

BABY TALK

By Rod

This sketch is based on Luke 1 vv 26-38 and Matthew 1 vv 18-25. It aims to highlight how hard it must have been for Mary to be bearing a child before her marriage to Joseph – and for him to deal with the situation. Mary's father is a 'fictitious' character (although she must have had one!). He is there to reflect society's sceptical view of the virgin birth. The sketch ends by drawing out how such a beginning gave Jesus no advantages in life – quite the reverse.

CAST

Dad *Father of Mary*

Mary *Needs to be relatively young female*

Joseph *The real Joseph was probably older than Mary so some latitude on age is possible*

The action begins with Dad on stage. He could be engaged in some activity (e.g. tailoring) Enter Mary who goes across to her father and embraces him in a daughterly way.

Dad Hello Mary, my darling daughter. How are you today?

Mary Hi Dad. Oh, it's so exciting. I'm going to have a baby.

Dad I know, Mary. You're going to marry that nice carpenter, Joseph, and then you're going to have lots of babies. Your mother and I are looking forward to being grandparents.

Mary No Dad, I'm going to have a baby right away.

Dad *[Treating Mary like a child]* Now listen, Mary, you can't have a baby until you're married. I thought your mother explained all those things to you when you had your little womanly chat.... about how the mummy cow meets the daddy cow...

M Bull.

D I assure you it's not. I know from experience. It's where you came from.

M No, Dad, I know all about that business with the mummy cow and the *bull*. I really am going to have a baby. *[Spelling it out]* I'm pregnant.

D Wait till I get my hands on that Joseph. He just couldn't wait. I never liked him. How could he bring such disgrace on our family?

M No, Dad, Joseph's not the father.

D What! You mean ... You haven't? .. Who was it? The milkman? The postman? Oh, Mary, how could you? Was it that young shepherd you took a shine to? What was his name?..

- M It wasn't a shepherd or the milkman or the postman – or anyone at all.
- D What are you babbling about girl?
- M I had a visit from the angel Gabriel.
- D Gabriel. That was it. I've never trusted shepherds. They travel around - easy come, easy go. No morals.
- M No, Dad, not the *shepherd* Gabriel – the *angel* Gabriel.
- D Have you been at my nettle wine, young lady? It's far too strong for the likes of you.
- M The angel Gabriel appeared to me and said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. You will be with child and give birth to a son".
- D [*Sarcastically. Mocking*] I take my hat off to you, Mary. Young girl's come up with some pretty good stories about how they *happened* to become pregnant – but that takes the biscuit. It's the best one I've ever heard.
- M But it's true.
- D [*Firmly*] I wasn't born yesterday, young lady. Now stop all this messing about and tell me the truth. [*Knock at the door*] Oh rats, who's that? You'd better go and see. [*Exit Mary. Dad mutters to himself*] Angel Gabriel! Hah. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you". Whatever will she come up with next? ... [*Enter Mary and Joseph*]
- M It's Joseph.
- D [*Embarrassed*] Ah, Joseph my lad. I'm .. er.. glad you dropped by. I'm afraid Mary and I have something to tell you.
- Joseph You mean about her being pregnant. I know all about that.
- D [*Angry*] So it was you! [*Advancing on Joseph menacingly holding up fists*] How dare you take advantage of my daughter before her wedding day?
- M [*Intervening*] Dad, stop it.
- J I know all about it because an angel appeared to me in a dream and told me.
- D Not you as well. Angels, dreams. What is it with young people today? They've completely lost touch with reality.
- J I've come to say that I will still happily take Mary home as my wife. Indeed I will deem it an honour.

- M *[Rushing to embrace Joseph]* Oh, Joseph, that's wonderful. *[Mary and Joseph chat together as if sharing their experiences]*
- D *[To himself]* Well, that's one bit of good news I suppose. At least I'll get Mary off my hands. And I won't have a screaming baby keeping me awake at night and my house littered with smelly nappies.
- J *[To Mary]* So you had a visit from an angel as well?
- M Yes, it was an awesome experience. It's such a privilege for us to be the one's to look after this baby.
- D *I* feel sorry for the *baby*. It's bad enough being Jewish; let alone being conceived out of wedlock *and* having parents who are both hallucinating lunatics. What chance has he got to make a name for himself with a start like that?
- M Oh, we already know what name he's going to have. Don't we Joseph?
- J Yes, the angel told us to "name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins".
- D Jesus! Saviour! He's not going to *be* a saviour – he's going to *need* a saviour. God help the little beggar.
- M I'm sure he will.

THE END