

# A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Bethlehem

a children's Christmas musical  
with piano and split-track accompaniment



story and lyrics by Emil Bertalot  
music by Taras Nahirniak

# **“A funny thing happened on the way to Bethlehem”**

A very different Christmas Pageant.



Music by Taras Nahirniak

Story and Lyrics by Emil Bertalot

## CAST

Luke:  
Mary:  
Joseph:  
Santa:  
Elf#1:  
Angel 1:  
Angel 2:

### REINDEER (10):

*wear brown pants and long-sleeve brown t-shirts or sweaters (plain, no pattern)*

Reindeer #1 (Dasher)  
Reindeer #2 (Comet)  
Reindeer #3 (Vixen)  
Reindeer #4 (Prancer)  
Reindeer #5: (Donner)  
Reindeer #6: (Dancer)  
Reindeer #7: (Cupid)  
Reindeer #8: (Blitzen)

### ELVES (14):

*Green hats, pointy ears, pointy green toes (green felt wrapped and stapled around , striped socks (long), black shorts, bright t-shirt (no logo)*

Elf#2:  
Elf#3:  
Elf #4:  
Elf #5:  
Elf #6:  
Elf #7:  
Elf #8:

Shepherd #1:  
Shepherd #2:

Donkey part 1:  
Donkey part 2:

Wise man #1:  
Wise man #2:  
Wise man #3:

**Props:**

20 wrapped boxes w/ removable lids (various sizes)  
 2 shepherd staffs  
 2 very large candy canes  
 Wooden mallet  
 Video game  
 Yellow wooden duck  
 2 baby dolls  
 Scroll and Quill  
 Paddle ball  
 Basketball  
 Puzzles  
 Football  
 Jingle bells

**Staging:**

Luke's home:  
 \* Desk

Desert:  
 • Painted backdrop?

Christmastown:  
 • Building 1 (set in front of and on top of thin table 1)  
 • Building 2 (set in front of and on top of thin table 2)  
 • Backdrop with more buildings on it  
 • Large bulb Christmas lights  
 • Large plastic snowman

Reindeer manger:  
 • Large manger (in front of and on top of thin table 1)

Elf factory:  
 • 2 thin work tables  
 • elf factory backdrop

Santa's headquarters  
 • Reverse side of building 1 and 2 (for interior background)

Jesus' manger  
 • Small manger

**SONGS:**

|                     |                                                          |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Luke                | "The very best stories"                                  |
| Mary and Joseph     | "What's the sense of a census?"                          |
| Christmas Town cast | "Welcome to Christmas Town"                              |
| Reindeer gang       | "We're the reindeer crew"                                |
| Elves               | "It's all about the toys"                                |
| Santa               | "I'm the king of Christmas"                              |
| Elf #1              | "Something there"                                        |
| Angel               | "Angels We Have Heard On High/<br>All Through the Night" |
| Luke and cast       | "The very best stories" reprise                          |

PREVIEW ONLY

## SCENE 1: Luke at his desk/Mary & Joseph in the desert

*Luke is sitting at a table, with a quill in his hand and a scroll spread out in front of him. He's writing. After a moment, he looks up and notices the audience for the first time.*

Luke: Another day, another morning at the scrolls. It's my job, you see. In the old days I used to travel more, spreading the good word to anyone who would listen. But now, I'm getting old and the legs don't work as well as they used to. So the Lord tells me, "I'm giving you a new job, one that requires your hands instead of your feet." I ask him what He means. "Write down the story," he says.

And I ask, "the whole thing?" And he says, "Of course the whole thing!" So here I am, telling it, building it, watching it take shape, one word, one sentence, one paragraph at a time. With His guidance, of course. I sometimes forget a detail here and there, so He helps me remember. Always looking over my shoulder!

Of course I don't mind. It's very good story. Perhaps, the best story of all.

*The very best stories  
Aren't written on paper,  
Confined to a page or a book.  
The very best stories  
Are more than just stories  
Worthy of one little look.*

*The story I'm telling has drama,  
excitement,  
Surprises, suspense, that is true –  
But what makes it a story  
that you'll want to hear  
Is what it will mean to you.*

It's not an easy assignment, you know. I suspect every word has a value, every sentence an insight, every paragraph, an inspiration. How can I possibly write such a story? It's very simple; I don't. *(points up to the sky)* HE does.

*The story I'm telling is living and breathing,  
it takes on a life of its own,  
because I am the writer,  
but God is the author,  
and that's how the story is known.*

*The very best stories  
Aren't written on paper,  
Confined to a page or a book.  
The very best stories  
are put in your heart  
and will always be there when you look.*

Luke: Let's see now . . . where was I? Oh yes . . .

*He begins to write on the scroll.*

Luke: And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus.

. . .

*He pauses to dip his quill into ink.*

Luke: that all the world should be registered. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

*He pauses to dip his quill into ink.*

Luke: Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth,

*At the word "Joseph," Joseph should appear on stage, perhaps from a hiding place behind a prop, as if Luke's words brought him into being.*

Luke: to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

*At the word "Mary," Mary should appear on stage, perhaps from a hiding place behind a prop, as if Luke's words brought her into being. She joins Joseph on stage and they just start to walk down the aisle.*

Luke: And so it was —

*A deep, booming, off-stage voice suddenly interrupts Luke. Mary and Joseph freeze.*

GOD: LUKE.

Luke: Lord, is that you?

GOD: LUKE. COME WITH ME. I HAVE NEED OF YOU.

Luke: But, but Lord, I was just telling the story of Christmas. The birth of your son!

GOD: LUKE.

Luke: But I can't stop just now, and leave Mary and Joseph wandering in the desert!

GOD: LUKE . . . I AM YOUR FATHER.

Luke: Oh, very well, Lord. When you call, I answer. These old legs could use some stretching anyway.

*Luke gets up from the table and departs off-stage. After a pause, Mary and Joseph unfreeze, as if awakening from a trance.*

MARY: Joseph?

JOSEPH: Mary?

MARY: Where are we?

JOSEPH: Judging by all this sand, I'd say . . . the desert.

MARY: But why? What are we doing out here?

JOSEPH: I don't know. It was like a voice was guiding us . . . and now it's gone. Do you remember anything?

MARY: There was something about Caesar . . .

JOSEPH: And a . . . salad?

MARY: No.

JOSEPH: A palace?

MARY: No.

JOSEPH: Wait . . . a census!

MARY: That's it!

MARY: Because Caesar had decreed it! (sings) You know what?

JOSEPH: What?

MARY: That's an awful idea!

JOSEPH: You said it!

BOTH: *What's — the sense of a census?  
Why — are we out here today?  
Whose bright idea is counting heads?  
We would rather just stay in bed!  
What's the sense of a census?  
It sounds like nonsense to us.*

*What's the sense of a census?  
The sun's beating down on our face,  
Hot sand is not good for a woman with child,  
What are we doing way out in the wild?  
What's the sense of a census?  
It sounds like nonsense to us.*

JOSEPH: Don't worry Mary, we'll be out of this hot sun soon.

MARY: But where? I don't see any sign of a town.

JOSEPH: I'm sure there's one not far from here.

MARY: How far?

JOSEPH: I don't know. They won't invent GPS devices for another 2,000 years.

**INSERT DONKEY DANCE NUMBER HERE.**

BOTH: *What's the sense of a census?  
Why are we out here today?  
Caesar, we'll tell you just what we'll do:*

MARY: *I'm number one —*

JOSEPH: *and I'm number two!*

BOTH: *There! Now, we're done with your census,  
So why don't you leave us alone?  
Why don't you leave us alone?  
Why don't - you leave us - aloooo—*

MARY: *—OHHH!*

JOSEPH: What is it?

MARY: The baby. It won't be long now.

JOSEPH: We have to find shelter for the night. Come on, I thought I saw something over the next ridge.

PREVIEW ONLY

## SCENE 2: Main Street of Christmastown

*They walk down the aisle, then back up one side. As they near the front again, they continue:*

MARY: Brrrr! How cold it gets at night in the desert!

JOSEPH: Yes, it is cold. Cold enough to —

*Small flakes fall down upon their heads.*

MARY: What's this?

JOSEPH: Snow!

MARY: Joseph, look!

*They notice the buildings and props. Lights on the buildings are turned on. Elves and reindeer hurry around the stage, with elves carrying wrapped presents back and forth and reindeer prancing and jumping. It's all very frantic-feeling.*

MARY: Those buildings! The lights! I've never seen anything like them!

JOSEPH: And look! Are they children?

MARY: I don't think so. Their ears . . .

JOSEPH: They're pointed!

MARY: Where are we, Joseph?

*All the elves and reindeer pause, as if hearing them for the first time, and turn to face them.*

Elf 1: Where are you?

Elf 2: You must be lost!

Elf 3: You must be new!

Elf 4: With all the presents?

Elf 1: And the snow?

Elf 3: And the elves?

Elf 4: And you don't know?

ALL: Ho ho ho!

*Turn lights to Christmastown on now.*

Elf 1: Hit it, gang!

Elf 2: *There's a place where all is goodness and light,*

Elf3: *A place you dream of when you're sleeping at night,*

Elf 4: *There's a place where peace and joy is held dear*

Elf 1: *And that place . . . isn't anywhere around here.*

ALL: *Christmastown! (shouted, not sung)*

*There's a special sort of feeling,  
A feeling we are told,  
Where every single visit  
Leaves you feeling cold!  
It's a special kind of feeling  
A feeling in the air,  
A special kind of feeling  
Of people who don't care.*

*Welcome! Welcome!  
Welcome to Christmas Town!  
Welcome! Welcome!  
Welcome to Christmas Town!*

*Our town makes you all tingly,  
From your head up to your feet,  
It's a lot like getting pelted  
With icy snow and sleet,  
It sends a simple message  
You'll feel it strong today,  
A heartfelt sort of message  
That tells you, "go away!"*

*Welcome! Welcome!  
Welcome to Christmas Town!  
Welcome! Welcome!  
Welcome to Christmas Town!*

*We'd really love to visit,  
But as you both can see,  
Spreading joy and peace on earth  
Has us busy as can be.  
We're too busy to say howdy,  
We wouldn't even try,  
But we'll make this one exception  
To squeeze in a "goodbye!"*

*Goodbye! Auf Wie-der-sehen! Goodbye! Ciao! Goodbye! Goodbye!  
Goodbye from Christmastown!  
Goodbye! Goodbye! Goodbye from Christmastown!  
Goodbye! Goodbye!*

*All the elves and reindeer march off, waving.*

MARY: So this is . . . Christmastown?

JOSEPH: I've never heard of it. But then, I don't get out of Nazareth much.

MARY: It's strange, but there's something . . . well . . . familiar about it.

JOSEPH: Strange or familiar, we have to find you a place to rest.

MARY: But they've all gone away!

*A lone elf has re-entered the scene. He picks up a present he's forgotten, and begins carrying it off-stage.*

JOSEPH: Not all of them! Look!

MARY: Excuse me? Are you one of the . . . elves?

ELF 1: I don't want to be an elf. I want to be a dentist.

MARY: What's a dentist?

ELF 1: They specialize in wide open mouths.

MARY: Oh, so you're a prophet!

JOSEPH: Can you help us? My wife is with child and needs a place to rest for the night.

ELF 1: Sorry, there's no room anywhere in Christmastown. It's the busy season.

MARY: Busy season?

ELF 1: Yep, the 365 days leading up to the big night — Christmas Eve! I've got to go — they're waiting for these snuggies up at headquarters!

*Elf begins to leave.*

JOSEPH: Wait! We only need a place to rest for the night! Can't you help us?

*Elf stops and sighs.*

ELF 1: Tell you what — check with the reindeer. There might be room in their manger!

MARY: Where is this manger, prophet?

ELF 1: Three prances up the road, take a right on Candy Cane Lane, turn left at the snowman who keeps yelling "happy birthday." Gotta go!

*Elf runs off.*

MARY:            Joseph?

JOSEPH:        Come on Mary, just a little further.

*They leave the stage. The elf reappears, watching them go, then exits himself.*

PREVIEW ONLY

### SCENE 3: Reindeer manger

*Scene change. A manger is brought into center stage. Reindeer appear. One is dribbling a basketball. One has a paddle ball. One is working a book of crossword puzzles.*

*Joseph and Mary reappear and approach the reindeer.*

MARY: Look Joseph! Do you think those are the . . . reindeer?

JOSEPH: There's one way to find out. Excuse me!

RD 1: Excuse who?

RD 2: Excuse you?

RD 3: There's no excuse for you!

*All reindeer laugh.*

MARY: What are you doing?

RD 4: What are we doing?

RD 5: What does it look like?

RD 1: Reindeer games!

JOSEPH: My wife Mary is with child. Could we spend the night in your manger?

RD 2: What?

RD 3: What?

RD 4: What?

RD 5: Stay?

RD 1: In our hay?

ALL: NO WAY!

RD 2: Don't you know who you're talking to?

RD 3: We're the reindeer crew!

RD 4: The elite eight!

RD 5: We're great!

RD 1: We pull the sleigh!

RD 2: So WE get this hay!

RD 3: We're the reindeer crew!

RD 4: Since you two are new

RD 5: We'll explain it to you!

*Every Christmas Eve there are places to go,  
So we're up in the air, flying through the snow,  
We land on the rooftops, click click click  
We pull the sleigh for old saint nick,*

*No other dudes can pull this sleigh  
Horse or mule, there ain't no way!  
Only magic deer can do this trick  
You gotta admit we're really slick.*

*We're the reindeer crew,  
Coming to you  
On Christmas eve  
Two by two,  
We fly through the air  
With the greatest of ease,  
We're the reindeer crew,  
Pulling the big cheese.*

*There's dasher, dancer, prancer, vixen,  
Comet, cupid, donner, blitzen,  
We're world-famous, you know it's true,  
A lot more special than you and you.*

*So when you say, how 'bout your hay?  
We're here to tell you, ain't no way!  
We're hauling presents for the kids,  
Without our rest we'd hit the skids!*

*We're the reindeer crew,  
Coming to you  
On Christmas eve  
Two by two,  
We fly through the air  
With the greatest of ease,  
We're the reindeer crew,  
Pulling the big cheese.*

*The reindeer get into their stable. As they leave:*

*We're the reindeer crew,  
Coming to you,  
We're the reindeer crew,  
Coming to you,  
We're the reindeer crew.*

**OUT!**

*They slam the stable door.*

JOSEPH: I guess that's a 'no.'

MARY: What do we do now?

JOSEPH: There has to be someone here who can help.

*Elf 1 enters with a load of presents in his arms.*

MARY: I t's the prophet! Excuse me!

ELF 1: *(twirls around trying to see over presents)* What? Who? You? What are you doing out here?

JOSEPH: They wouldn't let us in there.

ELF 1: The reindeer said no, eh? They're getting too big for their sleigh bells, if you ask me.

MARY: Do you have any other ideas?

ELF 1: Tell you what, follow me. I'm headed towards the factory. It's filled with toys this time of year, but who knows? They might have some room.

*They walk down the aisle and around, back up front, allowing for a scenery change.*

## SCENE 4: The Toy Factory

*Factory whistle sounds.*

MARY: What's that?

ELF 1: Shift change.

JOSEPH: What's a shift?

ELF 1: The changing of the elf workers. It's a very serious ceremony. Watch.

*Two elf guards come down the aisle leading a group of elf-workers. The guards are armed with giant (cane-sized) candy canes. While the workers wait in the aisle, the guards lead to do maneuvers in unison. The moves start out serious like a changing of the guard, but become increasingly silly and elf-like. At the end, there's another whistle, and all the elves cheer and run to their places at the factory tables. The song begins:*

ALL ELVES: *When the whistle blows,  
We have a job to do,  
It's a very very big one  
So we work the whole year through,*

*We're busy in the day  
We're busy in the night,  
We're busy busy busy  
Making everything just right.*

*We are Santa's elves  
And toys are all we make,  
We work and work and work  
Without a single coffee break.*

*We are Santa's elves,  
and our biggest joy  
is working our elf ears off –  
'cause it's all about the toys.*

ELF 2: *I inflate the footballs,  
Fill them with my breath,  
The last elf made a million  
And he blew myself to death.*

ELF 3L: *I make video games,  
if you think that's cool,  
try building microchips  
with a hammer for a tool.*

ELF 4: *I make all the dollies,  
That coo and eat and cry,  
I even make the ones that poop  
I really wonder why.*

ELF 5: *I make wooden yellow duckies,  
this one's almost done,  
And this year if I'm lucky  
a kid will ask for one.*

ALL ELVES: *We are Santa's elves  
And toys are all we make,  
We work and work and work  
Without a single coffee break.*

*We are Santa's elves,  
and our biggest joy  
is working our elf ears off –  
'cause it's all about the toys.*

*Somewhere kids are happy,  
Somewhere they're filled with joy,  
Somewhere kids are laughing  
'cause they got a brand new toy,*

*but here in the elf factory,  
work is all we know,  
we once knew why we did this . . .  
now it's off to work we go!*

*Heigh ho! Heigh ho! It's off to work we go!*

*We are Santa's elves  
And toys are all we make,  
We work and work and work  
Without a single coffee break.*

*We are Santa's elves,  
and our biggest joy  
is working our elf ears off –  
'cause it's all about the toys.*

*All the elves go back to working on their toys.*

ELF 1: Excuse me, guys? Guys? Guys!!!

ELF 6: What?

ELF 7: Where?

ELF 4: Who?

ELF 5: Oh, it's you.

ELF 2: Who?

ELF 3: The dentist.

ELF 4: *(opens his mouth and points inside)* I've been having a pain right here . . .

RACHEL: Quiet! Can we help you?

NATALIE: Yes! These two strangers need a place to stay for the night.

ELF 2: Let them stay here?

ELF 5: That would be against Kringle code 3455-7770453.

MARRY: What?

ELF 3: Santa's rule: "No unauthorized personnel in the factory at any time."

ELF 4: Someone might steal our secrets!

JOSEPH: Like who?

ELF 3: Anyone! Jack O'Lantern, the Easter Bunny, plus there's this one groundhog –

JOSEPH: But it's just for one night!

ELF 2: Sorry, we can't ever go against an official Santa directive!

MARY: Why not?

ELF 3: There's a CLAUS in our contact.

*All characters pause and look at the audience.*

MARY: Isn't there anything you can do?

ELF 5: I can make wooden yellow duckies!

JOSEPH: No, isn't there anything you can do about us staying the night?

ELF 6: No way!

ELF 4: Sorry!

ELF 7: Not today!

ELF 5: How about a duck?

ELF 1: Wait! What if we appeal for a one-night exception?

ELF 3: Appeal? To the big fella?

ELF 2: Tonight is the busiest night of the year for him!

ELF 5: And for us!

ELF 3: We've got toys to get to the sleigh – it's almost time!

ELF 1: Well, I'm going to take these two to the big guy, anyway.

ELF 3: You're wasting your time!

ELF 4: And ours!

ELF 2: Back to work everyone!

ELF 5: I think I have time to make another duck!

ELF 1: Come on, let's go.

*Joshua, Carley and Natalie come front and center, down to main floor in front.*

PREVIEW ONLY



ELVES: *He's the king of Christmas,*

SANTA: *I'm the king of Christmas,  
The reason for the season, that's me.*

*Every year on the very same night,*

ELVES: *He visits kid's houses when they're tucked in tight,  
He leaves them presents and away he flies,*

SANTA: *I really wish I could remember why!*

*Yeah I'm the king of Christmas,*

ELVES: *He's the king of Christmas,*

SANTA: *I'm the king of Christmas,  
The reason for the season, that's me.*

ELVES: *He's the king of Christmas,  
Yeah the king of Christmas,  
He's the king of Christmas,  
The reason for the season,*

SANTA: *that's me! Oh yeah! Thank you, thank you very much.*

*And now my song here is all I've done,  
There's toys to make assembly line to run,  
With all the good that I have to do,  
I don't have time for the likes of you!*

SANTA: *Ho ho ho! It's nearly time, boys! Hitch the reindeer! Load the sleigh! There are toys to deliver without delay!*

ELF 1: *Santa, wait!*

SANTA: *Wait? Ho ho ho, I can't wait, there's a schedule to keep!*

ELF 1: *But can't you just help these people?*

SANTA: *Come now, little elf. How could I do any good out there, if I spent all my time doing good right here?*

ELF 1: *But they're not looking for much!*

SANTA: *Then how about a nice wooden yellow duckie?*

ELF 1: *They don't want a wooden yellow duckie!*

SANTA: *Then have them submit a list like everyone else, I'll see if I can get them on the schedule for next Christmas.*

ELF 1: *Next Christmas? But —*

SANTA: *(to Elf)* And if I were you, I'd get back to work before you wind up on the naughty list.

*(to Mary and Joseph)* Thanks for stopping! Don't forget to visit the gift shop on your way out!

*Santa and extra elves exit.*

PREVIEW ONLY

## SCENE 6: Back in the desert

MARY: Oh Joseph, I'm so tired.

JOSEPH: I know Mary, but we don't have a choice. We have to move on.

ELF 1: I'm really sorry about all this.

MARY: It's not your fault.

JOSEPH: You tried.

MARY: I'm sure we'll find something, somewhere.

ELF 1: But you shouldn't have to *find* anything! It's not right!

MARY: Right or wrong, it is what it is. Good luck, prophet.

ELF 1: What does prophet mean, anyway?

MARY: A bringer of good news.

JOSEPH: Come on, Mary. Let's go.

*They exit down the aisle.*

ELF 1: *(after several seconds, half-calling after them)* You shouldn't have to go!

Bringer of good news. What's good about any of this? There's something wrong here . . . and it starts with me! I'm an elf! My job is toy-making, not caring about people. So why do I? What is it about those two?

*There's something there, that I can't see,  
There's something there, what can it be?  
why do I care, I just don't know,  
but I don't want those two to go.*

*There's something here, I feel inside,  
something's awake, it just can't hide,  
I want to give, to do much more,  
But I've never ever felt this way before.*

*What's the reason for the season?  
Have we lost our way?  
What has Christmastown forgotten,  
That we turned them both away?*

*All the reindeer and the elves,  
Snowmen and women, Santa himself,  
They're all so wrapped up in the big night,  
They're missing out, don't see the light.*

*There's more to this than all the toys,  
Than giving things to girls and boys,*

*Somewhere the meaning has been lost,  
I have to know, at any cost.  
What's the reason for the season?  
Have we lost our way?  
What has Christmastown forgotten,  
That we turned them both away?*

*Elf sits down glumly. As he sits there, the angels appear and sing:*

*Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains.  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria In excelsis deo.*

*Angels watching e'er around thee  
All through the night.  
Midnight slumber close surround thee  
All through the night.  
Soft the drowsy hours are creeping  
Hill and dale in slumber sleeping.  
I my loved ones watch am keeping  
All through the night.*

*Gloria In excelsis deo!*

*Angels finish singing and announce in a big, loud voice:*

ANGEL 1: Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is —

ANGEL 2: Hang on, wait a minute . . . where are your sheep?

ELF 1: My what?

ANGEL 1: Your sheep. You know, four legs, curly white wool,

ANGEL 2: baaaaaaaahhhh!

ELF 1: I don't have any sheep.

ANGEL 1: No sheep! What kind of a shepherd are you?

ELF 1: I'm not a shepherd. I'm an elf.

ANGEL 2: An elf? What's an elf?

ELF 1: We make toys up at the north pole.

ANGEL 1: The north pole? You mean this isn't the desert?

ELF 1: No.

ANGEL 2: And you're obviously not a shepherd.

ELF 1: Um, no, sorry.

ANGEL 1: Wow, are we off-course!

ANGEL 2: That's what we get for not waiting for the narrator.

ELF 1: What was that you were saying, when you first appeared?

ANGEL 1: What, our big announcement? That's for the shepherds.

ELF 1: You could practice on me!

ANGEL 2: Hmm, that's not a bad idea. Wouldn't want to make a mistake later — I've made enough today already.

ANGEL 1: Well, here goes . . . *Clears throat*. Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

ANGEL 2: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

ANGEL 1: And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

ELF 1: The good news is about . . . a baby?

ANGEL 2: Not just any baby, the son of God. His birth is a sign of God's love!

ANGEL 1: And his life with us comes with the promise of everlasting life.

ELF 1: That's hard to imagine. And I should know; I'm an imaginary creature.

ANGEL 2: But it's true. His birth will be heralded by a new star shining in the sky.

ANGEL 1: And wise men will come from afar and give him gifts.

ELF 1: Wait . . . did you say "gifts?"

ANGEL 2: Yes, and it will grow into a tradition, so that once a year, people will give gifts to their friends and family, to express love for each other —

ANGEL 1: and to remember Jesus' love for us.

ELF 1: Once a year, you say? And what was his name again?

ANGEL 2: Jesus.

ANGEL 1: But he is often called "The Christ child."

ELF 1: Christ?!? You mean, as in "Christmas?"

ANGEL 1 & 2: Of course we mean Christmas! Duh!

ELF 1: That's it! That's the true meaning of all this! Love for this child, and love for our fellow man! That's why we make toys for girls and boys – and that's why it felt so wrong to turn Mary and Joseph away! See you later!

ANGEL 1: Where are you going?

ELF 1: To tell the others! They need to hear this!

*Your story fills my heart with joy,  
It's not about the gifts and toys,  
in Christmastown, they have to hear,  
The meaning of this time of year.*

Thanks angel! Gotta' fly!

ANGEL 2: I thought flying was our gig.

*SCENE CHANGE BACK TO CHRISTMASTOWN*

PREVIEW ONLY

## SCENE 7: Christmastown

*Is the cast reprising “Welcome to Christmastown” and Elf #1 interrupts?*

ELF 1: Everybody! Listen! I need your attention!

ELF 5: Now?

ELF 3: Can't you see we're busy?

ELF 2: All the reindeer and the elves,

ELF 6: Putting on our jingle bells!

ELF 4: Wrapping presents!

ELF 7: Making toys!

ELF 5: For midnight visits to girls and boys!

ELF 1: I know, I know. But here's question: Do you have any idea WHY you're doing all this?

*Silence.*

ELF 3: Hmmm, now that you mention it . . .

ALL: NO.

ELF 1: Then gather around, everyone! I have good news to share . . . and a plan.

## SCENE 8: Luke's desk / the desert / the manger

*Luke walks in from off-stage and takes a seat at his desk.*

LUKE: Dear me, how long did God have me away? I've almost forgotten where I was in the story. If I recall, Joseph and Mary were wandering in the desert, poor things. Ah, here we are . . . *Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, (the next words are given emphasis, as he's writing them) into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.*

There, that brings us back to where I left off. And now for the manger scene.

*Stagehands bring in the manger at this point. Mary and Joseph enter the manger and sit down.*

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. (Mary holds up a bundle of Jesus and cradles him) She wrapped him in swaddling cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

Now, what am I forgetting?

*Shepherds enter.*

Oh yes, the shepherds!

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

And then . . .

*Angels enter.*

Of course! The angels!

*And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. And the shepherds said to one another,*

SHEPHERD: Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened.

LUKE: *So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.*

And they were joined there by —

*Three reindeer enter.*

— three . . . strange-looking horses? . . . with antlers?

*Three elves enter with three wrapped boxes.*

And . . . little creatures . . . wearing striped stockings?

*Santa appears with wrapped presents*

And . . . a chubby man . . . in a red suit . . . carrying gifts?

*Charlie opens his box and takes out the yellow duck, that he presents to Mary and Joseph.*

. . . including a . . . wooden yellow duck?

*(after a pause)* All right, that's enough! No one would ever believe this. In the best interests of this gospel, I think it's wisest that my official account ends with the shepherds.

*Big pause.*

*(with a smile)* Still, it makes a very good story, doesn't it?

The very best stories  
Aren't written on paper,  
Confined to a page or a book.  
The very best stories  
Are more than just stories  
Worthy of one little look.

*Entire cast joins Luke and sings with him.*

The story we're telling has drama, excitement,  
Surprises, suspense, that is true —  
But what makes it a story  
that you'll want to hear  
Is what it will mean to you.

Away in a manger no crib for a bed  
The little lord Jesus lay down his sweet head,  
The stars in the sky look down where he lay,  
The little lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

The very best stories  
Aren't written on paper,  
Confined to a page or a book.  
The very best stories  
are put in your heart  
and will always be there when you look.

END