

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

by Setphen D. Larson

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: Mary and Joseph reflect on their lives since the announcement of Jesus' birth and come to see God's sovereignty in all circumstances.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: In this script, as in the other two in this issue, the author uses a narrator to prepare the audience. This script is a little different from the others in that the narrator here uses audience participation. He asks the audience to close their eyes and imagine the scene, and he sets the stage with sounds, smells, and emotions for them. Then the audience is startled into the scene by Mary's cry. This is a very dramatic and excellent opening for a story we know so well.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 2

TOPIC: Christmas, Biblical Times

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 2

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Christmas

SUGGESTED USE: Used in conjunction with *Guess What, Joseph?* and *A Conversation with Her Son*, to tell the Christmas story

CHARACTERS:

MARY and JOSEPH, the parents of Jesus
NARRATOR

PROPS: Pile of hay, a manger, a life-size doll to portray the baby Jesus

COSTUMES: First-century peasant costumes. Mary must have a simple head covering that she will use to swaddle the baby.

SOUND: Two wireless microphones; background animal noises (optional)

LIGHTING: Dim to suggest the lamp-lit interior of a stable

SETTING: A cave in Bethlehem, used as a stable

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NARRATOR enters and stands center stage. The lights are dim, suggesting the interior of a stable.

NARRATOR: I want you to close your eyes and imagine. Come on, close them.

NARRATOR waits while the audience closes their eyes. MARY gets into position. She is asleep, utterly exhausted. Beside her is a small bundle.

It is night, and the air smells of animals, straw and earth. A wind whistles outside the entrance to the stable where a young woman is anxiously attended by her husband. There is joy and sweat and pain and fear and the feeling that these feelings will never end, when suddenly—

MARY: *(A pained scream)* JOSEPH!

NARRATOR: Now open your eyes and behold. A miracle! God is with us.

After a few moments, MARY stirs.

MARY: Joseph? Joseph!

JOSEPH: *(Coming in quickly)* It's all right. I'm here.

MARY: Where were you?

JOSEPH: I was just outside, looking at the stars for a few moments. They seem brighter than I've ever seen them.

MARY: I feel so tired.

JOSEPH: And you should be. Having a baby is rough.

MARY: Like you'd know.

JOSEPH: Hey! I was in pain, too. You had a hold of my arm, and every time you had a contraction, you'd dig your fingernails—

MARY: I did? Oh, Joseph, I'm sorry. I don't remember much now. Did I say anything?

JOSEPH: Oh, yeah!

MARY: What?

JOSEPH: It's not important. What is important is that you and my son are all right. My son. That sounds odd when I say it. But I like it.