

# The Stable Story

*By Larry Damico*

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**ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY**  
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## **DEDICATION**

*To Micaela, who helped choose the puppets  
in the original production.*

## **STORY OF THE PLAY**

How can an angel do an important job when he can't fly? This heartwarming and delightful story, told by narrators and shown with puppets, takes us back to the journey Mary and Joseph made to Bethlehem. Complete with a donkey seller, innkeepers, an innkeeper's wife, shepherds, and a wise guy, the angel must deliver important messages, often after crashing from the sky! Ultimately the angel and the visitors come to worship the baby, the king, and someday, the Savior of the world. With gentle humor, *The Stable Story* shows us that Christmas is filled with miracles. Easily produced with a widely flexible cast from 7 to 21 actors and an optional children's choir, it is appropriate for youngsters of all ages, as well as the parents who bring them. With songs, about 30 minutes.

## **CHARACTERS**

*(2-3 puppet masters, 2-3 voices, 2 narrators, 1 stagehand)*

**NARRATORS 1 and 2:** Their jobs are to tell the story, so characterization should be minimal, focusing on clarity. Be sure to show reactions when there are variations in the story.

**MARY & JOSEPH:** These characters do not speak. Keep piousness about them, therefore making them the most important characters. Movements should be gentle, honest.

**ANGEL:** Unable to fly, this angel does his best to still deliver important messages.

**DONKEY SELLER:** Slick, fast-talking salesman.

**INNKEEPERS A-B-C-D-E:** Various distinct innkeepers.

**INNKEEPER HAROLD:** Innkeeper who provides the stable.

**INNKEEPER'S WIFE:** Harold's wife.

**SHEPHERDS JOE AND JACK:** Shepherds who decide to see baby Jesus after the angel tells of the birth.

**WISE GUY:** A good guy who brings gifts to the baby Jesus.

**FRANK, MYRNA and GOLDA:** Friends of Wise Guy who go with him to see the baby Jesus.

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

**STAGE:** If you have a large puppet stage, great. However, simple works too...a large piece of material draped over a horizontally-placed pole. A roof is not necessary. Keep the stage high, not only for the audiences' sake, but for the puppet manipulators. Narrators can be off to one side, or one on each side of the puppet stage area.

**PUPPET MANIPULATION:** While this seems so easy, it is truly an art, and spending some time on the basics is essential (*and fun!*). As few as two or three performers can work the puppets. The more behind stage, the more difficult it gets.

The performers manipulating the puppet can also speak for the puppet; however, this can create sound problems, and should be done only if the characters can be heard.

Another route is to cast other performers who do the voices. They should sit facing the puppet stage, use microphones, and speak for the puppets. Timing is important for this method. Cast these speakers carefully. Each character should be very big, broad, and use big, clear voices. Try to make the puppet voices distinct, but be sure they are loud and clear!

Voices could also be done with as few as two or three people. In addition, you will need a stagehand to do sound effects and additional crowd voices.

**NOTE REGARDING MARY AND JOSEPH:** As scripted in the play, puppets for Mary and Joseph are on stage; however, it may be easier to NOT use puppets for Mary and Joseph, since they may simply get in the way. Let the other puppets speak straight out to the audience when addressing Mary and Joseph. If you decide to use the Mary and Joseph puppets, you can create end tableau on stage with all puppets. If not, use actors for Mary and Joseph, with the baby Jesus, and have puppets behind on the puppet stage.

## THE STABLE STORY

**NARRATOR 1:** We want to tell you—

**NARRATOR 2:** —with the help of our friends,

**NARRATOR 1:** The story of the journey Mary and Joseph made to Bethlehem.

**NARRATOR 2:** The story that changed the world.

**NARRATOR 1:** A long time ago, a young woman named Mary lived in Nazareth.

*(MARY enters.)*

**NARRATOR 2:** And Mary was soon to be married to the carpenter Joseph.

*(JOSEPH enters. They stand off to side.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** One day, an angel appeared from the sky. He had a message for Mary.

*(ANGEL enters.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** *(Repeating, with emphasis.)* The angel appeared from the SKY.

*(ANGEL puppet looks at NARRATOR.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** He FLEW DOWN from the sky.

*(ANGEL puppet makes flying motion up and down, with arms if possible, or simply a slow bob up and down.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** *(Very deliberate.)* HE FLEW DOWN FROM—

**ANGEL:** *(Sighs, speaks to NARRATOR 2, in a stage whisper.)* Psst! I'm....I'm not a real angel, you know. *(Chuckle.)* I can't really fly.

**NARRATOR 2:** Oh, but, you must.

**ANGEL:** Why?

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**NARRATOR 2:** For the story and *(Gesturing out.)* the children.

**ANGEL:** But...but, I...

**NARRATOR 2:** Please!! *(With pleading.)* The children.

*(ANGEL looks at kids. Sighs, shakes his head and walks off stage.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** The angel appeared, flying down from the sky.

*(ANGEL, as if leaping from one side of stage, comes "flying" in, all the way to other side of stage. SFX: Crash. ANGEL reappears in rough shape, collapses on stage floor.)*

**NARRATOR 2:** And the angel said to Mary...

**ANGEL:** Ouch.

**NARRATOR 2:** The angel told Mary she would give birth to a child who would be God's own son, and his name would be Jesus.

**ANGEL:** Yeah. That's what I said.

*(ANGEL stumbles off. SFX: Crash.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** Shortly after, the angel also visited Joseph.  
*(No angel.)* Angel?? ANGEL??

*(ANGEL comes back on.)*

**ANGEL:** What!

**NARRATOR 1:** You also visit Joseph.

**ANGEL:** I do?

**NARRATOR 1:** Yes.

**ANGEL:** That's not in my script. Are you sure? Maybe it's another angel. Maybe it's Michael. Or one of those guys in Los Angeles. There's a lot of them there.

**NARRATOR 1:** No...

**ANGEL:** They've even got a ball team of angels! They'd be good. See, if they could fly out of left field—

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