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“HUSBAND OF THE
VIRGIN - MOTHER”



A Drama



By
JOHN P. LONARGAN, A. M.

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FOREWORD.

To visualize the character of Saint Joseph we must associate him with Jesus and Mary. I follow chronology closely, studying by analysis, the various paintings on the subject through the centuries; also the Bible, Legend and Tradition.

WORK EXAMINED.

Mrs. Jamieson on Art; Cornelius a Lapide—Commentary on Scripture; Duay's unabridged version of the Bible; Ridpath History of Mankind; Rollin on the Classics; Winston; Plutarch; Josephus.

Original in nothing, I strive for accuracy.

Title of Drama:

"HUSBAND OF THE VIRGIN-MOTHER."

Author,

JOHN P. LONARGAN, A. M.

PICTURE PRELUDE.

1. JOACHIM scorned by the High Priest.
2. ANNA'S VISION—THE BABE IMMACULATE.
3. JOACHIM AND ANNA BRING MARY TO THE TEMPLE.

NOTE: Taken from Mrs. Jamieson's *Work on Art*.
Suggested from Feast instituted by Sixtus IV. to honor

"THE HUSBAND OF THE VIRGIN."

OPENING SCENE.

HIGH PRIEST proclaims a jubilee from the Temple steps.
He stands reading Scroll. Two Trumpeters announce
Jubilee. (*Trumpet to lips.*)

Populace disperses, some to the Olive Grove, others in
caravans go forward to Boaz.

A woman in the foreground with child up on her
shoulder.

The potter at his wheel.

The Letter-Writer at his desk.

Money-lenders, Pharisees with Phylacteries.

Prowling dogs.

Carpet-weaving on the roofs.

City Gate in view.

ACT FIRST—FIRST SCENE.

Inner Atrium—Tabernacle in the distance.

To the Side—Lattice screened Court of Women.

Joseph stands meditating.

STORY OF THE FIRST ACT.

Joseph decides to be a suitor for the hand of Mary.

Angel announces to Mary the coming of Christ.

Mary yields to the High Priest in taking a Husband.

Mary goes to Elizabeth awaiting birth of John.

Mary returns to Joseph and Joseph becomes her protector.

Herod the Great and Mariamne at Court.

JOSEPH: Jesus, son of God, Savior, so read the Greek verse. My father, Mathan showed the Oracle's pamphlet to me. It is transcribed in Virgil's Pollio. He knew the day foretold by Daniel. Emanuel means "God is with us." The Messiah is at hand. The sceptre has passed from Juda and we are but Rome's bondsmen. Blessed Alma, whose paps will give suck to a world's Redeemer. Would that I were his servitor. Mary, her parents dead and now dedicate to the Temple, is the holiest maid of Nazareth, my native town. This day the High Priest offereth thee to that widower predestined by God to be her spouse, awaiting the fulfilment of God's holy will. Humblest of maids, modesty veils thy beauty; and thy thoughts seem all of Heaven. Old though I am, my trade is good, my arm is strong, my heart is true. I will contend against fame and riches. I will place my wand upon the altar with the rest. God of Israel, prosper me.

(EXIT.) *Enter High Priest with Mary.*

HIGH PRIEST: Mary, thy good mother, Anna dreamed of thee as, The Immaculate One. Of all the maids of Israel alone permitted to pray before the Ark. Thy destiny unknown, I hold thy secret sacred. Thou art now of age to be espoused; here come thy suitors, have I thy consent?

MARY: I will go once more to pray before the Ark.

HIGH PRIEST: Delay not long, we wait thy coming.

(*Apparition of Angel before the Ark.*)

ANGEL: Hail full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Fear not Mary for thou has found grace with God. Behold Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son and Thou shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great and he shall be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord shall give unto Him the throne of David his Father, and He shall reign in the house of David forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

MARY: How shall this be done? because I know not man.

ANGEL: The Holy Ghost shall come upon Thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy that shall be born of Thee, shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren, because no word shall be impossible with God.

(Mary returns to the High Priest, bowing assent.)

(Six suitors place wands on the altar: A Levite, a money lender, a pharisee, a judge, a rich young widower and St. Joseph.)

(A bird flies to his shoulder and heavenward as his wand blooms.)

HIGH PRIEST: The wand of the stranger blooms Thou of the Royal House of David, art the victor. Hossanna to the Highest.

(Joseph bows his head.) (The young man breaks his wand across his knee.) See Raphael's Sposalio.

YOUNG MAN: Farewell Lily of Israel.

HIGH PRIEST: Joseph and Mary come hither. *(Ring placed on finger.)* May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yield ye happiness and increase. Marry at your convenience, but remember that this espousal binds you until death.

MARY: Now I will return to the Ark to praise the Lord. *(Returns to the Ark.) (Joseph waits and receives congratulations.)*

MARY *(Kneels before the Angel)*: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word. *Angel disappears, Mary goes back to Joseph.)*

Joseph, My Spouse, in three months, I will abide with Thee. Now I go to my Cousin Elizabeth. I will sell my all and give it to the poor, henceforth the Lord is my treasure.

JOSEPH: The Lord be with Thee.

MARY: And with Thy spirit.

SATAN (*in the background*): Thou shalt not be the only one I cannot torment, nay conquer. Who art Thou? (*Curtain.*)

HOME OF ELIZABETH—VINEYARD.

MARY: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

ELIZABETH: Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus, and whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy, and blessed are thou that believed because these things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord.

MARY: Thus spoke the Angel Gabriel. . . . And this is the sixth month with her that is called barren.

ELIZABETH: And thou wilt stay with me these three months? God be praised.

(*Mary ecstatically sings the Magnificat.*)

MARY: Zachary?

ELIZABETH: He doubted the angel, wherefore is he dumb till my babe's birth, whom I shall call John. (*For he shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people unto the remission of their sins.*) All this Zachary will foretell.

MARY: Keep thou the Lord's secret, for neither the devil, nor the world, nor the flesh must know the time of Christ's manifestation. I would have Zachary sell all my possessions and give all to the poor. I am espoused to a man, a carpenter in Nazareth, Joseph, a stranger. I would sew for thee Cousin Elizabeth.

(*Curtain.*)

(Joseph placing a cross within the rim of a wheel outside his carpenters shop.)

JOSEPH: Welcome.

NEIGHBOR: Toilest thou and so rich?

JOSEPH: Work while it is day, for the night cometh.

NEIGHBOR: Ha! Tomorrow we die. Eat, drink and be merry for I am like the lily, I neither spin nor do I sew. Is thy espoused fair?

JOSEPH: As the sun.

NEIGHBOR: And beautiful?

JOSEPH: As the stars set in array.

NEIGHBOR: And worthy?

JOSEPH: Of soul so chaste, she seemeth Queen of Angels.

NEIGHBOR: When shall we see her?

JOSEPH: Nigh two months hence. I must work. Fare thee well.

(Neighbor meets another.)

FIRST NEIGHBOR: Can any good come out of Nazareth?

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Come out? coming in is different. Madala is worse, I hail from there.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: Curse Caesar and his taxes. Even the Greek's ensnare Herod by their culture. He hath orgies in the Temple's depth. Aye a status of Venus. The deliverer is a long time in coming.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: False Messiahs in every town, on every tongue. The kingdom of God is at hand, and yet we are worse than ever. Hopeless as Bethlehem.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: Bethlehem is a jest, but forget not Noemi, David, and Rachel's tomb.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Why go back to Abram? See that carpenter?

FIRST NEIGHBOR: I know him not at all.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: He will be rich, espoused to the daughter of Anna and Joachim, and the royal house of David.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: Well, I think him just in all his dealings, but he is so silent.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: A very Nazarene. They say that he has won the fairest maid in all Israel. Let us on.

(Curtain.)

“HOME OF ELIZABETH.”

ZACHARY: Our relatives were overwrought that the child should be called John.

ELIZABETH: Thou hast found thy tongue, let it be in charity.

ZACHARY: Thou didst wish him to be called John and when they did ask me, I did write down, then God's angel unlocked my tongue, and I did sing a canticle.

ELIZABETH: John, forerunner of the Messiah prophet of the highest; to await his coming in the desert.

ZACHARY: He will call to repentance, live on the bread of the desert and be clad in wild skins. Wonderful are the ways of God for he will form a new Israel.

(Mary enters from the garden.)

ELIZABETH: Thou wouldst leave me, mother of my Lord?

MARY: My time is fulfilled.

ZACHARY: I would share thy journey.

MARY: I will love John for the sake of Jesus.

ELIZABETH: And when thy Holy One is born may I not bring John to share His infant joys? His smile, and blessing?

ZACHARY: Let me go with thee? Thou goest to a stranger, I would go even to his door.

MARY: Nay, leave me at Nazareth's gate. I would meet Joseph alone. God will direct his handmaid.

ZACHARY: The night will encompass thee.

MARY: The Holy Ghost will guide and guard me, Cousin Elizabeth, God be with thee, till we meet again, I am ready.

ZACHARY: Blessed Lady I attend thee.

MARY: Elizabeth keep thou God's secret.

(Curtain.)

NIGHT SCENE: NAZARETH—MARY'S RETURN.

(*Joseph lights a candle when Mary knocks, opens door, light falls on Virgin.*)

(SATAN (*behind whispers*): "Mary is unfaithful to thee"—(*Disappears.*))

MARY: Behold the handmaid of the Lord. (*Mantle drawn aside reveals her pregnancy, Joseph turns away putting his hands to his face*). Dismiss me, wouldst thou? The Son of man, hath not whereon to lay his head. (*Turns face to the lightning*) though the fox has his covert. I would crush the serpent's head. (*Lightning ceases.*) I will go. God is with me, who rides his chariot above the tempest. (*Joseph rises from his swoon on the couch, hears the angel.*)

ANGEL: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee, Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name, Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. (*Joseph kneels, clinging to the hem of Mary's garment.*)

JOSEPH: Queen of Virgins! forgive me. Bride of heaven! intercede for me. Emmanuel! I have sinned before thee. Accept thy unworthy servant, Mother of my Redeemer, I dedicate body and soul to thy service, till death. Hear me and pity me! Let me cherish and protect the child Jesus.

MARY: Keep then the Lord's secret till his manifestation, nor devil, nor flesh, nor the world must know that God is with us. Thou shalt be reputed his father. He shall be known as the Carpenter's Son, so God willeth.

JOSEPH: Thrice blessed home of Nazareth.

MARY: I would rest.

JOSEPH: Blessed Lady, I have prepared thy room. Mother admirable, command me!

MARY: Angels will comfort and cherish thee, for thou lovest the mother of God. God's will to thee; good night.

(*As Mary stands at the threshold of her room it glows with light celestial. Joseph draws back for her face is transfigured.*)

JOSEPH: Veil! Oh, veil! the beauty of thy face. Oh!
Lady the loveliness of the Redeemer shines in thine
eyes.

MARY: The Lord be with thee.

(Exit. Joseph withdraws to his couch; kneels.)

JOSEPH: God I adore, I love. Thou lovest me. *(Bows
his head between his outstretched arms, on the couch.)*

(Curtain.)

(Roses of Sharon—Woman pressing grapes.)

NEIGHBOR: Cast her bread on the running water?

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Sold all, and gave it to the poor of
Nazareth.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: A famous jest on the carpenter, if he
hoped for riches.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Joseph seems cheery at his work.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: I wish we could find a fault in him.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: We are kinder even to the stranger,
than is Jerusalem; be they Egyptian, Greek, or
Roman, for they pass our way. If we despise not the
Gentile, why pick on the Jew?

FIRST NEIGHBOR: That may be so. We are but an ob-
scure town. Nazareth means holy, I know not why.
Show me one just man in it.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Well, this man Joseph.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: Who knows?

SECOND NEIGHBOR: The Holy One may yet abide here,
for we believe in one God.

(Roman soldier interrupts.)

ROMAN SOLDIER: So did Xenophanes. Ye are mad
without sculpture. Do ye know the stars like the
Egyptians? Who is Gamaliel compared to Cicero?
The Arabs will find the star of the Orient before ye.
Let me pass!

FIRST NEIGHBOR: So I spit after him.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Joseph blessed my boy, laid his
hand on his head, and he stammereth no more.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: I'll none of him, I dare say that they have already quarreled.

SECOND NEIGHBOR: Why, I have seen him gather lilies and roses of Sharon and lay them at her feet. She is always busy. The gossips speak no evil of them.

FIRST NEIGHBOR: I hate him, he is so good.

(*Curtain.*)

COURT OF HEROD.

(*Canopied throne; carved lions on the six throne steps. King sits on Faldstol. Those who approach, prostrate before the throne.*)

HEROD (*on throne*): Wine, woman and song. Wine, and yet more wine! Let me comb thy tresses with my fingers. I whisper of Love and Bacchus.

MARIAMNE: Then give me that jeweled ring on thy finger.

HEROD: The emerald?

MARIAMNE: Nay! That were true.

HEROD: The ruby?

MARIAMNE: That were too passionate.

HEROD: Which?

MARIAMNE: The sapphire—'tis alluring.

HEROD: A king's ransom, take it to woo me. Thy dalliance plays me false. Give me more than smiles and pretty gestures and coy kisses.

MARIAMNE: What wouldst thou?

HEROD: Eunuchs, stand off! I would woo thy image from thee.

MARIAMNE: What, a mere cameo? When thou canst look on me.

HEROD: Aye, in minature. Wine and more wine! come rest thee on yonder couch.

MARIAMNE: Thou are merry in thy cups. I am too young, too fair.

HEROD: Yield, and whatsoever thou shalt ask of me I will give to thee. I would have her in all like to thee

save thy hellish temper.

MARIAMNE: Beast! Worms! Rottenness! Murder!

HEROD: Now would I slay thee, had I another half so fair.

MARIAMNE: Short be thy reign. I may be Caesar's wife.

HEROD: Yield, Mariamne.

MARIAMNE: Fear ye not the deliverer? The promised One? He will dethrone thee.

HEROD (*aquez in terror*): I would burn Jerusalem. Where dwells He?

MARIAMNE: I know not. His forerunner is born in Galilee, thou dolt! thou lustful leech! thou old fool!

HEROD: 'Tis over, a tremor—come love.

MARIAMNE: Thou hast thy slaves and paramours. Murderer! Leave me my freedom yet awhile.

HEROD: A kiss.

MARIAMNE: Nay, thy promise.

HEROD: On with the dance. Music; when thou seest her, thou enviest most, her life is thine; come!

SATAN (*to Herod*): Slay her!

(*See Ridpath's.*)

(*Curtain.*)

SECOND ACT.

STORY.

Joseph prepares for journey to Bethlehem.

Joseph reaches Bethlehem.

Jesus adored by angels and shepherds.

Joseph flying Bethlehem overtaken by the Magi.

Joseph decides to return to Jerusalem.

HOME OF NAZARETH.

JOSEPH: I am not worthy that thou, the Mother of my Lord, should enter under my roof. Pray thou for me now, and at the hour of my death.

MARY: Thou art faithful and just, and God fearing, dwelling with me in holiness.

JOSEPH: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

MARY: His word is the light and life of the world.

JOSEPH: In the world but not of the world, we must render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.

MARY: We must obey God rather than man.

JOSEPH: Caesar compels us to undertake a journey, we must go to Bethlehem, to be enrolled. Can'st thou endure the journey, and its hardships?

MARY: Faith can move mountains. My expectation is at hand. My Deliverer is coming, to do the will of His Father. His obedience is my example. I am ready to go through fire and water. I am ready. Fear not, Joseph. Have you saddled the beasts?

JOSEPH: Everything is ready. It snows a little.

MARY: It matters not. In the name of the Lord we will go.

(*Curtain.*)

BETHLEHEM—*Night.*

(*A light snow.*)

(*Inn full of travelers—donkeys outside tied to posts—Mountain and Manger dimly visible through flying snowflakes. Innkeeper stands on lighted threshold.*)

SATAN: Drive them hence——

INNKEEPER: Too late, ye cannot enter here.

JOSEPH: Our Lady is weary and wayworn.

INNKEEPER: Too late.

MARY: For my child's sake! Pity!

INNKEEPER: Too late, I must close the door. It snows. Go!

(Darkness; suddenly the sky clears, snow ceases, a trillion stars shine out.)

JOSEPH: The heavens invite us to yonder manger,—
wouldst thou go?

MARY: Yea! Even to the end of the world, for His
sake.

JOSEPH: See! The stars fall on the mountain side.

MARY: Those are the lighted lanterns of shepherds ap-
proaching.

JOSEPH: See the Ox! Rest thee here awhile.

(An angel seen wending down the mountain.)

MARY: Here will I kneel to pray before the manger.

(Joseph turns to watch the descending lights.)

(Christ miraculously born, Mary finds the infant in her arms. Mary was clad in a fine gauze underrobe, and over it a large white mantle.) (See St. Birgidda's vision.)

*(Mary places the infant on the ground, and wraps swad-
dling clothes about Him. Joseph now comes forward
and kneels adoring. Mary holds the Infant up.)*

MARY: Hail! Jesus, the Christ.

JOSEPH: Hail! Jesus! Hail! Virgin, Mother of Christ.

*(Joseph now rises and fills the crib with sweet scented
hay. Mary places the babe in the crib. Both step
back and prostrating adore Jesus. They are aroused by
the Gloria in Excelsis Deo. Mary stands by the side
of Jesus' crib as the angels in procession, two by two,
adore the Child, bow to our Lady and ascend to
Heaven. Last an angel leads the shepherds to the crib
and disappears.)*

FIRST SHEPHERD: The Lord is my Shepherd—I shall
not want.

SECOND SHEPHERD: A good shepherd layeth down his
life for his sheep.

THIRD SHEPHERD: Bethlehem is the house of bread.
Let us die for Jesus.

MARY: Return to your flocks since ye have seen God
in flesh. Obedience is better than sacrifice.

JOSEPH: Use your clubs but to defend the sheep from the robber. (*Shepherds adore and retire. Clouds gather, the Star of Bethlehem still shines.*)

MARY: My virgin love yields to a mother's fear.

JOSEPH: Whom does thou fear?

MARY: The evil one and Herod. Let us fly with Jesus.

JOSEPH: Thou hast already endured a journey.

MARY: I feel as strong as Eve when, sinless, she first gazed on God. . . . Let us fly!

JOSEPH: We will hide 'till tomorrow, and when enrolled, return to Nazareth.

MARY: Let us hence. God's angels will guide us.

JOSEPH: I will carry the child for thee.

MARY: For a little while.

JOSEPH: Now is the scripture fulfilled: "When he bringeth in the First Begotten into the world, and let the Angels adore Him."

(*Heard from the Inn as they pass.*)

VOICE: "Out of Galilee, a prophet riseth not."

(*Town Gate, Bethlehem; Roman building. Soldiers asleep on Porch, Sentinel on Guard, Howling dogs seen and heard. Snow on mountain. The town asleep.*)

(*Scene in front of the enrollment office.*)

MARY: The Light of the star falls full on the face of Jesus.

JOSEPH: I hear the click of the steed of an outrider. It is a caravanserie. Let us draw aside.

OUTRIDER (*prostrating*): Hail! to the New Born King. Fear not, the wise men hasten to adore Him. They come, they are here.

(*The wise men first gaze on the star then on Christ.*)

MAGI (*prostrating*): We adore thee, O Christ.

MELCHIOR: Ye flee?

JOSEPH: From Herod.

MELCHIOR: 'Tis well.

JOSEPH: By Caesar's order we must wait to be enrolled.

MELCHIOR: The very building as in other towns we have passed. (*To the Outrider*) Halt yon sentinel. Awake those sleeping soldiers; light up the hall. Let the taxgatherer take his scroll. Show this signet ring from Herod, give salutation from the Magi. Go! be quick!

(Doors open.)

OUTRIDER: All is ready, they await thee.

(*The Holy Family Enter.*)

CENSUS TAKER: Thy name? In the reign of Augustus Caesar.

JOSEPH: Joseph Bar Nathan, House of David. Husband of Mary.

MARY: Mary Beth Joachim and Anna. House of David.

JOSEPH: Jesus of Nazareth. House of David.

CENSUS TAKER: Whose Son?

MELCHIOR: Enough, thy task is done. Son of the most High.

(*Wise men kneel to present their gifts.*)

MELCHIOR: Gold to the New Born King. Frankincense for the God of all. Myrrh for Christ, Who dieth for our sins.

MELCHIOR (*to Mary*): Virgin, Mother of the Word made flesh. We led by yon star, foretold for ages, come from far Arabia from Saba to welcome the Messiah. As becometh wisdom, we sought from Herod. Where is He, that is born King of the Jews? Herod called the priests, scribes and ancients. They drew back from the anger in His Face, save one fearless ancient who answered: "Bethlehem, Land of Juda, art not the least among the Princes of Juda. for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people."

MARY: And then?

MELCHIOR: Alma! full of grace! Herod smiled in terror, beckoned us to private conference and there be-

sought us diligently to seek out the time, the star appeared to us. We told him. "Go to Bethlehem!" he begged of us, "and inquire diligently after the Child, and when ye have found him——"

MARY: My Jesus! (*Folds Him to her bosom.*)

MELCHIOR: "Bring me word that I may come and adore Him."

MARY: He would betray the Son of the Living God?

MELCHIOR: Queen of Heaven, overcome by fatigue on my journey here I fell asleep. In my dream, an angel warned me not to return to Herod, but to go back by another way to my own country, Saba.

MARY: Jesus must be circumcised and the law fulfilled. Let us leave Bethlehem behind, nor halt 'till we reach the crossroads.

(*They proceed to the crossroads of Jericho and Jerusalem.*)

JOSEPH: O, Holy Mother Mary, the second law of Leviticus reads: "Thou shalt not touch anything holy for thirty-three days," but thou hast held the Holy of Holies, in thy arms since His birth. Thou art nature's solitary boast. Jesus, of our nation must be circumcised.

BALTHASSOR: Turn ye back at once without fear to Jerusalem, but do not re-enter Bethlehem, for Herod's spies follow us. Hide by day, travel by night and in seven days ye shall beard the lion in his den. We will delay on a different road, and so throw the wolves off the track. Joseph yonder star declining to the East, leads to Egypt. Seek ye out Alexandria. Take this gold, nor be offended, thou hast a journey. Jesus Bless Us. Mary pray for us, on earth, we meet no more—Farewell. We return with our dromedaries from Midian to Saba. Farewell.

(*Curtain.*)

THIRD ACT.

STORY.

Joseph has Jesus circumcised without falling into Herod's power and tries escape through city gate.

Is warned by angel at Anathoth to fly to Egypt. Is followed and escapes across the borderland aided by the strategy of Mary.

Zingerella tells fate of Jesus.

Joseph captured by bandit in the desert.

Bandits child healed of leprosy.

Joseph dwells in Alexandria 'till warned by angel to return to Palestine.

SCENE—TEMPLE STEPS.

(*Pharisee with phylactery and prayer cricket.*)

MARY: Jesus is circumcised. One drop of his precious blood enough to redeem the world. Ah! babe divine, Lamb of God to suffer most of all mankind. Jew! Lover of the Gentiles.

JOSEPH: Let us go. Jerusalem is doomed.

SIMEON: I behold my redemption. Now dost thou dismiss thy servant O Lord according to thy word? Because mine eyes have seen their salvation. A light to the Gentiles, and the glory of the people, Israel. This child is set for the fall and the resurrection of many in Israel and for a sign which will be contradicted. (*To Mary*): Thy own soul, a sword shall enter, that out of many hearts, thoughts may be revealed. (*Goes by.*)

ANNA: Through my widowhood, I have served in the Temple, and now I will tell the glad tidings.

JOSEPH: My good woman, I pray thee peace.

ANNA (*runs off*): I must tell the glad tidings.

(*Joseph and Mary hasten down the steps and are soon lost in the crowd.*)

(*Curtain.*)

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER: Ptolmey returned to Egypt under Pompey's protection. I swear by Appolo his riches bought every senator. The incestuous Ptolmies are no more.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: He had done valiant service for Caesar here in Juda with six hundred horses. Egypt will be a haven for those who hate Herod.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER: Jerusalem has gone mad with Messiahs, mobs, and riots.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: They had a bloody enrollment at Bethlehem.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER: Tell me not, any Roman soldier committed foul murder on the innocents?

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: They refused. Herod's varlets did the foul deed.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER: May his worm-eaten entrails rot. Why this cruel deed?

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: Fear of a New Born King. All male infants under a year old, he ordered slain. They tore the babes from the arms of shrieking mothers. Did spit them on their swords, some they split atwain.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER: Horrible! Most horrible!
(*Mary, hearing, hides her babe. Joseph unties the beasts.*)

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: That old man and his daughter dress as do those of Nazareth. I'll chance it for Herod's reward. (*To Joseph*): Are ye bound for Bethlehem?

JOSEPH: Nay.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: Whither?

JOSEPH: To Nazareth by this gate.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER (*to Second Soldier*): All are slain. Detain not these good folks, nor shame Rome. Ye may go.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: But the reward is great. Herod waited for the Magis return two days. They came not, nor can they be found. In a rage he gave orders to spare none.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER: Old King or New, they must give tribute to Caesar.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER: Vale! They seem royal fugitives in disguise. I will get a few horsemen and follow. They must fly to Egypt.

SATAN: Follow on!

(*Curtain.*)

ANATHOTH.

(*Three miles from Jerusalem on the way to Jericho.*)

JOSEPH: Here Jeremiah, the prophet, was born. Lady, I must rest. I am weary. (*Mary remains awake. The beasts lie down and Joseph wraps his mantle around him and sleeps.*)

MARY: Give me thy gentle kiss of peace, gentle savior, forgive my fears. My babe! My treasure! My salvation! Israel's Redemption! My tears fall because my lips cannot tell thee all I love thee.

(Joseph awakes startled.)

JOSEPH: An angel appeared in my dreams, saying: "Arise, and take the Child and his mother, and fly into Egypt and be there until I tell thee; for it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child to destroy Him."

MARY: Rachel laments for her children that are not. Herod would seek for Jesus to the end of the world.

JOSEPH: God will spare our home in Nazareth. This night we shall follow the star shown us by the Magi, 'till we are safe in Alexandria.

MARY: This night, this very instant, we will go where the exiles hung their harps on the willow trees. Do not wake Jesus,—but hasten on.

(Curtain.)

BORDERLAND.

(Twilight—the Holy family have just reached the top of a hill, another as high in Juda visible in the distance.)

MARY: Twilight's ray strikes the glistening armor of a group of Roman horsemen on yonder hill. They come this way.

JOSEPH: Woe is me! They must see us also.

MARY: Call that man sowing his field.

(The husbandman approaches.)

MARY: Good man, if any one asketh concerning us, say that we passed by when you were sowing the wheat; add not a word to this, nor take a word away; and thou shall have my child's blessing, my prayers, and God shall reward thee.

FARMER: I will say ye passed when I was sowing wheat.

MARY: God prosper thy labors, food night.

(DARKNESS—DAWN.)

FARMER: A miracle! My field has grown up over night to a huge harvest. I am made rich. She must be the mother of God.

(*Soldiers ride up in haste.*)

SECOND SOLDIER: I charge thee in the name of Caesar, passeth any one this way?

FARMER: An old man, a young mother with her babe, also the beasts.

SECOND SOLDIER: When?

FARMER: When I did sow this wheat.

SECOND SOLDIER: That were a year gone by thou fool and liar, I will slay thee.

FARMER: I speak the truth, and nothing but the truth.

SECOND SOLDIER: Wheat as far as I can see, and yet last night I thought—by this they are safe beyond the border. Curse Herod and his reward. Henceforth, I will be a true Roman. (*Exit.*)

(*Mary and Joseph seen asleep in the wheat field. Jesus awakes, looks Heavenward, his hands clasped as if in prayer.*)

(*Curtain.*)

NIGHT IN THE DESERT.

(*Moonlight, Heat Lightnings and Stars in vivid colors; Lions roar.*)

MARY: We are in Egypt. The star lies on the horizon. Weary?

JOSEPH: Footsore, not weary. It is heaven to be with Jesus and Thee. Mother of Grace, Queen of Angels; though the camel here kneels to the simoon's death-dealing sands, and the sun never shone in yon dense forest since creation's dawn.

MARY (*Out of Egypt I have called my Son*): Moses, I charge thee with the care of Jesus in this, the land of thy birth. Joseph pray to the great law-giver.

JOSEPH: We cannot be far from Alexandria. I hear a voice!

SATAN: Seize them!

BANDIT: You are my captives, bold travelers. Follow me to yon oasis behind the rock; and go ye into my cave.

MARY: What wouldst thou?

BANDIT: My woman may make thee her helper. As for this old man, if he has money, I will take it. His bones may whiten on the desert sand. As to the babe, I know not—It is wonderous beautiful.

MARY: Lead me to thy wife.

WOMAN: Thou are comely and gracious. What seekest thou?

MARY: Water to wash my babe.

WOMAN: Water thou shalt have. Wash thy babe first, mine is a leper.

JOSEPH: I will fill the tub for thee. (*Mary washes Jesus.*)

JOSEPH: I will replenish?

WOMAN: Nay, the water seems clearer than before. (*Washes her babe—her babe is cured.*)

WOMAN: Husband! Husband! (*He rushes in with cimetar drawn.*)

SATAN: Slay!

HUSBAND: What is it?

WOMAN: Put down the weapon. Thy child! See thy child! Healed! Healed! Praise thou God nor harm these holy people. They have traveled far. Rest ye here to-night. Ye have fled but now ye are safe. After this travel by day. I will make a good bed for thee, old man; also a bed for thy daughter and her heavenly child. Go in hither.

(*Bandit re-enters with lantern, sees Joseph's toolbox, picks out purse.*)

WOMAN: Gold! Tools! Touch neither as thou lovest me. Thou lovest me well, then show them gratitude.

(*Curtain.*)

DAWN.

SATAN: Let them not pass.

SECOND BANDIT: Thou wilt not let them pass. Let me follow and slay them. Thy woman will never know.

FIRST BANDIT: Suffer them to go, I beseech thee. Let them go in peace, they have healed my child. I will give thee forty goats an likewise my girdle.

SECOND BANDIT: 'Tis a bargain. Agreed!

(Mary overhears them.)

MARY: The Lord will receive thee to His right hand and grant thee pardon of thy sins and though thou shalt sup sorrow, Jesus shall welcome thee in Paradise.

FIRST BANDIT: Thou art free to go. Farewell.

WOMAN: Take this flower for thy babe.

(Revolving screen shows the desert, as Joseph journeys along.)

JOSEPH: Let us rest awhile under this date tree.

MARY *(sitting on the beast)*: Dates would refresh us but the branches are too high.

(Jesus uplifts his hands and the branch bends down to to Mary's reach. She takes and gives to Joseph, bows, smiles and kisses the babe's hand.)

JOSEPH: The beast is dry and so am I. See! *(A spring appears. Joseph offers drink to our Lady.)*

ZINGARELLA: Save thee good luck! Fair Lady, welcome! old man and this fair child.

MARY: Well met, sister mine. God give the grace of his infinite mercy and forgive thee thy sins.

ZINGARELLA: Poor pilgrims, ye are tired. Wilt thou alight?

MARY: Oh sister, full of courtesy, God reward thy charity. We are from Nazareth, arrived in a strange land.

ZINGARELLA: Let me tell thy fortune? Hear me sing

thy past. Thy Babe was born in Bethlehem, angels guard thee here. Let me look upon thy Son my Redeemer. (*Brings straw and fodder for the beasts.*)

MARY: Dear husband, give me my lovely Babe so that this poor gypsy fortune teller may look on him.

ZINGARELLA: O! beautiful, so beautiful, divinely beautiful; how lovely the child thou lovest. . . . I see him nailed to a cross. Beautiful Boy! Sweet Boy! . . . But he bears the cross for our sins. Give me an alms, I am a poor gypsy.

MARY: Joseph give her a piece of gold. My babe will give thee true contrition. I will intercede for thee, and after death, I will meet thee at Heaven's Gate. Good noon.

(*Curtain.*)

ALEXANDRIA.

SECOND CITIZEN: The Ptolmies are no more. Cleopatra long since dead.

FIRST CITIZEN: Egypt gift of the Nile, with plenty for all; yet how little happiness. Ptolemy returned to mock the power of our priesthood, the treasury of all our learning.

SECOND CITIZEN: True, O! cursed caste. Our merchants are little more than pariahs. The city is in a tumult, but how quickly the sedition will be put down.

FIRST CITIZEN: Must freedom die for a corrupt Rome?

SECOND CITIZEN: Our Ambassador did accuse him in the forum, but in vain.

FIRST CITIZEN: Splendors of Semiramis, we surpass, but our liberty is lost.

SECOND CITIZEN: Alexandria the magnificent, with thy ample roads, thy noble temple, thy libraries, thy religion,—all lost! lost! lost!

FIRST CITIZEN: There goes an exile Jew, yet his ways are not of the Essenes.

SECOND CITIZEN: We have a large number of Jews. A long suffering mysterious race, some affluent, all

united. They help their poor. That shout of triumph heard you it? I go.

JOSEPH (*Soliloquy*): We are poor indeed. Mary The Blessed Virgin, begs from door to door for wool wherewith to clothe Jesus. Though of a sect they have saved us from penury. Mary complains not but sweetly smiles, and I work for a pittance. Few seek me. I am a stranger.

SECOND CITIZEN: I dislike thy race and religion, for whether Pharisee, Saducee, Essenes or Samaritan; A Jew is a Jew, if in Palestine, Rome, Alexandria; Thou seemest holy.

JOSEPH: Thou shalt find men of God's good will with one heart everywhere. Ye embalm in the hope of Resurrection?

SECOND CITIZEN: Truly Thou are just and faithful.

JOSEPH: The Chaldeans failing in their tower, were content to study stars so follow God's light on earth to reach everlasting life.

SECOND CITIZEN: Babylon is fallen, but ye fear the Romans.

JOSEPH: We found a friend in Cyrus the Persian, and now wait a Deliverer.

SECOND CITIZEN: I like thee well, though poor, Thou art gifted. Thy trade?

JOSEPH: A Carpenter.

SECOND CITIZEN: Rule and compass. You build well for the eternal. I'll give thee work. Come! Thy Joseph saved us from famine. Thy Name?

JOSEPH: Joseph.

SECOND CITIZEN: I like it well. A good name for deliverance. Come this way, there is fierce rioting down the avenue.

(*Child enters with bread and toy chest of tools.*)

CHILD (*To Joseph*): Thou didst not eat since dawn, wherefore I bring thee bread.

SECOND CITIZEN: What call ye this beautiful Child?

JOSEPH: Jesus.

(*Curtain.*)

“RETURN FROM EGYPT.”

(Scene—*Sphinx—Pyramids—Holy Family, Jesus with Tool Box.*)

MARY: Ever playing with the cruel nails. Picks up one nail and prays and then another and prays, on and on, and sighs, pauses and gazes heavenward and sighs. Then runs to me.

JOSEPH: Out of Egypt I have called my Son. “Farewell Land of darkness, Ye lofty pyramids, memories of Babylon with gates of brass and thy idols.—Farewell Gizeh.” So God resisteth the proud.

MARY: Farewell Pharos Lighthouse of Alexandria Thou seventh wonder of the world. He is the true light who enlightens every man that cometh into the world. Happy was I to beg for Jesus, Nor will He forget a cup of cold water given in His Name. Joseph we must cross this stream. But how?

(A raft drifts toward them.)

JOSEPH: Praise God and His Holy Angels. We will embark.

(Curtain.)

FOURTH ACT.

STORY.

Joseph meets Elizabeth and John and Zachary.

They separate in Galilee.

Joseph loses and finds Jesus in the Temple.

Joseph sees Mary of Magdala as she passes through
Nazareth.

Joseph is baptised by John, with Joseph of Arimethea.

MARY: See who comes?

JOSEPH: Thy cousin Elizabeth, Zachary and John. How knew she this? (*Elizabeth embraces Mary. Zachary embraces Joseph. The children begin to play.*)

ELIZABETH: Herod is dead. We set out, knowing that we would meet at your return.

MARY: God be praised!

JOSEPH: An Angel appeared to me in Egypt, saying: "Arise! and take the child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead that sought the life of the child.

ELIZABETH: Ye are poor.

MARY: The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.

JOSEPH: The Lord will provide. How died Herod?

ELIZABETH: Tell him Zachary.

ZACHARY: His bowels filled of worms and rottenness fell apart—even so he died.

MARY: Where is my Jesus. (*Looks where he is.*)
(*John refuses to play with the nails—but taking a scooping shell pours water on the forehead of Jesus, who smiles.*)

ELIZABETH: Come and abide with us.

MARY: Nay, we must on to Nazareth. Joseph will tell thee why.

JOSEPH: Thou knowest Zachary, that Archelaus reigneth in Jerusalem and though he seeketh not Jesus he is cruel. Nay, I must go to Nazareth.

ELIZABETH: May I not bring John to Nazareth to see Jesus? And they will play with the doves.

MARY: Come for they shall be separated many years. We will keep together until we reach Galilee, there we must part.

(*Curtain.*)

(*Temple entrance—Wild dogs running through the Street—Vendors of water.*)

MARY: I have sought him sorrowing for three days. Earth! give him back to me.

SATAN TO JOSEPH: Despair!

JOSEPH: I asked on the way of him from acquaintances and relatives. Many of them spurned me because I was poor and a carpenter. I come unto my own and they knew me not. Woe! Woe is me!

MARY: O breaking heart! O heavy secret, would that I might cry out from the house top, give me back my Jesus, my Redeemer. O Simeon, for the third time the sword has pierced deep, deep, deep into my—I hear! I hear his voice! Sweeter than birds song at dawn, sweeter than hymns of Angels—Joseph, where is my Jesus? My King?

JOSEPH: See! See! softly! there, in there disputing with the doctors, asking and answering questions. See his eyes, how they shine, how the doctors listen lost in wonder.

MARY: Wait, listen—Ah! He has ceased.

GAMALIEL: Wonderful! A second Daniel come to judgment. Never have I listened to such wisdom. A little child shall lead us. One had thought he wrote the Scripture.

PILATE: Perhaps He is the New Born King, the promised One, the Orient, the Messiah?

GAMALIEL: Then must our nation fall, and the glory of Solomon perish for ever; for He speaks of heavenly kingdom, not one word of Israel's emancipation from Caesar.

PILATE: He comes this way.

GAMALIEL: It is better for one to perish than a nation. I would away with Him to the Sanhedrim. Imprison! Yea! destroy Him, if I thought so. Though it means appeal to Augustus Caesar.

JESUS: Mother!

MARY: My son, we have sought Thee sorrowing.

JESUS: Knew ye not, I must be about my father's business?

(He takes the hands of Joseph and Mary and stands between them.)

GAMALIEL: His father! Impossible—See those horny

hands. A carpenter's Son will never reign in Israel.
My fears deceive me.

PILATE: O! wise Gamaliel, thou hast erred. He was
detained on some errand. Perhaps his Father needed
lumber. They seem peaceful, harmless persons.

GAMALIEL: I wish He were my pupil. His genius con-
founded the doctors. Let them go in peace. (*Re-
turns to the Hall.*)

JESUS: Who is my mother? Who is my father? but
he that doeth the will of my heavenly Father. In
heaven the greatest serve. Mother! Why ponderest
thou? My time is not yet come. Wisdom cometh
from above. When they did dishonor my Father, I
must dispute with them. They only seek an earthly
kingdom. And for thy grief, I kiss thy hand and
bless thee also Joseph, henceforth thou shalt know
my going and coming.

MARY: To grow in grace and wisdom before God and
men.

JESUS: Let us return to our home in Nazareth.

(They go down the steps together.)

(Curtain.)

NAZARETH ON THE HILLSIDE.

*(Black tents of Bedouins afar, and Princes going
to Rome. Canaan drenched with light. Pilgrims lead-
ing camel. Barefooted girls pressing grapes. Oxen at
work. Virgin Mary seated in the garden, knitting
wool. Joseph cutting plank lengthwise. Jesus playing
with companions on the roadside. He holds a lamb in
his arms. Birds singing.)*

FIRST COMPANION: Seest thou the mote? What of the
beam in thine eye?

SECOND COMPANION: Thou wouldst strike me?

FIRST COMPANION: That I will.

JESUS: Let not the sun go down on thy anger. First
forgive thy brother and then offer thy gift at the
altar. Take this orange and give it to thy friend.
A kind word turneth away wrath.

SECOND COMPANION: Here (*The first takes it shakes hands and smiles*).

OLD WOMAN: Didst ever hear the like? He will die young.

SECOND WOMAN: God grant me a son like this angel. (*Jesus runs to hold end of plank 'till the rip saw cuts it. Goes to his mother and places a flower on her knee. Companions try to fly a kite. It falls to the ground. Jesus returns to them.*)

JESUS: Even so words without thoughts never to heaven go. Say a prayer to thy angel and then try.

FIRST COMPANION: I will. (*The kite flies high.*) Now will I pray to my angel every day. He that stirs the pool at Siloe. Thou are meant to be a priest.

JESUS: Of the Most High.

FIRST COMPANION: You do not study.

JESUS: There is more wisdom in the cross than in all books.

FIRST COMPANION: How?

JESUS: No man shows greater love than to die for his friend.

FIRST COMPANION: And wouldst thou? I believe thou wouldst, Jesus.

OLD WOMAN: I could listen to Him forever. I envy his mother.

SECOND WOMAN: She seemeth still a maid.

OLD WOMAN: She is his mother.

SECOND WOMAN: Then I say she never suffered the curse on our sex. She is beautiful as the morning star. Where was the Child born?

OLD WOMAN: Some say Egypt, some Nazareth.

SECOND WOMAN: Bethlehem! I swear it, and yet no one knoweth whence the Son of God will come; but this One we know dwells in Nazareth. Do you remember the slaying of the innocents?

OLD WOMAN: Aye some fourteen years ago.

SECOND WOMAN: I dare not tell thee what I think,

though Herod be dead; but this I will tell thee, I worship that Child.

FIRST COMPANION: Which is the chief virtue?

JESUS: Obedience. I must leave you, I am needed.

(Gives apple to beast.)

(Jesus carries a tiny cross, which Joseph has made for Him to make another Kite. A Boy obsessed, raves on the roadside.)

BOY: Why torment me, devils! Devils! why torment me.

(The shadow of the cross falls on him.)

BOY: They torment me no more.

(Curtain.)

MAGDALA.

COURTEZANS AND OLD FOLLOWERS.

SALOME: I love him either he will feed my passion or I will destroy him. Why did I ever seek him in the wilderness of Juda? He did call us Whited Sepulchres, rottenness, and worms. The more fiercely he spoke with the strength of an angel, the more I loved him. He avoids the love in my eyes, on my lips, in my heart, in my passion; to feed on locusts and honey. Dead or alive, John you are mine.

MAID: He is a fool, and a fiend to make thee weep!

SALOME: His love must quench these fire flakes of my passion. What a physique! An Appollo in camel skins.

MAID: I fear and hate him.

SALOME: Now I must chide thee. He will be thy master, my slave or else my victim. His voice haunts me, his beauty charms me, his holiness frights me. I would give all my jewels to seduce his innocence. I would show him woman's power to ensnare. If he defies and resists me, I will slay him and kiss his dead lips. By Venus, I swear it! I swear it!

MAID: Thou are beside thyself. If indeed thou lovest him, cage thy bird, imprison him and then sing to him, woo him. Was not Herod friend to Marc Antony? to Brutus, to Cassius, who dared oppose his will? Did he not slay the Sanhedrim, and Antigonus, and Aristobulus? Feared he Cleopatra? Nay tell Herodianna, she will urge Herod to grant this favor; when thou hast done with John, kill and despise him for my hate! For is not Herod Antipas, great as His Father?

(*Satan*)—Kill him—Kill him—but make love to him—

SALOME: I will attempt it. Take this jewel for thy nimble wit. I will have John placed in the fortress of Macheras, where he must look out on the waters of the eastern shore of the salt sea; there shall I expose my nakedness before his very eyes where he must see, aye if need be, I can creep within his very arms. He will! He must yield to my charms or I will die and he will die. Ah! I will tell mother, she hates him. She will place him in my power. Who is yonder courtesan, followed by old fools for lovers?

MAID: Heard ye not of the fascination of Mary of Magdala? Such eyes, such hair, lips of carnadine, shape of a goddess, charming abandon. Men would perish for her smile.

SALOME: The sorceress! Come, we tarry too long
(*Exeunt.*)

(*Mary steps into her litter, still followed by the crowd waiting for a smile or word.*)

MARY: Come Esther, they weary. Secure their gifts. Come!

ESTHER: Encourage them with a smile.

MARY: Nay! I've lost my heart to Nazareth. Where, as I rode along the way, I saw a carpenter shop, 'twas eventide and I did pause in my vanity to study a holy family. The son stood in the shadow of a cross with eyes so pure, as would not look on sin. The meekest, noblest, holiest of men. One look of sweet reproach he did bestow as broke my heart. I

trembled in my guilt. Is there forgiveness for a soul as black as mine?

ESTHER: I know not what thou meanest. I never had a conscience. For me remorse is meaningless. I will leave thee if thou ever think of being good. I am ready.

ROMAN SOLDIER: There goeth one for whom Caesar would gladly pay a price.

(Curtain.)

(*Mary affects the Roman in dress. See Winston's History on "Dress of Romans." Tunic of white silk gauze, a gold star spangled palla of sky blue hue. Garlanded roses in her hair of golden tint and of luxuriant length, pinned by a gold clasp. Strings of pearl round neck and arms. Gold sandals with silver buckles.*)

(*The Desert*) LEPERS, BEGGARS, MULTITUDE.

FIRST SOLDIER: This is indeed a Roman peace, lethal. No war, true, but slavery everywhere. Oppression, discontent, apathy and suicide. What a multitude in the desert, as if they would fly the world.

SECOND SOLDIER: Now shalt thou hear an orator whose thrill is greater than was Cicero's.

FIRST SOLDIER: As I say, to my thinking all nations should be free, if not, they live not. They merely exist.

SECOND SOLDIER: Listen he terrifies, he convinces, he feels what he says, he speaks from the heart, he begins. Listen!

FIRST SOLDIER: Aye!

JOHN: Priests, levites, people of Zion!—What come ye out into the desert to see? I am not the Christ, nor Elias, Prophet? I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness "Make straight the way of the Lord; as the prophet Isais told you. Self-seeking Pharisees, worldly sadducees, vipers, hypocrites, whited sepulchres, make ye straight the highway, the day of salvation is at hand. Ye ask me, why do I baptise if I am not Christ nor Elias? I baptise in water—be clean, clean of heart—for there is

one among us before me, whom you know not. He who on earth after me, but who was before me; aye before Abraham—before all time. I am not worthy to loose the latchet of his shoe. Fill up the valley. Redemption is at hand. He who cometh baptiseth by fire.

PHARISEE: Indeed he doth incite the people by the fury in his words, He causeth a tumult. Sadducees are easily overcome, but this zealot arouses the populace. He should be imprisoned—but not yet. Tell Herodias to have patience, we will ensnare him in his speech. Alas! he is so popular; Pontius Pilate is however a wise politician. We will accuse John to Tiberius if there be need.

COMPANION: Herodias desires his arrest.

PHARISEE: Salome bears him a mad passion. It bodes not well. He is holy.

COMPANION: Passion? brazen lust. She will not win him. Fire meets ice. How he sways the multitude! Tearing their gabardines, they bow and rise.

COMPANION: Like stone having ears we hear not.

FIRST SOLDIER: Caesar's calender made a difference of some seven years in dates. 'Twill perplex remote posterity.

COMPANION: Thou heedest not! I wish I were a Jew.

JOHN: Salvation is nigh. Walk while it is day, for the night cometh.

COMPANION: Comest thou? I go to be baptised.

PHARISEE: I spit at thee, I spurn, I hate thee. The dungeon for John. I swear it.

COMPANION: Caesar still Caesar, but no longer Pontifex.

JOSEPH OF ARIMETHEA: I heed this call to personal responsibility of the Sanhedrim, though I lose wealth and life, I come to be baptised—Stranger wilt thou come?

JOSEPH OF NAZARETH: John, forerunner of Christ, baptise thou me.

LEPERS: Stand off! unclean! unclean!

(Holds hands aloft.)

(Curtain.)

FIFTH ACT.

STORY.

Joseph at Marriage feast.

Joseph at baptism of Jesus in the Jordan.

John beheaded—Christ cast out of Nazareth.

Jesus in the desert with Multitude.

Jesus in the tempest.

Jesus brings disciples to his home in Nazareth.

Joseph dies in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

MARRIAGE-FEAST—CANNA.

(Jesus beside his Mother—Mother beside the Bride.)

GUEST: Joseph is not here?

RELATIVE: A Carpenter!

GUEST: What of the carpenter's Son?

RELATIVE: Indeed it were disgraceful. Such disciples, they dare baptise.

(Bride whispers to mother of Jesus pointing to empty goblets.) (Mary whispers to Jesus—and Jesus whispers to Mary.)

RELATIVE: The wine is not good and many goblets near empty?

(Mary rises and goes out to portico with Jesus.)

RELATIVE: Most among us disown Joseph. *(Joseph enters.)*

RELATIVE: Yoi! welcome, welcome. Sit here.

(Mary and Jesus in Portico.)

JESUS: Thou ministering angel! What is this feast of sinners to us? At my last banquet I shall be betrayed. At my Father's banquet in heaven thou shalt be queen; among the meek and pure of heart. This earth is not my kingdom and my hour is not yet come.

MARY: Though sinners they are thy children. A mother pleads for them.

(Jesus Smiles.)

MARY: Waiters, whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye. *(Returns.)*

JESUS: Fill the water pots with water *(Blesses them)*. Draw out now and carry to the chief steward of the feast. *(Returns.)*

RELATIVE: Who said the wine was not good? This is wonderful!

GUEST: It must be taken in temperance.

JOSEPH: He is the vine! (*pointing to Jesus*).

BRIDE: Cousin, it is terrible; the groom knows it not.

CHIEF-STEWARD: Bridegroom! Every man at first, setteth forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then they set that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine till now.

BRIDEGROOM: This is not wine of the grape; this is heaven's vintage. Bless us, O! Master. Now is thy power manifest.

(*All kneel.*)

(*Jesus with his hand on Mary's head, blesses them.*)

SATAN: Cursed wine—Drink ye fire—see!

(*Spills it on ground—as in Faust.*)

(*Curtain.*)

(*Jordan River, The Desert, A Light Sand Storm, Bedouins Fly by on Steeds.*)

JESUS: Now shalt thou hear the voice of my Father; for this is the Ford of Jordan at Bethsabara near Bethshar, where John will baptise me even as he did thee.

JOSEPH: Thou wouldst not leave me foster-son! And Mary who is my Mother?

JESUS: Nay! But thou shalt soon leave Mary and go to my Father.

JESUS: Jesus I have tried to be faithful and just. Wilt thou not remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom?

JESUS: In a short while, John will go to Aenon near Salim.

JOHN: "Do penance for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. I baptise with water unto penance, but He is at hand shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire; whose fan is in his hand and he will purge his floor and will gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with an unquenchable fire."

HERODIAS: Terrible Man! He holds my soul before my eyes. Daughter we must away with him, I never feared man before.

JOHN: Go! And leave thy husband's brother. And now cometh unto the Jordan the Promised One. Yea! In the distance I see the white dove descending over him, as he approaches. It was the sign given to me by the angel. Lo! He comes, he is here. The Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

JESUS: Cousin baptise thou me.

JOHN: I ought to be baptised by thee, and cometh thou to me.

JESUS: Suffer it to be so now, for so it becometh us to fulfill all Justice.

(John rises from his knees and baptises Jesus in the Jordan.)

JOSEPH: See! Oh blessed Mary the dove again descends on Jesus.

(All gaze heavenward. The Heavens grow brighter. Jesus crosses his arms and bows his head.)

JOHN: (In ecstasy.) I see the Spirit coming down as a dove from Heaven. And I knew him not, but He who sent me to baptise with water, said to me—
“He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him; He, it is that baptiseth with the Holy Ghost, Yea. This is the son of God.

A VOICE IN THE HEAVENS: “Thou art my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” *(Mary and Joseph on the outside of the crowd.)*

MARY *(Kneeling)*: Now is Christ made manifest to the Nations.

JOSEPH: His father has spoken and my heart is stricken. Jesus take me back to Nazareth that I may yield up the ghost. My deliverance is at hand. I have grown ages old in one short hour.

JESUS: Our Father who art in Heaven—

(Curtain.)

COURT OF HEROD.

SALOME: Is his love mine? What said He? One word and he mounts to a throne and I to rapture. I would fly to the end of the world with him. I languish my freezing veins on fire. I am mad for his love. Speak!

MAID: He spurned thee. Called the wanton and threatened hell-fire.

SALOME: Say no more. Mother, rest secure in thy shame. Vengeance—Vengeance! Kiss me mother, tell me how to kill, to kill exquisitely.

HERODIAS: Whom?

SALOME: John the Baptist.

HERODIAS: Whip thy hate to fury, then let me feast upon it; for thy hate is as—love to mine.

SALOME: Scorned! Scorned! Scorned! Aye, aye,—and then?

HERODIAS: What endures more than love? Hate! hate! hate!—revenge, take it, kiss me and listen.

SALOME: Aye! aye!

HERODIAS: When thou dost dance for Herod, dance with all the art and abandon thou knowest, nude and lewdly.

SALOME: My mother.

HERODIAS: And when Herod asketh what wouldst thou have, ask for the the head of John.

SALOME: His head, Aye! Bring me to Herod, let me dance—his head!

(Herod and Herodias on throne.)

HEROD: A brother's wife, but mine always.

HERODIAS: Always, always, thine *(Salome enters dancing.)*

HEROD: Salome is wonderful to-night, how graceful? How beautiful? Such charm, such abandon. Ah! That I were young! Eureka! I cannot resist her. Come Salome! Come! Let me taste thy lips. Here take this jewel.

SALOME: Nay! (*Keeps on dancing.*)

HEROD (*Rising*): Salome, I implore thee. Come! I will give thee half my kingdom. Thy beauty, swaying, and smile allure, entrance me: Thine eyes blaze with magnificent fury. Is it passion or death. What wilt thou?

HERODIAS: Speak, daughter. (*Salome still dancing.*)

SATAN: Slay Him!

SALOME: A silly wish, give me the head of John the Baptist on a silver plater.

HEROD: Herodias, but for thee, I had long since forgiven him. I dare not. He is the idol of his race. (*Satan*)—Consent!

HEROD: Salome! I will dare all for thee, dance on. Headsman! go and quickly return. Kiss me Salome, kiss me.

SALOME: I will dance forever. I will dance forever. (*Head of John brought in, eyes staring.*)

HEROD: Kiss! Salome! Kiss me!

SALOME: Nay, him will I kiss on the lips, he is mine, all mine! I have sworn it.

(*Maniacal cry—swoons.*) (*Herod and Herodias rise to fly. Thunder—Darkness.*)

(*Spirit of Jeremias seen, Pronounces Malidiction.*)

O! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears; for here in Herod's court Phoenician idolatry with its obscene rites, haunt the place. Yea! in the dark chambers—neath the temple Ye dare to worship Egypt's brute. Ye would restore paganism. Judah is doomed. O Lord, give thy dogs to tear and fight over the corpse. The birds of the air and the beasts of the field. Give their sons to hunger, let their wives be childless and widows. Their city shattered—Anathema!

(*Lightnings and thunder crash.*)

(*Curtain.*)

NAZARETH.

(*Near the Synagogue.*)

FIRST PRIEST: Herod imagines John rises from the dead, but these are the works of this man Jesus. Should he continue his wonders? Our priestly trade is gone. We must catch him in his speech and accuse him to Tiberius Caesar.

SECOND PRIEST: The Sanhedrim decrees that he must meet the fate of John.

FIRST PRIEST: His blood be upon us for he hath already won over Magdala, Cana, Carphanaum, Bethsaida, Corazin, and the city of Gergesenes by his discourse and cures. He hath worked no wonders here as yet. We must stir up the jealousy of those in Nazareth.

SECOND PRIEST: He must die cursing and not forgiving them, also they might love his memory. Nazareth and Carphanaum never did agree.

FIRST PRIEST: Here He comes from the Synagogue followed by a large crowd. He looks weak; He has fasted forty days in the desert. Harken!

JESUS: The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captive, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of reward. This day is fulfilled the scripture in your ears.

A VOICE: Now showest wisdom and grace. Thou sayest all things well, work Thou a miracle here in thy own town.

JESUS: Doubtless you will say to me a similitude—Physician cure thyself. As great things as we have heard done in Carphanum do also here in thine own country. Amen I say to you that no prophet is accepted in his own country, and in truth I say to you there were many widows in the days of Elias

when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, when there was a famine throughout all the earth, and to none of these was Elias sent but to Sarepta of Sidon to a widow woman; and there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elizeus, The Prophet, and none of them were cleansed but Naamah, the Syrian.

A VOICE: Thou dost refuse?

ANOTHER: He does refuse. Who is He! But the Carpenter's Son, Joseph.

CROWD: Away with him! Kill him!

A VOICE: He insulteth Nazareth. Cast Him out of the City Gate.

(They hurry him up the hill outside the gate.)

SATAN: Destroy Him!

PRIEST: Cast him down the precipice! Hurl him to perdition. Slay Him. Stone Him.

(They rush on Christ, who disappears in the air.)

(Curtain.)

DESERT.

JOHN'S DISCIPLE: Art thou He who is to come or do we expect another?

JESUS: The blind see, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

JOHN'S DISCIPLE: Thou art He, O Master.

JESUS: John in prison sent ye that ye might be convinced. He is dead. What went you out into the desert to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? A Prophet. Yea! I will tell you and more than a prophet; for was it he of whom it is written "Behold! I send an angel before thy face, who shall prepare a way for thee. Amen I say to you that there hath not risen among them that are born of women; a greater than John the Baptist, yet he that is lesser in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Woe to thee Corasin, woe to thee Bethsaida, you did hear him say to the

multitude ye offspring of vipers who hath shewed ye to flee from the wrath that is to come? God is able of these stones to raise children to Abraham. Now the axe is laid to the root of the tree. They said, what shall we do? And he answered—"Let him that hath two coats, give to him that hath none. Do violence to no man. And now John the forerunner, imprisoned, was beheaded; so the world is already judged and My Kingdom is at hand.

DISCIPLE: Master! The Multitude now weeping have followed thee into the wilderness for three days and they will faint on the way.

JESUS: How many loaves and fishes have ye?

DISCIPLE: Seven barley loaves and five fishes but what are they among many?

JESUS: Sit ye down the Multitude (*Curtain lowered and raised*).

JESUS: Gather ye up the fragments.

DISCIPLE: Twelve baskets.

JESUS: Dismiss the multitude. Take out the boat. I go to the mountain to pray.

(*Curtain rises.*) Night on the water—storm. (*Christ appears walking on the water.*) (*Boat in distress.*)

DISCIPLE: We are lost. It is a Spirit!

JESUS: Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid.

PETER: Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to thee on the water.

JESUS: Come! (*Peter finds himself sinking.*)

PETER: Lord save me! or I perish. (*Satan*) Wind and storm do thy work. (*Jesus takes his hand.*)

JESUS: O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

(*A Great Calm—They enter the boat.*)

ALL (*Kneeling*): Of a truth Thou are the Son of God.

(*Curtain.*)

ROADWAY LEADING FROM THE DESERT

(*Multitude in the distance—Jesus coming to Nazareth alone, some of John's disciples follow after hastening to catch up to him.*)

FIRST DISCIPLE: A leathern girdle bound about his loins, clothed in camel's hair, feeding on locust and honey—He was a man of God.

SECOND DISCIPLE: He did prepare the way for Jesus. Let us follow the Rabboni.

JESUS: What seekest?

FIRST DISCIPLE: Rabbi, where dwellest thou?

JESUS: Come and see.

ANDREW (*to Peter*): We have found the Messiah, the Christ.

JESUS: Thou art called Simon, the son of Jonas. Thou shalt be called Cephas—the rock. Phillip, thou shalt also follow me? Yea by the shore of the sea. I have called ye Peter, Andrew, James and John. Ye shall be fishers of men. Nathaniel! Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.

NATHANIEL: Whence knowest thou me?

JESUS: Before that Philip called thee, where thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

NATHANIEL: Rabbi, thou art the Son of God. Thou art the king of Israel.

PHILLIP (*soliloqui*): I see myself in vision, preaching afar off in a distant land, with Joseph of Arimathea, to convert the heathen. Can this come to pass?

JESUS: Amen, amen I say to you, that you shall see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man. Come to Nazareth.

ANDREW: Can any good come out of Nazareth?

JESUS: Jeremiah says, "A Prophet receives no honor in his native spot." Come!

(*Curtain.*)

NAZARETH.

(*View—Snow on the mountain—a high valley—wild flowers, figs, lemon-pomegrante, cactus, hedges, Jesus coming to the home with Peter, James, Andrew, John Phillip and Nathaniel.*)

DEATH OF ST. JOSEPH.

JESUS: My Foster Father is about to render up his spirit to my Heavenly Father. Kneel ye here in the garden by the window.

MARY (*inside, to Joseph*): I will place thee facing the open casement so that thy soul may fly outward and upward to the Orient.

JESUS ENTERS ALONE.

JESUS: Mother, place thine arms around Joseph, and I will also receive him in my embrace—so.

JOSEPH: Sweet Jesus, thy presence brings the Kingdom of Heaven to my humble dwelling breathing love and peace and happiness. Thou didst aid me in all my toil, as though thou wert servant and not my Master. Thou, my God, didst refresh me with thy hymns of praise. My eyes are heavy and my sight grows dim. For eight years my strength has failed me.

JESUS: Joseph, thou goest to my Father.

JOSEPH: And will I meet Thee?

JESUS: In a little while.

JOSEPH: And we shall part no more?

JESUS: Verily.

MARY: Joseph, thou hast been faithful and just and there awaits thee. . . .

JESUS: The Palm of Victory. Thou wert childless, yet didst thou adopt me for thy son giving to me thy name among thy people.

MARY: For this will God hold thee chiefest of all his saints.

JESUS: Like my priesthood. Childless, still a father

faithful in small things. I shall place thee over many. Here do I crown thee Patron of my church and Father of the Missions.

MARY: Thou shalt be an example to the lowliest worker in the vineyard of the Lord, a guide to parents. Thy heroism in obscurity will hearten the unnoticed and the unrewarded for all the scorn they endure from the unworthy: The laborer defrauded of his just pay, the orphan deprived of his portion. For such there is reserved in Heaven a reward exceeding great.

JESUS: This, the house thou lovest, shall be borne by angels far across the sea. It shall be called the House of Lorreto. Pilgrims shall seek it through the ages of Faith. It shall rest within the sanctuary before the tabernacle of the hidden God, till at last it shall be consumed by fire, so that it waiteth not the destruction of the world for I have loved it. After the fall of Jerusalem, the Jews shall fly to Nazareth as to a covert: Even so may they return to Palestine, and to me, ere it be too late.

PHILLIP (*to Nathaniel*): This is indeed the promised Messiah—The Christ, for have we not heard the Voice of His Heavenly Father saying by the River Jordan: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.” And now we hath found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, “Jesus, the Son of Joseph of Nazareth.” It is verily—The Christ.

JOSEPH: Wilt thou, sweet Mother, watch over me in Heaven?

JESUS: Thou shalt companion us forever. As yet Thou dost not understand for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the mind of man to imagine the joys reserved for the Blessed in Heaven.

JOSEPH: I see in vision, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elias beckoning me unto them. They awoke from a sleep in the Lord—a deep sleep—I see them sitting at the right hand of—Jesus I am dying—Jesus!

mercy and love; Mary, Mother of God in the flesh—
Mother of Chastity—Farewell! (*Expires.*)

(*Curtain.*)

JESUS: Joseph was a man faithful and just.

MARY: Jesus save his soul.

JOHN: Mother of Christ, be thou our Mother also.

PHILLIP TO CHRIST: Thou art truly the Son of David.

NATHANIEL: Thou art the "Son of Man" seen by Daniel
in his vision.

PETER: Thou art the Son of the living God.

JESUS: When ye see Me, you see my Father who is in
Heaven.

Picture Ascension

(*Destroy this temple and in three days I will rebuild it.*)

Picture Assumption

(*Lily of Israel.*)

Picture St. Joseph

(*Go to St. Joseph.*)

TITLE: "Husband of the Virgin," given by Sixtus IV.
Papa.

GREEK VERSE: Act First—See Douay (Unabridged).

ALMA: With the Hebrews meant Virgin-Mother.

ANNA'S VISION: See Painting in Jameison.

THE ARK: See Douay.

NAZARETH: See Ridpath as to Scenery.

XENOPHANES: See Plutarch.

COURT OF HEROD: Carved Lions; see Ridpath.

MARIAMNE: Wife of Herod the Great.

HERODIAS: Consort of Herod Antipas.

MAGI'S VISIT TO BETHLEHEM: Opinion of an early
Father. See Jamieson.

GOLD, FRANKINCENSE, MYRRH: See Rollin and Win-
ston.

ANATHOTH: See Smith's Dictionary and Cornelius A. Lapidé.

ZINGRELLA: See Jameison.

FARMER: Legend. See Jameison.

DATES: Legend. See Jameison.

SALOME: See Josephus.

ALEXANDRIA: In Roman province of Egypt.

STUDY: Christ never was taught according to church tradition.

CAESAR AUGUSTUS: Reigned at the time of Christ's birth, also at the time of the finding in the Temple.

CAESAR TIBERIUS: Reigned at the time of St. John's beheading and the death of St. Joseph.

CAESAR'S CALENDAR: Refutes Ingersoll's error as to the time of Christ's Birth.

HISTORIC GROUPING: From synoptic version.

FINIS.

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