for your trouble, sir. Can you perhaps suggest some place?

Inn Keeper 1: I suggest you turn around and head for home. You'll get a room sooner.

Joseph: But it's eighty miles!

Inn Keeper 1: You'll still get a room sooner. Bethlehem's full and overfull with people come for the census. (Closes door - noise ends)

Inn Keeper 2: (Responding to Joseph's knocking) Yeah?

Joseph: Pardon me, sir, but my wife and I are looking for a small room to stay in.

Inn Keeper 2: Not a chance, pal. We've been stuffed full for days.

Joseph: Is there any place we...

Inn Keeper 2: Nope. Better camp out. Night.

Inn Keeper 3: (Responding to Joseph's knocking) What?

Joseph: Pardon me, Ma'am, but my wife and I...

Inn Keeper 3: Sorry, friend. I can't even let my cat in, it's so crowded.

Inn Keeper 4: (Responding to Joseph's knocking) Whadaya want?

Joseph: Excuse me, sir, but...

Inn Keeper 4: If you're looking for a room, you're way too late.

Joseph: Mary, there's nothing open anywhere.

Mary: Please try some more, Joseph. And try to hurry. Please!

Joseph: (Music over mime of Joseph knocking on doors 5, 6, 7 & 8. Lighting gradually changes to blue of night and music comes up. Each innkeeper is sleepier and more rude. Joseph returns to Mary).

Mary: Anything yet?

Joseph: No. We've walked from one end of town to the other and there's nothing.

Mary: I'm afraid, Joseph.

Joseph: So am I. Let's pray again.

Mary: Yes, please.

Joseph: Dear God. We are only little children. Pick us up in your great arms and show us where you would like to lay us down. It doesn't need to be fancy, just someplace out of the cold for Mary and your baby. Thank you. Amen.

Mary: Amen.

Joseph: You feel better?

Mary: Yes, thank you.

Joseph: God will hear us.

Mary: I know. We'll find something. Even if we have to share a place with our donkey.

Joseph: That's it!

Mary: What?

Joseph: We'll go to a stable!

Mary: Joseph, stables are...

Joseph: Never mind that. I'll find a clean one for you. We'll go where they keep the hay and I'll make you a cozy nest in the straw!

Mary: Are you sure?

Joseph: Sure I am. I used to do it lots of times when I was a kid. C'mon.

Mary: All right. Anything's better than out here.

Joseph: It won't be very fancy, you know.

Mary: I know. But God will be there. And where God is, there is heaven.

SCENE XIX

(Shepherds enter with stealth, trying to be quiet)

Shepherd 1: Over here, you guys!

Shepherd 2: We found Him! Come here!

Shepherd 3: (A bit too loudly) Hey! They found it!

Shepherd 1: Shhhhh!

Shepherd 2: There's a light in here.

Shepherd 3: (Still a bit loud) Yeah, a light.

Shepherd 1: Shhhh!

Shepherd 3: Hey, look, they're all asleep!

Both: Shhhh!

Shepherd 1: At least they were.

Joseph: Who are you? What's the meaning of this?

Shepherd 3: Is that Him?

Joseph: Who?

Shepherd 2: The Messiah.

Joseph: Who are you?

Shepherd 1: We're just shepherds, sir.

Joseph: How did you find us?

Shepherd 3: Angels told us.

Joseph: Angels!

Shepherd 1: Yes sir. We were watching our sheep and praying for the Promised One, when this angel appeared in the sky.

Shepherd 3: He was real purty too!

Shepherd 2: He was so bright it hurt our eyes to look at him. But when our eyes adjusted he spoke to us.

Joseph: What did he say?

Shepherd 3: He said "Peace on earth, good will to men". Then he told us that we would find the Messiah here, in a manger.

Joseph: This is amazing. Did you hear, Mary?

Mary: Praise God. We are not forgotten.

Shepherd 2: Oh no, Ma'am.

Shepherd 1: Next the whole sky opened up and there were angels everywhere. Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands.

Shepherd 3: Millions of 'em!

Shepherd 2: They sang to us.

Shepherd 3: It was beautiful!

Shepherd 1: They sang "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Shepherd 2: It was the most beautiful sound we have ever heard, Sir. I wish you could have been there too.

Shepherd 1: Is that the baby Messiah, Ma'am?

Mary: Yes.

Shepherd 2: Take yer hat off.

Shepherd 3: Oh, yeah, forgot.

Shepherd 2: How old, Ma'am?

Mary: Just a few hours. His name is Jesus.

Shepherd 1: A good name, Ma'am.

Shepherd 1: He sure is a happy looking baby, Ma'am.

Mary: Thank you.

Joseph: He has come to save Israel from the oppressors. He has reason to be happy.

all: Amen!@

Shepherd 1: We shall march in His army.

Shepherd 2: Praise God! We have seen the Promised One.

Shepherd 3: What'd you say His name was, Ma'am?

Mary: Jesus.

Shepherd 1: Jesus, Jesus, what a happy name.

Shepherd 1: Happy baby.

Shepherd 2: Happy mother.

Shepherd 3: Happy Herod.

Both: Happy Herod!

Shepherd 3: Just kiddin'.

Shepherd 1: You mean happy world!

Shepherd 2: Happy universe! The Messiah has come!!

All: The Messiah has come!!! Praise God!!!

Mary: (Gently) Shhhh.

Shepherd 1: Sorry, Ma'am. I guess we're a little excited.

Shepherd 2: So is He. See Him smile.

Shepherd 1: Babies that young don't smile.

Shepherd 2: Looks like a smile to me.

Shepherd 3: Boy, He sure is cute.

Mary: Would you like to hold Him?

Shepherd 3: (Suddenly very shy) Uh, ... er... me?

Mary: Sure, why not?

Shepherd 3: Oh, Ma'am, I just couldn't.

Mary: Don't you know how to hold a baby?

Shepherd 3: Oh... I... uh...

Shepherd 1: Sure ya can, Izar. You gotta dozen kids.

Shepherd 3: Only seven!

Mary: Then surely you know how to hold a baby.

Shepherd 3: Oh, yeah, sure. It's just that...

Mary: That what?

Shepherd 3: Well, you know..., I mean, with an ordinary kid it's not so bad if you were to drop it or something...

Mary: Just be careful. Here you go.

Shepherd 3: Oh,... Oh, Ma'am.

Mary: There. That's not so hard, is it?

Shepherd 3: No, Ma'am. Not so.

Shepherd 2: He's sure quiet.

Shepherd 1: Yeah. Like a little lamb.

Mary: Little lamb. What a cute name. Little Lamb.

Joseph: God's little lamb, born in a stable with God's sheep.

Shepherd 1: And with God's shepherds to welcome Him.

Shepherd 2: Now you two are also shepherds. You must lead God's little lamb beside still waters and lay him down in green pastures.

Joseph: Until He grows to be a man. Then He will be our shepherd.

Mary: And lead all Israel beside still waters.

Mary: (Voice Over) "The shepherds stayed with us far into the night, and then left us as quietly as they had come."

Shepherds: (Ad lib noisy farewell.) G'bye - Farewell - See ya later - Bye

SCENE XX

End of sample. This is approximately 60% of the total script.