An Advent Skit
by Angie Lahman Yoder

CHARACTERS

Narrator
Innkeeper
Innkeeper’s Wife
Mary
Joseph
Three Shepherds (Head Shepherd, Young Shepherd, Youngest Shepherd)
Quirinius

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Narrator (with panache)

We’re going to be doing a skit for the Advent season in much the same way as the radio programs of old. We’ll begin the skit today and leave you wanting more out of the continuation next week. In order for it to work well, however, we need a little audience participation. You will be the curtains for our production and all you need to do is be able to open and close your eyes. Simple as that! So let’s practice. When I say, “Curtains DOWN,” please close your eyes. And when I say, “Curtains UP,” open your eyes again.

Curtains DOWN.

Good—uh oh—we’ve got some people not playing—ah, good. Now, Curtains UP. No sleeping! Good! Curtains DOWN. Curtains UP. Curtains DOWN. Curtains DOWN. Uh oh—Simon didn’t say Curtains UP! Okay. Curtains UP! You’re good at this!!! Now, I think with that out of the way, we can move along . . .

Head Shepherd (whiney)

Wait! You’re forgetting us—you ALWAYS forget us—we’re the most important part!! You’ve gotta show them how to help us!

Narrator (with resignation)

Right. Okay, folks. For some reason, the shepherds need us to play the part of the sheep—it makes it more real or something. So, when one of the shepherds says sheep, you need to “Baaaa—aaa” like sheep. Okay? Okay.

Head Shepherd (whinier—if possible)

WAIT! Shouldn’t they practice or something?

Narrator (resignedly)

Alright, people. Give us your best sheep . . . (people baa). Wow! Are you sure you’re all human—that’s pretty real! (to head shepherd) Are you satisfied now? (Head shepherd nods.) Okay. On with the show! Curtains DOWN. No peeking.

(Mary and Joseph get into position. We see a very pregnant Mary sitting in a rocking chair, fanning herself and taking deep breaths. Joseph is holding a paint bucket and brush, standing back from the “wall” and admiring his work.)
Curtains UP.

Joseph
Whew. (wipes his brow) That should do it. The walls are finally finished. Don’t you think they’re beautiful, dear?

Mary (absently)
What’s that? Oh, are you finished already? (Mary stands awkwardly.) Oh, Joseph. (grabs his arm for support) It looks absolutely wonderful—I hope he likes it too. (She pats her pregnant belly.) Now, where should we hang this mobile? (She holds it up.)

Narrator

(The three shepherds move into position. Two shepherds are sprawled out in the “field.” The “sheep” is a good distance from them. The Head Shepherd is standing.)

Curtains UP.

Head Shepherd
Hey, young shepherd! (pause) I said, hey! Young shepherd! (still no answer. He nudges him with his toe.) Hey!

Young Shepherd (peeks one eye open at the Head Shepherd)
Yeah?

Head Shepherd
One of our sheep (Audience should baa-aa here—may need reminding! For example: “I said, one of our sheep) is straying from the flock. Go bring it back here.

Narrator

(Innkeeper and Wife move into position; the wife is wearing an apron and is standing next to her husband who is scrubbing the floor with a sponge.)

Curtains UP.

Wife (nagging)
. . . and when you’re finished with the floor, I need some boxes brought down from the attic. And later, but not too much later, I will need you to run to the store and pick up some milk for dinner. And then after that, the dishes will need to be washed, the laundry will need to be folded. Then you may draw my bath. (She turns on her heel and flits away.)

Innkeeper (to audience)
Forty years I’ve run this inn on my own. Forty years. (shakes his head) And now, when business is slow, she’s got me doing more work than I’ve ever done in forty years!

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.
(Quirinius moves into position. Quirinius is standing, looking at a Palm Pilot.)

Curtains UP.

**Quirinius**

Hmm. Cool! An Instant Message. *(clicks pen on Palm Pilot—disappointed)* Oh, it’s just from Herod *(to audience)* you know, being governor of Syria is tough work. *(interrupted)* No wait, it’s from Caesar himself! *(Reads message)* What? A census? I’ve gotta contact all the descendants of David to come here to Bethlehem for the census? That’s a LOT of people—what a mess this will be!

**Narrator**

Curtains DOWN.

*(All actors clear stage.)*

Curtains UP.

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Narrator
Welcome back for another round of “An Advent Skit!” Glad you could join us! Now, remember, when I say “Curtains DOWN,” close your eyes. And when I say “Curtains UP,” open them again. Okay? (starts to walk off)

Head shepherd (calling out from side stage)
Don’t forget us!

Narrator (returning to center stage)
Oh, yeah, sheep. The audience baa’s. (Narrator smiles.)

Curtains DOWN.

(Quirinius moves into position.)

Curtains UP.

Quirinius
So the notices have been sent to the “descendants of David,” the city merchants have been warned, and the local media has been called. What else is there? (looks in “mirror” on wall) Maybe I should get my hair cut.

Narrator
Curtains DOWN.

(The three shepherds move into position.)

Curtains UP.

(Young shepherd stands in middle of other two, holding the sheep.)

Young Shepherd
I got the sheep (audience baa’s), Head Shepherd.

Head Shepherd (sleepily)
Great. I’m glad you got the sheep. (audience baa’s)

Narrator
Curtains DOWN.

(The Innkeeper and Wife move into position. Innkeeper is asleep in a chair. Wife is standing beside him, reading a letter.)

Curtains UP.
Innkeeper (snoring)

Wife (reading)
To all esteemed business owners, duht, duht, duht. Skip, skip, skip. There will be a census in town in two weeks? All merchants should be aware that business may pick up immensely. Consider yourselves warned. (screams) Oh, honey! You’ve got a lot of work to do! The people are coming. The people are coming!

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.

(Mary and Joseph move into position, Mary on “donkeyback,” Joseph walking alongside.)

Curtains UP.

Mary (whining)
Oh, Joseph. How much farther is it now? I don’t think I’m going to make it much longer. This baby is coming! I think my water broke over that mound of rocks back there a mile. Oh, Joseph. And just when the nursery was finally finished, too. This is so disappointing. Oh! Joseph. Did you call ahead and make reservations?

Joseph (to audience)
Reservations?

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.
Curtains UP

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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Narrator (quickly)

Curtains DOWN.

(The three shepherds move into position All three shepherds are asleep on the ground.)

Curtains UP. (Narrator pauses.)

Curtains . . .

Head Shepherd (lifting his head from the ground)
SHEEP. (The audience baa’s and Head Shepherd puts his head down.)

Narrator (giving stern glance to Head Shepherd)
Curtains . . .

Head Shepherd (lifting his head from the ground again)
SHEEP. (The audience baa’s and Head Shepherd puts his head down.)

Narrator (giving another stern glance to Head Shepherd)
ARE YOU FINISHED ALREADY?

(Head Shepherd smiles and nods.)

Curtains DOWN.

(Quirinius moves into position as he is handing out lanyards to “visitors.”)

Curtains UP.

Quirinius
Get your lanyards here! Don’t be caught without one—new security measures during this time of high traffic—wear it around your neck at all times so we know you belong here. Oh, hello (doffs his hat), good day to you too. Welcome to my city. Welcome, one and all!

Narrator

(Mary and Joseph move into position—Mary draped over Joseph’s back, Joseph struggling to carry her. Each is wearing a lanyard. Mary has two on.)

Curtains UP.
Joseph
Mary, I’ve apologized a thousand times already. I’m sorry I didn’t make reservations for a room! How was I supposed to know it would be so crowded here? I’m even sorrier that we had to come here in the first place—especially now, when you’re in so much pain.

Mary
Pain? Pain? (shrieking now) You don’t know what pain is!

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.

(Innkeeper and Wife move into position: Wife’s apron stuffed with money. Innkeeper’s hands filled with money. No Vacancy sign is lying on floor.)

Curtains UP.

Innkeeper (sifting through money, counting it)
According to my calculations, every single one of our beds is full tonight. I think it’s time to put up the No Vacancy sign.

Wife (dreamily)
What was that, honey?

Innkeeper (to audience)
She’s already got this money spent. (sets No Vacancy sign on chair)

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.
Curtains UP.

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Narrator
Ah, it’s the big Sunday—today it all becomes clear. Don’t forget to make it special with the
Curtains UP, Curtains DOWN . . . and sheep. For those of you who haven’t been here—we’re
looking for great audience participation! When I say “Curtains DOWN,” close your eyes and
open them again when I say “Curtains UP” . . .

Head Shepherd
And when I say “sheep,” you say “Baaaaa.”

Narrator
Thank you, Head Shepherd. Now, let the skit begin!
Curtains DOWN.

(Mary and Joseph get into position. Manger is in between them (like every good nativity set.
Mary is holding a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths.)

Narrator
Curtains UP.

Mary
There are no words. Just no words.

Joseph
God is to be praised for this beautiful baby boy.

SONG: “Breath of Heaven”

Narrator
Curtains DOWN.

(Innkeeper and Wife move into position, Wife peering through “window” toward barn and
Innkeeper reading newspaper.)

Narrator
Curtains UP.

Wife
Do you think they’re okay out there, dear? I mean, she had a baby in the barn! With all the
animals standing by. Do you think they’re okay? Poor little one.

Innkeeper (puts down newspaper)
Why don’t we take them some more clean blankets. It’s the least we can do. Such a miracle—in
our own backyard.

SONG: “Mary, Did You Know?”
Narrator

Curtains DOWN.

(Quirinius moves into position, looking at Palm Pilot again.)

Curtains UP.

Quirinius

Newsflash? Young woman gives birth to king in barn? I don’t believe it—a king in a barn. Could it be true? Oh, wait, here’s an update: Bright star seen over barn in Bethlehem. A barn? Where are my manners?

SONG: “Welcome to Our World”

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.

(Three shepherds move into position, all three standing huddled together excitedly.)

Curtains UP.

SONG: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Youngest Shepherd

Did you see that? It was so bright.

Young Shepherd

I’ve never seen anything like it. Did you see that angel’s robes?

Head Shepherd

Or heard anything like it?—“Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace to all.

Youngest Shepherd

Shouldn’t we go to the manger like they said? (starts to jog away)

Young Shepherd

I just can’t believe we’re going to find a baby wrapped in blankets lying in an animal feed trough—but I’m not going to argue with God’s angels! Let’s go! (starts to jog away with Head Shepherd)

Head Shepherd (stops his jog)

What about the sheep? The audience baa’s. (Shepherds run.)

Narrator

Curtains DOWN.

Song: “The First Noel”

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