



THE HEART OF A CHRISTIAN PLAYWRIGHT

Written by us, inspired by Jesus

EXPECTANCY

(Based on Ideas presented by Brad Jahn)

An Original Stage play

By

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SYNOPSIS

This play was inspired by the Best Seller, The Word Became Flesh. It takes a look at the event surrounding the Birth of Christ from the days of the Prophet Micah to the day Joseph could not find a room for His pregnant wife to give birth.

Christmas is losing its true meaning to Santa Claus, Gifts and Mistletoe. We have a responsibility every year to remind our loved ones what Christmas is really about. If we fail at this, the next generation that follows us will be worse than now.

Christmas is about celebrating the Birth of Christ and no one tells the story better than the Scriptures. Expectancy is based on the Scriptural account of this historic event that still has eternal significance.

THE CHARACTERS

Micah	Elderly male
Kathy.....	Elderly female
Mary	Younger female
Joseph.....	Younger male
Elizabeth	Older female
Herod	King
Adviser 1	
Adviser 2	

THE SCRIPT

SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP

Micah is onstage praying and meditating. He has some open transcripts nearby and he occasionally stops reading and thinking to write something down excitedly.

Kathy enters. Both these characters are well along in years.

KATHY: Micah, do you think maybe you can help me out a little with the things that need to be done around here?

MICAH: Like what?

KATHY: Well, somebody needs to take out the trash.

MICAH: Let the kids do it.

KATHY: We don't have any kids.

Micah pauses for a moment.

MICAH: Are you sure?

KATHY: I think I would remember giving birth.

MICAH: Improvise honey, please or I will do it later. I am in the middle of something.

KATHY: You are always in the middle of something and I am always at the end of something.

MICAH: Which is?

KATHY: I am at the end of my rope. Micah you are always busy and you don't take time out to even listen to what I have to say. Are we even still married?

MICAH: Can we talk about this later?

KATHY: You know people get divorce for less than this.

MICAH: *(takes a little time out to laugh)* We are too old to get a divorce honey. The horse is already through the gate.

KATHY: At least you remember how to laugh.

MICAH: Of course. That's why you are my wife for life.

Pause.

MICAH: Can you believe that God chose me as a Prophet. Of all the men He singled me out to reveal His secrets of coming events to.

KATHY: That's nice.

MICAH: It's just so overwhelming at times. I feel honored to be His mouth piece...you know, like a voice crying in the wilderness. I am humbled by His choice.

KATHY: Do you even understand some of the things you write down?

MICAH: Of course not. I don't think we are supposed to understand everything. But it's really exciting.

Micah is writing something.

Kathy grabs his pen and writing pad out of frustration.

MICAH: What are you doing?

KATHY: Taking the bull by the horn.

MICAH: I see you have been talking to your mother in law again.

KATHY: At least she is always there for me to talk to. But I miss talking to you. I miss the good old days.

MICAH: Why?

KATHY: That's a real stupid question to ask.

MICAH: Sorry. This is important Kathy. God has been speaking to my heart about things that are yet to happen.

KATHY: He always is. And I am happy that He does but I don't think He's happy about you neglecting your wife like this.

MICAH: I'm not neglecting my wife. I just wish you would try a little harder to understand what is happening. I am a Prophet. Called and appointed by God Himself. I have a duty to help prepare the way.

KATHY: Prepare the way for what?

Micah points to writing pad in her hand.

MICAH: Read it for yourself. Exciting stuff I tell you.

KATHY: *(reads)* Marshal your troops, O city of troops, for a siege is laid against us. They will strike Israel's ruler on the cheek with a rod. But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

Pause.

KATHY: What does it mean?

MICAH: *(With glee in his eyes)* I have done some cross references from other writings and can only conclude that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. And we dear wife are privilege to that information before it has actually happened.

Pause.

KATHY: Bethlehem is a very small Village near Jerusalem. No good thing has ever been spoken of that Village. *(quoting scripture)* Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body.

MICAH: There has to be a reason I am getting this.

KATHY: I'm sure there is. But you dear husband need some vacation. You are putting too much of yourself into this and its starting to destroy your ability to make your wife very happy.

Pause. Micah didn't hear a word.

MICAH: We know from Jeremiah that the Messiah will be a direct descendant of King David.

KATHY: I'm not listening to you right now.

MICAH: David was King over Jerusalem. Wouldn't it make sense that a descendent of him would also come from Jerusalem?

KATHY: Why do you think it's necessary for us to know before time?

MICAH: Some of us have to know. We have to prepare the way and set the foundation for faith. In doing so when the Messiah comes we will know that it is he and he is here.

KATHY: You have been at this for years. I feel like I missed out on having a husband.

MICAH: Some of us have a higher calling.

KATHY: You should have said that before I said I do. When they asked at the altar if anyone objects why didn't you say something?

MICAH: Maybe because I was the one getting married.

Pause.

MICAH: Look, I miss talking to you too. There was a time you would get all warm and excited when I got a prophecy.

KATHY: It was fun then but as you can see we are well along in years now. We are not as sharp as we were back then. It hurts to try and figure this stuff out these days.

MICAH: Maybe because we don't do it together anymore.

Pause.

MICAH: Help me with this now and I will help with the chores later. How does that sound?

KATHY: Like a trick.

Pause.

KATHY: Fine.

MICAH: Good. *(starts shuffling through his papers)* That is what I received recently. I'm trying to put it all together.

KATHY: It doesn't make any sense.

MICAH: You don't believe in the prophecy do you?

KATHY: I'm trying to but it's hard to put it all together. It's actually very confusing.

MICAH: I don't think we're supposed to understand all of it.

KATHY: Why live with an expectancy of a coming savior? What difference can someone like that make? The world is already gone to the dogs.

Micah finds other writings.

MICAH: (*reads*) The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

KATHY: How long was that written?

MICAH: Long enough.

KATHY: Exactly. It sounds good in theory but there is no practicality to those claims. What makes you think it hasn't lost its validity?

MICAH: Faith.

KATHY: Faith sometimes gives false hope in things that may never be.

MICAH: Hope...yes. But I believe that the one who sends these words is more than capable to fulfill them.

KATHY: Micah, we are too old for this.

MICAH: Listen to my words Kathy...years from now, long after we are gone and forgotten people will read the words of Micah and say surely he was a prophet because he believed without seeing and they will wonder if I had a wife because you did not believe. It's a choice you have to make dear whether to accept these prophecies as fact or fiction.

Pause.

KATHY: I support you as a wife should support her husband. But no one will ever believe the words of an old prophet.

MICAH: Yeah, well....on that note one of us is wrong.

Micah gets back to his writings.

KATHY: I will go get you something to eat.

MICAH: I love you too Kathy.

Kathy waves him off and exit.

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP

Joseph and Mary greet at center stage.

MARY: Joseph we need to talk.

JOSEPH: I am happy to see you too.

MARY: Sorry. *(smiles)* I am glad to see you.

JOSEPH: Why are you so fidgety?

Pause. Mary walks away...her back turned to him.

MARY: Something has come up.

JOSEPH: You changed your mind about us getting married?

MARY: No...it's not quite that.

JOSEPH: Not quite that? What is it then?

Pause.

MARY: I got a visit yesterday.

JOSEPH: An old flame?

MARY: What?

JOSEPH: Ex-boyfriend.

MARY: No Joseph. You know I have only loved one man in my life so far.

JOSEPH: So far? There is someone else?

MARY: No.

JOSEPH: Then what are you trying to say?

MARY: I want to just say it...but I don't know how you're gonna take it.

JOSEPH: Just say it.

MARY: You have to promise me that whatever I tell you we are gonna talk about it and you won't just go silent and walk out on me or start making wild assumptions or get angry.

Pause.

JOSEPH: This is starting to feel very uncomfortable. What is it? You don't love me anymore.

MARY: I do love you. It's just that...that...

JOSEPH: What is it?

MARY: Well, It's just that...*(Mary is now looking into Joseph's innocent eyes and finds it hard to finish the sentence)*...

JOSEPH: Baby...just say it.

MARY: *(breathes hard)* How do you feel about having children?

Joseph has to think about this one.

JOSEPH: Well, it's one of the reasons people get married right? So I guess...sometimes in the future we will try for our own. *(really puzzled)* Why would you ask me that now?

MARY: You believe in God don't you Joseph?

JOSEPH: Yes.

MARY: And Angels too?

JOSEPH: I've never seen one but I guess all things are possible with God.

MARY: So you do believe all things are possible for God.

JOSEPH: Yes and I also believe you are trying to give me a serious headache with all this beating around the bush.

MARY: I'm not beating around the bush darling.

JOSEPH: Mary just say what you have to say. I am patient but not that patient.

MARY: I don't want to hurt you Joseph.

JOSEPH: Mary...

MARY: I'm pregnant, Joseph.

Pause.

Longer pause.

JOSEPH: How can you be pregnant?

MARY: Maybe pregnant is too strong a word to use.

Pause.

MARY: But there is no other word to describe to you what has happened.

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

MARY: I know Joseph and I can explain.

JOSEPH: Please...*(Joseph is obviously hurt to tears)*

MARY: I was visited by an Angel who told me that I would become pregnant and bear God's Son. He is to be called Jesus. He will save man from sin.

Pause.

JOSEPH: Mary, you lost me at pregnant.

MARY: Joseph, please...I am asking you to look beyond the natural at this moment. I know what it looks like but I need you to stay grounded in the faith you have that God does the impossible.

JOSEPH: Impossible, yes. Ridiculous, well I am having a problem with that one.

MARY: But Joseph...

JOSEPH: You would just throw away our future like this? You are the best thing that ever happened to me Mary.

MARY: I am telling you the truth.

JOSEPH: Are you telling the truth about being pregnant?

MARY: Yes Joseph.

JOSEPH: And how am I supposed to handle this Mary. (trying hard to hide the tears)

MARY: I'm still trying to figure it out...but I was hoping we could do that together.

JOSEPH: You break my heart and then you want us to talk about it.

MARY: I am asking you to try. I haven't done anything to hurt you. You have to believe me.

JOSEPH: You cannot cover up a pregnancy. It becomes obvious after a few months and everyone will know Mary. They will know that this happened outside of marriage and that is when it gets really serious.

MARY: I know. Getting married a little sooner would be an option.

Pause.

JOSEPH: What am I supposed to say to that?

MARY: Yes.

Now the tears come.

JOSEPH: I think this is where we say goodbye Mary.

MARY: No Joseph. I will not accept that.

JOSEPH: I don't see any other way.

MARY: God will make a way. Please don't make a decision right now...just give it a little time before you decide ok. If you love me as much as you said you did...just grant me this one favour. Give it some time.

JOSEPH: Ok.

MARY: I am going to visit my cousin Elizabeth. I will be back in a few days. Joseph, I do love you.

Pause.

Joseph doesn't answer.

Mary painfully turns and leaves.

JOSEPH: God...I can't do this. I need a way out. I never knew love could hurt this much.

LIGHTS OUT

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SCENE 3

LIGHTS COME UP SR

Elizabeth stands alone... she is pregnant and it's beginning to show.

MARY'S VOICE: Cousin Elizabeth.

Something leaps in Elizabeth's stomach. She holds it with glee.

Mary joins her. They hug. Mary pulls away and touches her stomach.

MARY: It is true?

ELIZABETH: Yes. There is nothing too hard for our God to do.

MARY: I needed this confirmation Elizabeth. I have been so confused.

ELIZABETH: The moment I heard your voice my baby leaped in my stomach. It's as if he is rejoicing.

MARY: My heart is broken Elizabeth. I have lost my love because of this.

ELIZABETH: You are blessed and highly favored of all the women in Jerusalem. You first need to believe that. God has a plan for your life and anything you lose or gain its all a part of his plan.

MARY: I didn't want to lose Joseph. I love him.

ELIZABETH: But does he love you?

Mary is in thought.

LIGHTS COME UP SL

Joseph and his friend Peter.

PETER: Do you love her?

JOSEPH: I think I do...or did. I don't know.

PETER: Love hurts my brother. That's reality. When dealing with women you can't get your heart involved.

ELIZABETH: It's a matter of the heart Mary. Love conquers all my cousin. I believe that.

MARY: I am so confused right now. I don't know where to turn or what to do.

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ELIZABETH: God has a plan. I know He does. He is the father of your child. He will make a way.

JOSEPH: She is carrying a child that is not my own. I can't see beyond that.

PETER: But you said an angel looking thingy had visited you and told you to take her as your wife and not be afraid.

JOSEPH: It was a dream.

PETER: A very timely one if you asked me. But I support you bro. This one is a bit too complicated. Best to stay clear of this one.

JOSEPH: That's what my mind tells me....but I still can't stop thinking about her and having this feeling of responsibility to her that somehow it's my duty to protect her.

PETER: Do you think Mary was telling the truth, though absurd the story sounds.

JOSEPH: I don't know Mary as a liar. She would not sit down and make up such a story.

PETER: Maybe something has gone wrong upstairs.

JOSEPH: Well that's one explanation or maybe...she was telling the truth.

PETER: A virgin pregnancy. You must be kidding.

MARY: I told him the truth...but he just wouldn't believe me.

JOSEPH: She was the only woman for me Peter.

MARY: He is the only man for me Elizabeth.

JOSEPH: I thought I was the only man for her.

MARY: I thought I was the only woman for him.

JOSEPH: I am really thinking about becoming a priest.

MARY: I'm gonna join the convent.

JOSEPH: I love her so much.

MARY: I love him so much.

JOSEPH: I thought she loved me.

MARY: I thought he loved me.

MARY & JOSEPH: I just don't understand. *(both sighs)*

ELIZABETH: God knows best. He will work it out for your good.

PETER: Maybe it wasn't meant to be. I don't see why you wanted to tie yourself down so young and you can forget about becoming a priest. Too many fish out in the sea bro.

ELIZABETH: You just need to follow your heart.

PETER: The moment you decide to follow your heart some chick usually comes along and break it. The next time you fall in love leave your heart out of it man. That's what I do.

MARY: I don't even know what it means to follow your heart.

JOSEPH: How do you love without a heart....seriously? Why am I even talking to you?

ELIZABETH: For starters don't jump to conclusion.

PETER: Be quick to call it quits and move on brother. There are many fishes in the sea.

ELIZABETH: If Joseph truly loves you he will come to his senses.

PETER: Do the sensible thing and just let her go. She is a recipe for trouble and you are better off without her.

ELIZABETH: I know you are hurting Mary, but its darkest just before dawn.

PETER: There is no silver lining in this cloud brother. Even if she was telling the truth and somehow got pregnant without doing the natural...this whole set up could cause you much embarrassment. People will know she got pregnant out of wed lock however it happened.

MARY: This could be very embarrassing for my family. Getting pregnant outside marriage. That's all people will see even if this is a miracle from God. I can't face all that embarrassment Elizabeth. I may never recover from that.

JOSEPH: The way I see it I have a choice. The truth is I love that woman and even though I am hurting I still have a desire to be her husband...especially now you mentioning how bad this can look. I can choose to marry her and protect her or walk away and leave her to a multitude of shame...they may even consider her an adulterer and stone her to death. I can't let that happen.

ELIZABETH: Well then, dear cousin. I guess it boils down to just how much Joseph loves you.

PETER: I guess it boils down to how much you love her.

Pause.

JOSEPH: I will do as God wants me to do.

PETER: Still the same Joseph I know. Always choosing the hardest possible road.

JOSEPH: There is just one fish in the sea for me Peter. I just can't see my life without her.

PETER: Whatever you say bro.

Pause ...

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE 4

LIGHTS COME UP SR

King Herod is sitting on his throne gouging himself with food.

Three wise men are escorted in and they bow to Herod and wait patiently for Him to take A break from eating and acknowledge them. He eventually does as he wipes his mouth.

HEROD: You are not from around here, are you?

WISE MAN 1: No Your Highness.

Pause.

HEROD: Where are you from?

WISE MAN 2: We have travelled from the West.

HEROD: From the West? I guess that makes you West Indians.

WISE MAN 2: We merely observe the stars.

HEROD: And what do three star gazers want in little Jerusalem.

WISE MAN 3: We seek a King.

HEROD: And you have found your King.

Herod stuffs his mouth with food.

WISE MAN 1: You are not the King we seek.

Herod chokes on the food.

Pause.

HEROD: What blasphemy is this?

WISE MAN 1: Blasphemy is against God.

HEROD: Blasphemy is what I say it is.

WISE MAN 1: We seek the one who will sit on David's throne.

HEROD: And where exactly do you think I am sitting?

WISE MAN 2: With all due respect your highness...

HEROD: Let me make myself a little clearer. I am THE KING, not A KING. Beside me there is no other.

WISE MAN 2: Not according to the Prophecy.

HEROD: What Prophecy?

WISE MAN 3: For out of Jerusalem will come a Remnant.

HEROD: I'm sorry. I did not pack my dictionary in my lunch pack this morning.

WISE MAN 2: For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

WISE MAN 1: And He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

WISE MAN 3: He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

HEROD: This is about religion?

WISE MAN 2: It's about that star we have followed in the East. It led us here and by our own interpretations of scripture we know the child will be born in Bethlehem.

WISE MAN 1: Can you help us find him?

HEROD: I would love to...but I don't think I can. Your journey has been long. I can make accommodations for you to get some rest and food.

WISE MAN 2: We appreciate the offer Your highness, but we should be on our way.

HEROD: The roast pork is very good.

WISE MAN 3: And we are sure it is...but we must find this child and time is of the essence.

HEROD: Then I must ask of you a favor. When you find this child King, bring me back word. I too would love to come and worship Him.

WISE MAN 1: As you wish Your Highness.

HEROD: Go in peace.

The wise men leaves.

The food has lost its flavor. Herod shoves it aside his face now twisted in an angry frown.

HEROD: Jerusalem will know no other King.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 5

LIGHTS UP

Herod seated on his throne CS.

Enter two advisers. They stand to his left and right. They bow and remain in silence.

HEROD: I am deeply troubled by the recent events.

ADVISER 1: My lord, you haven't eaten in three days. You need to eat to keep up your strength.

HEROD: I find no pleasure in gouging myself with food. I find pleasure in nothing. Three wise men came to this very palace claiming to look for a king. I told them to bring me back news when they found this king. But my heart tells me they will not return.

ADVISER 2: They have no intention of coming back.

ADVISER 1: They know you only intend to harm the child.

HEROD: How can they know that?

ADVISER 2: It is no secret that you are a jealous King, my lord, and you have all reason to feel threatened if we should consider past events.

Pause.

HEROD: Who said I feel threatened?

ADVISER 1: My king has denied himself meat. It is without question.

HEROD: I need to remove this threat from my conscience. How do I do that?

ADVISER 2: The child has to die.

ADVISER 1: The prophecy will die with him.

HEROD: Have we accepted this prophecy?

ADVISER 2: Its not to be ignored my lord. The majority of the people over which you rule wait patiently for its fulfillment.

ADVISER 1: It's no longer a question of can it happen but how can we stop it from happening.

HEROD: How do we stop it?

ADVISER 2: The child must die.

HEROD: We don't even know where the child is.

ADVISER 1: That's true...but what we do know is that the child must be born in Bethlehem.

ADVISER 2: The wise men who travelled from the East said the star rest over Bethlehem and according to ancient prophecies that is where the child would be born.

HEROD: Bethlehem is a very small village but thousands of children are born there every year.

ADVISER 1: That is true.

ADVISER 2: One of them will be the child.

ADVISER 1: We seek a male child.

ADVISER 2: A young child who is yet to be weaned.

ADVISER 1: A young male child born in Bethlehem.

HEROD: We don't know if the parents have move on with him.

ADVISER 1: A mother will not leave the child's birthplace until after he is weaned. Which takes at least one and a half years.

ADVISER 2: The child would still be in Bethlehem. We are sure of it.

HEROD: But how do we find this specific child. It would be like searching for a needle in a hay stack.

ADVISER 1: True. But that depends on how far my lord is willing to go to secure his kingdom.

HEROD: I have killed to be where I am. I have used means that are contrary to law and ethics. Do you really think you need to stand there and ask me that question? I brought you here for a solution not to question my ability to execute it.

Pause.

ADVISER 1: You should give the magi enough time to return word to you. If they fail to show, assume that they found what they seek.

ADVISER 2: There is only one possible way to ensure without the shadow of a doubt the continuity of your reign.

ADVISER 1: One way to remind the people that they have only one king and if another should stand in your place it will be a king of your own making.

ADVISER 2: No stranger or descendant of the radical David can replace your lineage.

HEROD: And how do my trusty advisors propose we do that.

ADVISER 1: Employ every Soldier of Rome to invade Bethlehem. Find every male child two years and under.

HEROD: And..?

ADVISER 2: Have them killed!

HEROD: I want only one child dead. What you are proposing is a massacre.

ADVISER 1: To kill one you have to kill many. It's the only way.

ADVISER 2: Which leaves only one question for you to answer my lord. How badly do you want this child dead?

Pause.

HEROD: Wait a year then send out the decree. I want to make sure the child is dead.

The Advisors bow and exit.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 6

LIGHTS UP

Mary in her advance stage of pregnancy is being led up the aisle on a donkey. Her husband Joseph leads the donkey or the lights can come up with them already onstage.

MARY: I can't go any further Joseph.

Joseph quickly finds somewhere for his wife to sit.

MARY: The donkey ride is a little bit too bumpy for me.

JOSEPH: We can't spend the night by the side of the road.

MARY: I know that....but I just need to rest. As you can see I am having a hard time sitting up straight.

JOSEPH: Are you always this grumpy when you are pregnant?

Pause.

MARY: I hope that's not a serious question.

JOSEPH: Right. Your first child. Ok that was a stupid question.

MARY: Thank you for saying it and I am not grumpy...just uncomfortable.

JOSEPH: I bet Eve didn't think about that when she was biting that fruit.

MARY: Why is it always a woman fault?

JOSEPH: I don't know...maybe because women are the weaker vessel.

MARY: And we are gonna have this argument now?

JOSEPH: I guess not. Just try to relax a bit and let me know when we can go on.

MARY: My feet hurt.

Pause.

Joseph begins to rub her feet.

MARY: I love you Joseph.

JOSEPH: I love you too Mary.

MARY: I hope so because I think this baby is coming now.

JOSEPH: You can't know that for sure.

MARY: Really. And who is carrying the baby.

JOSEPH: You can't be having a baby now. We are still a couple miles out.

MARY: There is a Inn right over there.

Joseph looks in the direction Mary is pointing.

JOSEPH: I think we can do a little better than that.

MARY: *(starts to squirm a bit)* Oh I think not dear husband and unless you plan to deliver this child right here by the side of this road I suggest you go over there and book us a room.

JOSEPH: Can't you hold it?

MARY: You want me to hold this baby.

JOSEPH: Well, can you.

MARY: To avoid sounding too...harsh dear husband I don't think it works like that. *(the pain starts to seep through her body...she squeals)*

JOSEPH: You are going into labor!

MARY: You think.

Joseph gets a bit agitated. He runs from one end of the stage to the next.

JOSEPH: What do I do? What do I do?

MARY: Joseph please go over to that Inn and get us a room.

JOSEPH: Right.

Joseph quickly exits.

A beat.

Mary rocks left, she rocks right trying to stay calm.

Joseph comes back.

JOSEPH: They have no room. They are full to capacity.

MARY: Joseph, this baby is coming now.

JOSEPH: I can see that. *(goes to her side)* Just try to breathe.

They do the breathing exercises they teach in pregnancy class.

MARY: I don't think we are going any further than right here Joseph.

Joseph considers. He looks at her knowing she is right.

JOSEPH: Do you think you can make it over to that Inn?

MARY: I can try.

Joseph helps her up.

MARY: But you said they had no room.

JOSEPH: They don't...but I'm not about to let my wife have this child by the side of the road.

Joseph helps his wife offstage.

LIGHTS FADE