



A Shepherd's
Childhood
Memory

A One Act Children's Nativity Play

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A SHEPHERD'S CHILDHOOD MEMORY

STAGING:

STAGE CENTER: Stable with a manger – can be simple or include hay, animals (even 2 dimensional). You may want a light on the back to help light the angels.

STAGE REAR: Risers – Hopefully the stable can be in front of the risers to hide your angels, then they can move to the top row when they need to do their part

STAGE RIGHT: Shepherd's field – a few bales of hay with a makeshift fire in the middle

STAGE RIGHT: Fake wall with door. Above the door is a sign "Bethlehem Inn" Perhaps "NO VACANCY" on the sign somewhere as if it's added.

SCREEN: *(optional)* If power point or other multimedia is available, there are a suggestions to add to the production

LIGHTS: *(optional)* one or two spots fixed on the aisle or aisles – flood lights - one to illuminate the manger and another to light up the angels

CHARACTERS: *1 Adult and 7-9 children's speaking parts – unlimited extras*

LEVI – The only adult in the production. A 40 something shepherd

AARON – One of three 8-12 year old shepherds – about 6 lines

ISAIAH – One of three 8-12 year old shepherds – about 5 lines

ELI (optional – you can have just 2 shepherds) - One of three 8-12 year old shepherds – about 4 lines – If you opt to have no Eli, give his lines to another shepherd and omit his name in dialogue.

JOSEPH – Mary's husband – about 7 lines

MARY – Jesus' Mother – 3 lines

INNKEEPER(S) – Boy or Girl – 6 lines (Optionally written for 2 children – combine INNKEEPER 1 & INNKEEPER 2 if you're only using one innkeeper) (*Optional:* INNKEEPER(S) may also be in the Choir of Angels)

ANGEL – Any boy or girl – 2 lines

CHOIR OF ANGELS – the rest of your younger girls (could be boys) – 1 line repeated all together

SHEPHERDS – the rest of your younger boys (or girls) – no lines, but some pantomime to go along with the narration

WISE MEN – (optional) – if you have a lot of extra kids, several of them can be wise men/women – there is an optional part to Scene V for them. **CAN BE MORE OR LESS THAN THREE!!!** We don't know how many wise men there were, only that there were 3 gifts. (If you have a very small cast, the shepherds can also be Wise Men)

SCENE I

1 **SCREEN:** *starry night*

2 **LIGHTS:** *spot on Shepherd's Field*

3 **LEVI:** *(entering from the audience aisle speaking with*
4 *excitement to the younger shepherds)* Aaron, Eli,
5 Isaiah, come here. I have news.

6 **AARON:** *(entering stage left with Isaiah and Eli)* What kind
7 of news, Levi? Did something happen while you were
8 in Bethlehem today?

9 *All shepherds sit on bales of hay near the "fire"*

10 **LEVI:** Nothing happened, but I overheard the townspeople
11 talking about some excitement that happened in
12 Jerusalem last spring.

13 **ISAIAH:** Excitement in Jerusalem? What happened in
14 Jerusalem that would make any difference to shepherds
15 in Bethlehem?

16 **LEVI:** To be perfectly honest, I'd heard some rumors the
17 last couple of times I went into town, but I didn't think
18 it could be true. *(Beginning to digress into his own*
19 *little world)* I mean even if everything I'd heard was
20 true, the chances of it being . . . *(his thoughts begin to*
21 *sound random)* It was just a baby, who'd have thought
22 . . .

23 **ISAIAH, ELI and AARON:** *(look at each other and shrug)*

1 **LEVI:** *(continuing)* It's been . . . wow . . . how long . . .
2 *(thinking and completely forgetting there is anyone*
3 *else around)* . . . must have been . . . let's see . . .
4 Quirinius was governor . . . so . . .
5 **ELI** *(or AARON):* *(clears his throat)* Levi, what ARE you
6 talking about?
7 **ISAIAH:** Yeah, you aren't making any sense.
8 **LEVI:** *(kind of waking up)* What? Oh! Sorry! Let's see . . .
9 before I tell you the exciting news I heard today, I
10 guess I better start at the beginning so you'll see why
11 it's so amazing. Like I said Quirinius was governor
12 and *(digressing again . . . thoughts keep wandering)* . .
13 . let's see . . . Augustus was Caesar, so it must have
14 been more than 30 years ago. I wasn't much more than
15 your age when it happened.
16 **AARON:** *(beginning to get frustrated)* When WHAT
17 happened?
18 **LEVI:** I keep doing that. It's just all so amazing! And it
19 was so long ago, I haven't thought about it in a long
20 time . . .

SCENE II

1 **LEVI:** Let's see . . . When I was about your age, the most
2 amazing thing I'd ever seen happened. Caesar
3 Augustus decided he wanted a head count of everyone
4 who lived in Roman territory. To get everyone
5 counted, every family in the country had to return to
6 their ancestral home. I remember the older shepherds
7 didn't even try to go into town for weeks. It was so
8 crowded in Bethlehem.

9 *LIGHTS: Dim spot comes up on Mary and Joseph as they*
10 *enter from audience on the opposite side of Levi*

11 **LEVI:** (*continues*) Families came from all over to be
12 counted. I didn't realize there were so many
13 descendants of King David. People were sleeping
14 everywhere.

15 *LIGHTS: fade on shepherds and come up full on Joseph and*
16 *Mary and follow them to the inn.*

17 **JOSEPH:** Are you all right, Mary? We're almost there.
18 Look at the crowds! I hope we can find a room.

19 **MARY:** I'll be fine, but we really need to find a place soon.
20 *Mary & Joseph stop at the Inn*

21 **JOSEPH:** Let's check this place. (*Knocks on the door*)

22 **INNKEEPER 1:** (*Opens the door*) Hello, may I help you?

23 **JOSEPH:** We're looking for a room.

24 **INNKEEPER 2:** I'm sorry, but we're all filled up.

1 **MARY:** But I'm going to have a baby soon. Maybe tonight!

2 **INNKEEPER 1:** *(still very professional)* We really don't

3 have any space available.

4 **JOSEPH:** We don't need anything fancy, but we need to

5 find someplace BEFORE she has this baby.

6 **INNKEEPER 2:** *(a little annoyed)* Look, everything is full.

7 Even the stable only has one stall left.

8 **JOSEPH & MARY:** We'll take it.

9 **INNKEEPER 2:** *(very agitated)* What do you mean you'll

10 take it? I didn't mean you could stay there, I was just

11 hoping you'd get the hint and move on.

12 **JOSEPH:** My wife can't move on. She's going to have a

13 baby anytime now. Can't we have the open stall?

14 **INNKEEPER 1:** *(exasperated)* Oh, all right! Go ahead and

15 sleep in the stable, but no complaining about the smell

16 or the noise. *starts closing the door and mumbles from*

17 *behind the door* – Some people! I can't believe they're

18 staying in the barn

19 *Mary and Joseph move on to the stable as the light fades on*

20 *them and comes up on the shepherds*

SCENE III

1 **LEVI:** I felt so bad for that family. They only came to
2 Bethlehem because of the census. They were so far
3 from home, and then had a baby right there with all the
4 animals. I still remember Joseph telling us that story,
5 but he didn't seem to mind. You should have seen him!
6 He was so surprised when we found them. What a
7 night that was!

8 **ELI** (or **AARON**): So, was it your cousin or something?

9 **LEVI:** On no. No relation. I'd never even met Joseph before,
10 and I never saw him again.

11 **ISAIAH:** Then why did you go see his new baby?

12 **LEVI:** That's the truly amazing part of the story! We'd
13 been out in the fields with the sheep for months. Like I
14 said, town was crazy with people, so no one went in
15 from the fields unless they had to. It was really late,
16 we'd put out all the torches and only the fire was left
17 burning. The night was quiet. It was so peaceful. The
18 sky was clear and full of stars, a lot like tonight. In fact
19 most of us were asleep. I think Grandfather was the
20 only one left awake. And that's when it all started!

21 Grandfather said that the sky began to get very bright

22 **SCREEN:** *brightens gradually until it's very bright when*
23 *the angel appears*

1 **LEVI:** *(continuing)* By the time I woke up it was brighter
2 than day, but only in the one spot in the sky. Yep, it
3 was right over there *(pointing toward where the angels*
4 *will appear and sounding even more excited)* I'll never
5 forget it! It's the most amazing thing I've ever seen in
6 my life!

7 **AARON:** *(catching the excitement)* What? What was it!???

8 **ANGEL:** *(moves into position)*

9 **LIGHTS:** *spotlight begins to come up on the angel and fade*
10 *on the shepherds*

11 **LEVI:** An angel. It was a real live angel . . . *(laughing)* and
12 we were absolutely terrified.

13 **LIGHTS:** *full on angel, faded on shepherds*

14 **ANGEL:** Don't be afraid. I'm here to bring you good news
15 of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the
16 city of David a baby has been born, and He is Christ
17 the Lord. And this is how you'll find Him: You'll find
18 a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

19 **LIGHTS:** *Up on stable as Mary lays the baby in the manger*

20 **LEVI:** *(no light on him, his voice speaks in hushed tones)*

21 We were all stunned. No one said a word and then:
22 *(lights up on all angels)*

23

1 **ANGEL CHOIR:** *(stands on either side of the lead angel*
2 *and repeats together)* Glory to God in the highest and
3 peace to men on earth! Glory to God in the highest and
4 peace to men on earth!
5 **Cast sings first verse of “Angels We Have Heard On High”**
6 **LIGHTS:** *fade on angels and stable and back up on*
7 *shepherds*
8 **SCREEN:** *goes back to starry night*

SCENE IV

1 **AARON:** You’ve got to be kidding! ANGELS!!! You saw
2 real Angels?!!!

3 **LEVI:** Yep! Real angels. For a minute or so everyone was
4 completely silent. We each thought we were the only
5 ones who saw it, but finally someone asked, “Did you
6 see that?” Then everyone began talking all at once.
7 We knew we had to go into town immediately. At first
8 we didn’t know who to leave with the sheep, but it
9 didn’t take long to decide we’d take our chances and
10 leave them here by themselves. No one wanted to miss
11 out.

12 **ISAIAH:** You left the sheep alone?!!! NO WAY!!

13 **LEVI:** I know it’s hard to believe, but this was THAT
14 important!

15 **LEVI:** *(excited)* I don’t think I’ve ever walked to Bethlehem
16 that fast before. We wondered what kind of baby this
17 was to have an entire of army of angels announce his
18 birth. We couldn’t stop talking all the way there

19 **SHEPHERDS:** *Enter from rear audience opposite LEVI.*

20 **LIGHTS:** *fade on shepherds in field and come up on*
21 *shepherds hurrying toward stable – Levi’s voice is still*
22 *heard telling about their trip*

23 **LEVI:** Then we saw the stable.

24 **ELI** *(or ISAIAH):* A stable? The Baby was in a Stable?

1 **LEVI:** Oh yes. Remember? The angel said we'd find the
2 baby in a manger. (*Levi begins talking with mystery in*
3 *his voice*) Anyway, it was late and there was only one
4 building that still had a lamp lit.

5 **SHEPHERDS:** *STOP – look and point – continue to gesture*
6 *as Levi talks*

7 **LEVI:** We wondered if we should all go in or just one of us
8 go first. We really didn't know what to do. I was so
9 excited to see this baby, I could hardly breathe.

10 **SHEPHERDS:** *whispering to one another, looking*
11 *confused, etc*

12 **LEVI:** Finally, one of us got the courage to slowly walk
13 over to the stable.

14 **SHEPHERDS:** *one shepherd walks over to the stable –*
15 *JOSEPH motions for him to come in, and this shepherd*
16 *motions for the others to follow him as LEVI continues*
17 *and shepherds enter*

18 **LEVI:** A man motioned for us to come in. When we entered
19 the stable, we immediately knelt in front of the manger

20 **SHEPHERDS:** *kneel on either side of the manger, so the*
21 *audience can still see the manger*

22 **LEVI:** It was almost as if we couldn't stand anymore. The
23 minute we walked in we could feel the peace and the
24 magnificence of this baby. I'd never been part of
25 anything so important in my life. I kept wondering why

1 God picked us to tell about the baby. I figured Kings
2 and governors would be showing up any minute.
3 *(pausing for a moment – growing quieter and even*
4 *more reverent – shepherds still bowing)* We just stayed
5 there bowing for quite some time. This was definitely
6 a different baby. *(very still for a moment)* Finally, we
7 got up from our knees *(pausing while the miming*
8 *shepherds rise)*

9 **SHEPHERDS:** *rise very slowly, one at a time*

10 **JOSEPH:** *stands and shakes hands with shepherds – make it*
11 *a good strong hand shake – look like Joseph is*
12 *speaking to the shepherds*

13 **LEVI:** We shook Joseph's hand and he told us a bit of their
14 story about how they came from Nazareth.

15 **LEVI:** *(pauses thoughtfully for a moment to allow shepherds*
16 *to speak with Joseph – Then very softly, but*
17 *passionately – staring at the fire)* When we left, we
18 walked much slower back to the shepherd's field. We
19 didn't even talk, we were so in awe of what we'd just
20 seen.

21 **SHEPHERDS:** *walk back in awe toward the rear of the*
22 *audience*

23 **LIGHTS:** *fade on miming shepherds and back up on*
24 *shepherd's field.*

- 1 *Allow Children to sing 2nd and 3rd verses of “Angels We*
- 2 *Have Heard on High”*

SCENE V

1 **LEVI:** That day was the most amazing in my whole life.
2 I've never forgotten that night. And I've always
3 wondered what happened to that family. There was a
4 bit of a stir some time after the baby was born.

5 **KINGS:** *(optional) enter from rear audience opposite Levi*

6 **LIGHTS:** *(only if wise men are used) up on Kings – fade on*
7 *shepherds*

8 **LEVI:** We heard some rich guys from the east came in to
9 town following this strange star, looking for a child.

10 **SCREEN:** *bring large star into the starry night*

11 **KINGS:** *(optional) move to where Mary and Joseph are as a*
12 *portion of “We Three Kings” play or kids can sing one*
13 *or two verses – recommended: Go Fish Guys version –*
14 *toward the end of the second chorus the Kings move*
15 *back toward rear where they entered*

16 **LEVI:** *(if song is used, this is following the song – If there's*
17 *no song, Levi should just continue)* They called him
18 “King of the Jews.” The older shepherds were sure it
19 was the same baby we'd seen that night. *(growing*
20 *contemplative)* But until today, I've never heard
21 another word about that family. *(Levi stops talking –*
22 *there are a few seconds where everyone is quiet)*

23 **SCREEN:** *Fade star to starry night*

SCENE VI

1 **AARON:** *(waiting a moment or two – then impatiently*
2 *breaking the silence)* But Levi, what happened today?
3 What’s today got to do with a baby you saw when you
4 were a kid?

5 **LEVI:** Oh yes! *(getting excited again)* That IS how this
6 story started, isn’t it? During the last three years, I’ve
7 heard rumors of this teacher with a kind of a rag tag
8 following. According to everything I’ve heard, he’s
9 done some pretty remarkable things. They’re saying
10 he’s healed people, fed huge crowds with just a bit of
11 food and even walked on water. I guess last spring the
12 rulers in Jerusalem didn’t like it that he was getting so
13 many followers, because they killed him on a cross.

14 **SCREEN:** *fades to silhouette or shadow of a cross or three*
15 *crosses*

16 **ISAIAH:** I’ve heard some of those stories, but I still don’t
17 understand what they have to do with that baby?

18 **LEVI:** Well, I never thought too much about those rumors,
19 but they are saying this guy’s followers call him Jesus
20 of Nazareth, and three days after he was crucified, they
21 went to his grave and he was gone.

22 **SCREEN:** *fades to an empty grave*

23 **ELI** ^(or AARON): What do you mean, “gone”? Someone stole
24 his body? How gross is that?

1 **LEVI:** There are some people who think the body was
2 stolen, but what's really causing a stir all over Judah is
3 the people are saying He's alive. People have seen Him
4 . . . and I'm pretty sure (*pausing, digressing . . .*
5 *reflectively staring at the fire*) . . . it's really amazing . . .
6 .

7 ***Quiet for a moment***

8 ***SCREEN:*** *fades back to a starry night*

9 **LEVI:** His followers said they saw Him being lifted to
10 heaven. And they said his name was Jesus of Nazareth
11 . . . Jesus . . . the same name as the baby. The baby
12 that angels said would be "Christ the Lord." Our
13 people have been waiting for more than 2000 years for
14 the Messiah to appear.

15 **LEVI:** (*It's all sinking in now and he begins to sound angry*
16 *with himself-Maybe even stands up and begins walking*
17 *around a bit*) Why didn't I pay more attention to those
18 angels?! They told us this was the Christ, the Messiah.
19 And after we saw the baby, even though we knew
20 when we saw him that there was something different,
21 something awe inspiring about this infant, it still didn't
22 sink in that this was more than just a baby.

23 **LEVI:** (*tone changing to awe*) I SAW the Messiah . . . I
24 stood in the presence of the Chosen One of God . . . I
25 was one of the first to kneel and worship Him. WOW!

1 Who would have imagined that the One God sent to be
2 the Savior of the World would come as a baby? And
3 will anyone ever believe God told shepherds first?
4 **AARON:** So, you really think this baby was the Savior of
5 the World?
6 **LEVI:** *(with passion)* I do . . . I REALLY DO!!! I'm not
7 exactly sure how it works, but I tell you something.
8 I'm not going to spend anymore time in this field until
9 I do. *(exits toward rear of audience)*
10 **ELI** *(or ISAIAH):* *(calling out after Levi)* But what about the
11 sheep?
12 **LEVI:** *(yelling back)* You guys keep an eye on them. When
13 I figure out exactly how this baby is going to save the
14 world, I'll be back to let you know. I wasted all these
15 years not paying attention to those angels. I'm not
16 going to waste anymore.
17 **LIGHTS:** *fade on LEVI and up on manger – end with last*
18 *verse of “Angels We Have Heard on High”*

ABOUT LYNNE MODRANSKI

Lynne Modranski is the pastor's wife and director of Worship and Small Groups at Sycamore Tree Church in Northern West Virginia. In addition to loving her job as a wife and mother, her passion is to help others become all they can be in Jesus Christ. After writing music, performing and leading worship across the United States for many years, Lynne changed her focus from music to print work. Since then she has written a variety of resources for churches including Advent Readings, Devotionals, Bible Studies and Children's Lessons.

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