

SCENE 10
CHURCH REHEARSAL ROOM – SECOND REHEARSAL

*(the stage is strewn with boxes of costumes labeled "angel wings,"
"shepherd robes," and "animal ears..." BETH and ALICE and the
good KIDS are giving the HERDMANS instructions)*

BETH

The shepherds always stand over here.

ALICE

And Mary comes on from there.

BETH

With Joseph. And the inn is offstage.

LEROY

What's an inn?

TEDDY

It's like a motel –

ELMER

– where people go to spend the night.

CLAUDE

What people? Jesus?

ALICE

Oh, honestly! Jesus wasn't even born yet. Mary was great with child.

RALPH

Pregnant? Mary was pregnant!

ALICE

Don't say that!!

*(lots of snickering... GRACE enters with boxes of stuff she pulled,
followed by CHARLIE, who is helping her)*

GRACE

Okay, team, put a cork in it. We all know Mary was pregnant.

(GRACE exits to get more boxes)

ALICE

I don't think it's nice to say "pregnant" in church.

For perusal purposes only.

BETH

But Mary was.

ALICE

I'm not even allowed to say "pregnant" out of church.

ELMER

And this is the barn where Mary had her baby.

IVY

She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger —

CHARLIE

— because there was no room for them at the inn.

IMOGENE

They didn't have room for Jesus?

ALICE

Well, nobody knew the baby was going to become Jesus.

IMOGENE

Didn't Mary know? And what's the matter with Joseph? Why didn't he tell the innkeeper? I mean, my god, she was pregnant!

ALICE

Stop saying that!

OLLIE

What's a manger? Some kind of bed?

(GRACE enters with more supplies)

GRACE

They didn't have a bed in the barn so they put him in the manger, which was a big feeding trough for the animals.

IMOGENE

(outraged)

This is getting worse and worse!

ALICE

On the word manger, the angels are supposed to sing.

*(BETH, ALICE, IVY start humming "Away in a Manger" ...enter
CHURCH LADIES)*

BETTY

Hello, Grace, we wanted to pop in to see how it's going.

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GRACE

What? Oh, we're just getting started.

IMOGENE

(continues to rant)

So Mary wrapped her baby in wadded-up clothes and stuffed him in a feedbox?

CONNIE

It sounds like you could use some help.

(ALICE nods vehemently to her mother, CONNIE)

IMOGENE

Where was her social worker?

GRACE

I can handle it, Connie.

(to IMOGENE)

They didn't have social services in those days.

IMOGENE

I guess not!

GLADYS

The social worker is at our house every other week.

BETTY

We'll be in the kitchen making applesauce cake.

LUANNE

Holler if you need anything.

GRACE

(calls to LUANNE as they leave)

Don't worry, I won't.

RALPH

What kind of story is this anyway?

GRACE

It's the Christmas story. Don't you know the Christmas story?

(ALICE, BETH, and IVY stop humming)

LEROY

Never heard of it.

(ANGELS and the other KIDS start whispering, "They don't know the Christmas story")

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CLAUDE

What's the big deal?

BETH

Do you think they really don't know the Christmas story?

IVY

I think they don't.

ALICE

Of course not. They've never been in a church in their life. They just came for the snacks, which your brother told them we had.

CHARLIE

I said I was sorry.

GRACE

Okay, then. Everyone come here for a moment.

(KIDS gather on floor around GRACE)

GRACE

You see, Jesus is born and the Angel of the Lord—

GLADYS

(raising fist in the air)

That's me!

GRACE

That's right—and the angel tells the shepherds about it and they go visit.

BETH

Then King Herod sends Three Wise Men to find baby Jesus.

IVY

They follow a star that leads them to Jesus. Then they give him very special gifts.

LEROY

Like what?

CHARLIE

Gold, frankincense—

TEDDY

--and myrrh.

CLAUDE

What's that?

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GRACE

A fragrant oil.

RALPH, IMOGENE & GLADYS

Oil!?

IMOGENE

What kind of cheapo king gives oil for a present?

OLLIE

We get better stuff from the firemen.

ELMER

It turns out that King Herod is an evil guy who is worried that Jesus will take over and become the king when he grows up.

TEDDY

So he wants to kill baby Jesus.

IMOGENE

My god, they're gonna kill a baby?

ALICE

Not the Wise Men. King Herod.

RALPH

Is that true, Mrs. Bradley?

GRACE

Well, yes, it is.

GLADYS

Sounds like something straight outta Action Comics.

*(KIDS all talk at once... "Did you hear that? Action Comics!"
"Jesus isn't a comic book character..." "Who says?")*

TRACK 31

#11 DIE HEROD DIE!

IMOGENE

Shut up, everyone. Shut up!

*(this song has sword fighting, pirate moves, lots of swash and
buckle...GRACE tries to regain control of the situation and can't)*

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