

IN THE LIGHT OF THE NATIVITY
By Terri Dill
Music and lyrics by Bob Marshall

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AUDITION 1 -- for 1m, 3w

In this scene, Pete tends to the nativity scene and is surprised to find Holly.

(FX: The storm continues. PETE is bundled up to check on the Nativity. CATHERINE MOORE leaves the dry goods store, and she too is bundled up for the storm. She stops to lock up, then watches Pete, hesitating.)

CATHERINE: Pete? *(Yells a little louder to be heard over the wind.)* PETE! What in the world are you doing out tonight?

PETE: *(Gruffly.)* Minding my own business! That's what!

CATHERINE: *(Undeterred.)* Does your wife know where you are? You best mind your own business and get yourself out of the cold night air. You're going to catch pneumonia.

PETE: *(Snappy.)* Margaret is home making supper, and yes, she knows I am out here.

CATHERINE: *(With suspicion.)* All right. That seems rather odd, just saying.

PETE: Speaking of odd, what are you doing closin' the store at this hour?

CATHERINE: Just a few last-minute shoppers is all. This isn't so unusual for me. Only me to worry about when I get home, and of course my cat. I don't think too much about the hours I work. I enjoy it. Especially at Christmastime. *(Looking up to watch the snow fall.)* Don't you just love Christmas? And this snow really gets me in the spirit.

PETE: *(With irritation.)* I don't worry about the holidays. Margaret gets caught up with everything having to be perfect. I like all the fussin' over the food, but the rest of it... well, let's just say I am glad when it is over.

CATHERINE: I agree with Margaret, but to each his own. You best get back to your supper. I am heading home before the streets get covered. Good evening, Pete. *(Turns to leave, glancing back at HIM.)*

PETE: *(Mumbles some reply, then pulls HIS coat up around his neck.)* Can't a man just go out for a stroll without it being a big deal?

(PETE approaches the Nativity. He hurries to pick up the donkey and places him out of the wind. As he does, HOLLY appears to him from the shadows of the makeshift stable. Surprised, he jumps back.)

PETE: *(Cont'd.)* What is it with people just popping up all over? *(To HOLLY.)* Don't you know it's snowing? In another hour we are going to have a foot in town. *(HE moves his hands about as if to shoo her away.)* Go away!

HOLLY: I am very aware that it is snowing. That is what I am doing here - looking for shelter. I am trying to get out of the wind. *(Rubs HER hands together to warm them.)*

PETE: For starters having a coat would help! What in God's creation made you come out in this without a coat?

HOLLY: Well, I could make up a story and tell you I got lost and someone stole my hat and coat. Or that I never had a hat and coat because I have no money. I suppose I could just about tell you anything, but the truth is, I have been looking for this stable.

PETE: Listen, woman, this here is not a real stable. We put it up every year at this exact time for Christmas. You do know the Christmas story, right? Why else would we have a plywood donkey and a camel?

MARGARET: *(Offstage.)* Pete! Where are you, Pete? You ole fool! Now you have gone off and done it! Got yourself lost in a snowstorm!

(PETE peers from around the side of the stable to answer.)

PETE: I am not lost! I am over here talking to this crazy lady!

(MARGARET enters and joins HIM. As Pete turns back to speak to HOLLY, he finds that she has left.)

MARGARET: *(Hands on hips.)* So, you're down at the stable, meetin' up with a crazy lady? In a snowstorm?

PETE: No, no, no. I am just at this stable checking on things. This woman shows up with no coat on saying she has been looking for this here stable.

MARGARET: *(Entering the stable.)* So, not only are you out in a storm, you have now run across a woman in the storm with no coat. *(Pause.)* Well, where is she?

PETE: As you can see, she is gone. You probably scared her off with all your yellin'! Never mind, just help me move this bale over here so we can put the donkey and camel behind it. Otherwise they'll both blow away before morning.

(PETE stands back and gives Margaret the head nod to move the bales. SHE picks up the first one, then turns back to see if Pete is going to help her.)

MARGARET: Well, are you going to help me?!

PETE: *(Motions for HER to continue.)* You're doin' fine. Just place 'em over there.

(MARGARET stands with both hands on hips, staring at Pete. HE shuffles his feet for a moment and tries not to notice she is disgusted, but eventually gives in.)

PETE: *(Cont'd.)* Well, move aside so I can get to 'em! *(HE quickly places the bales in front of the donkey.)*

(After a moment, MARGARET begins to watch as PETE adjusts the Nativity scene, moving the donkey and camel, perfecting all the details.)

MARGARET: *(Smiling.)* Now, if this don't beat all. Pete Matchet has a fondness for the town square Nativity. Can't wait to tell Elisa when I see her next! Ha, she'll never believe this one.

PETE: Now you leave my sister out of this! She'll never let me live it down. She thinks she runs this town, but she just needs to mind her own business! I don't know how the mayor has put up with that woman for all these years.

MARGARET: He has put up with her because he is just like her. Two peas in a pod I'd say.

PETE: Don't know how this harbor can manage without the two of them running everything. Well, they aren't running me! I haven't stepped foot in their house for fifteen years, and it will be another fifteen if I have my say.

MARGARET: Come on, you old coot. We both best get home before we freeze. Soup is ready for eatin'. *(Laughing, almost to herself.)* Want to ask your lady friend to join us?

PETE: *(Shaking head.)* Why me, Lord? Why couldn't you have sent me one of those quiet ones, you know, the ones with no humor or backbone?

(HE turns and sees MARGARET with hands on hips, scowling. He quickly adjusts his hat as if to say "I'm coming!" but it is clear he does not make her wait on him. THEY exit.)

AUDITION 2 -- for all cast

In this scene, the town celebrates finding Jonathon.

(AT RISE: It is the Christmas Eve service. ELISA is running around trying to get all her actors in place. No one is cooperating.)

ELISA: *(Waving HER arms about.)* All right, everyone, it is time for the Nativity scene. Where are my Wise Men? Shepherds, shepherds? You need to go over there so the angels can find you. Angels, where are my angels?

(The VILLAGERS are standing to one side as they light their candles for the outdoor service. They begin to listen in as ELISA and PETE talk. The MAYOR and MARGARET are talking and both seem pleased that the siblings are at last talking to one another.)

PETE: Good grief, Elisa, let us just enjoy this one thing without you directin' traffic.

ELISA: *(Hands on hips.)* Well, well, well, if it isn't my brother Pete. Didn't expect to see you here tonight.

PETE: I show up every Christmas Eve, you're just too busy tellin' everyone what to do you don't see the forest through the trees. This is the one thing, as kids, you and I agreed was the best part of Christmas. Don't you remember? Mother and Dad would take us to the service then we'd all come here to sing carols and watch as Mary would lift the baby from the manger. That is what I remember.

ELISA: *(Quietly.)* Me too, Pete, me too. What happened to us? You're my big brother, and I used to look up to you for everything. Then you got married and forgot about me. I have no children, you and your family were my family. I needed you to be my brother. I need family. Pete, I want you and Margaret to know this, the mayor and I have talked with Holly and offered her a place to live while in Prophete Harbor. She will be able to stay as long as she wants and, God willing, she will find her son very soon.

PETE: I didn't know, Elisa, how you felt about any of us. I thought you were pushing me away. You have found your family in Holly. She can be for both of you the daughter you never had. *(Pause.)* I have Dad's stubborn streak in me and my pride got the best of me. I hope you can forgive me.

ELISA: I guess I got some of that stubbornness as well. Aren't we a pair? We just wasted fifteen years for nothing. Having you back in my life will be the best Christmas present I have ever gotten.

JOE: Can I make a suggestion? How about you not waste another minute; let's go to the stable and see if all of us can get on the same page. Even if we don't have a Mary, we can see Christmas. *(Heartfelt.)* God is everywhere.

PASTOR SAYWARD: Joe is right, folks. God is here. He knows we gather together in His name. *(Pause.)* Please, let's go to the stable. We can keep watch for the Savior and celebrate together. This will be the best Christmas Eve service ever. It is time to make new memories.

(The CHILDREN are in the stable around the manger. They are smiling and anxious to bring the good news to the people. HOLLY enters with ISABELLE. The rest of the VILLAGERS follow. Many stand outside of the set, looking as if they are seeing it for the first time. The CAPTAIN is dressed like Joseph, JACKSON a shepherd, and the MAYOR wears the hat of the Wise Man. As they are about to take their places in the scene, SFX: a baby cries. They ALL are astonished and look to see where the crying is coming from. The captain goes to the manger, bends down and picks up baby Jonathon. The children are thrilled. Gasps are heard from the crowd. Holly runs to her son and takes him from the arms of the captain.)

CAPTAIN: *(Looks first at HOLLY then at the VILLAGERS who are standing in awe.)* We have our Mary!

HOLLY: It can't be! How can it be? He is really here. Right here in front of me. I never thought I would see him again. *(Talking to the baby.)* I will never let you go no matter what happens, I will never let anyone take you from me. I am your mother and you are my son, you are my Christmas miracle. *(Thrilled, SHE turns to go back to the people of Prophyte Harbor, to show them Jonathon.)*

(HANNAH and GABRIEL appear to step out from nowhere, dressed in white. FX: They glow, as do the lampposts. The sky is filled with stars and there is a light on the Nativity that shines on all.)

HANNAH: And on that night, in a stable, the Son of man was born to the Virgin Mary. Her husband, Joseph, would look on as she held her newborn son in her arms and said, "I am your mother and you are my son, my gift from God." The angels of the Lord would surround them as they led the shepherds to see the Savior of the world. The Wise Men would find the King of all Kings, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. They would give them their gifts and for all eternity, the world would know the story of the birth of Jesus Christ. All were standing on holy ground.

GABRIEL: Just as you have come tonight, because you are drawn to this place of peace, let it be known, the Lord of Lords, your God and my God, comes to you in the light of the Nativity.

(EVERYONE gathers to sing.)

SONG #6: In the Light of the Nativity

ENTIRE CAST:

IN THE LIGHT OF THE NATIVITY LIVES ARE CHANGED.
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY CHILD THINGS ARE
NEVER THE SAME.
GOD'S LOVE CAME DOWN TO US REACHING THRU TIME
AND THRU SPACE.
GOD'S GIFT TO THIS FALLEN WORLD SHOWED HIS
AMAZING GRACE.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE NATIVITY, TRUTH'S REVEALED.
IN THE PRESENCE OF EMMANUEL
BROKEN LIVES CAN BE HEALED.
WE NEEDED A SAVIOR,
THAT WAS GOD'S PLAN FROM THE START.
JESUS IS THAT SAVIOR, LET HIM COME INTO YOUR HEART.

IN THE LIGHT, IN THE LIGHT WE CAN KNOW GOD'S LOVE,
WE CAN KNOW GOD'S PEACE, HE IS WITH US,
LET US CELEBRATE HIS BIRTH.
IN THE LIGHT, IN THE LIGHT, HE'S THE PRINCE OF PEACE,
HE IS LORD OF LORDS,
HE HAS COME, HE HAS COME TO US.
IN THE BIRTH, IN THE LIGHT, IN THE LIGHT, HE'S THE
PRINCE OF PEACE, HE IS LORD OF LORDS, HE HAS COME,
HE HAS COME TO US.
IN THE LIGHT, IN THE LIGHT, IN THE LIGHT,
IN THE LIGHT OF THE NATIVITY.

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