

# Away in a Suitcase

The Script



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## Scene 1 – Mary's House

*[Mary enters slowly, reading a textbook, and flops sideways on a large comfy chair, centre stage]*

**Narr** In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth in Galilee.

*[Knock at the door]*

**Mary** Muuuuum! There's someone at the door.

**Mum** *[Offstage]* Can you answer it, Mary?

**Mary** I can't. I'm in the middle of college work.

**Mum** And I'm in the middle of fixing your curtain rail, and if I'm not careful I'll ... ooo, errr, oh dear!

*[Crash sound effect]*

**Mary** Oops.

**Mum** I'm OK. I'm OK. Ooh, that's going to have a bruise in the morning.

*[Knock at the door]*

**Mary** Daaaaaad! There's someone at the door.

**Mum** Your dad's gone on a park run. You'll have to get it.

**Mary** *[Getting up]* Oh, I s'pose.

*[Knock at the door]*

Alright, alright, I'm coming. Keep your wig on.

*[Mary opens 'door', Gabriel steps inside]*

**Gabriel** Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.

**Mary** You what?

**Gabriel** Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.

**Mary** *[Giving him a 'what planet are you on?' look]*  
R-i-i-ght. OK.

**Gabriel** Hello Mary, I am Gabriel. I have a message for you. From the boss. *[Pointing upwards]*

**Mary** Gabriel? You mean you're an ... How do you know my ...? A message from ...?  
You'd better come in.

*[Both move to chair]*

Sit down?

**Gabriel** I think you might need the chair.

**Mary** Why?

**Gabriel** You're going to have a baby.

**Mary** *[Looking coy]* Well yes, probably, some day. But Joe and I only got engaged last month. We've not even set a date for the wedding yet. We certainly weren't planning on having a baby anytime soon. I'm still at college!

**Gabriel** This will be God's son, not Joseph's.

**Mary** *[Sitting down suddenly]* But ... but ... I mean ... well ... y'know ... ummmmn ... how?

**Gabriel** Oh, *[Waving hands]* Holy Spirit and all that, you know.  
You will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

**Mary** Oh. Right. *[Talking to self, rapidly]* Wow! God's son? I mean, WOW! Why me? It's gob-smacking! It's incredible! How will I cope?  
*[Continue mumbling to self]*

**Gabriel** *[Speaking over Mary]* So is that OK then?

**Mary** What? Oh, yes. Yes, let's do it!  
*[Talking to self again]* Crumbs, God's baby! I wonder if he'll look like me?  
What kind of nappies does God's son wear?  
*[Continue while Gabriel leaves]*

**Gabriel** I'll let myself out, then. Bye.

*[Gabriel exits through 'door' and Mum enters from other side, wiping hands]*

**Mum** Who was that, dear?

*[Mary walks to Mum, taking textbook]*

**Mary** You'll never guess, Mum. You'll never guess!  
*[Mary and Mum exit]*

## Scene 2 – Mary’s House, a week later

**Narr** Now, Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph.

*[Knock at the door, Mum enters and answers door]*

**Mum** Hello, Joe dear. Come on in. You know Mary’s away, staying with her cousin Elizabeth?

*[Joe enters, looking cross]*

**Joe** Yeah, I know she’s away. That’s why I’ve come round now. I got this text from her last night.

*[Showing phone]*

A baby? Did you know about this?

**Mum** Ah, yes dear. I know it looks bad but don’t ...

**Joe** *[Interrupting]* Looks bad? It feels bad! Right here. *[Thumps chest]*

She’s broken my heart, that girl. Told me some rubbish about an angel visiting her.

Does she think I’m an idiot?

**Mum** No, Joe, not at all. She loves you. Come and sit down, dear.

**Joe** Loves me? Well, she’s got a funny way of showing it! The wedding’s off. *[Flops in chair]* I’ve only come round to bring back her CDs.

**Mum** Now don’t be hasty, dear.  
Let me get you a cup of tea and you can have a go with that Minebox Playtendo game that you like so much.

*[Mum exits and changes character to Postie]*

**Joe** Yeah, OK then. Thanks.

*[Puts on VR headset and starts miming]*

What was I playing? Oh yes, Aerobatics Ace.

Resume.

Bank left ... bank right ... deploy ailerons ...  
barrel roll ... ah, this is great.

Ooh, thunder cloud ahead!

I'll power up and climb above it.

Raise elevators

*[Mimes steep climb]*

Wow! The view up here is brilliant.

*[Looking round]* Great graphics.

*[Gabriel enters and walks round Joe]*

**Joe** *[Watching Gabriel as he walks around]*

Amazing detail! That angel looks so real.

I could almost reach out and touch him.

**Gabriel** Joseph!

**Joe** Woo! Great 3D sound too!

**Gabriel** Joseph! Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because her baby is from the Holy Spirit.

She will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.

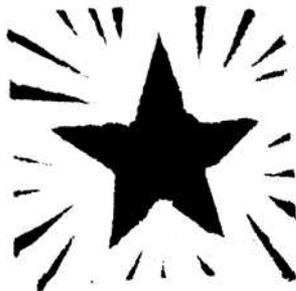
*[Joe's jaw drops. Gabriel exits. Joe watches him in stunned silence]*

**Joe**     *[Removing headset]*  
What just happened there?

*[Addressing Mum, offstage]*  
Er, you know what I said about the wedding?  
Forget that. It's back on.

And could I have a couple of sugars in my tea,  
please?

*[Joe exits, taking headset]*



### Scene 3 – Mary's House, several months later

**Narr** In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that all people must register ...

*[Joe and Mary enter, Joe is reading a letter, Mary is heavily pregnant]*

**Mary** What's that you're reading, Joe?

**Joe** A letter from the Inland Revenue. We have to register Junior's name if we want a tax rebate for him.

**Mary** Already? He's not even born yet!  
*[Flops into chair]*

**Joe** Yeah, it's a slow process. They've got a backlog as long as the orbit of Jupiter.

**Mary** So do we fill in a form, or can we do it online?

**Joe** Neither. We have to register in person. They have an open day next week at their office in Bethlehem. We could go to that.

**Mary** Do I have to go too?

**Joe** Yeah, sorry. They need both of us. We could make it like a holiday, a mini-break in Bethlehem, call in and visit some of the relatives. You could go shopping or have a spa day with my cousin June. You two get on really well. What do you say?

**Mary** I dunno. The baby's nearly due and I feel like a whale on legs.

**Joe** I'll make it OK. I'll book us a nice hotel and we'll be back before Junior comes along.

**Mary** Oh, alright then.  
Give us a hand up, will you?

*[Joe and Mary struggle to get Mary out of chair]*

But somewhere nice, mind. None of your manky Travel Inn Express.

**Joe** Whatever you say, my sweet.  
*[Tapping on phone]*  
Full English breakfast or continental?

*[Joe and Mary exit, Joe still tapping on phone]*

## Scene 4 – Hotel Bethlehem

**Narr** So Joseph went to the town of Bethlehem with Mary, who was expecting a baby.

*[Mary and Joe enter, Joe has a suitcase]*

**Joe** I'm sorry, Mary, sweetheart. I know you didn't want Travel Inn Express, but everywhere else was booked up solid. And this was their last room.

**Mary** Joe, I'm so tired after that long journey that all I want is a nice comfy bed.

**Joe** You relax, dear. I'll get the keys.  
*[Puts suitcase down, mimes desk bell] PING!*

*[Manager enters, bowing obsequiously]*

**M'ger** Good evening sir, madam, and welcome to the Hotel Bethlehem. How may I help you?

**Joe** Hello. I made a reservation online. Room 25-12. Could we have our keys, please?

**M'ger** Oh dear. Room 25-12?

**Joe** Yes. Is there a problem?

**M'ger** Indeed there is, sir. I do wish sir had rung to confirm. Room 25-12 is unavailable, I'm afraid.

**Mary** *[Very quiet]* Joe.

**Joe** What! I booked it last week!

**M'ger** If sir had read the small print, he would have noted that online reservations expire at 10pm.

It is now 10:05, sir. And rooms are in great demand.

**Mary** *[Quiet]* Joe.

**Joe** So you've given our room to someone else?

**M'ger** Indeed. Although sir will be pleased to know that his small oversight has provided accommodation to three foreign VIPs, here for an astronomy conference, I gather. They were very happy to find a vacant room in the middle of Bethlehem. Sir is so kind.

**Mary** *[Medium loud]* Joe.

**Joe** But where are we going to stay? Do you have any other rooms?

**M'ger** I'm afraid not, sir. We are like a brand-new library – fully booked. *[Silly laugh]*

**Mary** *[Getting louder]* Joe.

**Joe** I suppose you don't have ... ummmn ... like ... a stable round the back, or anything, do you?

**M'ger** A Stable? Sir is having a laugh. Where do you think this is, Old MacDonald's Farm?

**Mary** *[Loud, tugging Joe's sleeve]* Joe!

**Joe** *[Finally noticing]* What is it, Mary?

**Mary** The baby! It's coming!

**Joe** *[Horrorified]* What, now?

**Mary** Now!