

'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE: A CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

Music and lyrics by Roland Caire Jr.

Based on the play by Rachel Olson



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'Twas the Night Before:

A Christmas Musical

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Speaking parts

Reader 1, 2

Angel 1, 2, 3, 4

Gabriel

Person 1, 2, 3

Innkeeper

Shepherd 1, 2, 3, 4

Mary

Joseph

Balthazar

Melchior

Caspar

Servant

Non-speaking parts

Little Angels

PRODUCTION NOTES

Set

This play doesn't need a large space to be performed. It can be performed on a stage or in any open area. A manger needs to be added as indicated in the script. It can be placed anywhere visible.

Props

An oversized book with a playbook hidden behind it for Readers 1 and 2. Gabriel needs a scroll. Mary needs a Baby Jesus, which can be a doll wrapped in a white blanket. The Servant needs a large scroll, frankincense, gold, and myrrh to give to the Wise Men.

Costumes

Costumes can be as simple or as elaborate as the director wants. The Angels can be dressed in white robes with halos and wings or they can wear everyday clothes with wings and halos. The halos can be made out of gold garland and placed on top of the head. The Little Angels wear halos and cardboard wings and can wear street clothes or white robes. The Shepherds may wear in biblical robes or street clothes. If they dress in street clothes they should carry a staff to signify to the audience they are shepherds. All other characters can dress in biblical clothes or in street clothes. Accessories may be added to the street clothes to suggest their character's identity.

SONG LIST

1. 'Twas The Night Before
2. Narration 1
3. Christ Is Coming Tonight
4. Narration 2
5. Too Many People In Town
6. Narration 3
7. The Good News
8. Narration 4
9. The Promise Is Here
10. Narration 5
11. Hey, Look At That Star!
12. Narration 6
13. Merry, Merry Christmas To You!
14. Bows/'Twas The Night Before (Reprise)

1 *(Song “’Twas The Night Before.” ALL enter during music*
 2 *introduction.)*

3 **ALL:** *(Singing)* ’Twas the night before, the world had been
 4 waiting

5 For this night before, anticipating
 6 That the Lord would come to lead his flock into the
 7 light from the darkness.

8 ’Twas the night before, the prophets had told us
 9 Of this night before, when we would behold
 10 A blazing star above, a sign of love shining down on a
 11 manger.

12 Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden had angered the
 13 Lord when they ate from the tree.

14 We have been waiting for God to forgive us and send
 15 us a Savior to set us all free.

16 ’Twas the night before the birth of a King.

17 ’Twas the night before, when the angels would sing
 18 To proclaim His birth to all the earth and praise the
 19 Lord from the heavens.

20 ’Twas the night before, this is the story
 21 Of the night before, when God in His glory
 22 Sent His only son to lead us from the darkness of the
 23 nights before. *(READERS 1 and 2 take their places*
 24 *Downstage. They hold the oversized storybook.)*

25 **READER 1:** Welcome, fellow Christians, and a blessed
 26 Christmas to each of you. My name is _____.

27 **READER 2:** And I’m _____. We’re here to tell you
 28 a story. From the title of the play, you may be familiar
 29 with one version of this poem.

30 **READER 1:** But we have a version you may not have heard
 31 before. Settle back in your seats while we tell you the
 32 story ...

33 **READERS 1 and 2:** ’Twas the Night Before! *(They open the*
 34 *book.)*

35 **READER 1:** *(Singing “Narration 1”)* ’Twas the night before

- 1 Christ's birth and far above earth,
 2 The angels were ready to announce Jesus' birth.
 3 (*ANGELS step Downstage adjusting their gowns, checking*
 4 *halos, and talking.*)
- 5 ANGEL 1: Tonight's the night!
- 6 ANGEL 2: God has finally decided to send Jesus down to
 7 earth.
- 8 ANGEL 3: The plan is unfolding and Mary and Joseph seem
 9 anxious for his arrival. She's a brave girl. So full of faith.
- 10 ANGEL 4: Say, Gabriel, you've been down there before. What
 11 will the people do when they see us?
- 12 GABRIEL: At first they'll be very frightened, but when they
 13 realize God has sent us, they'll listen and believe.
- 14 ANGEL 1: Who shall we announce this birth to first?
- 15 GABRIEL: Let's see. (*Gets out a scroll, unrolls it, and reads.*) Our
 16 assignment is to go to the hills outside of Bethlehem to
 17 a group of shepherds.
- 18 ANGEL 2: Shepherds? Shouldn't we be announcing the birth
 19 of God's Son to important people?
- 20 GABRIEL: It is God's wish for us to tell the humble first.
 21 After all, the birth is just the beginning of the plan.
- 22 ANGEL 3: By the time the important part happens, everyone
 23 will know about him.
- 24 ANGEL 4: God knows best. We'd better get the other angels
 25 and head for earth.
- 26 ANGEL 1: Lead on, Gabriel. (*The ANGELS go to the door and*
 27 *lead in the LITTLE ANGELS.*)
- 28 GABRIEL: This way, little angels. (*Leads them to the front of*
 29 *church to sing. Other ANGELS also take their places. Song*
 30 *"Christ Is Coming Tonight."*)
- 31 ANGELS: Listen, little angels, we must fly, tonight we will fill
 32 the starry sky.
 33 We will bring the news to shepherd men watching their
 34 sheep, falling asleep,
 35 Not aware that Christ is coming tonight.

1 We will do a thing we've never done, we'll light up the
 2 sky just like the sun.
 3 We will sing with voices clear and pure,
 4 Lifting in song, vibrant and strong,
 5 Spreading word that Christ is coming tonight.
 6 But, before we leave for earth bringing the news about
 7 His birth
 8 I want to hear you sing once more, let your voices soar!
 9 LITTLE ANGELS: Ah. Gloria! Gloria!
 10 GABRIEL and OTHERS: Christ is born! Christ is born!
 11 LITTLE ANGELS: Ah.
 12 ALL: Gloria, Gloria! (*After song, LITTLE ANGELS go to their*
 13 *assigned seats and GABRIEL and ANGELS exit.*)
 14 READER 2: (*Singing "Narration 2"*) The people in Bethlehem,
 15 a very small town,
 16 were just getting ready to lay themselves down.
 17 (*PERSON 1, 2, 3 and INNKEEPER enter and position*
 18 *themselves in the front.*)
 19 PERSON 1: Have you ever seen so many people in town?
 20 PERSON 2: This tax census from the Romans is really
 21 causing a lot of headaches.
 22 PERSON 3: I never knew I had so many relatives. We have
 23 twenty-one extra people at our house!
 24 INNKEEPER: You think you've got problems? My inn is so
 25 full, I've had to turn people away. Why just a little while
 26 ago a young couple from up north pleaded with me to
 27 let them stay in my stable.
 28 PERSON 1: Did you?
 29 INNKEEPER: Yes, but I felt so bad. The wife is expecting her
 30 baby any time now.
 31 PERSON 2: I suppose it was better than sleeping in the
 32 street.
 33 (*Song "Too Many People in Town"*)
 34 ALL: Push, shove, push, shove, too many people in town.
 35 Too many people.

1 Everyone's in town for the census,
 2 The traffic is a terrible mess.
 3 It's crowded as it can be, they're double parking
 4 donkeys
 5 And every house is filled to excess.
 6 Push, shove, push, shove, too many people in town.
 7 Too many people.
 8 If you didn't make reservations,
 9 If you aren't staying with kin,
 10 There's nowhere to stay here, they'll turn you away
 11 here,
 12 There's no room left at the inn.
 13 The line outside the deli stretches halfway down the
 14 street,
 15 The crowd's so thick at temple you can hardly find a
 16 seat.
 17 The tourists crowd the market looking for their
 18 souvenirs,
 19 We'll be cleaning up the mess they leave for years!
 20 Push, shove, push, shove, too many people in town.
 21 Too many people.
 22 Aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews,
 23 Everybody's family is here,
 24 Wagonloads of cousins, children by the dozens
 25 The local folks have had it to here!
 26 Push, shove, push, shove, too many people in town.
 27 Too many people in town!
 28 PERSON 3: It's awfully dark. I'd better be getting home.
 29 PERSON 2: Me, too. Good night, everyone.
 30 PERSON 1: Night, brothers. *(PERSON 1, 2, 3 exit. Only the*
 31 *INNKEEPER remains.)*
 32 INNKEEPER: Good night. *(Turns to walk away, then stops.)*
 33 Maybe I should check on that couple. No, they'll be all
 34 right. *(He exits. SHEPHERDS enter and take their places in*
 35 *the front.)*

- 1 **READER 1:** (*Singing "Narration 3"*) And out on the hillside,
 2 while watching their sheep,
 3 A group of young shepherds were falling asleep.
 4 (*SHEPHERDS act as though starting to sleep.*)
- 5 **READER 2:** When suddenly out of the sky came a light
 6 And an angel appeared making everything bright!
 7 (*GABRIEL and the ANGELS appear and stand near the*
 8 *SHEPHERDS. READER 2 speaks in regular voice.*) He said
 9 to the shepherds,
 10 (*Song: "The Good News"*)
- 11 **GABRIEL:** Peace! Have no fear
 12 For the news I have brought is for all men to hear.
- 13 **ANGEL 1:** A baby is born, this night is his birth
 14 And he's come to save all of the people on earth.
- 15 **ALL ANGELS:** Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in
 16 the highest we sing.
 17 Glory to God, Glory to God, The Savior is here, Christ
 18 Jesus our King!
- 19 **ANGEL 2:** In Bethlehem town you will find this dear child
 20 With Joseph and Mary, his mother so mild.
- 21 **ANGEL 3:** Sharing a manger with oxen and sheep.
 22 Nestled in blankets, the babe, sound asleep.
- 23 **ALL ANGELS:** Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in
 24 the highest we sing.
 25 Glory to God, Glory to God, The Savior is here, Christ
 26 Jesus our King!
- 27 **ANGEL 4:** Good news we bring you this wonderful night
 28 Christ Jesus has come, so run to the site.
- 29 **GABRIEL:** Blest is the Child whose birth we proclaim.
 30 Praise to the Lord and praise to His Name.
- 31 **ALL ANGELS:** Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in
 32 the highest we sing.
 33 Glory to God, Glory to God, The Savior is here, Glory
 34 to God! (*ANGELS exit but SHEPHERDS stay.*)
- 35 **SHEPHERD 1:** A vision from Yahweh. Bless his name!

- 1 **SHEPHERD 2:** We must do as the angels said. The promise
 2 handed down from old has been fulfilled.
- 3 **SHEPHERD 3:** Let us go and look for the stable where the
 4 baby is lying.
- 5 **SHEPHERD 4:** The Lord will take care of the sheep. Let's
 6 hurry. (*SHEPHERDS go over to where a manger has been*
 7 *placed. MARY, JOSEPH, and BABY JESUS enter and take*
 8 *their places while the READERS sing.*)
- 9 **READER 1:** (*Singing "Narration 4"*) So after the angels
 10 delivered the news
 11 The shepherds went searching with no time to lose!
- 12 **READER 2:** (*Singing*) And just as the angels had told them
 13 aloud
 14 They found Jesus with Mary and Joseph, so proud.
- 15 **SHEPHERD 1:** Is this the Messiah that the angels spoke of?
- 16 **JOSEPH:** Please, come nearer. Our Savior has finally come.
- 17 **SHEPHERD 3:** We are only poor shepherds, but we offer
 18 our love. (*SHEPHERDS 1 and 3 bow. SHEPHERDS 2 and*
 19 *4 talk to each other.*)
- 20 **SHEPHERD 2:** We are the first, but soon everyone will hear
 21 of this baby.
- 22 **SHEPHERD 4:** God has given us the long-awaited promise.
 23 Praise God. (*Song "The Promise Is Here"*)
- 24 **ALL:** The Promise is here for in the manger we find,
 25 A baby so dear to rescue all humankind
 26 For God has sent His only Son to redeem us in His love.
 27 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord above!
 28 (*SHEPHERDS 2 and 4 join SHEPHERDS 1 and 3 bowing*
 29 *down next to the manger. JOSEPH goes to center and talks*
 30 *to the audience. Underscoring continues throughout.*)
- 31 **JOSEPH:** (*Speaking*) What a night! Many months ago an
 32 angel also came to me with strange news. The woman
 33 I had chosen to marry would become the mother of
 34 God's Son. When my parents told me about the
 35 promised one, I never dreamed that someday my wife

- 1 would give birth to that promise.
 2 It is hard to understand. But as I look at Mary and
 3 Jesus, I feel so humble, yet so proud that God chose us.
 4 *(He rejoins the scene.)*
 5 **ALL:** The Promise is here for in the manger we find,
 6 A baby so dear to rescue all humankind
 7 For God has sent His only Son to redeem us in His love.
 8 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord above!
 9 **MARY:** *(Moves to Center.)* When I was first told that God had
 10 chosen me, I was scared. Why, among all the women in
 11 the world, was I chosen for this great honor? So many
 12 things have happened that I shall never forget. The
 13 birth being announced by angels. The birth of my child,
 14 and everyone's Savior. I am proud of Jesus, but I also
 15 remember the Scriptures of old that say this Savior
 16 must suffer and die for our sins. It's been a strange and
 17 marvelous night. *(She returns to the manger scene.)*
 18 **ALL:** The Promise is here for in the manger we find,
 19 A baby so dear to rescue all humankind
 20 For God has sent His only Son to redeem us in His love.
 21 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord above! *(WISEMEN enter*
 22 *to Center.)*
 23 **READER 2:** *(Singing "Narration 5")* Now wise men who lived
 24 in a land far away
 25 Saw a star burning like the sun in the day.
 26 They questioned and wondered what this light could
 27 mean
 28 For a star of this brilliance had never been seen.
 29 **BALTHAZAR:** None of the history charts have revealed any
 30 type of star like this before.
 31 **MELCHIOR:** It must signify something very important.
 32 Possibly something that will change the whole world.
 33 **CASPAR:** A ruler perhaps? A great and powerful king that
 34 will change the course of his people?
 35 **SERVANT:** *(Enters carrying a large scroll.)* Here is the book of

- 1 the prophecies from the Israelites. (*Exits.*)
- 2 **BALTHAZAR:** (*Looks at the scroll.*) The Israelites spoke of a
- 3 promised Messiah. Could this be his star?
- 4 **MELCHIOR:** He is very great. The books speak of him
- 5 many times.
- 6 **CASPAR:** It must be. Let us take some gifts and seek him.
- 7 (*Song "Hey, Look At That Star!"*)
- 8 **BALTHAZAR:** I've never seen that star before.
- 9 Look how it shines up there, brighter than a meteor.
- 10 See how the light is coming down, down there to
- 11 Bethlehem town.
- 12 Get your bags, we've gotta travel far.
- 13 Hey, look at that star!
- 14 **ALL WISEMEN:** Nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah!
- 15 **CASPAR:** Load the camels up, we gotta ride.
- 16 Let's hit the highway with that star as our guide.
- 17 Pack up the frankincense, get the gold, spare no
- 18 expense,
- 19 Find the myrrh, we'll bring the biggest jar.
- 20 Hey, look at that star!
- 21 **ALL WISEMEN:** Nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah!
- 22 **MELCHIOR:** A star like that must be a sign, and, if we
- 23 follow it, what do you think we'll find?
- 24 A wise man or a king? It could be anything! Bet ya it'll
- 25 be spectacular!
- 26 Hey, look at that star!
- 27 **ALL WISEMEN:** Nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah!
- 28 Nah-nah-nah-nah-nah!
- 29 **SERVANT:** (*Enters again with the gifts.*) Here are your gifts —
- 30 gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (*WISEMEN take the gifts*
- 31 *and ALL leave, including the SERVANT.*)
- 32 **READER 1:** (*Singing "Narration 6"*) They traveled in search
- 33 of the child whom they knew
- 34 Would grow up to serve as the King of the Jews.
- 35 The star showed the wise men where Jesus would be.



Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:
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