

The MYSTERIES

*Adapted from the York, Chester and Wakefield Cycles of
Mystery Plays*

By

Christopher Denys

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THE MYSTERY PLAY CYCLES - A Few Brief Facts and Speculations

There were once Cycles of Mystery Plays at Aberdeen, Bath, Beverley, Bristol, Canterbury, Ipswich, Dublin, Leicester, Worcester, Northampton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and, possibly, Lincoln and London.

Early versions of the Wakefield (the Towneley Plays) and the York cycles may have been adapted from an earlier Newcastle cycle. Certainly, from some remnants of dialect, they seem to have originated in Northumberland.

Surviving cycles are: Wakefield (32 plays); York (48 plays); Chester (24 plays); Coventry (42 plays - though these didn't originate in Coventry and are thought to come from somewhere in the East Midlands - are they the missing Lincoln plays?). All of these cycles have similarities. The odd one is the Cornish cycle which is very individual and doesn't ever seem to have ever contained a Nativity.

There is a reference to the York plays in 1378 as being already a regular event. The Chester plays were certainly in performance by 1375. The Wakefield plays seem to have grown out of the York cycle - or, possibly, it was the other way about. The Wakefield plays were brilliantly rewritten by an anonymous genius known to us only as the Wakefield Master in the years preceding 1450 and it is in a manuscript of this date that they have survived. This manuscript belonged to the Towneley family of Burnley and the plays may have grown up in Lancashire as there are a number of references to Burnley, Whalley, etc. Certainly the Abbey of Whalley seems to have held the manuscript until the Dissolution.

Edmund Grindall, Archbishop of York (1570 - 1576) didn't approve of them at all and called in all the plays within his reach, including the York and Wakefield Cycles. At this stage, they were simply censored (heavily). The Virgin Mary was reduced in importance and status and no representation of "God the Father, God the Sonne and God the Holie Ghoste" was allowed - which can't have left much of the plot intact.

In 1576, Grindall became Archbishop of Canterbury and promptly suppressed all the cycles of plays outright. The manuscripts were called in and most of them vanished for ever. Possibly because of his previous connection with York, Grindall left the collection of the northern scripts to the local commissioners - which may explain why the four cycles have survived. Certainly one of the commissioners - Alexander Nowell - was a very close and trusted friend of Grindall's. He was also the half brother of John Towneley. Their mother married twice without religious prejudice and had both a Catholic and a Protestant family. John Towneley, son of the first of these families, was a persistent Catholic who suffered a great deal for it one way and another. It really does seem that Nowell must have slipped the Wakefield manuscript to him rather than destroying it as instructed - hence 'The Townley Plays'.

The popular image of the Mystery Plays is of huge Pageant Carts trundling through narrow streets and this was often - though not always - the case. If the York records have been correctly interpreted, it seems that each play was performed at twelve different locations in the course of one day. This would mean that the first play at the first station would commence at about 4.30.am. (with dawn providing the lighting cues for the Creation) and the

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last play at the last station would end just after midnight - no doubt with bonfires for the damned. Certainly the surviving municipal accounts from Coventry tell us that a great deal was spent on feeding the performers and horses over the course of the day - plus a noticeable amount on axle-grease.

At Wakefield, it seems that the performance was all in one place - possibly a quarry - and that the plays were performed over three days. The Wakefield Cycle contains both a first and a second Shepherds' Play. Personally, I've always felt that the First Shepherds' Play (not included in this adaptation) is suited in mood to the end of a day with the sun setting and that the Second Shepherds' Play is the sort of knockabout farce suitable for an early-morning restart. The second day is thought to have ended with the Crucifixion and the third day would then have run from the Resurrection to the Judgement including the now-lost plays (confiscated at the first "calling-in") of the Pentecost and the Assumption of the Virgin.

Although the plays were presented by the local Guilds in competition with each other in many places professional actors were frequently employed. Professional musicians were certainly used and were very well paid - the Musicians' Union being as efficient and caring of its members' interests then as it is now.

There is no doubt that the plays continued in performance long after the suppression. I would imagine that public taste being much the same then as now, the most exciting ones and certainly the funny ones lived on - if only in fragments and improvised or half-remembered paraphrase. Performances were in secret, by invitation only and probably "out of town". That Wakefield quarry probably saw a few. It seems very likely that Shakespeare saw some of these performances during the 'lost years' before he arrived in London. Certainly he was familiar with the stories, characters, content and the prevailing acting styles (hence "He out-Herods Herod").

Where the manuscripts did survive, they subsequently lay largely forgotten for the best part of four hundred years. Those academics who knew of their existence tended to regard them as crude doggerel and, being unfamiliar with the dialect phrases and words (many of which are still in use today), found them incomprehensible. I believe it was at the suggestion of Tyrone Guthrie that the York cycle was revived in 1951 (for the first time since 1572) and between 1954 and 1960, Martial Rose made a splendid adaptation of the Wakefield plays. Tony Harrison's more recent adaptation for the National Theatre brought them to wider public attention and to the consciousness of theatre critics for seemingly the first time. Hopefully, they will continue to grow in popularity.

Where are the missing manuscripts? Were they actually destroyed or were they filed away and forgotten? While it's appealing to think that there's some crypt or cupboard at Canterbury or at Lambeth Palace in which some of them lie gathering dust, it's also not impossible that some exist - somewhere - in their native towns and cities.

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The Adaptation:

This adaptation draws freely from the York, Chester and Wakefield Cycles – and particularly from the Wakefield. Some of the plays are entirely (or almost) adapted from one particular cycle but most are compiled from what I judged to be the most dramatic and ‘speakable’ bits of all three. In the productions of the piece which I’ve directed, I’ve certainly found that the resulting changes of metre and rhyme-scheme enhance the feeling of spontaneity and keep the audiences’ attention better than beating them over the head with non-stop couplets.

While Part One is made up of distinctly separate plays linked together, most of Part Two, from the entrance of John the Baptist, performs as one continuous action. However, even in the case of the separate plays, the action is intended to be continuous with no Blackouts or pauses for Scene changes and with the cast setting and striking what they need as a part of the action.

Staging:

While this adaptation may be presented just about anywhere - on stage, out of doors, in a church, in a hall or gymnasium - it’s very useful to have an upper level with steps either side connecting it to the stage for God, Gabriel and the Angels and for Christ’s ascension into Heaven.

As I’ve always regarded Christianity as an entirely optimistic and redemptive faith, I haven’t included any of the retribution and punishment plays (of which there are many - the Church of the day saying sternly “If you don’t toe the party line, this is what’ll happen to you”) there’s no need for a basement to represent Hell. However, it’s quite useful to have a centre trap for the creation of Adam and Eve ‘out of the dust’ and it makes a useful exit for Satan to squirm down into in the same play. But this can be accomplished by having a mound with a trap in it and sufficient space below for two people. Whichever method is used, this trap or mound can stay on for the next play and hide the source of smoke for the offerings of Cain and Abel.

The two most technically complicated scenes are Noah’s Ark and the Crucifixion. For the Ark, it’s best if this is along the lines of an IKEA flatpack of pieces which can be slotted together around rostra to form the finished Ark - and be just as easily dismantled and struck. Fishing lines can be hooked to the Ark’s window from the flies - or from somewhere on a rising diagonal - for the flights of the Raven and the Dove. Long lengths of blue cloth, operated from either side of the stage by members of the cast provide the rising water and I’ve always imagined that the animals enter the Ark from the back and so, mercifully, are not seen.

The upper level is particularly useful for the Crucifixion as the front edge of it can provide a fixing point for the Cross about seven or eight feet up which, with the base in a wooden ‘shoe’ pin-hinged to the stage, should make it secure.

Drawings and suggestions for the basic set, the Ark and the Crucifixion are included at the end of this script.

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The MYSTERIES

Characters (in order of appearance) Part 1:

GOD
 ADAM
 GABRIEL
 EVE
 SATAN
 PIKEHARNESS
 CAIN
 ABEL
 NOAH
 SHEM
 HAM
 JAPHET
 MRS SHEM
 MRS HAM
 MRS JAPHET
 MRS NOAH
 1st GOSSIP
 2nd GOSSIP
 3rd GOSSIP
 MARY
 1st ANGEL
 2nd ANGEL
 JOSEPH
 1st SOLDIER
 2nd SOLDIER
 CITIZEN OF BETHLEHEM
 SALOME
 ZELOMYE
 HEROD
 NUNCIO
 JASPAR
 MELCHIOR
 BALTHASAR
 GIB
 HODGE
 DAW
 MAK
 GILL
 REVELLERS, CITIZENS OF NAZARETH, WORSHIPPERS

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Characters (in order of appearance) Part 2:

1st SOLDIER
 2nd SOLDIER
 HEROD
 1st MOTHER .
 2nd MOTHER
 3rd MOTHER
 4th MOTHER
 DEATH
 JOHN THE BAPTIST
 JESUS
 BLIND MAN
 LAME MAN
 ANNAS
 CAIAPHAS
 WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY
 MARY MAGDALEN
 JUDAS
 PETER
 ANDREW
 JAMES
 MATTHEW
 BARTHOLOMEW
 PHILIP
 JAMES 2
 SIMON
 THOMAS
 THADEUS
 FROWARD (4th EXECUTIONER)
 PONTIUS PILATE
 1st EXECUTIONER
 2nd EXECUTIONER
 3rd EXECUTIONER
 SIMON OF CYRENE
 LONGEUS
 MARY SALOME
 MARY JACOBI

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A great deal of doubling and trebling is possible but the governing factor, as far as the number of men is concerned, is the Last Supper when Jesus and all twelve of the disciples are on stage while Caiaphas, Annas, and the two Soldiers are plotting with Judas – giving a total of seventeen men in active view at the same time.

There are a great many possible permutations depending on the particular cast but, on the next two pages, is a chart of possible doubles/trebles.

In the previous productions, the entire cast have been ‘The Choir’ singing either offstage or onstage and the choral sections have been pre-recorded so that the live cast have back-up.

Also, in these productions, those members of the cast not involved in the particular scene have carried out all scene-changes, setting and striking of props, etc. to avoid any interruptions in the flow of the performance.

Possible Casting Lines - PART ONE

Actor	Creation	Cain/Abel	Revelling	Noah	Annunciation	Bethlehem	Herod	Shepherds	Nativity
M1	Pages 1-8	P. 8-15	P. 15	P. 15-24	P.24-28	P.28-30	P.30-33	P.33-43	P.43-45
M2	God	God	Reveller	Waves	God		1st Soldier	God	God
F1	Adam		Reveller	Waves	1st Soldier			1st Angel	Worshipper
M3	Eve		Reveller	Waves	1st Angel			1st Angel	1st Angel
M4	Satan		Reveller	Waves	2nd Soldier		2nd Soldier		Worshipper
M5	Gabriel				Gabriel			Gabriel	Gabriel
M6		Cain	Cain	Waves	Crowd				Worshipper
M7		Abel		Waves	Crowd				Worshipper
F2			Noah	Noah	Crowd				Worshipper
M8			Reveller	Mrs Noah	Crowd				Worshipper
F3		Pikeharness	Reveller	Shem	Crowd			Mak	Mak
M9		Horse	Reveller	Mrs Shem	Crowd				Worshipper
F4			Reveller	Ham	Crowd	Citizen		Daw	Daw
M10		Horse	Reveller	Mrs Ham	Crowd			Gill	Gill
F5			Reveller	Japhet	Crowd		Nuncio		Worshipper
F6		Horse	Reveller	Mrs Japhet	Crowd				Worshipper
F7			Reveller	1st Gossip	Crowd				Worshipper
F8			Reveller	2nd Gossip	Crowd	Salome			Salome
F9			Reveller	3rd Gossip	Crowd	Zelomye			Zelomye
M11		Horse	Reveller	Mary	Mary	Mary			Mary
F10			Reveller	Joseph	Joseph				Joseph
M12		Horse	Reveller	2nd Angel	2nd Angel			2nd Angel	2nd Angel
M13			Reveller	Waves	Crowd		Herod		Worshipper
M14			Reveller	Waves	Crowd		Jaspar		Jaspar
M15			Reveller	Waves	Crowd		Melchior		Melchior
M16			Reveller	Waves	Crowd		Balthasar		Balthasar
M17			Reveller		Crowd			Gib	Gib
					Crowd			Hodge	Hodge

Possible Casting Lines - PART TWO

Actor	Massacre	Sermon	Plotting	Last supper	The Garden	Scourging	The Cross	Crucifixion	Ascension
M1	P.46-49	P.49-52	P.52-56	P.56-59	P.59-60	P.60-65	P.65-67	P.67-73	P.73-76
M2	God	God	James	James	James			God	God
F1	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	1st Soldier	
M3	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	
M4	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	2nd Soldier	
M5	Death	Death	Judas	Judas	Judas				Gabriel
M6	Citizen	Citizen	Thomas	Thomas	Pilate			Pilate	Thomas
M7	Lame Man	Citizen	Thadeus	Thadeus		Citizen		Longeus	Thadeus
F2	Citizen	Citizen	Peter	Peter		Citizen			Peter
M8	Citizen	Citizen				Citizen			
F3	Blind Man	Citizen	Andrew	Andrew	Froward	Executioner	Froward	Andrew	Andrew
M9	1st Mother	Citizen	Citizen			Citizen			
F4	Citizen	Citizen	Barth'mew	Barth'mew		Citizen	Sim'Cyrene	Barth'mew	
M10	2nd Mother	Citizen	Citizen			Citizen	Citizen		
F5	Annas	Annas	Annas	Annas	Annas	Annas	Annas	Annas	
F6	3rd Mother	Citizen	Citizen			Citizen	M'Salome	M'Salome	M'Salome
F7	4th Mother	Woman	Citizen			Citizen	M'Jacobi	M'Jacobi	M'Jacobi
M11	Magdalene	Magdalene	Magdalene			Magdalene	Magdalene	Magdalene	Magdalene
F8	Mary	Mary	Mary			Mary	Mary	Mary	Mary
F9	Citizen	Citizen				Courtier	Citizen		
M12	John Baptist	Citizen	John	John	John	John	John	John	John
F10	Citizen	Citizen				Citizen	Citizen		
M13	Herod	Citizen	Citizen	James 2	James 2	Citizen	Citizen	James 2	James 2
M14	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus
M15	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas	Caiaphas
M16	Citizen	Citizen	Philip	Philip		Executioner	Executioner	Philip	Philip
M17	Citizen	Citizen	Simon	Simon		Executioner	Executioner	Simon	Simon
	Citizen	Citizen	Matthew	Matthew		Executioner	Executioner	Matthew	Matthew

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THE MYSTERIES**PART ONE**

CHOIR: **IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD.
AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD.
AND THE WORD WAS GOD.**

GOD appears above. The CHOIR continues to sing softly during:

GOD: Ego sum alpha et omega,
I am the first, the last, Eternity.
One God in majesty;
Marvellous of might most,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
One God in trinity.

Light glows on the earth.

GOD: All that which is - is but in My thought,
Without My power there can be naught,
All things are in My sight;
The word is with Me and, after My will,
What I conceive I shall fulfil
And maintain with My might.

Sounds of wind and roaring seas.

Now Heaven and Earth is made through Me:
Beast and bird - stone and tree,
These works are good - as well, I see -
These works that I have wrought.

Sounds of birds and animals.

Creatures of earth that creep or fly,
Bring forth your young and multiply;
I see that it is good!

Now in our likeness make we man,
Who shall govern as he can
All fowl and fish in flood.

Thus, in my hand, shape I this earth.
From humble clay be this the birth
Of all humanity.

Spirit of life in the dust I blow,
Good and ill both shalt thou know;
Rise up, Adam . .

ADAM bursts up from the ground - chokes, gasps for breath, breathes.

GOD: . . and stand before me.
All that is - in water or on land -
All shall bow unto thy hand,
And sovereign thou shalt be.

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ADAM: Ah, Lord, what gifts Thou bringest me!

GOD: I give thee wit, I give thee strength,
Of all thou seest, the breadth and length,
Be wonderfully wise.

ADAM explores, laughs, joyful, delighted.

GOD: *(Sharing his laughter)* Mirth and joy to have at will,
And thy pleasure to fulfil,
And dwell in Paradise.

For, Adam, I give to thee this place,
This earthly seat of Heaven's grace -
Keep and care for it - all thy days -
And do as I thee say.
Of all the trees that be here in,
Eat thou the fruit and nothing sin
But of *this* tree, *(Indicating the apple tree U.C.)* never dare begin
To eat thou by no way.

What time thou eatest of this tree
Thou shalt know death and not know me.
Therein dwells the worm of mortality
So be thou pure of sin.

It is not good alone to be,
All creatures bide in company.
And thou shalt have thy kin.

ADAM stretches, yawns, sinks down and falls asleep. GABRIEL descends the staircase R. and mimes taking a rib from ADAM which he throws up to GOD.

GOD: Sleep thou, Adam, peacefully,
While a rib from thee I take,
And thereof a maid shall make
Then shalt thou be complete.

EVE bursts up from the ground, cries out, gasps, breathes. ADAM wakes.

GOD: Rise up. Each other greet.
Ye both may govern what here is,
And evermore may live in bliss
Close to my mercy seat.

EVE: *(To ADAM)* Why, what art thou so tall and strong?

ADAM: Thy husband, Eve, and we belong
Us each to each to dwell among
These beauteous gardens all our days.

EVE: Then are we blessed - all bliss to share
To dwell in joy and not know care.

ADAM: And, of these fairs thou art most fair.

BOTH: Then to the Lord, give praise.

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GOD: But hear thou, Adam and Eve thy wife,
 Forget not I forbid thee the tree of life,
 And my commandment must be kept
 Take what thou wilt that tree except.
 For, Adam, if thou scorn my breath,
 Thou shalt die a doleful death. (*He turns away and the light fades on the upper level.*)

ADAM: (*Calling after*) Almighty Lord, thanks be to thee
 That is, and was, and ay shall be,
 For all thy love and all thy grace,
 For now is here a merry place.
 Eve, my fellow, how find you this?

EVE: A garden it is of joy and bliss,
 That God has given to thee and me.
 Blessed everlastingly be he!

ADAM: Eve, my dear, abide you here,
 I will go visit far and near
 To see what trees have planted been;
 For more is here than we have seen:
 Grasses and the fairest flowers
 That smell so sweet, of many colours.

EVE: Here gladly, Adam, I shall remain;
 When you have seen, return again.

ADAM: But look well, Eve, my darling dear,
 You come not near the tree of fear,
 For if you do we need have dread
 That we be punished as he said.

EVE: Nay, Adam, thou needst never fear
 I would defy God's will, my dear.
 Go forth and wander all about;
 I shall not near it while you are out,

ADAM: (*Going R.*) Aye. For you and I would be full loath
 To do a thing to make God wroth.

Distant thunder. SATAN appears D.L.

SATAN: (*Furious. To the Audience*) Out, out! What sorrow is this?
 That I should lie in dark abyss!
 But once I dared to do amiss,
 And out of Heaven I fell.
 The brightest angel I was ere this
 That ever was or yet is,
 But now these . . . *creatures* dwell in bliss
 Whiles I must sweat in hell.

Of earthly paradise now, I see,
 A *man* is given mastery.
 By Beelzebub, this shall never be.
 For I shall make him, by some perfidy,
 To forfeit God's benevolency.

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As I fell - so shall he!

In serpent's likeness will I now disguise,
And lead astray with subtle lies.
(Calling) Eve, Eve!

EVE: *(Looking round)* Who is there?

SATAN: *(Approaching her)* A friend. A neighbour come to wish thee cheer
And for thy good I am come near,
And thee have sought.
Why, what wondrous fruits are here
In Paradise. Why eat ye nought?

EVE: We may from every one
Take whate'er we please,
But one tree only we must shun,
Or else we learn unease.

SATAN: *(Innocently)* What tree is this?

EVE: *This* tree that here in the midst doth grow,
Eat we of it and sin will follow.
God says that we shall sorrow know,
If e'er we touch that tree.

SATAN: *(Scornfully)* Woman, nay! Believe not this!
To eat here shall not lose you bliss,
Nor lose no joy that to give is His,
But make ye wise as He.

EVE: Why, what kind of thing art thou
That tells this tale to me?

SATAN: A humble worm that knows well how
That ye may worshipped be.

EVE: What worship should we win thereby?
What *need* we of such vanity?
Our lordship is in mastery
Of all God's earthly bounty.

SATAN: *(Approaching the tree)* Woman, fie! Away!
For ye may dwell in majesty,
If ye do but as I say.

EVE: But we are lords of all the earth -
Why should we God defy?

SATAN: Yet are ye folk of greater worth
And should be throned in Heav'n on high.

EVE: Nay. Nay. Not I.

SATAN: Ah, God is coynt and wise of wit,
For he knows, if you eat of it,
Then your eyes shall be unknit;
Like *gods* you both shall see.

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Then you shall good and evil know.
Therefore, of me be counselled so,
I tell thee true - God is your foe,
Therefore eat after me.

EVE: (*Following him*) Is this true what thou say?

SATAN: Yea. Why trust thou not me?
I never would in any way
Tell ought but truth to thee.

EVE: (*Tempted*) For sure this tree is fair and bright,
Green and seemly in my sight,
The fruit is ripe and much of might,
If *gods* it may us make.

SATAN: Be not abashed. Bite and be bold;

EVE: Aye. I will by thy teaching hold
And take this fruit to be our food.

She picks an apple from the tree.

ADAM: (*Approaching*) Eve? Eve!

SATAN: (*Retreating to L.*) Give Adam some to amend his mood.

ADAM enters R.

EVE: Here, Adam - Husband, see
What sweet fruit I have picked for thee.

ADAM: Alas, dear Eve! Why took you this?
Our Lord has bid us both
To spare this tree of His.
Thy sin will make Him wroth.
Alas! Thou'st done amiss.

EVE: Nay, Adam, do not grieve,
And I shall say the reason why.
This serpent maketh me believe
We shall be *gods* now, you and I,
If we do eat.

ADAM: (*Tempted*) Gods?

EVE: Aye. For we shall be as wise
As He that is so high.
I swear I tell no lies.
Eat of the fruit now as do I.

ADAM: To eat it I would not be loath
If what thou sayest be not lies.

EVE: Bite on boldly, let us both,
As gods we shall in all things be wise.

ADAM: Aye. To be gods - raised up on height

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To sit by Him. Twere but our right.
Eat we then and so arise!

SATAN chuckles and hides.

ADAM: (*Eating*) Why, Eve, this fruit is sweet and good.
And methinks I see now as I should
For what was once a pretty wood
Appears now dark and harsh.

EVE: (*Eating*) Aye, Adam, for I see likewise.
This garden we called Paradise
Becomes a midden plagued with flies -
A mire of mud and marsh.

ADAM: (*Retching*) AH! Now my gorge begins to rise . .

EVE: Alas, what *horrors* fill mine eyes?

ADAM: God's gift is gone. *Destroyed* it lies.

EVE: Alas! What have we *done* for shame?

ADAM: (*Angry. Shaking her*) Ill counsel came from *thee!*
Ah, Eve, *thou* art to blame
That thus enticed thou me.
My limbs against me exclaim,
For I am naked as I think.

EVE: Alas, Adam, right so am I.

ADAM: And now for sorrow I faint and sink,
For we have grieved our Father mighty
That made me man.
Broken his bidding bitterly.

EVE: Alas! That ever we this began!

ADAM: (*Threatening her*) This work, Eve, *thou* hast wrought
And made this bad bargain.

EVE: (*Pleading*) Nay, Adam, chide me nought.

ADAM: Not chide thee, Eve, whom then?

EVE: The serpent. Chide him. He is to blame.
With smoothe temptation he me betrayed.

ADAM: Alas! (*Striking her*) I listened to thy game,
And let thee with these lies persuade.
For that deed done I curse my pride.
Our nakedness me grieves,
Wherewith shall we it hide?

EVE: Let us take these fig leaves
That grow here beside.

They take leaves from the bushes and cover themselves.

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ADAM: Right as thou say so shall it be,
For we are naked and all bare.
(Trying to hide behind the mound) Full gladly now I would hide me,
From the Lord's sight, I know not where,
So I be not caught.

GOD: *(Turning)* Adam! Adam!

ADAM: Lord?

GOD: Where art thou there?

ADAM: I hear thee, Lord. Nay come not now
For I am naked as I vow,
Therefore now I hide me.

GOD: Who told thee, Adam, that thou naked was,
Save only thine own trespass
That of the tree thou eaten has
That I forbade thee?

ADAM: *(Looking all around)* I hear thee, Lord, but see thee naught.

GOD: Nor shall not more behold my face.
Who is it that this sin hath wrought?

ADAM: Lord, Eve made me thus to fall from grace
And to this plight me brought.

GOD: Say, Eve, why didst thou Adam lead
To eat the fruit of mortality
Whereof I commanded none should feed?

EVE: A serpent, Lord, beguiled my will,
Ah, weladay!
That ever I did that deed so ill!

GOD: *(To SATAN)* Ah, wicked worm, woe wait on thee for ay,
For thou in this manner
Hast caused such deep dismay.
(Pointing) My malediction . . . !

A crack of thunder. SATAN cries out and falls to the ground.

GOD: . . . have thou here,
With all the might I may.

SATAN crawls and slithers, hissing, down into the earth during:

GOD: On thy belly shalt thou glide
And be ay full of enmity
To all mankind on every side.
The soil thy sustenance shall be
To eat and drink.
Adam and Eve, also ye -
To work the earth ye shall not shrink,
But labour for your food.

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ADAM: Alas! That we might sink,
We that had all the world's good,
Now thrust out as I think.

EVE: Lord! Lord! Nay grant us grace.
Say we may bide yet in this place.

ADAM: Lord! Lord! I see not Thy face.
Why turn away from me?

GOD: Henceforth, my countenance is barred from thee
My face ye nevermore may see
Until ye die.
Though I shall watch thee constantly
While hidden from thy sight.
Go forth! Take Eve with you.
Now, Gabriel, my angel bright
To middle-earth drive these two.

GABRIEL: *(Descending)* Adam! Eve! Need no more telling
But hie to woe and toil and care
For here you may make no more dwelling
Go ye forth, fast to fare,
Of sorrow may ye sing.

GABRIEL drives them out of the garden during:

CHOIR: **ADAM LAY Y-BOUNDEN,
BOUNDEN IN A BOND;
FOUR THOUSAND WINTERS
THOUGHT HE NOT TOO LONG.
AND ALL WAS FOR AN APPLE -
AN APPLE THAT HE TOOK,
AS CLERKS FINDEN
WRITTEN IN THEIR BOOK.
DEO GRACIAS! DEO GRACIAS!
DEO GRACIAS!**

Wind. Cawing of rooks. PIKEHARNESS skips in from L.

PIKEHARNESS: *(To the AUDIENCE)* All hail! All hail, both blithe and
glad,
For here come I, a merry lad!

CAIN: *(Off L. Roaring)* Pikeharness!

PIKEHARNESS: Yet I mun hide, for my master's mad -
To the devil he'll me speed.

CAIN: *(Distant, approaching)* Hey . . Hup! Hup!

The crack of a whip. A whinny of pain from the horses.

PIKEHARNESS: Here he cometh. Hark at him roar?
Now get you home and shut the door
Lest he make you bleed.

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CAIN: **(Furious)** Hup! Hup! Draw on . . . !

PIKEHARNES: Save me! How he roars again.
He'll flay your hide! His name . . . is Cain.

CAIN enters, driving the HORSES, stumbling in the mud, trying to steady the plough. He carries a sack of sheaves slung over his shoulder.

CAIN: Go forth, Greenhorn, hey hup, Gryme!
Draw on, draw on and plough betime.
Ye slide and slither in the slime.

A HORSE falls to her knees.

CAIN: **(Furious)** What, will you no further, mare?
(Beating) Get up! Get up! Let's see you draw.
Up bitch! Up! I'll break your jaw.
I'll make thee bleed I'll beat thee raw
Unless you use me fair.
(Bellowing) How, Pikeharness, how? Come hither belife!

PIKEHARNES: Here, master. **(To the AUDIENCE)** May you never
thrive.

CAIN: What, boy, must I hold *and* drive?
Hearest thou not how I cry?

PIKEHARNES: **(Soothing the HORSES)** Nay, Mall. Nay, Stott, will ye not
go?
Lemyng, Morell, Whitehorn, Joe!
Hup now. There now, master. See how they hie.

CAIN: God give thee sorrow, boy;

He knocks PIKEHARNES to the ground.

CAIN: Let me pass.

PIKEHARNES: **(Getting up)** Th' art unfair, sir . . .

CAIN: Stand off, say I. I'll kick your arse.

PIKEHARNES: Nay now, master, do me right.

CAIN: **(Raising his fist)** Do you give back-answer? Wilt thou fight?

PIKEHARNES: **(Putting fists up)** If it please thee. I'm not fright.
(He seizes the plough and drives the HORSES off) But rather I to plough
the land.
Come, Greenhorn, Morell. Whoa hup there!

CAIN: Nay. Come back. Thy braying I'll not longer bear.
Now fight we where we stand.

ABEL: **(Entering L. carrying a satchel)** Cain! God as he both may and
can,
Speed thee, brother, and thy man.

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CAIN: Come kiss my arse. Did I call thee?
No welcome ye shall have from me.
For I would never bid thee come.
Go, Abel - kiss the devil's bum.

ABEL: Brother, why thus on me ye rail?
For there is none in hill or dale
Would wish thee harm.
But now, dear brother, let us both away,
As is the custom on this day,
That all that work and plough and farm
Shall worship God with sacrifice.
Our father taught us in this wise.
Then let us to it and right joyful be
To give to God part of our fee
Of corn or cattle, whatsoe'er it be.

CAIN: Should I leave my plough and all other thing
And go with thee to make offering?
Nay. Thou findest me not so mad!
What gives God *thee* to praise him so?
Me he gives naught but sorrow and woe.

ABEL: Cain, leave this vain carping
For God gives thee all thy living.

CAIN: Not I! Not one brass farthing
Since last I offered.

ABEL: Come, dear brother, let's be walking;
I would my tithe - this lamb - were proffered.

CAIN: And shall I tithe my corn, *dear* brother?
What's mine is mine and for no other.

ABEL: Nay, Cain, all the good that thou hast won
Of God's grace is but a loan.

CAIN: Lends He *me*? No, brother, no.
For He has all ways been my foe.
For had He ever my friend been
Otherwise it had been seen.
When all men's corn was fair in field
Then was *mine* a paltry yield.

ABEL: Dear brother, say not so,
But bring thy sheaves and to offer go.

CAIN: (*Grudging*) Well, since we must, let's tithe together

ABEL: Blessed be God, we have fair weather.

They circle round to the mound C.

CAIN: Lay down thy trussell upon this hill.

ABEL: Forsooth, brother, so I will; (*Taking a lamb from his satchel*)
Dear God of heaven take this lamb I pray.

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CAIN: Light up thy fire then, without delay.

ABEL strikes flint and steel. The fire burns with white smoke.

ABEL: *(To Heaven)* God that shaped both Earth and Heaven,
I pray to Thee here take my steven,
And take in thanks, if Thy will it be,
The tithe I offer here to Thee;
This lamb I bring in good intent
To Thee, my Lord, that all has sent.
See, brother, how this smoke doth fly,
Bearing my sacrifice to God on high.

CAIN: *(Pushing him away)* Aye. Aye. Arise! Let *me* now since that
thou has done;

He tips out his sheaves.

CAIN: Lord of Heaven, this was hard won!
I broke my back for this, I say
And am full loath to give't away.

ABEL: Cain . . !

CAIN: Well . . *(Counting out sheaves)* One sheaf, one, and this makes
two,
But neither shall I give to You.
Two, aye two, now this is three,
But this shall also stay with me:
Now then, now then, four, lo, here!
Better grewed me none this year.
Four sheaves, four, lo, this makes five -
Though, if I part, how may I thrive?
Five and six, now this is seven,
But this gets never God of Heaven.
Nor none of these four, at my might,
Shall ever come in God His sight.
Seven, seven, now this is eight.

ABEL: Cain, brother, deal not so in hate.

CAIN: Can you not your tongue make stay?
Must you be jangling all the day?
Well! Eight, eight, and nine, and ten is this,
Eaugh! Well, *this* one may we never miss.
Aye. Give him this - though dank and poor
It goes against my heart full sore.

ABEL: Cain, tend right. Be not so mean.

CAIN: Get you to hell,
For lo, I hold me paid;
I tend here wondrous well -
The best were ever laid.

ABEL: Cain, of God me think, you have no dread.

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CAIN: Now and He get more, the devil me speed.
 For if He think my gift so small
 As He may wipe His arse withall,
 For that, and this that liest here
 Have cost me sweat and pain full dear.
 Ere it was shorn and brought in stack,
 It cost me many a weary back;
 To grow this I laboured in the mire
 And must I now set my crop on fire?

ABEL: Cain, I beg of you, tend right
 For love of Him that sits on height.

CAIN: How that I tithe, care never the de'il
 But tend thy scabbed sheep well,
 For if thou mock of my tithe make
 I will make trouble for thy sake.

ABEL: Cain, I pray thee, careful tend
 For God of Heaven be thy friend.

CAIN: My friend? Na, that is not so.
 For he has ever been my foe,
 Sending ill luck to keep me poor
 So do as I. Give him no more.

ABEL: If thou tend good, good wilt thou find.

CAIN: Yea, kiss the devil's arse behind.
 And tend I well or tend I ill,
 Shut up thy mouth. Keep thy tongue still.
 But now since thou hast tended thine,
 Now will I set fire to mine.

He strikes flint and steel but the fire doesn't light.

CAIN: (*Furious*) Weh! Out! Help to blow!
 It will not burn for me, I trow.

CAIN: Puff! (*Coughing*) This smoke does me much shame -
 Now *burn* in the devil's name!
 Ah, what devil of hell is this -
 That mine burns black when bright was his?

The fire belches black smoke.

CAIN: (*Choking, staggering away*) Augh! Had I blown but one blast
 more
 I had been choked to death right sore;
 It stank like the devil's fart in hell,
 That longer there I might not dwell.

ABEL: Cain, this is not worth one leek;
 Thy tithe should burn without this reek.

CAIN: Go kiss the devil right in the arse,

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For thee it burns well. For me the worse;
I would that it were in thy throat.
(Approaching him, menacing) But I'll learn thee not to grin and gloat.

GOD: *(Turning)* Cain, why art thou so rebel
Against thy brother Abel?

CAIN: What? *(Calling)* Who is that Hob-over-the-wall?
Eh? Who was that as piped so small?
Come, I think I heard the devil call;
God is out of his wit.
Come forth, Abel and let us wend;
Me thinks that God is not my friend;
Away then will I flit.

ABEL: Ah, Cain, brother, that is ill done.

CAIN: Nay, cease thy jangle. I'll be gone.
And if I may, I shall be
What place as God shall not me see.

ABEL: Brother, why art thou to me so much in ire?

CAIN: Why? Why burned *thy* tithe so bright a fire?
While mine but smoked
Right as it would us both have choked.

ABEL: God's will I know it were
That mine burned so clear.
If thine burned so foul am *I* to blame?

CAIN: *(Savagely)* Why, *yea!* Tis all times the same:
That I must burn and smart with shame
Whenever *thou* art near.
But I will stop thy merry flow . .

CAIN picks up a bone and holds it as a club.

ABEL: *(Afraid)* Nay, brother, nay, I say!

CAIN: What, coward, dost thou start away?
Here with this bone . .

ABEL: I pray thee! No!

CAIN: With all my hate in one single blow
To close thine eye.

He strikes ABEL down.

CAIN: So! Lie down there and take thy rest.
Thus shall shrews be chastised best.

ABEL: Vengeance! Vengeance, Lord, I cry!
For I am slain and not guilty.

CAIN: *(Striking again and again)* Yea, lie there, young shrew, lie there,
lie!

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(Turning on the AUDIENCE) And if any think I did amiss
I shall do worse, much worse than this,
That all men may see it so.
But now that he is brought on sleep,
Into some hole fain would I creep;

GOD: Cain, Cain!

CAIN: Who is it that calls me?
I am yonder, can thou not see?

GOD: Cain, where is thy brother, Abel?

CAIN: Why askest thou me? Mayhap in hell.
Go thou there. Then might ye see.

GOD: Cain, Cain, why hatest thou good?
The voice of thy brother's blood
That thou hast slain on false wise
From Earth to Heaven vengeance cries.
And for that thou hast brought thy brother down,
Here I give thee *(Pointing)* my *malison*.

A crack of thunder. CAIN clutches his head in pain.

CAIN: *(Furious and defiant to GOD)* Yea. Devil take Thee, for I will
none,
To my own ways will I be gone.
Since I have done so little sin,
That I may not Thy mercy win,
And Thou thus throws me from Thy grace;
I shall go hide me from Thy face.
(To the AUDIENCE) And where so any man may find me,
Let him slay me hardily;
And where so any man may me meet,
Whether by sty or yet by street;
Let him keep him well apart
For by all men set I not a fart!

During the following song, the Cast enter as REVELLERS. Led by CAIN, they dance, drink, fornicate and fight. NOAH is beaten up and left lying D.C. as they exit at the end.

MUSIC. "APPARITION OF APHRODITE"

**SYNTAN THEON!
AKAMPTON PHRENA KAI BROTON AGEIS KYPRI
SYN D'HO POIKILOPTEROS AMPHIBALON
OKYTATOPTERO POTATAI DE GAIAN
EUACHAETON TH'HALMYRON EPI PONTON
TELGEI TELGEI TELGEI TELGEI D'EROS
SYMPANTON BASILAEIDATIMAN
SYMPANTON BASILAEIDATIMAN
KYPRI KYPRI KYPRI KYPRI KYPRI KYPRI
TONDE TONDE MONA
TONDE TONDE MONA
TONDE TONDE MONA
TONDE TONDE MONA
TONDE TONDE MONA
KRATYNEIS!**

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GOD: Man that I made I will destroy,
 For all on earth, they me defy,
 And do what ill they can.
 It harms me so hurtfully,
 The malice that can multiply,
 And sore it grieves me inwardly
 That ever I made man.

NOAH: (*Kneeling humbly*) Mightful God, I say, maker of all that is,
 Three persons in the One, the One in endless bliss,
 Thou made'st both night and day, beast, fowl and fish,
 All creatures that live may, wrought Thou at thy wish,
 As Thou well might;
 The sun, the moon, the firmament
 Are all of Thy accomplishment
 The stars that fly full fervent
 Thou made to shine full bright.

(*Rising, to the AUDIENCE*) Yet now I, Noah, dread lest God on us take
 vengeance
 For that sin is now abroad without repentance.
 Six hundred years and odd have I in due obedience
 On earth my way trod with great grievance
 All way;
 And now I wax old,
 Sick, sorry and cold
 As muck upon mould
 I wither away.

GOD: Why then, Noah, my servant free,
 That righteous man art as I well see,
 When all other perish, saved shalt thou be.

NOAH: (*Amazed, looking all around*) Lord? Is it *Thou* that talks? That
 speaks to *me*?

GOD: Do but as I bid thee.
 A ship thou shalt make thee -

NOAH: A *ship* . . ?

GOD: Of trees dry and light.
 Little chambers therein thou make
 And binding slich also thou take,
 Within and out thou must not slake
 To annoint it with all thy might.

NOAH is scribbling notes.

GOD: Three hundred cubits it shall be long,
 And fifty of breadth to make it strong,
 Of height, thirty. Make no thing wrong
 But careful measure take.
 Soon all the world destroyed shall be . .

NOAH: (*Fearful*) Nay but, Lord . .

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GOD: Save thou, thy wife, thy sons three,
And all their wives also with thee
Shall saved be for thy sake.

NOAH's Sons and Daughters-in-Law enter, busily about various mimed tasks, from R. and L. during:

NOAH: Ah, Lord, I thank thee in my heart
That does to me such good impart
To teach me rightly how to start
This vessel for to make.

(Calling) Have done, you sons and daughters all!
Help for ought that may befall
To work this ship . .

ALL: Ship . . ?

NOAH: . . chamber and hall,
All other work forsake.

SHEM: *(Brandishing an axe)* Well, father, I am ready bowne;
An axe I have, by my crown,
As sharp as any in all this town,
Of that you may be sure.

MRS SHEM: *(Carrying the mast)* And we shall fetch you timber too,
Hard and seasoned straight and true.
Though women are weak yet will we do
Our part in this travail.

HAM: *(Giving NOAH a saw)* And I from iron shall forge the nails
And the tackle for the sails,
Hooks and cleats and pegs and rails
All tempests to endure.

MRS HAM: *(Carrying a chopping log to C.)* See here, I fetch a good hackstock;
On this you may both hew and knock;
None shall be idle in this flock,
Nor let not no man fail.

JAPHET: *(Waving a lump hammer)* And I can take both peg and pin
And with this hammer knock 'em in;
Go and work with merry din,
To make our ship secure.

MRS JAPHET: *(With a bucket)* And I will go to gather slich,
The ship for to caulk and pitch,
Annointed it must be, every stitch,
Board, tree and pin.

MRS SHEM: *(With a basket)* And I will gather chippings here
To make a fire to fetch you cheer,
And to make your dinner,
For when you come in.

HAM brings the triangular prow truck from R. and SHEM brings the triangular prow truck from L. during:

NOAH: Now in the name of God, let all begin

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To make the ship that we shall in,
That we be ready for to swim
At the coming of the flood.

They are all sawing, hammering, chopping.

NOAH: *(Pulling the prow trucks together)* These boards *(with one blow of the hammer)* I join here together,
To keep us safe from wind and weather,
That we may row both hither and thither,
And safe be from this flood.

HAM, SHEM and JAPHET bring on the other four trucks and position them during the following:

NOAH: *(Taking up the mast)* Of this tree will I make the mast
Tied with cables that will last,
With a sail yard for each blast,
And each thing in their kind.

MRS NOAH: *(Approaching from L.)* Nay! What's this racket? Must ye
rail?

MRS NOAH and the GOSSIPS carry stools and jugs of ale. They settle themselves to sit and drink D.R. during the following)

GOSSIP 1: Can we have no peace to drink our ale? Ah!

MRS NOAH: See! One of my gossips has trod on a nail.
Art run out of thi mind?

NOAH: God speed, dear wife! How fare ye?

MRS NOAH: Now as ever I might thrive, the trouble I see;
Do tell me belife what all this travail may be?
Why all this strife? Why all this industry?
What make ye?

NOAH: A ship am I building us all to save
Here at God's bidding with plank and stave

MRS NOAH: *(Screaming with laughter)* A ship? Thou midden! Thou
foolish knave!
Devil take ye.

GOSSIP 2: Nay but we women suffer all ill husbands;

GOSSIP 3: Aye. I have one, by Mary - with head full of sand.
Ever contrary, for hours will he stand
With mouth all agape doing nought with his hands
To earn bread.

MRS NOAH: *(To the AUDIENCE)* And thus will mine play
At such folly all day,
Well, him shall I pay
And batter his head.

She slaps him. Cheers from the GOSSIPS.

NOAH: Ouch! Nay. Hold thy hand, ramshite, or I shall thee still.

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MRS NOAH: By my thrift, if thou smite, tha'll get more than thy fill.

NOAH: Say thou right? Have at thee, Gill!
Upon the bone it shall bite.

He slaps her. Cries of horror from the GOSSIPS.

MRS NOAH: Ah, so! Marry thou smites ill!
But thou shalt know
I'll be not in thy debt
But return hit for hit!
And settle up yet
With more than I owe.

She slaps him. Cheers from the GOSSIPS.

NOAH: Ouch!

She slaps him again. Cheers from the GOSSIPS.

NOAH: Vile Turk!
(Restraining himself) But I will not strike.
Fousty old shrike!
I'll not make her skrike
But on with my work.
Now my gown will I cast and work in my coat.
Make will I an oar to steady my boat.
Ah! My back, I traw 't will brast! This is a sorry note!

MRS NOAH: *(Joining the GOSSIPS)* Ha! I wonder that you last, such an
old dote,
All dold,
To begin such a task!
Your bones will not last,
Your lithe days are past,
For ye are full old.

*SHEM and MRS SHEM bring half of the Ark front from R.
HAM and MRS HAM bring half of the Ark front from L.*

SHEM: *(Slotting their half in)* With topcastle and bowsprit,

HAM: *(Slotting their half in)* With cords and ropes I hold all meet
To sail forth at the next weete;

JAPHET: *(Slotting in the mast)* This ship is at an end.

NOAH and the Children cheer.

NOAH: Wife, in this castle we shall be kept,
My children and thou I would in leapt.

MRS NOAH: In faith, Noah, thy reason slept.
Thou 'rt mad, as I declare!
And I will never madman heed.

NOAH: Good wife, do now as I thee bid.

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MRS NOAH: By Christ, not till I see more need
Though thou stand all the day and stare.

NOAH: Lord, that women be crabbed ay,
And never are meek, that dare I say.
This is well seen by me today
In witness of you each one.

Distant thunder.

GOD: Noah, take now heed of me
And in the ship hie that you be;
For none so righteous man to me
Is now on earth living.
Of all the beasts with thee do take
Two and two for my sake
He and she - make to make,
Be quick in that thou bring.

NOAH: Have done, you men and women all!
Hie you lest the water fall,
That each beast were in his stall,
And into the ship be brought.

Sounds of animals and birds, growing to a great confusion during the following:

SHEM: *(Pointing over the back of the Ark)* Sir, here are lions, leopards in,
Horses, mares, oxen and swine,
Goats, calves, sheep and kine,
Here sit as thou may see.

HAM: Camels, asses, men may find,
Buck, doe, hart and hind,
And beasts of all manner kind
Here come as thinkest me.

JAPHET: Take here cats and dogs too,
Otter, fox, fumart and shrew,
Hares hopping gaily can go
And have here for to eat.

MRS SHEM: Yet more beasts are in this house:
Here come cats, cockroach and louse;
Here a rat and here a mouse.
They stand friends together.

Crack of thunder. Rain begins. The lengths of blue cloth are rolled out across the stage D.S. of the Ark.

MRS HAM: And here are fowls less and more;
Hérons, cranes and byttour,
Swans, peacocks and them before
Hurry from this weather.

MRS JAPHET: Here are cocks, kites, crows,
Rooks, ravens, many rowes,
Ducks, curlews, in they goes
Each one in his kind.

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Ousels, mistles, doves, dippers, drakes,
 Redshanks running from the lakes,
 And each fowl here that dwelling makes
 In this ship men may find.

The rain increases. The Water begins to rise. A strong wind blows up. A crack of thunder.

NOAH: *(On board the Ark. Shouting)* Wife, come in! Why standest thou
 there?
 Thou art ever froward, that dare I swear.
 Come in for God's love. Time it were,
 For fear lest that we drown.

MRS NOAH: Yea, sir, set up your sail
 And row you forth with evil gale!
 For howsoever thou tell thy tale,
 I will not out of this town.

GOSSIP 1: Let us stay and gossip - every one

MRS NOAH: Aye. One foot away I will not gone;

They are clambering up onto the stools as the water rises.

GOSSIP 2: Ye shall not drown now, by St. John,

GOSSIP 3: Nay, we shall save thy life.

MRS NOAH: *(Drunkenly)* Ye've loved me well through joy and pain;
 I'll not forsake thee for these drops of rain.
(Calling) So row forth, Noah! No more remain,
 And get thee a new wife.

NOAH: Shem, son, lo thy mother is raw.
 Forsooth such another I do not know.

SHEM: Father, I shall fetch her in, I trow,
 Without any fail.

SHEM dives into the water and swims to MRS NOAH. The wind rises to a hurricane. He surfaces, spluttering, beside MRS NOAH.

SHEM: Mother, my father after thee me has sent,
 Tis high time thou into our ship went.
 Look up and see the wind
 For we be ready to sail.

MRS NOAH: Son, go to him again and say
 I will not come therein today.

NOAH: Come in, wife, in twenty devils' way
 Or else drown there without.

HAM: Shall we all fetch her in?

NOAH: Yea, sons, in Christ's blessing and mine,
 I would you hurry now betime
 For of this flood I am in doubt.

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The three brothers dive in and swim towards MRS NOAH.

GOSSIP 1: *(Panicking)* This flood comes in full fleeting fast,

GOSSIP 2: On every side, it spreadeth full high.

GOSSIP 3: For fear of drowning, I am aghast,

MRS NOAH: Good gossips, let us now draw nigh.
 And let us drink ere we depart
 For often times we have done so.

GOSSIP 1: Yet at a draught thou drinks a quart.

MRS NOAH: And so will I do, ere I go.

GOSSIP 2: Here is malmsey good and strong,
 It will rejoice both heart and tongue;

MRS NOAH: Aye. That for Noah. Strike up a song
 We'll sing and drink alike.

The Brothers surface, spitting water, beside MRS NOAH.

JAPHET: Mother, we pray thee altogether -
 For we are thine own childer -
 Come into the ship for fear of the weather,
 The water drowns this plot.

MRS NOAH: That will I not for all your call,
 But that I have my gossips all.

SHEM: In faith, mother, yet you shall,
 Whether you will or not.

They seize her and swim with her to the Ark. During which the GOSSIPS fall into the water and, struggling and drowning among the waves, exit R.

MRS NOAH: *(Struggling)* What do ye? Unhand me! Set me down!

SHEM: Nay, mother, we'll not leave ye here to drown . .

HAM: For water rises - over field and town . .

JAPHET: And none but our ship afloat!

They deliver her on board.

NOAH: Welcome, wife, into our craft.

MRS NOAH: Welcome? *(She slaps him)* Nay! Don't talk so daft.

NOAH: Shut all our doors 'gainst rain and draught
 And Shem, do thou steer the boat
 For children, methinks my boat removes.
 Our tarrying here hugely me grieves.
 Over the land the water spreads:

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God do as he will.

Doors and windows close anon,
And into our chamber let us be gone,
Till that this water, so great a one,
Be slaked through His great might.

They withdraw into the Ark but re-appear round the sides with tambourines to sing:

MUSIC. "PULL FOR THE SHORE"

**PULL FOR THE SHORE, SAILOR,
PULL FOR THE SHORE!
HEED NOT THE ROLLING WAVES,
BUT BEND TO THE OAR;
SAFE IN THE LIFEBOAT, SAILOR,
CLING TO SELF NO MORE!
LEAVE THE POOR OLD STRANDED WRECK
AND PULL FOR THE SHORE.**

NOAH: *(Opening the window)* Now forty days are fully gone.
(Hooking the Raven onto the wire) Send a raven I will anon
If ought-where earth, tree or stone
Be dry in any place.

The Raven flies off, cawing.

NOAH: And, if this fowl come not again,
It is a sign, truth to sayne,
That dry it is on hill or plain,
And God hath done some grace.

MUSIC. *They all look around for the Raven.*

NOAH: Ah, Lord, wherever this raven be,
Somewhere is dry, well I see;
But yet *(Hooking the Dove onto the wire)* a dove, by my duty,
After will I send.

The Dove flies off, cooing.

MUSIC. *They all look around for the Dove.*

The Dove returns down the wire with a sprig of olive.

NOAH: *(Taking the Dove)* Ah, Lord, blessed be Thou ay,
That me hast comfort thus today;
By this sight, I may well say
This flood begins to cease.
My sweet dove to me brought has
A branch of olive from some place
This betokeneth God has done us some grace
And is a sign of peace.

GOD: Noah, take thy wife anon
And thy children every one;
Out of the ship thou shalt be gone,
And they all with thee.
Beasts and all that can fly

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Out anon they shall hie,
On earth to grow and multiply.
I will that it be so.

NOAH: Lord, I thank Thee through Thy might,
Thy bidding shall be done in height,
And fast as I may dight
I will do Thee honour.

The Rainbow appears above.

GOD: My bow between us - you and me
In the firmament shall beauteous be,
And, by this token you may see
My wrath ye need not fear.

My blessing now I give thee here
To thee, Noah, my servant dear,
For vengeance shall no more appear;
And now farewell, my darling dear.

MUSIC. “**SPRING CAROL**” (*During which they dismantle and strike the Ark and exit R. and L.*)

**ALL THE WOODS ARE NEW IN LEAF,
ALL THE FRUIT IS BUDDING.
BEES ARE HUMMING ROUND THE HIVE
DONE WITH WINTER’S BROODING.
SEAS ARE CALM AND BLUE AGAIN.
CLOUDS NO MORE FORETELL THE RAIN.
WINDS ARE SOFT AND TENDER.
HIGH ABOVE, THE LORDLY SUN
CLIMBS ONCE MORE HIS COURSE TO RUN,
SHINES IN ALL HIS SPLENDOUR.**

GOD: For the wretchedness of the needy
And the poor's lamentation,
Now shall I make right joyful provision.
Time is come of reconciliation.
My people pray with one accord;
And cry to Heaven without cessation
Entreating that grace to man be restored.

My angel, Gabriel, thou shalt I send
Into the country of Galilee.
The name of the city Nazareth is kened,
To a maid wedded to a man is she
Of whom the name is Joseph, see,
Of the house of David bore;

MARY enters at the doors U.C. and sits, sewing on the steps L.

GOD: The name of the maid free
Is Mary, that shall all restore.

ANGELS appear above and GABRIEL descends the steps R. during:

CHOIR: “**GABRIEL’S MESSAGE**”
**THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM HEAVEN CAME.
HIS WINGS AS DRIFTED SNOW, HIS EYES AS FLAME.**

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**‘ALL HAIL,’ SAID HE, “THOU LOWLY MAIDEN, MARY.
MOST HIGHLY FAVOURED LADY,
GLORIA!”**

GABRIEL: Hail, Mary, full of grace and bliss.
Our Lord, God, is with thee and has chosen thee for His.
Of all women, blest might thou be.

MARY: (*Kneeling*) What manner of hailing is this
That so awesomely comes to me?

GABRIEL: Lady, above all women that ever was,
Lady blessed thou shalt be.

MARY: Then with all meekness, I incline to God’s accord,
Bowing down my head in all humility.
See here, the handmaid of our glorious Lord.
After His will may all be done to me.

1st ANGEL: The Holy Ghost shall light on thee.

2nd ANGEL: The child that shall of thee be born
Is the second person of the Trinity.

GABRIEL: He shall save all that are forlorn
And destroy the fiend's power utterly.

MARY: Ah! Now I feel in my body be
Perfect God and perfect man,
Having all shape of childly carnality,
Even at once, thus God began.

CHOIR: **THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM HEAVEN CAME.
HIS WINGS AS DRIFTED SNOW, HIS EYES AS FLAME.
‘ALL HAIL,’ SAID HE, “THOU LOWLY MAIDEN, MARY.
MOST HIGHLY FAVOURED LADY,
GLORIA!”** (*During which:*)

GABRIEL: (*Returning to Heaven*) Farewell, dove, God's daughter dear,
Farewell, God's mother, I thee honour;
Farewell, God's sister and his playfellow,
Farewell, God's chamber and his bower.

MARY goes into the house. JOSEPH enters R., carrying his toolbox.

JOSEPH: (*Knocking on the door*) How, dame, how! Undo your door, undo.
Are ye at home? Why speak ye not?

MARY: Who is there? Joseph? Dearest husband?

JOSEPH: Who else but I? Returned unto our land.

MARY: (*Entering*) Welcome home, my husband dear.
How have ye fared in far country?

JOSEPH: To get our living far and near
I have sore laboured for thee and me.
But how hast thou fared, gentle maid,

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While I have been out of land?

MARY: At home, sir, serenely have I stayed
Bearing this great gift from God's own hand.

JOSEPH: (*Seeing her stomach*) Gift? What's this? Thy womb ginneth to
rise!
(*Seizing her*) Then hast thou begun a sinful guise.
Tell me now in what wise
Thou was brought to this state.

MARY: An angel came to me in the night

JOSEPH: An angel? An angel? (*Pushing her away*) Nay, thy lies abate!
No angel came to cast this blight.
Some bonny youth must have been thy mate.
Tell me his name who brought thee to this plight.

MARY: (*Going to him*) The Father of Heaven - His will be done.
Other father hath he none.
I never lay with any man save thee.
God's child it is that groweth in my body.

JOSEPH: God's child! Thou liest in fay!
God did never dally so with May,
And I came never there, I dare well say,
Yet so nigh thy bower;
Again I say, Mary, whose child be he?

MARY: God's and yours, love. I speak truly.

JOSEPH: (*Turning away*) Ya, ya! (*To the AUDIENCE*) No old man ever
should
Wed with a young wench, warm of blood.
Alas and well away!
Alas, dame, why didst thou so?
For this sin doth me betray.
I hurt to see thee thus. (*Picking up his toolbox*) I'll from thee go
For this time, ever and for ay. (*Turning to go*)

MARY: (*Holding on to him*) Alas, good spouse, why say ye thus?
Alas, dear husband, amend your mood.
It is no man but sweet Jesus.
He will be clad in flesh and blood
And of your wife be born.

JOSEPH: (*Shaking her off*) Alas, alas! Let be! Go way!
It was some boy began this game,
That clothed was all clean and gay,
And ye give him now an angel name.
Alas, alas, and well away!

MARY: (*Kneeling*) Ah, gracious God, on Heaven's throne,
Comfort my spouse if it be Thy will.
Merciful God, amend his moan,
As I did never treat him ill.

JOSEPH: (*To the AUDIENCE*) Out of this country I will me speed

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And never be more in her company
 For, if men knew this villainy,
 In scorn they would me hold.
 And yet many there be - better than I -
 That hath been made cuckold.

MARY: God that in my body art seized,
 Thou knowest my husband is displeased
 To see me in this case.
 And therefore, help that he were eased
 That he might know Thy perfect grace.

JOSEPH: Now alas, where should I gone?
 I know not whither nor to what place.
(To her) Ah, wife, wife, thou didst me wrong.
 Alas, I tarried from thee too long,
 Nay, old man, get thee along,
 There is no love for thee in this place. *(Turning to go, he is confronted by GABRIEL)*

GABRIEL: Joseph. Joseph, thou weepst surely;
 From thy dear wife why do you hurry?

JOSEPH: *(wiping his eyes, not seeing GABRIEL)* Good sir, let me weep my
 fill;
 Go forth thy way and tell me nought.

GABRIEL: In thy weeping thou dost right ill;
 Against God thou hast miswrought.
 Go, cheer thy wife with hearty will,
 And change thy mood, amend thy thought.
 She is a full clean May.
 I tell thee, God will of her be born,
 And she clean maid as she was befor,
 To save mankind that is forlorn.
 Go cheer her therefore I say.

JOSEPH: *(Seeing GABRIEL and falling to his knees)* Ah, Lord God,
 benedicite!
 Of Thy great comfort I thank thee
 That such wonders come to pass.
 I should have bethought me
 So good a creature as she
 Would never have done trespass;
 For she is full of grace.

He returns to MARY and kneels before her.

Alas, for joy I quiver and quake!
 Alas what anger now was this?
 Ah, mercy, mercy, my gentle make.
 Forgive me. I have said all amiss.
 All that I said I here forsake.
 Your sweet feet now let me kiss.

MARY: *(Raising him up)* Nay, let be my feet and do thou take
 My lips. Pray, dear, do me kiss
 And welcome unto me.

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CITIZENS enter from R. and L. during:

JOSEPH: *(Embracing her)* Gramercy, mine own sweet wife!
Gramercy, mine heart, my love, my life!
Shall I never more make such strife
Betwixt thee and me.

Two SOLDIERS enter L.

1st SOLDIER: All men here must to Bethlehem Town
Their taxes to yield.

Angry murmuring from the crowd.

2nd SOLDIER: Let no man frown.
For our master, Herod, wants for a fine new gown
And you must pay.

1st SOL: From each, a fourth part of his wealth.

2nd SOL: Nor seek to avoid by cunning nor stealth
But pay up fair.

1st SOL: Aye. Twere best for your health.

2nd SOL: And don't delay.

The SOLDIERS and the CROWD leave to R. and L. during:

JOSEPH: *(To Heaven)* But, Lord, what trouble to man is wrought.
Rest in this world he has none.
Our betters tax our very thought
And what we earn so hard so soon is gone.
I, that am a poor carpenter, though of David's blood I say.
This new commandment I must obey
Or else I bear the blame.
Now, my wife, Mary - what sayest thou to this?
That I should leave you in this time of bliss?
It is a grievous shame.

MARY: My husband and spouse, with thee I shall wend,
For, in this time, we shall not parted be.
And so, to Bethlehem, let us our way mend
For a sight of that city fain would I see.

JOSEPH: My dear, thou art with child. I fear thee to carry.
For it seems to me a wayward work and wild.

MARY: Yet let us together be that you may greet the child.

JOSEPH: Aye. For to please thee fain would I.
So - let us fare forth as fast as we may
And Almighty God speed us on our journey.

They mime making the journey to Bethlehem during:)

CHOIR: **OH, LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM,**

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**HOW STILL WE SEE THEE LIE.
 ABOVE THY DEEP AND DREAMLESS SLEEP,
 THE SILENT STARS GO BY.
 YET, IN THY BRIGHT STREETS SHINETH
 THE EVERLASTING LIGHT.
 THE HOPES AND FEARS
 OF ALL THE YEARS
 ARE MET IN THEE TONIGHT.**

JOSEPH: Now to Bethlehem have we travelled leagues three.
 The day is near spent and draweth unto night.
 Fain at thy ease, wife, I would that thou should'st be,
 For you grow weary - though seemly in my sight.

MARY: God have mercy, Joseph, my husband dear,
 For that the time now draweth near
 When my child will be born which is the King of Bliss.
 Unto some place, Joseph, do thou me lead
 That I may rest and ease me at this tide.

A CITIZEN enters L. and crosses as if to exit R.

JOSEPH: (*Calling*) Hail, worshipfull sir, and good day.
 A citizen of this city ye seem to be.
 Of lodging for my wife and me, I you pray.

CITIZEN: Sir, hostelage in this town I know none,
 Thy wife and thou there for to sleep.
 This city is beset with people every one,
 And yet they lie outside in every street.

JOSEPH: Nay, sir, know you nowhere
 That we may rest us here?
 For yet my thought and all my care
 Is for Mary, my darling dear.
 Ah, sweet wife, what shall we do?
 Where shall we lodge this night?
 Unto the Father of Heaven pray we so,
 Us to keep safe till it be light.

CITIZEN: Yet, good man, a word I will thee say;
 If thou wilt do by the council of me.
 (*Opening the doors U.C.*) Here is a stable that stands by the way;
 Among the beasts harboured may ye be.

MARY: Now the Father of Heaven keep thee.
 And reward thee for thy charity.
 Go we hence, husband, for now time it is.
 In this poor chamber to await the blessed birth.
 Between my sides, I feel He stirreth.

JOSEPH: God be thy help, spouse. It seemeth me sore
 Thus feebly lodged and in so poor degree,
 God's Son among the beasts to be bore;
 Now God of whom cometh all relief,
 And as all grace in Thee is ground,
 So save my wife from hurt and grief
 Till I some midwives for her have found.

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SAOME and ZELOMYE enter from L.

JOSEPH: Travelling women in care be bound
With great throes when they do groan.
God help my wife that she not swownde;
I am full sorry she is alone.

SALOME: Be of good cheer and of glad mood;
We two midwives with thee will go.

ZELOMYE: There was never woman in such plight stood
But we were ready her help to do.

SALOME: My name is Salome. All men me know
For a midwife of worthy fame.
When women travail, grace doth grow;
There as I come I never shame.

ZELOMYE: And I am Zelomye; men know my name.
We twain with thee will go together
And help thy wife from hurt and grame.
Come forth, Joseph, go we straight thither.

MARY: My heart beats my Son to see
Even here in this poorly place
Now wait I in all humility
And shall abide God's high grace.

They withdraw into the Stable and close the doors during:

CHOIR: **O HOLY CHILD OF BETHLEHEM,
DESCEND TO US WE PRAY.
CAST OUT OUR SIN AND ENTER IN
BE BORN IN US TODAY.
WE HEAR THE CHRISTMAS ANGELS THE GREAT GLAD
TIDINGS TELL.
O COME TO US, ABIDE WITH US,
OUR LORD EMMANUEL.**

*HEROD enters in pomp from L. with the two SOLDIERS pushing on his throne truck at speed to C.
HEROD'S robe is draped on the throne.*

1st SOLDIER: (Proclaiming) Behold, the mightiest of might,
Herod, King of all Judee

HEROD: (Swaggering) All mortals tremble in my sight.
Moon and stars bow down to me

2nd SOLDIER: (Proclaiming) Lord of darkness. Lord of light.
No peer hast thou in majesty

HEROD: Over me dares no sun rise.

A crack of thunder.

HEROD: I am the cause of this great light and thunder;
It is through my fury that they such noise do make.

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My fearful countenance the clouds doth so encumber
 That oft times for dread thereof the earth doth quake.
(Drawing his sword) Look - when I with malice this bright sword do
 shake,
 All the world trembles from the north to the south
 For I may destroy all with one word of my mouth!

1st SOLDIER: The world kneels at his command.

2nd SOLDIER: No other power rules in this land.

HEROD: All men in my shadow stand
 For I am worthy, witty and wise.

1st SOLDIER: All kings to your crown must bow and bend.
 Lest ye lay them full low beneath thy might.

2nd SOLDIER: What villain, in faith, that does you offend
 We shall set him full sorely to death in thy sight.

HEROD: Well, in wealth shall I place thee ere from here I wend
 For ye are good lads full worthy, both witty and right.

NUNCIO: *(Approaching from R.)* My lord, Sir Herod, King with crown!

HEROD: Peace, dastard in the Devil's name.

NUNCIO: Sir, I have news. Here in the town . .

HEROD: Peace, fool, you spoil my game.
 Go beat the fool and throw him down.

2nd SOLDIER: Sir, Herod, King deserved of fame,
 This news may be for your renown.

HEROD: Ah! That would I hear. Thy news proclaim.

NUNCIO: My lord, I met at morn
 Three Kings travelling together.
 Seeking one that is newborn
 And they to worship Him come hither.

HEROD: Three Kings, forsooth!

NUNCIO: Sir, so I say.

HEROD: Have done. Dress us up in rich array,
(The SOLDIERS help him into his robe) And every man make them
 merry cheer,
 That no semblance be seen
 But friendship fair and still
 Till we know what they mean -
 Whether it be good or ill.

The KINGS enter R.

JASPAR: God keep thee, sir King, and comely knight,
 And all thy folk that here we find.

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HEROD: (*Aside*) The devil keep you, sirs, seemly in sight;
 (*Aloud*) Yet tell us where ye be inclined.

MELCHIOR: We follow yon star, sir,
 Though weary and worn.
 With gifts brought to honour
 One that is now born.

HEROD: This were a wondrous thing!
 Say, what bairn should that be?

BALTHASAR: Sir, he that shall be King
 Of Jews and all Judee.

HEROD: King! In the Devil's way, dogs, fye!
 Now I see well ye rant! Ye rave!
 Nay, *I* am King and none but I,
 That shall ye ken if that ye crave;
 For I am judge of all Jewry
 To speak or spill to say or save.

JASPAR: Lord, we ask nought but leave
 By your power to pass.

HEROD: Whither in the Devil's name?
 To honour a *lad* here in *my* land?
 False harlots, but you hie ye hame
 Ye shall be beat and bound both foot and hand.

2nd SOLDIER: (*Taking him aside*) My lord, be subtle to this foul
 defame,
 Show friendship smiles on every hand
 And press them cunning of the same
 That ye may stably understand
 Their mind and meaning -
 Whither they are going
 And where this infant traitor lies.

HEROD: Ah. Yea. Be silken smoothe? Sweetening?
 I thank thee of this good advice.
 (*Aloud*) Sir Kings, to cast all care away,
 Since ye are come out of your lands,
 Take comfort in my hall, I pray,
 For I would feast you at my hand,
 And tell me, as we drink a round,
 And eat our fill before ye go
 Where this famed infant may be found
 That I may pay him homage also.

JASPAR: Sir, there is a prophecy
 Revealed to us by the Heavenly Power
 That a maid of Israel says he,
 Shall bear one like to the lily flower,
 And bade us follow a certain star
 To where the babe and his mother are.

HEROD: (*Aside*) Fie. Fie. This waxeth worse and worse.

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(Aloud) I am your servant, lords.
(Aside) This prophecy is to me a curse.
(Aloud) I thank you for your friendly words.
 Go. Wend you forth, your pilgrimage fulfil,
 And when you find the child at hand
 That comes to banish pain and ill
(Aside savagely) And for to rule in this - *my* land,
(Aloud) Return to me in all goodwill
 And tell me where his dwelling stands.
 To worship Him, that is my will,
 Thus ye shall stably understand.

MELCHIOR: Certain, Sir, we shall you say
 All the truth of that child
(Going R.) In all the haste we may.

HEROD: *(Calling after them)* Farewell. *(Aside)* Ye be beguiled.
 Now, knights, this is a subtle train;
 Now shall they truly take their trace,
 And tell me of that little swain
 And of their counsel in this case.

1st SOLDIER: If it be truth, they shall be slain.

2nd SOLDIER: No gold shall get them better grace.

HEROD: Go we now till they come again,
 To play us in some other place.

He sweeps out L., the SOLDIERS following with the throne as GIB enters R.

Wind, rumbling thunder, the bleating of Sheep.

GIB: *(to the AUDIENCE)* Lord, this weather is cold and I am ill-
 wrapped.
 My legs they fold; my fingers are chapped.
 Life goes not as I would. For I am lapped
 In sorrow -
 In storms and tempests.
 Now by east. Now by west.
 Woe to him that has no rest
 Today or tomorrow. *(He moves away U.R., shivering)*

HODGE enters L.

HODGE: What may this mean?
 Why fares the world thus? Oft have we seen
 The weather so spiteful and the wind so keen
 And the frost so frosty that they water my een.
 No lie.
 Now in dry. Now in wet.
 Now in snow. Now in sleet.
 My shoes are frozen to my feet.
 It's not easy. *(Shivering, he backs into HODGE)*

GIB: Look where you're going. Art out of thi mind?

HODGE: It's your fault with your big behind.

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THE MYSTERIES

Props and Furniture:

PART ONE:

The Creation:

A Mound C. – ideally placed over a trap but, if not, large enough for ADAM and EVE to be ‘born’ through a trap in the top of it – also for SATAN to slither down into.

The Tree of Life U.C. with Apples – one detachable and edible

Small bush L. and Small Bush R. with detachable leaves to Velcro onto ADAM and EVE’s body suits.

Cain and Abel:

Plough off L. with harness for ‘HORSES’ to pull

Whip for CAIN

Sack of Sheaves for CAIN

Satchel for ABEL containing Lamb, Flint and Steel

White Smoke effect set in Mound

Black Smoke effect set in Mound

The Noah Play:

Scrap of Paper and stub of Pencil for NOAH

Axe for SHEM

Tree (Mast) for MRS SHEM

Saw for HAM

Chopping Log for MRS HAM

Hammer for JAPHET

Bucket for MRS JAPHET

2 x Triangular ‘Prow’ truck sections off L. and R.

2 (or 4 – depending on wing space) x Square ‘Deck’ truck sections off L. and R.

2 x Flat ‘Cabin’ sections (with practical window shutters) to slot into decks off L. and R.

Fishing line to rig from window to high point off stage – ideally 45 degrees – for birds

2nd Fishing line with snaphook to attach to Raven

Raven on hooks to slide on first line and with ring to attach to snap hook

3rd Fishing line with snaphook to attach to Dove

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Dove with hooks to slide on first line and with ring to attach to snaphook
 Sprig of Olive off at pulling point to Velcro onto Dove's beak for return journey sliding down the line
 5 x Tambourines
 Rainbow above – can be either a large lightbox or a projection

The Annunciation:

Sewing for MARY
 Toolbag for JOSEPH

Herod:

Throne on small truck for HEROD – from L. or R.
 Large Sword for HEROD
 Short 'Roman' swords for SOLDIERS
 HEROD's Gown set on Throne

The Shepherds' Play

Sheep – ideally three dimensional and capable of standing (and lying) with stiff legs
 'House' truck off U.C. with Bed and Manger set on it – ideally, it has a door – if not, this can be mimed.
 Blankets on the Bed
 Chamber pot under the Bed
 Leather bottle for GILL
 Coin for DAW

The Nativity:

Banners to mask the setting of The Nativity Scene
 Stool for MARY
 Manger – with light inside?
 Baby in Manger
 Casket of Gold for JASPAR
 Bob of Cherries for GIB
 Casket of Incense for MELCHIOR
 Bird for HODGE
 Jar of Myrrh for BALTHASAR
 Ball for DAW

PART TWO:

The Massacre:

Food (chicken drumsticks?) on the throne truck for the SOLDIERS
 4 x Babies for MOTHERS – these are wrapped in shawls to conceal the mutilations until after the massacre
 DEATH can either be a single Actor dressed in a ragged shroud or, alternatively, three Actors speaking in sinister unison while operating a huge rod puppet with a death's head and skeletal hands

The Ministry:

Crutch for LAME MAN
 Stones for the CROWD
 Jewelled Box for MARY MAGDALENE

The Last Supper:

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Table – this need only be a foot or so wide (sufficient to hold the props) but obviously long enough to create the traditional picture. If wingspace is limited, it could be made of two smaller sections carried on from either side. It is easier if JESUS and ten of the DISCIPLES stand behind the table with only PETER sitting at R. and JUDAS sitting at L.

2 x Stools
 Jug of Wine
 Chalice
 Basket of Bread
 Bowl and Cloth
 Sword for PETER
 Glove containing Coins for CAIAPHAS

The Trials and Scourging:

3 x Whips for FROWARD – ideally, these are ‘Cat o’ Nine Tails’ with the lashes made from strips of foam coated with carmine stage makeup – these will then leave ‘scars’ across JESUS’s back
 Bowl of water and Towel for COURTIER

The Crucifixion:

This should be made as realistic and harrowing as possible. People have become so accustomed to seeing painted images of the event that the true agony and horror of such a means of execution is often forgotten. The Wakefield Master has given us such a realistic group of EXECUTIONERS – honest tradesmen, showing no personal malice, skilled in their craft, who could just as easily be fitting a kitchen as nailing a man to a cross – that their naturalistic banter, complaints, corner-cutting and bodging to get the job done provide a powerful dramatic counterpoint to the deed itself.

The Cross – can be made hollow but must look - and will inevitably be – very heavy for JESUS to drag around the acting area. It has a shelf for JESUS’s feet at the appropriate place

Toolbag for 1st EXECUTIONER containing:

2 x Lump Hammers
 3 x Nails – which should look hand-forged, at least half an inch thick and four to six inches long
 Block of Wood – this can be used (masked by the EXECUTIONER’s body) – to actually hammer the nails into while the dummies are being fixed to JESUS’s hands and slotted into the Cross
 2 x ‘Dummy’ Nails – simply nail heads and a short stub soldered or welded to sturdy pelmet clips to slot into the Cross
 ‘Dummy’ Nail for the feet – as above but not taking any weight as JESUS will be able to support his weight on the ‘shelf’
 2 x Lengths of Rope – about fifteen feet long – for the EXECUTIONERS to stretch JESUS to fit the Cross and can also be used by the SOLDIERS to loop around the arms of the Cross from above and steady it as it is lifted into the Shoe.
 Scroll to fix to the head of the Cross
 Wedges to hammer into the Shoe

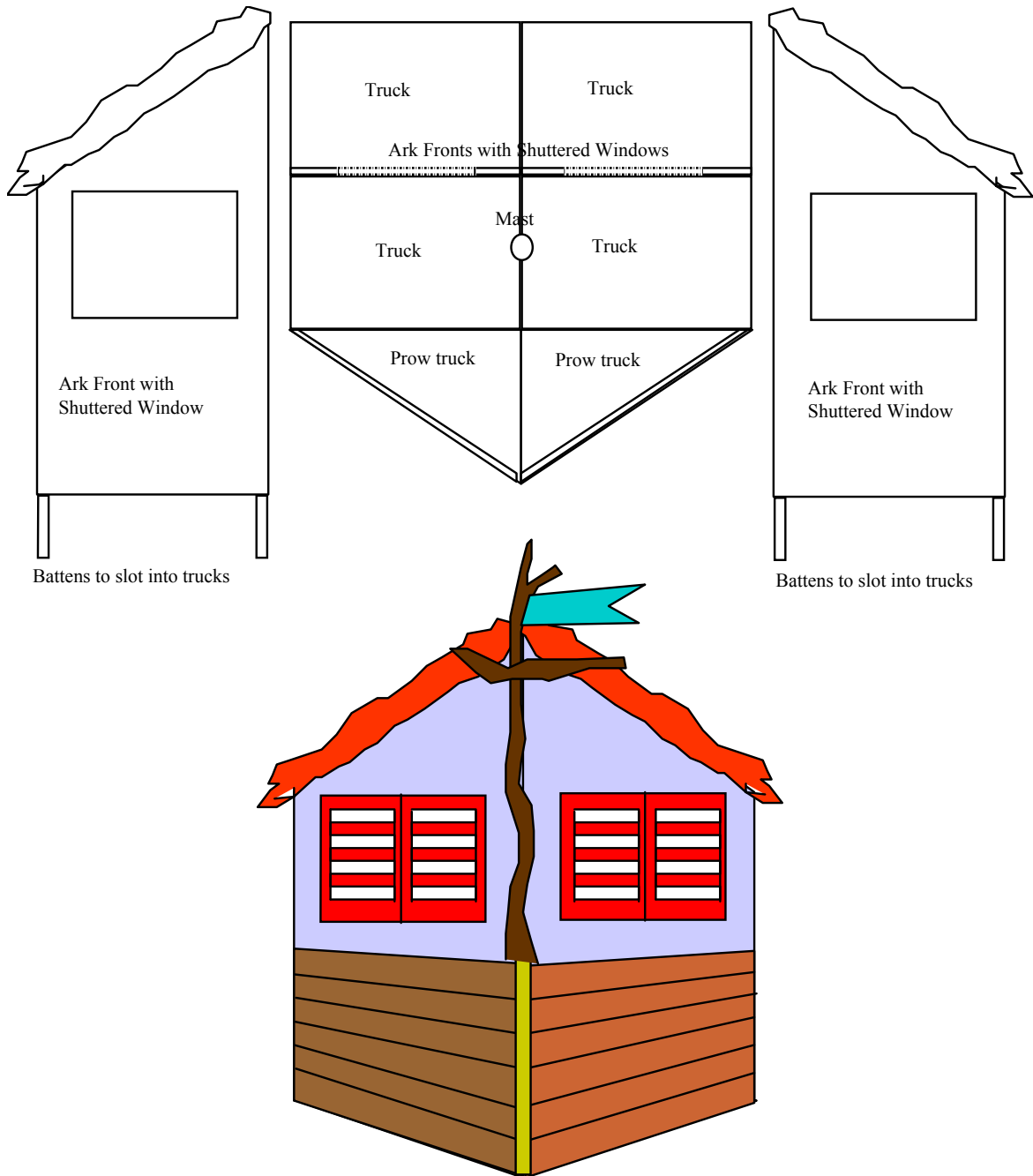
Rustic Pole with Sponge attached for FROWARD

Spear for LONGEUS

2 x Ladders off R. and L. for bringing JESUS down from the Cross

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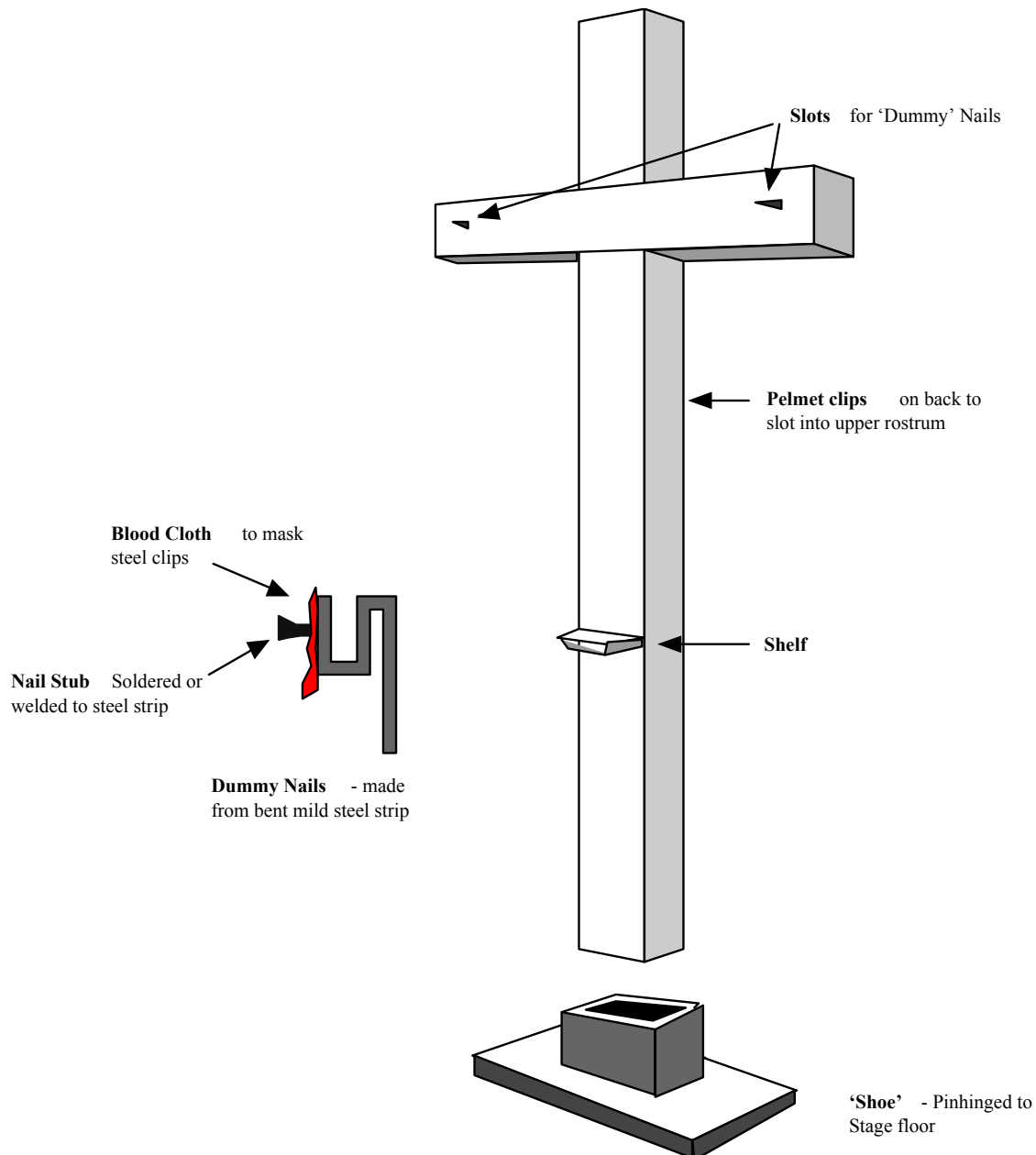
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Suggestions for the Ark

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Some suggestions for the Cross

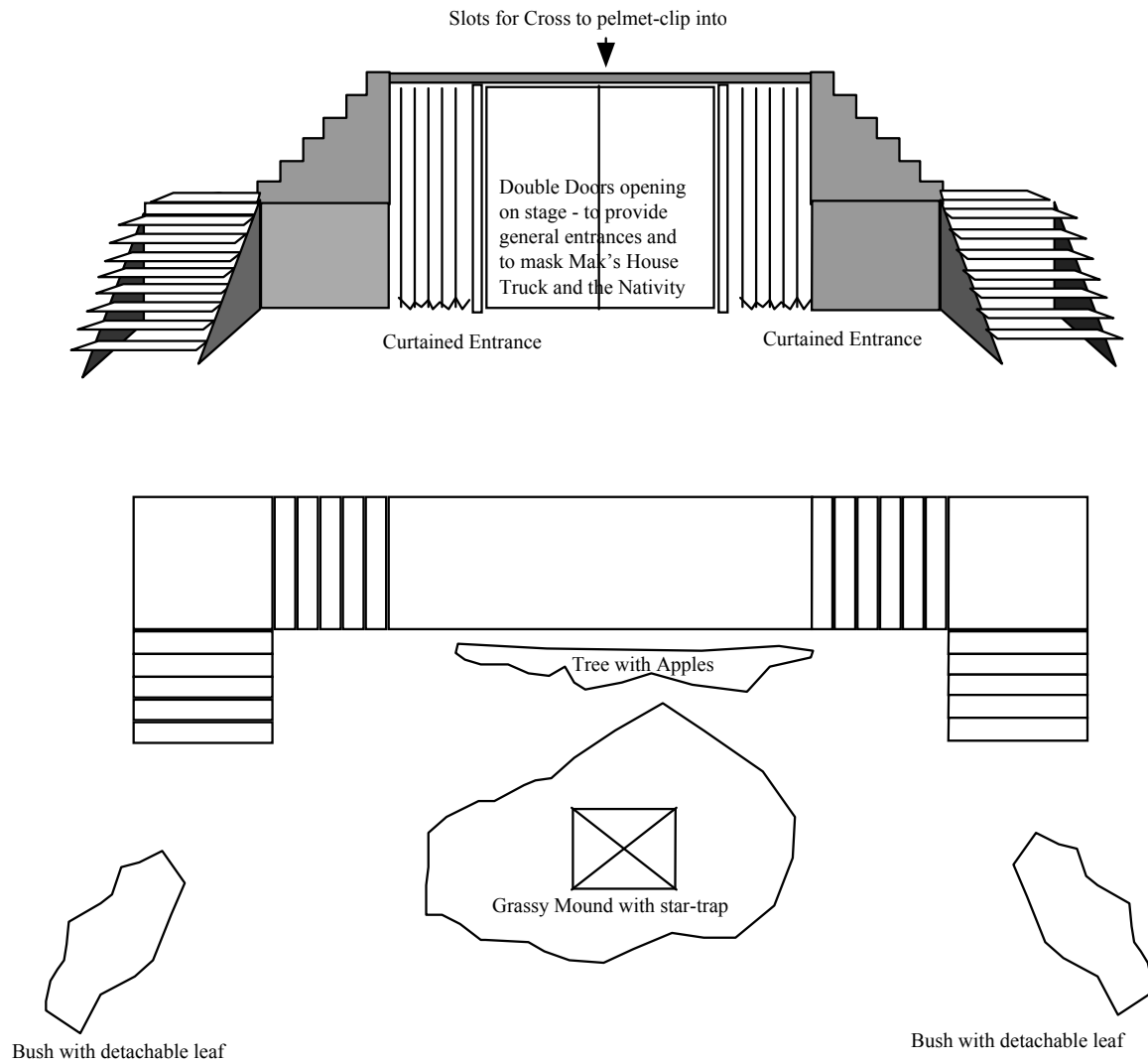
Although the Crucifixion must be completely convincing, the safety of the Actor is paramount as you're unlikely to find a different Jesus for each performance.

The belt and braces system suggested above - with the base firmly secured in the Shoe and the back of the Cross secured to the upper level by steel strip pelmet clips about eight feet up - will provide stability.

Also, the hand-holds provided by the 'Dummy Nails' gives the Actor something to hang onto.

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A very rough and 'squared off' indication of the staging used for previous performances

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