

THE LITTLE STARS OF BETHLEHEM

by Janet Meili



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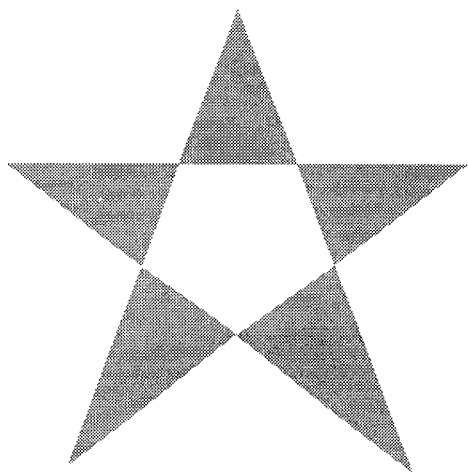
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*The
Little Stars
of Bethlehem*



JANET MEILI

CAST OF CHARACTERS

THE STARS OF BETHLEHEM:

Little Star

Small Star

Tiny Star

Wee Star

Baby Star

The Moon

The Stars Over Jerusalem

(Any number — five or more)

The Stars Over the Judean Hills

(Any number)

Orion

(Eight stars)

Polaris

SETTING

This play can be performed in the chancel with no scenery and no special lighting. Either the chancel steps, chairs, or children of various heights can be used to have the stars appear at different heights. There can be a manger scene if desired.

COSTUMES

The Moon holds a moon (any shape). The larger stars each hold a five-pointed star (of varying sizes). The Stars of Bethlehem each hold one triangle of what will become a large four-foot-wide star at the climax.

NOTE: Carols may be sung by the congregation before and after the playlet, or interspersed between the various action sections of the play.

- 1 **AT RISE:** The five Little Stars are On-stage, each holding a section
2 of reflective cardboard roughly triangular in shape. Later, each
3 of these one-fifth sections will be combined to become a large
4 star.
5
- 6 **LITTLE STAR:** Have you heard the good news? The baby
7 Jesus is going to be born right here in Bethlehem.
- 8 **SMALL STAR:** Isn't that nice! Then we'll all get a chance to
9 see him.
- 10 **BABY STAR:** Who is the baby Jesus?
- 11 **LITTLE STAR:** He's going to grow up to be the Messiah.
- 12 **BABY STAR:** That sounds important.
- 13 **SMALL STAR:** It is. He's going to redeem the world and start
14 the Christian church.
- 15 **WEE STAR:** That means he's the most important baby the
16 world has ever known.
- 17 **TINY STAR:** If he's going to be born right here, we ought to do
18 something special in his honor.
- 19 **LITTLE STAR:** Yes. He ought to have a special star all his own.
20 Would one of you like to be his special star?
- 21 **BABY STAR:** I'm too young. I don't even know how to twinkle
22 yet.
- 23 **TINY STAR:** I'm too tiny. Nobody can see me.
- 24 **WEE STAR:** I'm too weak. My light might go out.
- 25 **SMALL STAR:** My place in the sky is too inconspicuous. No
26 one would notice me. What about you, Little Star?
- 27 **LITTLE STAR:** I'm too unimportant. Nobody would pay any
28 attention to me.
- 29 **WEE STAR:** What are we going to do? None of us can be his
30 special star.
- 31 **LITTLE STAR:** We'll have to ask someone else. Who would
32 do the best job?
- 33 **SMALL STAR:** The moon. He's the brightest light in the night
34 sky.
- 35 **TINY STAR:** Oh, yes. Let's ask the moon. (*MOON enters.*)

- 1 **WEE STAR:** Go ahead, ask him. It was your idea.
2 **TINY STAR:** Let someone else do it. I'm afraid.
3 **LITTLE STAR:** You don't have to be afraid. He's really very
4 nice.
5 **SMALL STAR:** If you know him so well, then you ask him.
6 **LITTLE STAR:** All right, I will. Mr. Moon, we're the Little
7 Stars of Bethlehem.
8 **MOON:** Aren't you cute little sparklers, though!
9 **LITTLE STAR:** We came to ask you something.
10 **MOON:** Ask away. I'm sure I'll know the answer.
11 **SMALL STAR:** It isn't that kind of question.
12 **LITTLE STAR:** The baby Jesus is going to be born in Bethlehem
13 and we think he should have a special star.
14 **MOON:** And you want to know if I approve. I most certainly do.
15 **LITTLE STAR:** No, we want to ask you to be his star. Will
16 you?
17 **MOON:** Of course not. I'm no star, I'm the moon. Why, before
18 man knew about the One God, some of them worshiped
19 me as a god.
20 **LITTLE STAR:** We know how important you are. That's why
21 we asked you.
22 **MOON:** I can't be his special star, because I'm not a star. I
23 change my shape and move all through the sky. You'll
24 have to find someone else.
25 **LITTLE STAR:** I suppose you're right. Thank you anyway.
26 (*MOON exits.*)
27 **WEE STAR:** I'm so disappointed.
28 **TINY STAR:** But what he said was true. He can't get any
29 bigger or brighter than full moon and he does move
30 around. There's no way anyone would know he was doing
31 anything unusual.
32 **BABY STAR:** Who do we ask now?
33 **SMALL STAR:** It's too big a job for one star. Let's ask a
34 constellation. (*The constellation, ORION, enters. TINY, WEE*
35 *and BABY STARS leave. The eight STARS OF ORION form*

1 *their constellation [diagram below], by squatting down, standing*
 2 *on the steps of the chancel and standing on chairs so their stars*
 3 *form the shape vertically.)*



13 **LITTLE STAR:** I don't think this is going to work!

14 **SMALL STAR:** One star can't do it. A constellation is the
 15 perfect solution.

16 **LITTLE STAR:** But constellations are so clannish. They stick
 17 together and ignore the rest of us.

18 **SMALL STAR:** That is what makes them a constellation.

19 **LITTLE STAR:** And Orion is so gruff. If the three littlest stars
 20 are afraid even to come with us to ask him . . .

21 **SMALL STAR:** It will make it an even greater honor if he says
 22 yes. Oh, Mr. Orion?

23 **ORION:** (*All eight in unison*) Who dares to speak to Orion?

24 **SMALL STAR:** I'm Small Star of Bethlehem.

25 **ORION:** You must be small. We can't see you.

26 **SMALL STAR:** It doesn't matter. I just wanted to ask you to
 27 come to Bethlehem to be an honor guard for the baby Jesus.

28 **ORION:** The Bethlehem babe is the Prince of Peace.

29 **SMALL STAR:** Yes, he is. You know about him, then?

30 **ORION:** We are a constellation of violence. We are not fit to
 31 honor the babe.

32 **SMALL STAR:** Do you really think so? Maybe you're just
 33 being humble.

34 **ORION:** We are not fit to honor the Prince of Peace.

35 **SMALL STAR:** All right, if you say so. (*ORION exits. TINY,*

1 WEE and BABY STARS come back.)

2 TINY STAR: Can you imagine gruff old Orion having such a
3 conscience?

4 BABY STAR: What are we going to do? Who is there to ask?

5 WEE STAR: There are thousands of other stars in the sky.

6 TINY STAR: But how do we choose?

7 LITTLE STAR: What about the Stars Over Jerusalem? They're
8 used to guarding royalty.

9 WEE STAR: Oh, Little Star, you're so smart! That's the perfect
10 solution. (*Enter STARS OVER JERUSALEM, any number,*
11 *with various sized stars.*)

12 SMALL STAR: It's your turn to ask.

13 WEE STAR: All right. Here I go. Oh, Stars Over Jerusalem,
14 may we talk to you?

15 JERUSALEM STAR: (*One speaks for group.*) Why, you're so
16 small, your rays only go in one direction!

17 WEE STAR: We know we're small! That's why we've come to
18 you for help.

19 JERUSALEM STAR: What do you want?

20 WEE STAR: We'd like you to be an honor guard for a baby
21 who's going to be born in Bethlehem.

22 JERUSALEM STAR: Impossible! We only guard royalty.

23 WEE STAR: He's the Prince of Peace.

24 JERUSALEM STAR: We guard the representatives of the
25 Imperial Caesar.

26 WEE STAR: He's going to be the most important man in the
27 world when he grows up.

28 JERUSALEM STAR: If he were that important, he would be
29 born here in Jerusalem. Go away, little specks and stop
30 bothering us. (*STARS OVER JERUSALEM exit.*)

31 SMALL STAR: I'm ashamed to admit that they're stars like us.

32 TINY STAR: They're much more important than we are or
33 ever will be.

34 WEE STAR: There isn't much time left. Who else can we ask?

35 BABY STAR: What about our own Judean stars?

- 1 **LITTLE STAR:** I don't know. They're pretty busy.
- 2 **BABY STAR:** They wouldn't have to go far. And they'd
- 3 understand the importance of what has to be done.
- 4 **TINY STAR:** All we can do is ask. You ask. You're the youngest.
- 5 They won't refuse you. (*Enter STARS OVER THE JUDEAN*
- 6 *HILLS.*)
- 7 **BABY STAR:** Stars Over the Judean Hills, do you have a
- 8 minute?
- 9 **JUDEAN STAR:** (*One speaks for group.*) We have all eternity.
- 10 **BABY STAR:** The baby Jesus is going to be born in Bethlehem
- 11 very soon now.
- 12 **JUDEAN STAR:** Yes, we know.
- 13 **BABY STAR:** He's the Son of God and should have a special
- 14 star to honor him.
- 15 **JUDEAN STAR:** That sounds like a good idea.
- 16 **BABY STAR:** Will you provide the honor star?
- 17 **JUDEAN STAR:** Us? We can't do anything like that.
- 18 **BABY STAR:** Why not?
- 19 **JUDEAN STAR:** We're old stars, set in our ways. We have
- 20 guided and comforted the shepherds of these hills for
- 21 generations. We can't change now.
- 22 **BABY STAR:** Why not?
- 23 **JUDEAN STAR:** We have our own job and we do it well. If
- 24 you want somebody to do something out of the ordinary
- 25 like that, it should be some youngster. Young ones are
- 26 always willing to try something new.
- 27 **BABY STAR:** But where can we find some young stars who
- 28 can do it?
- 29 **JUDEAN STAR:** Ask the North Star. He knows everything.
- 30 **BABY STAR:** Oh, yes. He's just the one to ask. Thank you.
- 31 (*They exit.*) Did you hear that?
- 32 **WEE STAR:** We should have thought of him ourselves. (*Enter*
- 33 *POLARIS.*)
- 34 **LITTLE STAR:** Tiny Star, it's your turn to ask.
- 35 **TINY STAR:** I'll be glad to. Oh, Mr. Polaris.

1 POLARIS: Well, well, what are you Bethlehem stars doing up
2 here at the North Pole?

3 TINY STAR: Mr. Polaris, we know you're the most important
4 star in the sky.

5 POLARIS: Flattery, flattery. You must want a favor.

6 TINY STAR: Yes, we do, but not for ourselves. We're looking
7 for a way to honor the baby Jesus and we thought maybe
8 you'd come to Bethlehem and be his special star.

9 POLARIS: That would be an honor indeed, and I'd like to do
10 it, but I'm afraid I can't.

11 BABY STAR: Please, won't you think it over before you say no?

12 POLARIS: I'm sorry, but there's just no way I could manage
13 it. All the travelers in the world use me as their direction
14 finder and if I were to move, many ships would flounder
15 and many lives would be lost. And what sort of honor
16 would that be for the baby?

17 SMALL STAR: We didn't think of that!

18 POLARIS: Thank you for asking me. I'm honored that you
19 thought of me. Let me know if there's anything else I can
20 do to help.

21 TINY STAR: There is. You can help us find a star who will be
22 his special star. We've asked *everyone* and they all said no.

23 POLARIS: Whom have you asked?

24 SMALL STAR: We asked the Moon.

25 LITTLE STAR: But he said he wasn't a star.

26 WEE STAR: And we asked Orion.

27 SMALL STAR: He said he wasn't good enough.

28 TINY STAR: Next, we asked the Stars Over Jerusalem.

29 WEE STAR: They said they were *too* important.

30 LITTLE STAR: So we asked the Stars Over the Judean Hills.

31 BABY: And they said they were too old to change and we
32 should ask you.

33 TINY STAR: And you have your own job to do.

34 POLARIS: I guess you'll just have to do it yourselves.

35 BABY STAR: But I'm too young. I don't even know how to



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