

-Narrator 1 (Sam)	-Mary (adult)
-Narrator 2 (Cameron)	-Angels
-Donkey	-Jesus (baby)
-Sheep	-Wise Men
-Cow	-Shepherds
-Joseph (adult)	

[*All enter*]

[A Fine Place for a Song, If Desired]

Sam: It's Christmas! It's Christmas time. WHOOOOOO!

Cameron: Sam, it's not Christmas yet.

Sam: I mean...it's almost Christmas.

Cameron: Well, what if I *almost* gave you \$5?

Sam: It's Christmas AND you're giving me \$5? Sweet...

Cameron: No, if I almost give it to you then you don't have it. Almost is not yet.

Sam: Cameron, did anyone ever tell you that you're kind of a bumner sometimes?

Cameron: What – me? I'm just trying to make sure we get this right.

Sam: Yeah, what are we doing here?

Cameron: We're here to tell the real story of Christmas like Christians have been doing for hundreds of years – since 1223.

Sam: Alright, Christians have been telling this story since lunch time. Got it.

Cameron: No, the year 1223. Christians realized that if we act out the story, then we can understand it better. It's like it's a part of our lives. They even used real, live farm animals!

Sam: Holy crap! Are we gonna have live animals in here?

(*Donkeys, Sheep, and Cows enter and graze on their risers*)

Donkey: I am a donkey! Hee-haw!

Sheep: I am a fluffy sheep! Baah! Baah!

Cow: I am a cow! Moo, moo! Want some milk?

Sam: Hey, thanks! (*drink some milk*) Ahhh...nutritious! So, if Christmas is really all about farm animals, where's Rudolph?

Cameron: Rudolph?

Sam: (*singing*) "the red-nosed reindeer had a very shiny nose."

Cameron: (*interrupting*) Stop, stop, stop! Rudolph is not in the Bible.

Sam: No? Not even a little bit?

Cameron: Not anywhere!

Sam: Weird...

Cameron: Look, let me tell you the story of why we celebrate Christmas. There was a woman named Mary who was engaged to a man named Joseph.

(Mary and Joseph enter)

Sam: Mister and Mrs. Claus, perhaps?

Cameron: No! Just listen. Mary was with child from the Holy Spirit. It was a miracle! Joseph didn't know that that's how she got pregnant, but an angel of the Lord told him that he could trust her and that they should still get married.

Angel 1: (*pats Mary on the head*) You're a nice lady!

Angel 2: (*to Joseph, shaking finger*) Be nice to her!

(Angels follow behind Mary and Joseph)

Sam: Look at the happy family!

Cameron: Well, actually, it wasn't such an easy and happy time for them. Mary and Joseph lived in a land that had been conquered by the Romans. That meant there were lots of outsiders ruling over them and telling them what to do whether they liked it or not! So, Caesar Augustus....

Sam: Salad dressing guy!

Cameron: No, the emperor of all the known world.

Sam: That sounds more important than salad.

Cameron: Ya think? Anyhow, he wanted to take a census – he wanted to find out exactly how many people lived in his empire and where they lived. And he made everyone travel back to their family's home town to be registered – no matter how far away it was. Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem was 80 miles away from where they lived in Nazareth.

Sam: 80 miles? On foot? I mean, the emperor wouldn't make them go with her being pregnant, right?

Cameron: You're wrong. The emperor was a jerk.

Sam: Seriously. Well, at least they got to stay in nice, cushy beds once they got to Joseph's parent's house...

Cameron: Not exactly. Joseph's parents didn't live in Bethlehem – that was just where his ancestors came from. Like, I have ancestors who came over on the Mayflower in 1620, but that doesn't mean we know any family in England any more.

Sam: So, wait, Cameron...they just walked 80 miles to a town where they were total strangers?

Cameron: Yeah, and then nobody had any room for them to stay. They weren't the only ones who had to travel to Bethlehem and, with a pregnant lady along for the ride, they were not breaking any speed records. Slow and steady might win the race, but it doesn't get you a room at the inn.

Sam: Poor people! They must have been so hot and dirty and tired. Angels? Help 'em out, will ya?

Angels: (*touching different parts of Mary and Joseph in blessing; ad lib blessings*) Bless you! Bless your feet! Bless your hands! Bless your belly!

Cameron: So, anyway, the time came for Mary to give birth in the same room where they kept all the animals.

Donkey: Hee-haw! He's here. Jesus is here! Hee-haw!

Sheep: Bahh! My fluff is my gift! Bahh!

Cow: Moo! You can have my milk, too! Moo!

Cameron: And the people they stayed with built them a luxurious nursery with a big, fancy crib and a colorful mobile that played lullabies and they had toys for miles and miles.

Sam: Really? That sounds lovely...

Cameron: NO, of course not, goofball. There was nothing there – just a manger to lay her baby in. (*Sam looks as if he's about to speak*) And before you ask, a manger is a box where the animal's straw is – for eating!

Sam: But won't the animals go hungry?

Donkey: My dinner bowl!

Cameron: (*looks at the donkey*) They'll be fine. Don't worry. So, moving on, nearby there were shepherds who were watching their sheep.

Shepherd: Hi, sheep! Good sheep!

Sheep: I'm the best sheep!

Shepherd: I think so, too.

Cameron: And then angels from God stood in front of them and they were scared.

(Shepherds shake and look scared)

Angels: Boo!

Sam: Angels were scary?

Cameron: Not so much scary – you just don't expect to see angels popping up out of nowhere in the middle of the night. But the angel had a message for the shepherds:

Angel 1: Don't be afraid – I have wonderful news of great joy for everybody. Today in Bethlehem a baby was born. He is the Savior, the messiah, the Lord! Go to the city and find him wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger.

Cameron: And then a multitude (*eyes Sam*) – a whole bunch of angels showed up singing and praising God.

Angels: Glory to God! Peace on Earth! Gloria! Gloria!

[A Fine Place for a Song, If Desired]

Cameron: The angels left and went back to heaven.

Shepherd: Come on, sheep! Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see what happened. It must be important if God sent angels to tell us about it!

[A Fine Place for a Song, If Desired]

Cameron: So they went very, very quickly to find Mary and Joseph and little baby Jesus in the manger. When they saw Jesus, they told everyone what had happened to them and what the angels had said. And everyone who heard it said:

Everybody: Wow! That's amazing!

[A Fine Place for a Song, If Desired]

Cameron: Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went home, praising God for what they had heard and seen.

Shepherd: Praise God! Praise God! Hallelujah!

Sam: Cameron?

Cameron: Yeah, Sam?

Sam: Umm...the shepherds didn't leave.

Cameron: Well, no, they didn't.

Sam: But you said they were gonna go.

Cameron: They just don't want to miss the next part of the story. It's also exciting and scary and surprising.

Sam: Ooh! Let me get some popcorn! (*starts snacking; Cameron occasionally grabs some, too*)

Cameron: So, when Jesus was born there was a King named Herod. He was a bad guy – very bad guy – super villain of the story.

Everybody: Boo Herod!

Cameron: He wanted to keep all the power for himself and he didn't care who he hurt as long as he stayed in charge. One day, he got a visit from some wise men from the East. They said:

Wise man 1: We saw a star!

Wise man 2: That means a king is born!

Wise man 3: We'll bring presents!

Cameron: When Herod –

Everybody: Boo Herod!

Cameron: Yes, when Herod heard about this new king, he got scared and he called together everyone he could think of to find out who this baby was and where he was born. They told him that the messiah would be born in Bethlehem. So, Herod thought about it –

Everybody: Boo Herod!

Cameron: And he called in the wise men to find out about the star. He said to them to go to Bethlehem, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

Sam: Homage?

Cameron: Oh, right, it’s a way of honoring somebody in public – like when you kneel to a king so that everybody knows that you are loyal to the king.

(Everybody looks at Cameron and then bows to Jesus)

Sam: Like that?

Cameron: Yup! Just like that. *(Everybody gets back up)* So the wise men traveled to Bethlehem, following the star. And when they got there they were so happy!

Sam: How happy were they?

Cameron: They were so happy they jumped up and down for joy! *(wise men jump)* They were so happy, they high-fived each other for days! *(wise men high five)* They were so happy, they danced happy dances until the sun came up! *(wise men dance)*

Sam: Well, that’s pretty happy.

Cameron: When the wise men saw Jesus, they kneeled down in front of him.

(Wise men kneel)

Sam: Yay, Jesus!

Wise man 1: Take my gold!

Wise man 2: Take my frankincense!

Wise man 3: Take my myrrh!

(Wise men get back up)

[A Fine Place for a Song, If Desired]

Cameron: And then the wise men had a dream...

Angel 1: Don't go back to Herod!

Everybody: Boo Herod!

Angel 2: He's a bad man!

Cameron: So they went back home by another road. The end.

Sam: The end? That story was amazing! It had talking animals and stinky shepherds and ninja angels (ya know, 'cause they pop up from nowhere) and evil kings and wise men and miracle stars. Wow!

Cameron: And, you're right, Sam. The story doesn't end there. Jesus was born into our world to send hope and peace, love and joy into each one of our lives forever and always.

Sam: Frosty the snowman has nothing on Jesus Christ!

Cameron: You said it. We celebrate Christmas with endless joy, with gifts and yummy food, with acts of kindness and love because Jesus taught us that we are children of God and that where we are, God always is. As long as we hold onto our faith and hold onto one another, we can be a part of the joyful kingdom of peace in Jesus Christ.

[A Fine Place for a Song, If Desired]

Everybody: Hallelujah! Amen.

Christmas Time

By

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December, 2017