

# Nativity panto

By John Fewings

**Summary** A pantomime version of the nativity story, done in humorous verse.

## Characters

Narrators 1 and 2  
3 Wise Men  
Shepherds  
Angel  
Herod 3

Note: This sketch seeks to combine a traditional nativity with the fun of pantomime without becoming irreverent. (Hence, Mary and Joseph do not feature in the sketch.) It is the responsibility of the two NARRATORS (Na 1 and Na2) to keep the sketch moving at a reasonable pace. SHEPHERD number 2 (Sh2) can be played as a fool, whereas WISE MAN number 3 (Wi3) is more serious than his colleagues. HEROD must be a real pantomime villain and the audience should be encouraged to hiss and boo at his appearance.

## Script

Na1: As now it's nearly Christmas time We bring to you our pantomime.  
Not in the land of fairy-tale But in the land of Is-ra~el.

Na2: No Cinders here, no sisters spotty. No Aladdin, no Jack, no giants grotty, But  
wisemen, three, and shepherds, a few, An ox and an ass and a camel.

Na1: Pooh!

Na2: So now it's time to set the scene, Out upon the hillsides green,  
Reclining there in slumber deep, A group of "lookers after sheep".

Na1: The reason we've not called them shepherds Is nothing rhymes with that but  
leopards,  
And in Israel then there were very few, Save those that lived in the Galilee Zoo.

Na2: All at once a flash of light Fair gave those shepherds quite a fright.

Sh1: I can't believe what I am seeing A shining great angelic being.

Ang: (*quietly*) Fear not,

Na2: ... it said with voice like thunder;

Na1: (*sarcastic*) That hardly rent the heavens asunder.

Ang: (*a little louder*) Fear not,

Na2: it said, in a slightly louder voice.

Na1: Who picked him for the part? it's a pretty poor choice.

Ang: (*shouting*) Fear not,

Na2: it said. That made us quake.

Sh1: Are you sure you haven't made a mistake? We're only shepherds, the very least;  
Would you like a rabbi,

Sh2: perhaps a priest?

Sh1: A Levite, Scribe or Pharisee, I'm sure you really can't mean me!

Ang: Fear not, I say, I bring good news!

Sh2: You're going to send me on a cruise!

Ang: (*slightly annoyed*) For you in David's town this night Is born a baby ...

Sh2: That's alright; It isn't mine 'cos I'm not married ...

Ang: (*exasperated, losing temper*) Will you listen? This message from heaven I've carried,  
So shut your noise, stop messing around, Just get yourselves down to Bethlehem town.

Na1: So up they got and down they chased To Bethlehem town they made great haste,  
And saw the baby in the straw,

Sh2: Ee eck,

Na1: they cried, and

Sh1: Wow!,

Na1: and

Sh2: Cor!

Na2: They gathered round and had a peep, They brought the child a woolly sheep,  
Then off they went back to the fire To talk about this new Messiah.

Na1: Meanwhile, in far-off Eastern clime, Three wise men are having a chat, in rhyme.

Wi2: What is this icky-goo?

Wi1: It's frankincense; It cost me lots and lots of pence.

Wi2: It's smelly, sticky, and it's runny.

Wi1: Leave off, it cost me loads amoney.

Wi3: Myrrh is mystic, dark, mysterious. It speaks of death and all things serious.  
A gift so strange to give a baby. I wonder, am I mistaken maybe?

Wi2: I rub my lamp, see the genie appear!

Wi1: You twit! That's the panto we did last year. You're supposed to bring a gift of gold

Wi2: Well I would've done if I'd been told.  
But wait, although this lamps an old 'un, I'm fairly certain that it's golden.

Wi3: A very long journey we must make, Let's think of the things we'll need to take.

Wi1: We'll need roubles and lira and Japanese yen  
And deutschmarks and pfennigs and cheque-book and pen.

Wi2: Now don't get yourselves in a state of distress,  
Leave all that behind - take American Express.

Na1: So off they set upon the way But oh those camels, how they sway!  
And camels travel incredibly slow,

Wi2: Slower than British Rail, you know.

Wi1: But have some patience, please don't go, We'll see you later in the show.

Na2: Get ready to boo, prepare to hiss As we meet the villain of the piece.  
'Tis Herod the Great, or so he's called. Tho' he's thin as a rake and going bald.

Her: I heard just recently of a baby Born quite nearby, and thought that maybe  
For my royal throne here's a contender, But watch out! I can be quite a pretender.

Na2: Now as the town of Bethlehem dreams, King Herod plots, King Herod schemes,  
King Herod plans what he will do, Now altogether, let's give him a boo!  
(Audience is encouraged to boo.)

Her: Oh please don't scream and please don't yell, It really upsets me. Does it ...  
(to narrator) Can I say that?

Narrators & Cast: O no you can't

Her: Call out if you must, "Look out behind you!" I promise you this much; I won't mind you.  
I'm cunning; a fox; a slippery snake. When I find the kid, his life I'll take.

Na1: The wise men eventually did arrive, They don't make camels with overdrive.

Wi1: My camel only had first gear So we've been travelling over a year.

Wi3: We've slept in the daytime, We've travelled at night So we could keep the star in  
sight.

Wi2: (producing "STAR" newspaper)  
It costs 20p and it's worth it, by jingo! You could win a fortune on the bingo!  
(The other two hit him over the head with the 'paper)

Na1: Fearing no evil, suspecting no malice, The kings went along to ask at the palace.

Wi3: Where will the baby king be born? We've followed his star from dusk till dawn  
For many a mile for months on end. Pray, which way now should our footsteps bend?

Na2: Herod seethed and Herod raged, He was like a lion caged. He  
wanted to shout and scream and swear, Instead he whispered,

Her: (smarmy) Have a care; Go find the child and when you do,  
Tell me, so I can coochy-coo,  
So I can rock and sway the child, Treat him gently, treat him mild.  
(aside, to audience, more harshly)  
And when you wise men are not looking I'll hatch the plan that I've been cooking.  
I'll kill the kid, I'll choke the brat, Let's see you worship after that! (to wise men, nice again)  
So off you go along your way, See you later. Have a nice day!

Na1: They found the baby soon enough, Opened their gifts of gold and stuff.

Wi2: I rubbed my lamp - but nothing occurred.

Wi1: That's last year's panto, or haven't you heard?

Na1: But late that night the wise men dreamed. All was not as it had seemed.  
An angel appeared,

Wi2: or was it a genie?

Na1: He said,

Ang: That Herod is a meanie. Go home another way, make it quick!

Wi2: I'm glad! That camel made me sick.

Na1: So off towards the East they trotted, Not back to the palace as Herod had plotted.

Na2: What's this? Is Herod getting wild? The kings have scampered - and the child.  
*(The wise-men move about to rear of stage. Herod searches for them in vain.)*  
But Herod would not let them go, He searched high and he searched low.

Her: Come here, wise guys, I'm gonna find you.

Na2: Altogether, LOOK BEHIND YOU.  
*(Encourage audience participation.)*

Na1: Safe in God's hands, they fled with the child; Joseph strong and Mary mild.  
For news they waited of Herod's decease For when they could return in peace.  
They brought the child to their home again. He grew in favour with God and men.

Na2: The Lord was with him as he grew, And pretty soon the Saviour knew;  
The time was right for him to speak; To set his face toward Holy Week.

Na1: If you liked our sketch in panto-style Then muse on this one thought awhile:  
Though Herod could not harm our Lord ... At least he wasn't just ignored.

Na2: This Christmas time, if just to please us; give some thought to our Lord Jesus

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