

# They Followed a Bright Star

By Ulises Wensell

Based on a poem by Joan Alavedra, G Putnam's Sons, New York 1994

Adapted for play by Sharon Ramey, RScP

Edited by Marelu Marson

Director:

Assistant Director:

## Cast:

*If the group is small, the lines for parts such as the shepherds and servants can be combined.*

Narrator One:

Shepherd One:

Shepherd Two:

Shepherd Four:

Shepherd Five:

Shepherd Six: *(one who can play an instrument for the Christ Child)*

Angel:

Woman at well:

Fisherman:

Farmer:

Man in Grapefield:

Servant One

Servant Two

Servant Three:

Servant Four

Servant Five

Servant Six

Melchior:

Caspar:

Balthasar:

Mary:

Joseph

## Crew:

Costume Creators/Helpers:

Back Stage Crew:

Prop Creators:

Parent Helpers:

## Props:

Jug for woman  
farmer

Fish and pole for fisherman  
Three beautiful boxes for the Wise People

Loaf of bread for

*Narrator remains off to the side (stage left) for the whole play with script on a music stand.*

*Shepherds in shepherd costumes sit in half circle slightly stage right facing the front of the stage.*

Narrator One: Long ago, on a cold and bitter night, a group of shepherds sat huddled around a fire.

Shepherd One: Quiet! Do you hear that? Is someone singing?

Shepherd Two: It's only a fiddle playing in the distance

Shepherd Six: No, it's just a lamb bleating

Shepherd Four: (looks at Shepherd Three- as if not understanding what was meant)

Shepherd Six: (makes Lamb Sound) Baaaaahh!

Narrator One: Suddenly, an angel with shimmering wings appeared before them.

*Angel glides quickly to stand to the side of the shepherds (center stages).*

Angel: Arise, shepherds, and come!

*(Shepherds are frightened and crouch closer around the fire.)*

Narrator One: The shepherds were frightened and did not listen to the angel.

Angel: Shepherds! A miracle will happen in Bethlehem. The Christ Child will be born in a stable. Arise and come!! The star will lead you!

*Angel glides off stage.*

Narrator One: Then (pause) the night was still.

*(The shepherds look at one another)*

Narrator One: But not for long!

Shepherd One: What gift shall we take to the child?

Shepherd Five (Oldest): We will take the finest things we have.

Shepherd Two: A hen, a lamb, a turkey, and a jug of honey.

Shepherd Five: Yes, those are some of them, but most importantly we must take our God Qualities.

Shepherd Two: What shall we do with the sheep?

Shepherd Four: Well, I'll stay with them!

Shepherd Six: The dog will watch over our sheep. Come!

*Woman with a jug steps out on stage left with angel close behind her.*

Narrator One: So they left their flock and set out to follow the bright star. Soon the shepherds came to the top of a mountain, where a woman was drawing water from a spring.

*Shepherds stand up and walk in a group in a slow but exaggerated way. Shepherds approach the woman.*

All shepherds: Greetings, Good Woman!

Shepherd One: We are going to Bethlehem to see the child who will be born in a stable.

Shepherd Two: Come with us.

Woman: I can not. It is I who protect the spring, so that all of us may drink clean, pure water. An angel told me,

Angel & Woman: The child will need it someday.

Woman: Please take this as my gift to the child.

Shepherd Four: Very well. We wish you peace on this good night.

*Fisherman with a pole with a fish attached to a string sits stage right toward the front with the angel close behind him.*

Narrator One: The shepherds walked on until they came to a riverbank. There a fisherman sat with string deep down in the water.

*The shepherds walk slowly toward the fisherman.*

All shepherds: Good evening sir! Come with us.

Shepherd Five: We are going to Bethlehem to see the child who will be born.

Fisherman: I can not! It is I who catch fish to feed others. An angel appeared to me and said,

Fisherman & Angel: Cast your line into the water and wait. There is a child to be born

Who will need the fish you catch. He too will be a fisherman.

Fisherman: Here, take this fish. It is my gift to the child.

Shepherd Six: The angels have been busy! We wish you peace on this good night.

*Farmer steps onto stage left with angel close behind him.*

Narrator One: The shepherds continued on. On and on. And on. Until they reached a field, where they saw a farmer plowing.

*Shepherds walk slowly to the farmer.*

All Shepherds: Hello, good farmer!

Shepherd Six: Stop plowing!

Shepherd Two: Come with us to Bethlehem to see the miracle.

Farmer: I can not. I must plow and sow, thresh the wheat, and grind the corn to make bread with a golden crust.

Shepherd Four: But you will have time for that later.

Farmer: Oh No! Tonight a magnificent angel stood before my bed.

Farmer & Angel: Go and plow your field. The child to be born will need bread.

Farmer: Take this beautiful loaf of bread, it my gift to the child.

Shepherd One: Very Well, we wish you peace on this good night.

*Man walks onto stage right with pack of grapes and angel close behind him.*

Narrator One: The Shepherds shivered with cold. At the edge of an olive grove, they saw a man coming from their vineyard carrying a pack full of grapes.

*Shepherds walk slowly to the man.*

Shepherd Five: Why do you harvest so late in the season?

Shepherd Six: Come with us to see the child who will be born.

Man: (pointing to his pack): Do you see these grapes? A voice from the heavens told us

Man & Angel: Go to your fields. You shall find new grapes along the winter vines.

Man: And here you see them! I must make wine now, and store it until it is needed. These grapes are divine acts of god! Take some as our gift to this child you speak of.

Shepherd Four: Very well, we wish you peace on this good night.

Narrator One: And off the little band of shepherds marched again.

Shepherd Two: This night has been full of wonder! How rich life is!

Narrator One: Above them the star shone bright, its silver light filling the sky. As the shepherds continued on their journey, it looked as though there was no one else around for miles and miles.

But they were not the only ones following the star. Each of us follow the star, we just take different paths to get there.

*Three wise men begin moving across the stage closely together, rising up and leaning back together when the narrator says "high passes" and squatting down and leaning forward together when narrator says "deep valleys" to position themselves at center front stage. They face sideways until they each say their name. At that time they turn to the front one at a time.*

And riding across mountains, traveling over high passes (*pause*) and through deep valleys (*pause*), were three "Wise People". Their names were

Melchior: Melchior (*Melchior turns to front*),

Caspar: Caspar (*Caspar turns to front*),

Narrator One: and

Balthasar: Balthasar (*Balthasar turns to the front*),

All three "Wise People": And we too have gifts for the child!

*Servants gather off to stage right.*

Narrator One: As the “Wise People” rejoiced in giving to the Christ child, their servants were having their own experiences.

Servant One: I don’t know if I can go any farther! I need an excuse. Maybe my leg will start to limp! Yes, I’m injured. That way I don’t have to ask for rest. I’ll have a legitimate reason to need rest...

Servant Two: If I go over one more mountain...I swear I’ll...I’ll... well, I won’t do anything; instead I’ll keep thinking about what I want to do, and say. I’ll burn inside, and stay frustrated.

Servant Three: I wish I had a pillow to rest my head! That’s all I want. Just a pillow. I don’t want a bed, or blanket. Just a pillow. Even if there was a bed, I wouldn’t take it. I just want a pillow.

Servant Four: I always have to carry the heavy one. No matter what, I always have the one that’s heaviest. I always have to do the most work. that’s my lot in life. I always get the hard things.

Servant Five: I’m A-OK. I mean, I haven’t eaten in seven days, but, hey I’m okay. Yah, and I’m pretty tired, but that’s okay. I’m a bit cold too, well actually I can’t feel my feet...but its okay. There is nothing wrong, everything is okay!

Servant Six: I don’t want to do this. But I have to. I don’t have a choice. I could have been a servant, or a monk/nun, or a mom/dad, or healer, or a tailor, or a writer, animal trainer, or a king. I had no choice.

Narrator One: The “Wise People” looked at their maps, trying to plan how they were going to get there, but their maps told them nothing. Like the shepherds, only the bright star could guide them.

Melchior: We must hurry.

Caspar: Yes, for the star will disappear with the morning light.

Balthasar: Then we might never see the miracle.

*Mary and Joseph step to the center front stage as the Three Wise People move back. Angel is ready to step out to Mary and Joseph to deliver the message.*

Narrator One: Meanwhile, In Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph settled into a stable where the animals made room for them. For months they have been preparing for this night. Nine Months earlier, *(make squiggle sounds like “Wayne’s World”*

*"while Mary and Joseph spin around to create the illusion of going back into the past) As Mary and Joseph were busy about with their lives, an angel appeared before them.*

Angel: Mary, blessed are you among all women! And blessed is the child you will carry, Baby Jesus.

Narrator One: Mary and Joseph both knew,

Mary & Joseph: This is a gift from God.

*The Wise People, shepherds and servants all at ready to move out in a group to gather around Mary and Joseph as the Narrator describes.*

Narrator One: *(make squiggle sounds like "Wayne's World" while Mary and Joseph spin again to return to the past).*

So while Mary lays in the hay relaxed awaiting the birth, The "Wise People" and shepherds hurried toward the star...And in one miraculous second, a radiant glow of light filled the stable. As the "Wise People", servants and shepherds arrived, their hearts could not help but overflow with joy. All the love radiating filled them, and they forgot their journeys.

Joseph: Welcome... how did you know?

Shepherd One: We followed the Star!

Melchior: *(Offering a box)* Incense!

Caspar: *(Offering a box)* Myrrh!

Balthasar *(offering a box)* And a chest full of Gold... enough for a kingdom!

Shepherd Four: *(Loud whisper)* Is the baby a "Wise Man" or is he a shepherd!

Shepherd Five: Hush! You'll wake him.

Shepherd Six: Would the child like it if I played my flute for him?

Mary: I'm sure he would love it

Shepherd Six plays flute.

*(Flute is played and the others quietly offered their gifts to him)*

Angel: "Wise People" and shepherds, Rejoice! Let the world Rejoice.

Narrator One: And although physically they seemed to be far away, their spirits were present. The woman who watches the spring, *(pause)* The fisherman, *(pause)* the man who plows the field *(pause)* and the man who makes the wine.

Narrator or Angel:

For the time would come when Jesus would need water and fish and bread and wine. Water to cleanse the souls of the weary, fish to multiply and feed the many, and bread to break with the wine on another night of miracles.

But on that night, those who could not follow the star, were still present, by giving their unique gifts.

All: Let the world rejoice.