

THE COMING

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

The Coming by Cleveland O. McLeish

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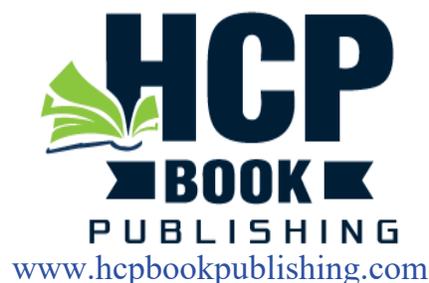


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CHARACTERS

BARTIMEUS	Blind HBI Agent
THOMAS	HBI Agent – Doubtful
ZACHARIAH	Blind, Aged, Expectant Father, Elizabeth's
Husband.	
ELIZABETH	Aged, Pregnant, Zachariah's wife.
MARY	Wife of Joseph, in an advanced state of pregnancy
JOSEPH	Husband of Mary
LESTER	Innkeeper, husband of Gretel
GRETEL	Innkeeper's wife
HEROD	King
SIMEON	Prophet of the Lord
ANNA	Prophetess of the Lord
MAN	
ADULTERESS	
WOMAN	
ANGEL ONE	
ANGEL TWO	
JESUS	
THREE WISE MEN	
THREE SHEPHERDS	
CROWD	Consists of 4–8 characters (could be more)

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SETTING

The stage has one design set created to look like a manger. For scene changes, remove the inn sign above the door and remove or add furniture where appropriate.

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COSTUMES

Biblical costumes are appropriate for all the characters, except the detectives. The detectives should wear modern detective hats with their costumes.

The Story

“For the virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a Son...and His name shall be called Jesus...”

Detectives Thomas and Bartimeus are on the biggest case of their career. They will face more than the simple conflict that exists between differing characters. They will face a truth long prophesied, faith unparalleled, and a child unlike anyone they have ever laid eyes on.

The Mission...

They work for the Herod’s Bureau of Investigations (HBI), and they have been hired by Herod himself to find the Christ-child. These are two very strange characters. One is ever doubtful and the other is blind, but as detectives...they always get the job done. They travel from the East to the inn...then on to the Temple, where they will eventually meet Joseph and Mary and their child. I must warn you...they will make you laugh all the way, as Blind Bartimaeus has a way of moving around as if he can see.

Bonus....

This play also shows the significance of Jesus’ coming by demonstrating a before-and-after scene with an adulterer that will begin and end this play.

Directive....

We know the story very well. We’ve heard it over and over again and in many different forms and styles; we’ve read it for ourselves, yet we cannot deny that the story never really grows old. Instead, writers have sought ways to tell the same story in new, sometimes even more exciting ways. The Coming is the same old story we all know, being told from a different viewpoint – that of two detectives, the innkeeper, and his wife.

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Play Details

Length: 40 Minutes

Cast: 8 males, 12 females. Plus extras

Audience: Teens & Adult

Genre: Contemporary Drama

The Script



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SCENE 1

Blind Zachariah stumbles onto the stage. He walks Down Stage Center (DSC) and stops a few inches short of the edge of the stage.

He turns his nose up and inhales deeply.

ZACHARIAH: Beautiful day, isn't it?

Silence.

Zachariah tosses his head left and right, grabbing the air with both hands.

ZACHARIAH: Elizabeth!

Silence

ZACHARIAH: ELIZABETH!!

ELIZABETH (O.S.): Yes, husband.

Elizabeth walks onstage carrying a mixing bowl.

ELIZABETH: Can't you see that...*[realizing Zachariah's blindness]* I'm busy right now, Zachariah.

ZACHARIAH: This pregnancy has made you so aggressive.

ELIZABETH *[under her breath]*: Then you are to blame.

ZACHARIAH: Excuse me.

ELIZABETH: What is it you want, dear?

ZACHARIAH: I want to spend some quiet time with my wife. Is that asking too much?

ELIZABETH: Quiet time doing what?

ZACHARIAH: For starters, we could just lie here and look up at the stars.

ELIZABETH *[under her breath]*: How's that going to profit you?

ZACHARIAH: Excuse me.

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ELIZABETH: It's almost dinnertime.

ZACHARIAH: Oh, well in that case, go; tarry no more. Just let me know when the audience gets here.

Elizabeth looks out at the audience. She shakes her head.

ELIZABETH: They're here.

ZACHARIAH [*stunned*]: Are you serious!

ELIZABETH: They're right there staring back at you.

ZACHARIAH: I did not see them come in.

ELIZABETH: You pretty much can't see anything, dear husband.

ZACHARIAH: Go make yourself useful around the back. Can't you see I'm busy right now.

[Elizabeth almost clobbers him with the mixing dish, but she knows better. She turns and exits.

Zachariah straightens himself and walks to the edge of the stage.]

ZACHARIAH: Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, and everyone else...I'm pleased to introduce our Dramatic Presentation for tonight. [*slight pause*] Each year, to commemorate the birth of our Savior, we revisit the time of His birth and the circumstances surrounding that period of fulfilled prophecy. Tonight, we bring that time to you in the context of a wider truth...the truth that if it were not for Christ, many of us would not be here tonight. So without any further ado...

Zachariah snaps his fingers and the lights go out.

A few bumps are heard on-stage and then a loud crash as Zachariah makes his exit.

ZACHARIAH'S VOICE: ELIZABETH!!!

LIGHTS OUT

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SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP

Man and Woman enter. The woman clings to the man as they mime having close relations.

VOICE: A world once existed beyond the limits of our imaginations.

Man and woman stop. They face each other, giggling and laughing and just enjoying each other's company.

VOICE: A world of laws and commandments. A world of unseen rewards and deadly consequences, a world where the only righteousness known to man is total faith in God.

Man and Woman continue walking until they reach Center Stage (CS).

VOICE: And the wages of sin...

Man becomes distracted by something in the distance. He looks out above the audience. The woman follows his gaze and their facial expressions slowly change to fear.

VOICE: Is death!

Crowd rushes in from all directions towards CS carrying stones.

CROWD [*yells*]: Adulteress!!!!

They push the man aside and stone the woman to death.

A cell phone rings. One of the members pulls the cell phone from his pocket and presses it to his ear.

MEMBER: Talk!

He listens.

MEMBER [*his expression brightens*]: That is awesome. [*hangs up*]

OTHER MEMBERS: What?

MEMBER: They caught two more in the act, a few blocks up the road.

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CROWD: Yeah...let's go!

Crowd disperses off-stage. The man slowly approaches the body of the motionless woman. He kneels beside her body, weeping. He picks her up and carries her offstage.

LIGHTS OUT

VOICE: Due to the magnitude of animal sacrifices, animals were fast becoming an endangered species.

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SCENE 3

LIGHTS UP

Another woman sits at DSC reading a book. She checks the time and sighs.

Another man enters and, upon seeing her, he runs offstage and we hear the sound of a loud chop.

MAN (O.S): Father, forgive me for lusting.

The man returns and walks over to the woman. She is not pleased.

VOICE: Man's hope diminishes by the second.

WOMAN: You're one hour late, again. Where have you been?

MAN: I...uhh, got caught in traffic.

*Realizing he just lied, the man slaps his forehead and runs offstage again.
Another loud chop.*

MAN (O.S.): Father, forgive me for lying.

VOICE: Salvation, a distant dream.

The man returns, but continues back and forth for the rest of the scene.

VOICE: By one man's disobedience, sin entered this world. Slowly, we were being Consumed by the sinful nature lodged within our beings.

Scene freezes.

VOICE: It was a period in our history where animal blood sacrifices was the only atonement for sin.

LIGHTS OUT

VOICE: But somewhere, far away, beyond the furthest reaches of our minds...man's redemption was about to be realized.

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SCENE 4

LIGHTS UP

Two angels converse at the edge of the stage.

ANGEL ONE: Very soon there will be no more animals to sacrifice.

ANGEL TWO: And man's soul will be damned for all eternity.

GOD (O.S): That must not happen.

ANGEL ONE [*looks offstage in the direction of God's voice and gestures to the Audience*]: Look at them, Father. They can hardly control themselves. They are vile, consumed by their own lust.

GOD (O.S.): Someone will have to go.

ANGEL TWO (*sadly*): But who? Who will go? Who is worthy to make such a sacrifice?

GOD (O.S.): Only one.

ANGELS [*looking at each other*]: Only one?

Long silence.

Jesus enters; He walks to center stage. The angels acknowledge Him and bow.

JESUS: Father, I will go.

Jesus passes between them and exits down the aisle.

ENTER THREE WISE MEN bearing gifts. They stop and point towards the east, then exit down the aisle.

ENTER THREE SHEPHERDS. They stop and look around, seemingly lost. One of them pulls a map from his pocket and opens it up for them to see. They stare at the map, turning it this way and that, but it offers no answers.

Angel One appears and points them to the star in the east. They smile and exit joyfully.

ENTER BLIND BARTIMEUS, who trips and falls, and DOUBTING THOMAS, Who makes no attempt to help his fallen comrade. They are with the HBI

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(Herod's Bureau of Investigations) and they carry a sword on their belt and a badge around their necks.

Bartimeus jumps to his feet.

THOMAS: I don't like the looks of this.

BARTIMEUS: What do you mean?

THOMAS *(gesturing to the east)*: Can't you see..*[realizing]*..look over..*[realizing]*..
Never mind *(under his breath)* Blind fool.

BARTIMEUS: I may be blind, but I'm not deaf and I'm certainly not a fool.

THOMAS: Yeah, whatever.

BARTIMEUS *(Outraged. Points in the wrong direction thinking he's addressing Thomas face to face)*: I keep warning you about using that tone of voice with me. I am tired of you treating me like I am less of a man than you are.

THOMAS: Who are you talking to?

Bartimeus realizes he's pointing in the wrong direction. He redirects his finger but he's still a bit off.

BARTIMEUS: You know I hate it when people treat me like an idiot, or a handicap.

THOMAS: I am tired of having this same conversation with you, every single day.

Bartimeus redirects his finger again.

BARTIMEUS: Then treat me like your equal. Stop taking advantage of me!

THOMAS: Well forgive me for doubting that a blind man can be a good detective.

BARTIMEUS: I'm as good a detective as any man.

THOMAS: Prove it.

BARTIMEUS: Fine.

THOMAS: Fine.

BARTIMEUS: FINE!

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Silence.

BARTIMEUS: So, where do we begin?

Thomas smiles.

THOMAS: That star in the East. It seems to be drawing a huge crowd.

BARTIMEUS: What star?

THOMAS: Can't you see...*[realizing Bartimeus can't see]* It's there in the East.

BARTIMEUS: Maybe it's a planet.

THOMAS: I doubt that.

BARTIMEUS: What else could it be?

THOMAS: A sign, perhaps. The Jews believe that a Messiah will come.

BARTIMEUS: I've heard the prophecies.

THOMAS: That's why Herod is so nervous. The atmosphere has changed as if something cataclysmic is about to happen.

BARTIMEUS: I can feel it.

THOMAS: Scholars have interpreted the ancient writings. They say that it was foretold that a redeemer would come and save man from sin.

BARTIMEUS: Herod will not be pleased.

THOMAS: He never is. We better go see him, and please try to keep up, okay?

Thomas steps off, leaving Bartimeus to find his way offstage.

LIGHTS OUT