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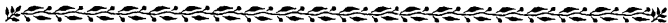
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Dramatic Publishing



A Christmas Rock Musical

JOY!

Book by RUTH PERRY

Music by DIANE LESLIE

Lyrics by DAVID ROGERS



®

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY



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(JOY!)

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JOY!

A Christmas Rock Musical

For Ten Men and Four Women
Plus Chorus and Extras

CHARACTERS

MARY	who plays the part of	Mary
JOE		Joseph
BADGE		Melchior
SAM		Balthazar
HOWARD		Caspar
BILL		the Shepherd
RACHEL		his wife
SABRINA		his daughter
LEON		Herod
ANGIE		
CENTURION		
SOLDIER		
ATTENDANT		
GOOD HUMOR MAN		
Innkeepers, Guests, Maids, Porters		

PLACE: The high school auditorium

TIME: The present.

Scene 1

SCENE: Auditorium of Central High School. An evening in autumn. The stage is dimly lighted and bare except for two benches and a large trunk containing stage properties, at stage L. There is an announcement on an easel stating:

ATTENTION CUSTODIAN:
REHEARSAL TONIGHT
NATIVITY PLAY – SENIOR CLASS
NO SMOKING
CUSTODIAN WILL PLEASE TURN OFF LIGHTS
AT CLOSE OF REHEARSAL
THANK YOU

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: MEMBERS of the cast begin to enter by twos and threes. They wear casual clothes as they go up to the stage where they discard wraps, bags, notebooks, etc. on one of the benches, ad libbing personal conversation as they go.

RACHEL (eagerly). Did the scripts come, Leon?

LEON. Nope! They're lost. (Turns aside and sits on trunk, head down, discouraged.)

SABRINA. No scripts, no director. We might as well just go home.

MARY. But Sabrina, we have to give the play. The Senior Class always gives a Nativity Play at Christmas. It's a tradition.

SABRINA. Mary, we've no scenery, no costumes — —

BILL. There's all that stuff in the prop trunk.

LEON (over his shoulder). We have the songs.

ANGIE (tentatively). We have the nativity story. It's all in the Bible. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. We can ad lib the lines.

SAM. We can't talk Bible talk. It's different.

HOWARD. Not much. You just say "thee" and "thine" instead of "you" and "yours." (LEON has been listening. Now he shows animation and turns alertly to the group.)

LEON. Besides, there's more to the story than that.

ANGIE. Of course there is, Leon. I remember a lot more.

SABRINA. How'd you find out?

ANGIE. Sunday School.

BADGE (skeptically). Sunday School? (He's attracted to ANGIE.)

ANGIE. I had to go every week. The only kid in the block that went!

BADGE. I'd've plainly said "no" to my folks.

ANGIE (amused). I tried that.

BADGE. What happened?

ANGIE. Sunday School. This won't be the first time it's paid off!

BADGE. Is there a part in it for a Black?

ANGIE. How about Melchior?

BADGE. Who's Melchior?

ANGIE (liking him). The black king, dummy.

BADGE. Me! A king! Man!

SAM (eagerly). Are there any more king parts?

LEON. Sure. There were three kings. Badge'll be Melchior, the black king, and you be Balthazar, the old king. (SAM nods agreement.) Who was the third king, Angie?

ANGIE. King Caspar.

LEON. Who'll volunteer?

HOWARD. I'd just as soon.

LEON. O.K., Howard. You're King Caspar. And since we've not got all night, Joe, you be Joseph, and Mary can be Mary. (They nod assent.) Rachel, you and Sabrina can be the Shepherd's wife and daughter.

BILL (alertly). I'll be the Shepherd. (Draws RACHEL possessively to him.) How are the sheep?

RACHEL (smiling at him). They're restless tonight.

ANGIE. Who'll volunteer for the part of Herod?
(Silence.) Leon, thank you for volunteering to be the villain.

LEON. Where does that leave you, Angie?

ANGIE. I'll find plenty to do. There'll be people we haven't thought of yet. Now first, look at this place. Dingy. Dark. It's supposed to be night in Bethlehem in December. The stars bright and frosty. We need light.

LEON (exuberantly). I'll just give a shout for the electrician. (Comes DC, looks high up and stretches tautly. Shouts.) Hey! (A pause.)

Hey, you up there! Hey! Electrician! Lights!
Let there be light! (There are a couple of metallic clicks and then the whole area is in the full blaze of dazzling light. LEON relaxes somewhat and observes with great satisfaction to the group.)

The electrician is with us tonight.

BILL (impressed). Man! (The others react with awe.)

BADGE (reverently). He is with us tonight? You mean, he's here?

LEON (simply). He's everywhere.

RACHEL. How do we start? Any suggestions?

ANGIE. Mary and Joseph are on their way to Bethlehem.

SABRINA. First we open the trunk. Have a look at the costumes.

BILL (opening trunk and poking about in it). Not much here. Some sandals.

MARY (already in the mood of the play). We can use those. It's a long walk to Bethlehem. (Takes sandals and gives a pair to JOSEPH. They sit on bench and put them on.)

SABRINA (pulling out various colorful oddments to dress up her costume with and in frequent consultation with her compact). One thing I never could figure out. Why would Mary and Joseph go traipsing off to Bethlehem when she was about to have a baby any minute?

ANGIE. They had to go to pay their taxes.

LEON. Taxes? More than a thousand years ago?

ANGIE. People don't change much. Let's just run through the story, so we all get it straight.

(Music. Easy.)

(SONG: "JOY!")

ANGIE.

It's a story of Joy,
It's a story of Joy to the World
When the birth of a boy
Brought a wonderful Joy to the World.

RACHEL.

It's a story of peace

BILL and BADGE.

And a Prince bringing peace, peace on earth.
May it grow and increase
Till there's peace for all time, here on earth.

ALL.

Joy, peace and love
Sent from above.

SABRINA.

One night in Bethlehem
Mankind was offered them.

ANGIE.

We can all play a part.

OTHERS.

Tell the story again and again.

ANGIE.

Let it grow in your heart.

OTHERS.

Joy and peace and goodwill to all men.

GIRLS.

Joy! Joy! Joy!

BOYS.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

ALL.

Love! Love! Love! and then
Forever good will to all men. . . .

LEON (pulling a white wig from the trunk). This'll do for one of the Three Kings.

BILL. Balthazar's the oldest. (SAM takes a rakish step or two and puts the wig on at a jaunty angle.)

LEON. Venerable King Balthasar, kindly straighten your wig and don't step so spry. Remember your age! Also, from now on, forget Sam. You're Balthazar. (SAM drops his flipant manner and adopts the faltering step and bent posture of extreme age. LEON takes out a red robe and a plain circular crown, considers them a moment thoughtfully, then folds the robe and places it and the crown aside on the bench.)

LEON. These will do for Herod.

BILL. The Kings will need these. (Takes out three crowns.)

BADGE (firmly appropriating the most elaborate and putting it on). Wait'll my subjects get a load of this! King Melchior! (Strikes an arrogant pose.)

BALTHAZAR (putting on his crown with trembling hand). We've got kingdoms, too. (ANGIE starts second half chorus as the others pick through the trunk.)

ANGIE.

Joy, love and peace
May they increase.

OTHERS.

We all can share more of
Joy, peace and love.
Love for all mankind.

ANGIE.

That's the message he brought way back then.

ALL.

That's the way we can find
Joy and peace and good will to all men.

GIRLS.

Joy! Joy! Joy!

BOYS.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

ALL.

Love, love, love and then
Forever, goodwill to all men. Amen.

HOWARD (putting on plain ring crown). I'm King Caspar.

Is there anything in that trunk we can use for gifts?

BADGE. I'd forgotten what happened to the gifts.

HOWARD. How'll we feel walking in there with no gifts?

BADGE. We'll find something. (Frowns and goes into
some inner calculation.)

RACHEL. I'd like just a touch of color to give the idea of
a costume. (Pulls out a beautiful blue robe.)

Wow! (Throws it around her shoulders and poses
charmingly.)

MARY (rapturous). That blue! (Bemused, she touches
the robe caressingly.)

LEON (gently). Rachel chose the robe.

RACHEL. Well, actually — — (She wants to keep the
robe.)

MARY. It doesn't matter — much.

ANGIE. Blue's always been Mary's color.

RACHEL (smiling). You need the robe, Mary. Wrap him
well.

(RACHEL drapes robe on MARY. JOSEPH has put on a short, brown, rather shabby robe with a length of frayed rope serving as belt.)

LEON (crisply). Joseph and Mary, you're on.

(The others in the cast drop back upstage as MARY and JOSEPH move forward; finally, when downstage, walk in place as if very tired.)

LEON. Your wife has been walking all day, Joseph.

RACHEL. Talk to her, Joe.

JOSEPH. Are you O.K., Mary?

MARY. Just tired – and my back aches.

JOSEPH. No, it's more than that. You're worried.

MARY. It's not important . . .

JOSEPH. Tell me . . .

MARY (coming out with it in a rush). Joseph, are you sure you barred the side door before we left home?

JOSEPH. Of course, Mary. I checked all the doors.

MARY. You might have forgotten it. We almost never use it.

JOSEPH. Is that all that's been worrying you?

MARY. There's so much crime these days. People notice an empty house.

JOSEPH. Mary, we've nothing worth carrying away.

MARY (with a flash of spirit). Nothing worth carrying away! But you made our furniture yourself. You spent all your spare time carving the lambs and butterflies on the crib. It's the most beautiful crib in the world!

JOSEPH. Mary, the crib is safe.

MARY (taking a long breath of relief and smiling at him).
Then I'll not mind the dark or be afraid of missing our way.

RACHEL. Give them a star, director.

LEON (looking up and shouting). A star! Hey electrician! Give them a star! (An astronomical drawing of a star appears.) No, not an astronomer's star. We need a miracle star! (Belatedly.) Uh, if you please, electrician. (A tiny, intense point of light appears aloft backstage and builds to high intensity.) Thank you, sir.

MARY (gazing at the star). See the star, Joseph? I think lonely travelers watch it through the night.

JOSEPH. People in far places watch it. Great kings and poor shepherds.

MARY. It seems to move almost as if to show us the way.

RACHEL. Because it's a traveling star. (Smiling, RACHEL begins obligato, humming softly a single note, as the music of "Follow a Traveling Star" comes up. The others join in on obligato until MARY begins to sing.)

(SONG: "FOLLOW A TRAVELING
STAR")

MARY.

Follow a traveling star,
Watch for your heavenly guide,
Then you won't stray
Losing your way
In a world so wide.

JOSEPH.

Follow a traveling star
High in the sky, there's a friend.
Dark though the night,
You have a light
To your journey's end.

BOTH.

Where do you go?
What will you find?
All that you know
You leave behind.

MARY.

Search for a happier day.

JOSEPH.

Find it no matter how far.

BOTH.

Help from above
Leads you to love,
If you follow your traveling star.

OTHERS.

Follow a traveling star
Watch for your heavenly guide.
Then you won't stray,
Losing your way
In a world so wide.

MARY and JOSEPH.

Follow a traveling star
High in the sky there's a friend.
Dark though the night,

You have a light
To your journey's end.

OTHERS.

Where do you go?
What will you find?
All that you know
You leave behind.

ALL.

Search for a happier day.
Find it no matter how far.
Help from above
Leads you to love,
If you follow your traveling star.

MARY (looking at star). How peaceful it is! (Proudly.)

My son is coming to a world of peace and joy.

But right now I'm almost too tired to go on.

BADGE (encouragingly). You'll soon be at the Inn.

ANGIE. You'll have a comfortable bed to rest in.

RACHEL. They say the Inn has a fine chef.

SAM. And a swimming pool.

LEON. You three Kings of Orient, attention! Exit now,
and after Mary and Joseph start for Bethlehem,
I want you to come in singing.

(SAM, HOWARD and BADGE start their exit.)

ANGIE. Remember you're following the same star and
come in when I signal like this. (Tiny flashlight.)

BADGE. How'll we know you're signaling?

ANGIE (decisively.) You'll be watching. (Three boys
nod and complete exit L.)

SABRINA (fussing a bit). Mary, are you sure you have everything?

MARY (a little doubtfully). I think so. Come, Joseph.

JOSEPH (smiling encouragingly). Our star is waiting.

(MARY and JOSEPH exit R hand in hand.

ANGIE flashes the signal. Music of "TRAVELING STAR" begins softly.)

LEON. I hear music.

(Enter L BALTHAZAR/SAM, CASPAR/HOWARD and MELCHIOR/BADGE, crowned and robed. They go downstage singing the song, walking slowly across to R. As the KINGS begin the song, the others crowd around them, as rapt as children about the Pied Piper, and follow them down to stage C, where the KINGS complete the song. Unobtrusively in the background, HEROD/LEON dons the robe and crown he put aside earlier. After the applause, the cast cluster about the THREE KINGS and exit with them, leaving HEROD/LEON, who sits on the trunk where ANGIE has placed a scarlet cloth. It is now his throne. Scene Two follows directly; there is no interruption of the action.)

(SONG: "FOLLOW A TRAVELING STAR")

BALTHAZAR.

Follow a Traveling Star

Lighting a path here on earth

Prophets have said
We will be led
To our Saviour's birth.

CASPAR.

Follow a Traveling Star
They said take gifts rich and rare.
You'll find the child
Peaceful and mild
In a manger there.

THREE KINGS.

Why do we smile?
Why do we sing?
For in a while
We'll find a king.

Servants to him we'll be
Powerful kings though we are
Humble and awed
Seeking our Lord

As we FOLLOW A TRAVELING STAR. _____