

THE BANNS

[Everyman, Everywoman]

(EVERYMAN appears putting the finishing touches to the Pageant Waggon)

EVERYMAN Right, that's it! Done. *(To audience)* You're just in time. The Mystery will soon be revealed. We're ready to roll.

(EVERYWOMAN appears from the Pageant Waggon pulling on her costume)

EVERYWOMAN *(sees the audience)* Oh! Where did you lot come from? We're not ready yet.

EVERYMAN Yes we are. I am anyway. *(Takes her aside)* Have you got the costumes ready?

EVERYWOMAN Yes. Just about. But it isn't time is it? My watch has stopped *(shakes it)*. We're not starting, are we, the angels haven't arrived yet,

EVERYMAN Got to. The audience are here. They'll think it's a right mystery if nothing happens. Go and dig the angels out. Tell 'em they're on!

EVERYWOMAN Right! *(pauses)* Shouldn't we say something *(nods to audience)*? Like, give them a welcome or something?

EVERYMAN Good thinking. *(Clears throat)* Good afternoon to you all. Welcome to...

EVERYMAN/EVERYWOMAN The Mysteries

EVERYWOMAN Tales as old as time

EVERYMAN Allow us to introduce ourselves. I'm Everyman...

EVERYWOMAN And I'm Everywoman, his better half...

EVERYMAN/EVERYWOMAN Your Mystery tour guides!

EVERYWOMAN We'll begin at the beginning

EVERYMAN Or even before ... in eternity, when there was only...

EVERYMAN/EVERYWOMAN God!

EVERYMAN Now, get the angels quick

(They exit)

THE CREATION OF ADAM AND EVE

[God, Adam, Eve, Animals]

GOD

I am the Alpha and Omega,
The Life the Way the Truth,
The first and the last.
It is my will it should be so,



It is, it was, it shall be thus.
I am great God gracious, which never had
beginning,
I am maker unmade, all might is in me.
I am life and way unto wealth winning.
I am foremost and first, as I bid shall it be.



See, Heaven and Earth are made by my
might.
In Heaven are angels both fair and bright,
But Earth in its void is dark as the night.
For name, let darkness be known as 'the
night',
And 'day' is the name I give to the light.

(The Earth is lit)

Now for my purpose I twin them in two.
In Heaven, the planets and stars will shine
through
And greater lights more than ever I knew
Named 'sun' and named 'moon' each other
pursue.
The sun for the day, the moon for the night
Thus they are divided, and give there some
light.

On earth shall be wetness - and dry I install.
The gathering of wet, 'sea' shall I call,

Therein shall swim fishes and whales, great
and small,
And from earth shall spring grass and trees
green and tall,
And beasts, fowls and insects about them
will crawl.
Thus the world is created. In five days, I

recall.

To keep this world, both more and less,
A skilful beast now will I make
After my shape and my likeness,
To worship me. And, for his sake,
Of the simplest part of earth that is here
I shall make Man.
Therefore rise up, O earth, in blood and
bone,
In shape of man! I here command!

(ADAM rises from the earth)

Take now this breath of life
And receive your soul from me.

(GOD breathes on ADAM)

ADAM

Lord, all powerful is your might
And that is seen on every side;
For now is here a joyful sight,
To see this world so long and wide.

GOD

A female shall you have as mate
'She' shall I make of your left rib.

(EVE rises from the earth)

This woman take you as your wife
And 'Adam' and 'Eve', your names for life.

*(GOD breathes on EVE. She sees GOD and
ADAM. ADAM and EVE hold hands)*

ADAM



Many different things there are
Beasts and fowls, both wild and tame;
Yet is none made to your likeness
But we alone. Praised be your name!


EVE

To such a Lord in high degree
Be evermore lasting loving,
That to us such a dignity


Has given before all other things.

(ANIMALS enter. ADAM and EVE name the animals. LUCIFER - as serpent - arrives with the other animals)

ADAM

Ah, blessed Lord! Now from the day
Since we are **made**, **promise** to tell 
What we must do, and also say,
Most gracious Lord, where we must dwell.

GOD

In Paradise shall **ye**  both dwell,
A place of pleasure and delight.
My name to worship evermore,
As all things else will **you** adore.

Of all the trees that be herein
You may eat fruit and know no sin.
But from this single tree alone
If **you** should eat, fall from **your** throne!

ADAM

Ah, Lord, since we shall do nothing
But love **you** for **your** great goodness,
We shall obey to **your** bidding,
And keep **your** word both more and less.

GOD

With heaven and earth first I began
And my creation all was blessed.
The sixth day, I created Man,
And on the seventh will I rest.

To bliss I shall **you** bring;
Come forth **you** two, with me.
You shall live in loving;
My blessings with you be.

(Exit GOD)

ADAM 

Our lot is cast in widest way

EVE

Our bliss to find each livelong day

ADAM & EVE

Together we now name for aye
All creatures great and small.

THE FALL OF MAN

[Lucifer, Eve, Lucifer, Adam, God, Angel]

LUCIFER

I, that ruled most bright and fair,
An angel high without compare,
Have fallen from grace; boastful ambition
Hath brought me to this sad condition.
And in my stead, a master new
God has made, His work to do,
By His own hand, the man is put
To rule the earth, while I in soot
Have lost the bliss that should be mine,
The noble trust, and love divine.
But harken all to what I say!
If I have sinned, then I repay.
I, Lucifer, exiled from light,
Shall all the bliss of mankind blight.
Ah, Adam's mate now I espy,

In serpent's guise I'll charm her eye.
In a worm's likeness will I wend.
Eve! Eve!

EVE

Who is there?

LUCIFER

'Tis I, a friend.
And for your good is my coming.
Of all the fruit that here doth grow
Why eat you naught, I beg to know?

EVE

We may of them each one
Take all and without fear
But one tree stands among
Would do us harm if we drew near

LUCIFER

And why that tree - that would I know
Any more than all the others other by?

EVE

For our Lord God forbids us so,
To eat that fruit, Adam and I.

We can't go near,
And if we did, we both should die,
He said, and lose our comforts here.

LUCIFER

Yes, Eve, he has me sent.
Come close, there's naught to fear.
To eat that fruit he you forbad.
I know it well, this was his skill,
Those great virtues that are there still.
For will you see?
Who eats the fruit of good and ill
Shall have knowledge as much as he.

EVE

What kind of thing are you
That tells this tale to me?

LUCIFER:

A snake that knows full well now,
How you may worshipped be.

(He genuflects)

Woman, give way!

EVE

To do that I am truly loath,
It would our God mispay.

LUCIFER:

No, truly you may safely eat
For there's no peril therein lies,
But worship and a great winning.
For just like God, you shall be wise,
Equal to him in everything.
Yes, Gods you both shall be.

EVE

Is this true what you say?

LUCIFER

Yes, why do you not trust in me?
I tell you nothing but the truth.

EVE

Then will I your teaching trust

And add this fruit to our daily food.

(She takes the apple from the tree)

LUCIFER

Bite on boldly, as you must.

(EVE bites apple)

Now to Adam, to share your bliss.

(LUCIFER laughs and retires)

EVE

Adam, eat this fruit so good.

ADAM

Alas woman, why took you this?

Our Lord commanded us both

To leave this tree of his.

Your deed will make him full of wrath.

Alas, you've done amiss!

EVE:

No, Adam, don't grieve at this,

And I will tell you why.

A snake has shown eternal bliss.

We shall be Gods, both you and I,

If this we eat,

Here from this tree.

For we shall be as wise

As God that is so great.

ADAM

To eat it would I not refuse

Could I be sure of what you say.

EVE

Bite on boldly, for it is true:

We shall be gods and know today.

(ADAM bites the apple)

ADAM

Alas, what have I done? For shame!

Ill counsel! Woe be to thee!

Ah, Eve, you are to blame;

To this enticed you me.

My body does me shame,

For I am naked, now I think.

EVE

Alas, Adam, and so am I

ADAM

And for sorrow sore, why should we not sink?

For we have grieved God Almighty

That made me Man.

EVE

No Adam, don't blame me.

ADAM

Really, Eve love, who then?

EVE

The snake, alas, it was his fault.

With tales untrue, he me betrayed.

ADAM

Alas, that I listened to your tale,

Our shapes in shame me grieve;

With what shall they be hid?

EVE

Take us these fig leaves

Quickly now I bid.

ADAM

Right as you say, so shall it be,

For we are naked and all bare.

I dearly wish to hide me

From my Lord's sight - if I knew where.

(GOD appears)

GOD

Adam!

ADAM

Lord?

GOD

Where are you? Quickly!

ADAM
I hear thee, Lord, but see you not.
I am naked as the day is long.
GOD
This deed, what have you wrought?

ADAM
Lord, Eve it was made me do wrong,
And to this state me brought.

GOD
Eve, why did you give your mate
Fruit I told you should hang still,
And commanded none to take?

EVE
This snake, Lord, enticed me so to do
Oh woe is me!
For ever that foolish deed I'll rue.

GOD
You wicked worm, I'll not abide,
For you have willed this, I believe,
From henceforth, on your womb you'll
slide,
Cursed shall you be, for the sake of Eve.

*(LUCIFER falls onto his stomach and
slithers away hissing)*

Woman, I warn you straight and true,
Your troubles I will full increase.
And Adam, henceforth I say to you,
In Middle-Earth sweat without cease,
And work hard for your food.

ADAM
Master, why has it come to this?
Why is it that we sink?
We that had all earthly bliss
Have now good cause to think.

GOD
Ho Cherubim! My angel bright
To Middle-Earth go drive these two.

ANGEL

All ready Lord, and it is right
Since your will is that, it must be so.
Adam and Eve with me now go,
Your sorrow I am telling.
Come forth, come fast, to Middle-Earth
For here you won't be dwelling.

ADAM
Alas, for life! Alas, for woe!
Come wife, 'tis done, and we must go.

*(LUCIFER - now as Death - goes out with
them triumphantly)*

CAIN AND ABEL

[Pikharnesse, Cain, Abel, God]

(Horse dance is in progress as the audience enters. PIKHARNESS comes forward)

EVERYWOMAN

Now here I am, a merry boy,
All hail, all hail! Be full of joy,
Shut your noise and listen to me,
And hear what you are about to see.
Make way, make way for Adam's sons,
For Cain and Abel are about to come!
One with plough, the other with sheep.
Now see how well God's law they keep.

(CAIN enters ploughing; he is having considerable trouble in making the horses work.)

CAIN

Hey up Greenham! Come on Gryne,
Quickly now, waste not my time!
Plough this field today we must,
Move you now, with wrath I bust!
Oh, you nags, will you not work?
Now pull this way and do not shirk.
What are you doing standing still?
O, hang for you I surely will!

Pikharness, Pikharness, my servant lad!

PIK

Greetings to you master, be ever glad!

CAIN

How is it you are never near at hand?
Come on now, make them plough the land!

PIK

Come on now Mull! Oh, come on Stott,
You know that ploughing is your lot

(Horses start to move)

Now you see they work for me,

'Tis just they will not move for ye.

CAIN

Pikharness, you are a cheeky lad!
Your cockiness does make me mad!
Oh, how I wish that you were dead,
I must tan your hide instead!
I am your master; will you fight?

PIK

Yes, unless you take a fright,
When I shall show you all my might!

(Comic fight, CAIN missing the faster PIK)

PIK *(Seeing ABEL coming)*

Ah, but look yonder, I see your kin,
Your brother Abel comes here for
worshipping.
This bantering must now surely stop.

CAIN

Oh, to hell with you and there to rot!

ABEL

God, as He both may and can,
Speed you, brother, and your man.

CAIN

Come kiss my arse!
I must not curse.
Away from here is your welcome.
Go off with you, dear brother, and kiss the
devil's bum.
Why sneak up like a thief?
When I want you, I will shout.

ABEL

Brother, there is none about
Would cause you any grief.
But my brother, hear me more,
For it is the custom of our law
That all whose works and ways are nice
Shall worship God with sacrifice.
And, therefore, brother, let us pray
That God may clean our hearts this day.
Then make our offering should we,
Of corn or cattle it can be.

So God may his great mercy send
To grant us bliss without an end.

CAIN

On, and on, and on, you preach!
How long these lessons will you teach?
For God's sake hold your tongue, I say,
Or else go work the Devil's way!
Should I leave my plough and everything
And go with you to make an offering?
You will not find me that mad,
Go to the Devil and say I'm bad!
What does God give to make you praise
Him so?
He gives me naught but sorrow and woe.

ABEL

Cain, this talk is vanity,
God gives your livelihood to you.

CAIN

Yet not a farthing do I see.
What He gives have I no clue!

ABEL

Our custom, brother, does require
A tenth of all our stock entire
To be, in God's name, burned with fire.

CAIN

Huh, what is to you a tenth, dear brother,
For me each year is worse than the other.
So little can I glean
No wonder I be lean!
Yet if a fat gift I could bring,
He would not lend me anything.

ABEL

Yet everything that you do own
Is of God's good grace, and a loan.

CAIN

What reason have I to think that so
Since I remember He was my foe?
If indeed He was my friend,
There was plenty He could lend.
When all men's corn was fair in field

Not a penny's worth was my yield!
When I would sow and wanted seed,
And of corn had the greatest need,
Then He gave me not a jot.
So, now I keep what I have got!

ABEL

Cain, dear brother, say not so,
'But let us forth together go.

(CAIN does not move)

'Dear Cain, it would grieve my heart
If you and I should go apart.
The ties of blood do not deny;
Are we not brothers, you and I?

CAIN

I would not part to please God or not
With anything that I have got.
But I suppose I cannot win,
So to your pleas I will give in.
Lead on - though I am loathe to go

Dear brother Cain, why are you so?
Come! Let us journey onward together.
Blessed is God; we have fine weather.

*(They move to the place of sacrifice, ABEL
with sheep and CAIN with corn)*

CAIN

Lay down your bundle upon this hill.

ABEL

Forsooth, brother, so I will.
And, God of heaven, take it good.

CAIN

Now offer first your livelihood.

ABEL

God, that created both earth and sky,
I pray to you to hear my cry.
Now, take with thanks if 'tis your will,
This tithe I offer here on this hill.
For I give it to you with good intent,

To you, my Lord, that all has sent.
I burn it now with steadfast thought
In worship of Him that all has wrought.

(White smoke appears)

CAIN
Rise! Let me, since you have done,
Quickly finish what is begun.
Yet, as I stand here with these shanks,
I have no cause to give much thanks.
I know however much I burn
Will bring no profit in return.
Although to tithe I have no heart,
I suppose I had better make a start.

(CAIN begins to count the sheaves but deliberately and holds back the best ones for himself)

One sheaf, one; and this makes two!
Neither can I spare for you.
Ah, here! Another making three,
Yet also, this shall stay with me.
For I will choose these three to keep,
He shall not have the best I reap.

(Selecting a very poor sheaf)
Ah, take this one, Lord, as your due,
For this is all I give to you!

ABEL
Cain, be advised and tithe aright.
Fear you not God in all his might?

CAIN
My tithing need not lose you sleep,
Be off and tend your scabby sheep.
For if you would meddle more with me
Then it will be the worse for ye.
Four, five, six; and seven -
Oh, go not these to God in heaven!
Seven ... seven. Now this is eight.

ABEL
Cain, brother, beware God's hate.

CAIN
None of these here on my right
Shall ever come into God's sight.
Oh, come fire, burn bright, I say,
Receive the tithe I give today.
Oh, this smoke does me much shame.
Now, burn, I say, in the Devil's name!

(Black smoke appears)
Cursed be this stink I smell,
'Tis not from heaven but sure from hell!
Had I but taken one breath more,
I had been choked, and that right sore.

ABEL
Cain, for nothing do you choke,
A true tithe burns without black smoke.

CAIN
Come, kiss the devil in the arse!
Because of you, it burns the worse.
Would that within your cursed throat,
Were fire and smoke to stop your note.

(GOD appears)

GOD
Cain, why are you now so stirred
Against your brother Abel's word?
For, since no man can me deceive,
As he shall give, he shall receive.

(GOD withdraws)

CAIN
Phew! Who is that hob over the wall?
Who was that, that piped so small?
Old God must be out of His wit
But surely now we had better flit.
For certain, Old God is not my friend.
Come on, Abel, away let us wend.

ABEL
Ah, brother Cain, for you I grieve.

CAIN
No, come on, Abel, let us leave,
To find some place, where it may be

That God no more can look on me.

ABEL

Brother, I will not journey far,
Only to where the cattle are.
For all need food and some are sick.

CAIN

No, stop! I have a bone to pick!
A villain's plan you now are shaping,
Your mind is set not on escaping
No, I owe you many a whack,
The time has come to pay you back.

ABEL

Why do you rage at me and sneer?

CAIN

Why? Why? Burned your tithe so clear?
Yet my offering never more than smoked,
And, dear brother, I nearly choked!

ABEL

So does the will of God appear,
'Twas He that made my tithe burn clear.
If yours but only smoked - am I to blame?

CAIN

Why yes! And I will stop your game.

(CAIN picks up a large bone and threatens ABEL)

May this cheek bone burst your brain,
That life and you shall part in twain!

(CAIN attacks ABEL with a bone; ABEL falls to the ground)

Lie down there and take your rest,
I'll now be rid of you - you pest!

ABEL

Vengeance! Vengeance, Lord I cry,
For I am slain and guiltless die!

(ABEL dies) (Death carts him away)

CAIN *(To audience)*

And if you lot say I did wrong,
Beware of me; my arm is strong!

(GOD appears)

GOD

Cain! Cain!

CAIN

Who is that who calls to me?
I am here, can you not see?

GOD

Cain, where does your brother Abel dwell?

CAIN

Why ask me? Maybe in hell!
Or somewhere he may lie sleeping,
Is my brother in my keeping?

GOD

No longer, Cain, can you lie or boast;
I hear the voice of your brother's ghost.
You have him slain, I know your lies.
From earth to heaven 'vengeance' cries!
Your sin of all sins is the worst,
And henceforth you shall be accursed.

(ANGEL marks CAIN)

CAIN

Since I have done so great a sin
That I may never your mercy win;
Since you have banished me from grace,
Now will I hide me from your face:
So any man that I may meet,
In country way or city street,
Wherever wretched Cain is found,
There let him strike me to the ground,
And bury me in ditch or bog,
Despised, cast out, like some dead dog.

GOD

No, Cain, it shall be as I will;
No man his brother man should kill.
He that murders, young or old,

He shall be punished sevenfold.

(Enter EVERYMAN and EVERYWOMAN)

EVERYWOMAN

Brrr.He gives me the creeps.

EVERYMAN

Who? Old death? He's part of the story
from now on.

EVERYWOMAN

Maybe,but why does he just pop up,from
nowhere?

Oh,I need cheering up!

EVERYMAN

I've got just the thing

(produces an umbrella and twirls it)

EVERYWOMAN

What you on about?

EVERYMAN

We're going on a cruise,and you'll need your
brolly

(gives her a brolly)

'cos it's going to rain,and rain,and rain.

EVERYWOMAN

We're going on a cruise in the rain? Not
likely!

EVERYMAN

You sound remarkably like a certain Mrs
Noah,who also didn't want a trip in the FZ
Ark.

EVERYWOMAN

Noah's Ark! Is that coming next! Oh,I love
it...! Come on.

(she starts to exit)

What's FZ mean ?

EVERYMAN

Easy. *(to audience)*

Floating zoo! *(They Exit)*

NOAH'S FLOOD

[God, Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, Shem's Wife, Ham's Wife, Japheth's Wife, Noah's Wife, Gossip, Animals]

GOD

I, God, that all the world have wrought,
And Heaven and Earth, and all from nought,
Now see my people, in deed and thought,
Are foully set in sin.
Man that I made I will destroy,
Beast, worm, and fowls that fly;
For on Earth they do me so annoy,
The folk that are therein.

Therefore, Noah, my servant free,
A righteous man you are I see,
A ship you soon shall make for me
Of trees dry and light.
Make little chambers front and back;
And bind with pitch all sticky black;
Inside and out do not slack
And make it with all your might.

Three hundred cubits it shall be long,
And fifty of breadth to make it strong,
Of height thirty, and be not wrong.
But measure it about.
One window, mark this tricky bit,
A cubit of length and breadth make it;
Upon the side a door shall sit,
For to come in and out.

Eating places you make also,
Three roofed chambers in a row;
For deep water I mean to flow
O'er Man that I did make.
Destroyed all the world shall be,
Save you; your wife, your sons all three,
And all their wives shall saved be,
And all this for your sake.

NOAH

Ah, Lord, I thank you loud and clear,
That spares me and my kin from fear.
Your bidding, Lord, we all do hear,

And set about it now.

(Exit GOD)

Now listen, men and women all!
We're saved from what shall soon befall.
So work this ship, chamber and hall,
As you did hear me vow.

SHEM

Father, we are all ready I'll be bound.
An axe I have, by my crown,
As sharp as any in this town;
This pledge I to this task.

HAM

I have a brace and bit with me,
That will hole the hardest tree,
A better sharpened you'll not see.
I'll do what you do ask.

JAPHETH

And with my skill I'll make a pin,
And with this hammer knock it in.
None there will be shall make more din
Than I, to build this ark.

SHEM'S WIFE

We shall bring you timber too,
For we have nothing else to do,
Women are weak to undergo
The building of this ark.

HAM'S WIFE

Here is a sturdy chopping block,
On this may you all hew and knock
Till none be idle in this flock.
God's blessing we shall win.

JAPHETH'S WIFE

And I will gather kindling here
To make a fire for you, my dear,
I'll cook on it a dinner rare
For when you all come in.

(ALL set to work with tools)

NOAH

Now, in the name of God, we begin
To make this ship, for to live in
That we be ready for to swim
At the coming of the flood.
These boards we join here together
To keep us safe from the weather,
That we may row both hither and thither,
And safe be from this flood.
Of this tree, we'll make the mast,
Tied with cables that will last,
With a sail yard for each blast,
And each thing of that kind.
With topcastle, and bowsprit,
With cords and ropes, still coiled as yet,
We set forth, with the next wet.
This ship is at an end.
Wife in this ship we'll be safe kept,

My children and you, aboard now step.

NOAH'S WIFE

Husband, you may have well o'erslept
If you think you can me scare.
I will not in that ark be hid.

NOAH

Good wife, do now as I you bid!

NOAH'S WIFE

Not I! Not till I see more need,
Though you may stand all day and stare!

GOD

Noah, take now your family,
And in the ship see that you be;
For none so righteous man to me
Is now on earth living.
Of beasts take but two and two,
Male and female, on board with you.
And see that my commands you do.

Seven days be yet coming;
You shall have time them in to bring.
After that, it is my liking
Mankind for to destroy.
Forty days and forty nights
Rain shall fall for their unrights,

What I have made through all my might
Now think I to destroy.

(Exit GOD)

NOAH

Have done, you men and women all!
Hurry you, lest this water fall!
Bring to the ship beasts great and small,
Two now of every kind.

SHEM

Sir, here are lions, leopards in,
Horses, mares, oxen and swine,
Goats, calves, sheep, and kine
Here sitting you may see.

HAM

Camels, asses, men may find,

JAPHETH

Buck, doe, hart and hind;

JAPHETH'S WIFE

Beasts of all manner and kind,
And here, it seems to me.

SHEM'S WIFE

Take here cats and doggies too,
Otter, fox, polecat also;
Hares, hopping gaily go,

JAPHETH'S WIFE

Here's kale for them to eat.

HAM'S WIFE

And here are bears, wolves set,
Apes, owls, marmoset,

JAPHETH

Weasels, squirrels and ferrets,
Here they'll eat their meat.

HAM

Yet more beasts are in this house,
With cats making it full carouse.

JAPHETH'S WIFE

Here a rat and there a mouse,
Are standing near together.

SHEM

And here are fowls, less and more:
Hérons, cranes and skua,

SHEM'S WIFE

Swans, peacocks; and set before
Food against this weather.

JAPHETH

Here are cocks, kites, crows,

HAM'S WIFE

Rooks and ravens, many rows,

HAM

Ducks, curlews, whoever knows.
One of every kind.

JAPHETH'S WIFE

And here are doves, ducks, drakes,

SHEM

Redshanks running from the lakes,

NOAH

Each fowl and beast that God did make,
In this ship men may find.

Wife, come in! Why stand you there?

This is no time for moods, I swear.
Come in, on God's behest, my dear,
For fear lest you do drown!

NOAH'S WIFE

Yea sir, set up your sail,
Go forth with evil hail!
For, without any fail,
I will not leave this town.
Without my gossips, every one,
One foot further, I will not be gone.
They loved me full well, bar none!
Unless you let them on your list,

You may row forth, Noah, wherever you
wish,
And get you a new wife.

NOAH

Shem, son, Look! Your mother will not go,
I tell you, such another I do not know.

SHEM

Father, I shall fetch her in, right now,
Without any fail.
Mother, my father says you are so slow,
And bids you into this ship now go,
Can't you feel this angry wind blow.
'Tis time that we set sail.

NOAH'S WIFE

Son, go again to him, and say
I will not come in there today.

NOAH

Come in, wife, in twenty devils' way,
Or else stand there without!

HAM

Shall we all fetch her in?

NOAH

Good sons, with God's blessing and mine,
I wish you would and in quick time,
For of this flood, there is no doubt.

GOSSIP

Look, water comes flowing in full fast,
On every side it spreads so far,
For fear of drowning I am aghast,
Good gossip, let us draw near!

NOAH'S WIFE

And let us drink as down we go;
For in times past we have done so,
Here is my bottle of Malmsey, lo!
We'll drown ourselves in cheer.

JAPHETH

Mother, we pray you, all as one,
For here we are, your three dear sons,

Come inside, for fear of the weather,
For God's love that you know.

NOAH'S WIFE

That will I not, for all you call
Until I have my gossips all.

SHEM

In good faith, mother that you shall
Whether you will or no.

(SHEM lifts his MOTHER up and carries her aboard)

NOAH

Ah, welcome, wife, into this ship!

NOAH'S WIFE

Here, you take this for your tip!

(NOAH'S WIFE hits NOAH)

NOAH

Ho, what? I think my boat did dip.
God do as You will.

This window will I shut anon,
And into my chamber will I be gone
Till this water has become
Lessened by your skill.

*(NOAH closes the window. Time passes.
NOAH opens the window)*

Now, forty days are fully gone,
A raven will I send upon,
The wind to see if tree or stone
Be dry in any place.
And if this fowl come not again,
The truth is clear, it is a sign.
That dry it is on hill or plain
And God has shown some grace.
(He releases a raven)

Good Lord, where'er this raven be
Somewhere is dry land I see;
So now a dove I will set free

A messenger to send.
You will return again to me.
For, of all fowls that may flee
Over land and over sea,
You are most meek and kind.

(NOAH releases a dove and it returns with an olive branch)

Ah, Lord, blessed as I pray
Who has comforted me this day!
For by this sight I may well say
This flood begins to cease.
My sweet dove to me brings apace
A branch of olive from some place,
And this shows clearly God's good grace,
And is a sign of peace.

GOD

Noah, take your wife along,
And your children every one,
Out of your ship you should be gone,
And they with you shall see.
Beasts and all the fowls that fly
Coming out into the sky,
On earth to grow and multiply,
I will that it shall be.

Weary earth will I harm no more
For man's sin that grieves me sore,
For, from his youth and even before,
Man sinned against My will.

Here I make a pact with you,
That man, beast, *(Mrs Noah coughs)* and
woman too,
With water, whilst the world stays new,
I vow no more to kill.

A rainbow between you and me
In the firmament shall be,
To be a token that all may see,
My vengeance now shall cease.

My blessings now I give you here,
To you, Noah, my servant dear,
For vengeance shall no more appear,

And now farewell, my darling dear.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

[Everyman, Everywoman, Abraham, God, Sarah, Isaac]

EVERYWOMAN (*enters with a broom*)
Oooh! I do love rainbows, don't you?
Always makes me think of old Noah and his ark. (*starts sweeping*) Mind you, so does this lot... Ever thought what it was like with all those animals cooped up for forty days and nights? (*holds her nose*) Pheew! Now you know why they abandoned ship so smartish. And who do you think got the job of clearing up? Muggins.

EVERYMAN (*enters*) Not done yet?
Hurry up, the next scene will be along any minute.

EVERYWOMAN (*glaring at him*) Will it now? Then there's just time for me to deal with another load of rubbish. Don't want old Abraham to slip on horse muck, do we? On second thoughts, I think I'll clear up a bigger problem (*she starts to sweep EVERYMAN off the stage*) Come here you big coward!

(*They exit*) (*ABRAHAM enters and kneels in prayer*)

ABRAHAM
Father of Heaven Magnificent,
I call to you with all my heart,
My livelihood you have me sent
And all I own to me is lent,
For me to praise your part.

Now I am old, my joy is this;
That you did grant me my sweet son.
No other joy would I so miss
Except yourself, dear Father of Bliss,
As little Isaac, my own dear one.

And, therefore, Father of Heaven, I pray
For his health and for his grace,

Now, Lord, keep him both night and day,
That no disease or danger may
Come to my child in any place.

(*In Heaven GOD speaks to an ANGEL*)

GOD
Mine Angel, fast be on your way
Down to earth to do my will.
Try the heart of Abraham I say
And prove if he be steadfast still.

Say I command him now to take
Isaac, the son he loves so deep,
And with his love an offering make,
If that my friendship he would keep.

Show him the way on to the hill,
Where this sacrifice shall be.
There my command he shall fulfill,
And choose between his child and me.

(*ANGEL leaves Heaven. Back on earth, ABRAHAM is still praying*)

ABRAHAM
Now, Father of Heaven, who formed all thing,
My prayers I make to you once more,
For today a tender offering
I must give to you for sure.
What manner of beast is your desiring?

(*ANGEL arrives from Heaven*)

ANGEL
Abraham, Abraham, why do you rest?
Our Lord commands for you to take
Isaac, the young son you love the best,
And with his blood an offering make.
Go, climb up high on yonder hill,
And give your child unto the Lord.
There your dear one's blood must spill.
Unto God's will you must accord.

ABRAHAM
Welcome, Angel, whom God has sent.

I know your bidding must be done.
It is ever my wish to be obedient,
Yet, hear a plea for my dearest son.

If it could please Lord God on high
To take instead all I possess,
And tell me Isaac need not die,
My heart would leap with happiness.

For I love Isaac as much as life,
But yet I love my God the more.
Though my heart should burst with strife
I will do God's will and keep his law.

ANGEL
Abraham, Abraham, this is well said,
And all these commandments look you
keep.
And by God's will henceforth be led.
Go forth, there is no cause to weep.

(The ANGEL departs)

ABRAHAM
Although my heart be heavy and sad
To see the blood of my dear son,
I know I must go and fetch the lad
And see that sacrifice is done.

Oh, but what my wife to tell?
Her life on Isaac does depend.
To slay the son she loves so well
Her bitter grief would never end.

(Enter SARAH with ISAAC)

SARAH
Welcome my Lord, now home at last!
Oh, you have been too long away!
Come, tell me, quickly, what has passed.
Sweet, tell us what you have to say.

ABRAHAM
Dear, nothing happened untoward!
Save that an Angel to me came,
Who brought instruction from the Lord,
For sacrifice above this plain.

Isaac, dress and come with me,
And we will climb on yonder heights,
For it is meet that you should see
Observance of these holy rites.

ISAAC
Oh yes, my Father, let me come,
And I will bear the wood for you.
Your well-behaved, obedient son
To watch there what you do.

SARAH
Hold now Husband, I you pray,
For, ever as you hold me dear,
Let Isaac stay with me today,
It blows so cold this time of year.

ABRAHAM
Hush now, woman, and hold your tongue!
Isaac shall come with me, I say.
Do not worry for the precious one,
Soon he'll be back home to play.

SARAH
It shall be ever as you say,
But dear husband, to give me joy,
Come home as quickly as you may,
Because of Isaac, my sweet boy.

ABRAHAM
Isaac, Isaac, my darling dear,
My blessing on you I here bestow.
Take up this wood with good cheer,
For it is time that we did go.

ISAAC
I'll follow where'er you lead,
Although I be but slender.

ABRAHAM *(aside)*
Ah, Lord, my heart will break indeed,
His words they are so tender.

(They travel to the hillside)

Now we have reached the place at last,

Set down your load upon the ground.
ISAAC
Dear Father, here I cast it down,
But Sir, now that I see you near,
Upon your face I see a frown,
And in your eyes a look of fear.

And neither can I understand,
Why have we brought no beast to kill?
Both fire and wood we have at hand
But nothing lives upon this hill.

And yet I know some living thing
To be your sacrifice must die.

ABRAHAM
The fire was all we had to bring.
A beast will come from God on high,
It will be as the Angel spake,
Trust, my son, in our dear Lord.

ISAAC
Father, I now begin to quake
To see you hold so sharp a sword.
Why is it drawn before you so?
My heart is full of fearful wonder!

ABRAHAM *(aside)*
Ah, Father of Heaven, so I am woe,
This child breaks my heart asunder.

ISAAC
Father, Father, tell me more!
Is your sword thus drawn for me?

ABRAHAM
My son, so sweet, I do implore,
Have peace, my heart will break for thee!

ISAAC
Father, keep not the truth from me,
I am your beloved son!

ABRAHAM
Ah, Isaac, Isaac, I must kill thee!

ISAAC

Kill me Father! What have I done?
ABRAHAM
This sacrifice did God ordain,
To whom I my allegiance owe.
ISAAC
Is it God's will that I be slain?

ABRAHAM
Yes, Isaac, truly it is so.

ISAAC
Then you must do as God has bidden,
And carry out our Lord's command.
But from my mother keep this hidden;
Say I have gone to some other land.

ABRAHAM
Oh, Isaac, how blessed you are to me.
What dread sacrifice must I perform!
Why must I choose 'twixt God and thee?
How my heart and soul are torn!

ISAAC
Bless me, Father, with your hand,
Before I from this life depart.

ABRAHAM
My dearest child in all the land,
I do you bless with all my heart!

(He blesses and kisses him, then binds his hands and lifts him onto the altar. He puts a blindfold on him)

ISAAC
Let me die with just one blow;
Strike hard and quick - a stroke of worth;
So little pain I then shall know.

ABRAHAM
So be it, sweetest child on earth.

(ABRAHAM raises his sword - but falters)

Oh, Lord, my heart will not obey,
He lies here so meek and still.
O help me, Lord of Heaven, I pray;

This gentle child I cannot kill.
ISAAC
Oh, Father, why do you delay?
Why must I linger so long here?
God commands; you must obey,
For I, your son, am weak with fear.

(ABRAHAM goes to strike but the ANGEL appears and takes the sword from his hand)

ANGEL
I am that Angel from God sublime
That down from Heaven to you art sent,
To thank you in this blessed time
For keeping his commandment.

A creature stands among the briar.
So sacrifice to God that ram;
His death is not the Lord's desire.
Now, farewell, blessed Abraham.

GOD
Abraham, your son I spare.
But look you well; for this world's sin
Upon a hillside bleak and bare,
My son shall die, man's soul to win.

ABRAHAM
Oh Lord, great thanks I give to Thee!
You are both merciful and wise.
(He unties Isaac)
Dear child, arise, and come to me,
Arise, sweet child, I say, arise.

(ABRAHAM and ISAAC embrace and exit)

(Enter EVERYMAN and EVERYWOMAN)

EVERYMAN
Here, have my hanky. It gets you, doesn't it?

EVERYWOMAN
Poor little Isaac. Fancy having to go through that!. Fine father Abraham was!

EVERYMAN
It's so long ago. They thought human

sacrifice was what God wanted. Abraham was lucky. He found out God didn't want his son.

EVERYWOMAN
It was Isaac who was lucky, if you ask me.

EVERYMAN
Stand by. The next scene is coming, and we're in it.

EVERYWOMAN
Oh, are we? Well I hope there's no killing in this one!

EVERYMAN
Nah. Just Moses after he crossed the Red Sea, being given God's laws.

EVERYWOMAN
Oh, that's a relief

EVERYMAN
Yeah, be glad you don't play an Egyptian.

EVERYWOMAN
Why's that?

EVERYMAN
They were all drowned in the Red Sea

EVERYWOMAN
You...! (she chases him off)

THE LAW

[God, Moses, Everyman/Everywoman,
Isaiah, Micah]

(Enter MOSES)

GOD

Moses, my servant beloved and dear,
And all the people that be here,
Know well. In Egypt when you were,
Out of bondage I you brought.
I will you honour no God save me,
No images nor idols now make ye,
My name in vain take not ye,
For that I liketh not.
I will you hold your holy day;
And worship also, by all way,
Father and mother, all that you may;
And slay no man nowhere.
Fornication shall you flee;
No man's goods steal ye,
Nor in no place look ye
False witness for to bear.

Your neighbour's wives covet nought,
Servants, nor goods that he has bought,
Ox nor ass, in deed or thought,
Nor anything that is his.

In all this do my bidding
That you nothing do amiss.

*(MOSES approaches the Jews. Among them
is Everyman/Everywoman who addresseth
the audience)*

MOSES

You, God's folk, be you intent
To hear the Lord's commandment:
Six days boldly work you all,
The seventh Sabbath you shall call;
That day, no matter what befall,
Hallowed shall be always.

EVERYMAN

Lordlings, this commandment

Was of the Old Testament.

But this story, if all of it we show
Would take far too long we know!
Wherefore, most fruitful here below
To take it now as seen
That the law be written in men's hearts
Evermore.

EVERYWOMAN

Now, one thing I will tell you all,
Hereafter what shall befall,
A star of Jacob spring up shall,
A man of Israel.
He shall overcome and have in hand
All kings, dukes of strange land,
And all the world have in his hand.

(ISAIAH and MICAH appear)

Hear what the prophets tell!
Isaiah near does stand.

ISAIAH

I say a maiden meek and mild
Shall conceive and bear a child,
And be called Emanuel.

EVERYMAN

Lordings, this word Emanuel -
Emanuel is as much to say
As...

EVERYWOMAN

'God is with us night and day'.

EVERYMAN

Therefore, that name for ever and aye
To his son accords wondrous well.

MICAH

I, Micah, through my mind,
Will say that man shall surely find
That a child of kingly kind
In Bethlem shall be born.
He shall rule the human race
And win mankind e'en back to grace.

EVERYMAN/EVERYWOMAN
Lordings, much more matter
Is in this story than you see here,
But the substance, never fear,
Is played for you this evening here.

THE ANNUNCIATION

[God, Gabriel, Mary, Joseph, Susannah,
Citizen]

GOD

Good Angel Gabriel, from me go hence
Unto the land of Galilee.
At Nazareth, there find a wench.
Wedded to an ancient man is she.
His name is Joseph, and of David's line.
Here is Mary, that maid so fine.

GABRIEL

My Lord, I go.

*(GABRIEL appears to MARY who is
discovered with two other women, both
older than she, one heavily pregnant)*

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
Our Lord God is now with thee!
Above all women in this place,
Lady, blessed more you be.

You shall conceive upon this ground
The second of God's Trinity.
He shall be born of you alone.

MARY

Why I?

GABRIEL

For your virginity.

MARY

I marvel now how that may be,
For man's company knew I never yet.

GABRIEL

This child that of you shall be born
By name of Jesus shall he be,
He shall save what was forlorn
And the Fiend's power destroy shall he.

And, further, maid, in your own line,
Behold Elizabeth, your cousin grey,

Is now with child full past her time.

MARY

Aye, she that was barren all her life,
Six months or more great grown is she.
Is this God's work? Did He contrive?

GABRIEL

To God impossible nothing may be.
Oh, you whose sweetness cannot cloy,
Arise and take His blessing.

*(MARY rises and closes her eyes. GOD
enters and with His hand touches her
forehead. He goes)*

MARY

I cannot tell what joy
I feel now in my body.
Gentle Gabriel, I thank you for this,
Meekly commend me to our Father.

GABRIEL

I will, my Lady, give him this kiss;
Farewell, sweet maid, our Holy Mother.

*(GABRIEL goes, MARY returns to the
women. JOSEPH enters)*

JOSEPH

Ho! Dame ho! Unlock your door!
Are you at home? My feet are sore.

SUSANNAH

Who is there? Who shouts so in the night?
Take care! You're giving us a fright.

JOSEPH

Unlock your door,
I say to you

MARY

Ah, it is my spouse that speaks to us,
Unlock the door as he bids thus.

*(ELIZABETH goes to JOSEPH, bids him
enter. JOSEPH pats her stomach)*

Welcome home, my husband dear,
How have you fared in that far country?

JOSEPH

I've laboured long for most a year.
Your face, my wife, is changed brightly.

(MARY rises and reveals her pregnancy)

You are with child!
I've been deceived! My honour lent!
Say woman, who has been here since I
went?

MARY

Sir, here was neither man, nor person,
But only the angel of our Lord of heaven.

JOSEPH

Say not so, woman; for shame, let be!
This child's not mine, alas for me.
Tell me woman whose is this child?

MARY

None but yours, my husband mild.

JOSEPH

Let all old men example take.
See, I am disgraced, 'twas my mistake
To wed a fair and pretty maid.
Farewell my love, I'm rightly paid.

MARY

No, truly, Sir, you are not beguiled
Nor yet with sin am I defiled.
The angel brought God's holy son
And of your wife he shall be born.

JOSEPH

An angel! An angel! Alas, now, for thy
shame
To put an angel in such blame!
Were it not so sad, 'twould make me laugh.
Now farewell Mary, my better half!

*(JOSEPH withdraws. GABRIEL appears to
JOSEPH, who weeps)*

GABRIEL

Joseph, Joseph, why do you weep?

JOSEPH

Why, for my wife, whom I did love.

(JOSEPH looks at GABRIEL)

GABRIEL

I am the angel that God did send.
Now go to Mary and comfort her,
And to her you should make amend
For she's as pure as was before.

JOSEPH

O, Lord, I thank you with all my heart,
For of these tidings I am so glad.
I'll straight to Mary now depart
And no more think why I was sad.

(He returns to MARY)

Ah Mary, Mary, I kneel full low,
Forgive me, sweet wife; here, in this land,
Mercy, Mary, for now I know
Of your good grace, and how it does stand.

And now to Bethlehem must I go
To make an Emperor's tribute there.
Am I to leave you, growing so?
Tell me, Mary, how you should fare.

MARY

Nay, hardily, husband, dread you nothing,
For I will ride there all the way.

I trust in God, our mighty King,
To speed us on our journey.

*(JOSEPH helps MARY mount a donkey. He
picks up his belongings)*

JOSEPH

I thank you, Mary, for your grace,
That for my words you did not blame.
To Bethlehem we'll go apace,

We'll go together in God's name.
(They begin the journey)

MARY
Ho, Joseph, sweet husband, would tell to
me
What tree stands yonder on that hill?

JOSEPH
By name it is called a cherry tree.

MARY
But, husband, I crave the fruit thereof.
Please fetch me some, from the tree top.

JOSEPH
I have no time to labour thus
To pluck the fruit that here grows wild,
For this tree grows so high o'er us.
Let him give you cherries that gave you
child.

MARY
Good Lord I pray, grant me this boon,
Give me these cherries if 'tis thy will.

(The tree bends down)

I thank you Lord, the tree bows low,
Now I may eat of it my fill.

JOSEPH
Lord, mercy, again I have offended thee,
Saying to my spouse unkind words thus.
For now I know, it may none other be
But that she bears the King of Bliss.

*(They travel on and enter Bethlehem; a man
stands to greet them)*

Worshipful Sir, we bid you good day.
Of Bethlehem you seem to be.
Know you a room wherein, I pray,
I may rest, and my wife Mary?

CITIZEN
Sir, this city is so full of late,

No room, know I, will thou find here.
But try against the city gate.

JOSEPH
I will come on my, darling dear.
Ah, sweet my wife, what shall we do?
Where shall we lodge this night?

CITIZEN
Ho, Sir, I have a stable, lo,
With beasts you may spend the night.

MARY
Good husband, in haste, I say to you
My time is at an end,
Let's to the stable.

JOSEPH
Kind Sir, adieu.

MARY
Husband, help me descend.

*(She dismounts from the donkey and
together they enter the stable)*

Now that I am in the stable brought,
I hope, right well, my child to see.
Go from me husband, I'll need you not.
Go from this place and leave me be.

*(JOSEPH goes out of the stable and tends
the donkey. MARY goes to the back of the
stable and kneels amongst the straw. After a
moment, she returns to the front of the stable
with the Baby Jesus in her arms. The stable
fills with light. Angels sing)*

MARY
Behold the child that God has given,
Of God the incarnate Word.
Praise we now our King in heaven,
And you, our infant Lord.

(They all sing a carol)

THE SHEPHERDS

[Coll, Gib, Daw, Mak, Gill (Mak's Wife),
Angel, Mary]

(Enter COLL moaning and grumbling)

COLL

Lord, what these weathers are cold!
My legs they fold, for I am all wrapped
In sorrow.

But we wretched shepherds that walk on
the moor,
In faith, we are almost out of the door.
We are so crippled,
Over-taxed and crushed,
We are made hand-tamed
By these gentry-men.

It does me good, as I walk thus on my own,
Of this world to talk in manner of moan.
To my sheep will I stalk and harken anon,
There abide on a bank or sit on a stone.

*(Enter GIB who does not see COLL. COLL
tries to attract his attention and
communicates his amusement to the
audience)*

GIB

Lord, these weathers are spitous, and the
winds full keen,
And the frosts so hideous they water mine
een -
No lie.
Now in dry, now in wet,
Now in snow, now in sleet,
When my shoes freeze to my feet
It is not all easy.

We married men endure much woe -
We have sorrow then and then; it falls out
so.
I have my wife to fear,
As sharp as a thistle, as rough as a briar.
She has brows like a bristle, and a sour face

to cheer;

And once she wets her whistle, she can sing
full clear
Her paternoster.
She is as great as a whale,
And most hearty and hale,
But, by my cup of ale,
I would to God I had lost her!

(COLL tries to whistle to gain his attention)

GIB *(Surprised)*

Oh, the devil in your maw, how was this
planned!

(Recovering his composure)

Senn anything of Daw?

COLL

Yes, on the lea-land
I heard him blow. He comes here at hand,
Not far.
Stand still!

GIB

Why?

(Sound of horn and they hide. Enter DAW)

DAW

Was never since Noah's flood such floods
seen,
Winds and rains so rude, and storms so
keen.
We that walk in the nights, our cattle to
keep,
We see sudden sights when other men sleep.

(He sees the other shepherds peeping out)

I think I see two old shrew peep;
You are two monsters!
Sir, God save you, and master mine!
A drink would I have, and something to
dine!

(GIB and COLL leap at him and roll him over - good humouredly)

GIB

Well, boy, sit we down all three and drink we shall then.

(They each produce items from their bags)

Here a foot of a cow,
Well soused in wine.
The leg of a sow,
That pickled has been.

COLL

Two blood puddings I vow,
A liver sausage between.
Now eat of this store.

I have here soused in ale, boiled and roast
Even an ox tail.
Onion, galick, juicy leeks,
And green cheese that will grease your cheeks.

DAW

Now reach us a drink -
This food hath given me a thirst;
So shall we drink of this good brew.
Come! Wet your mouths; Gib, be the first.
Good wholesome ale gives life anew!

(They drink)

GIB: In faith, these nights are long,
Yet, I would ere we went that we sing a song.

(They sing)

Of every kind of tree,
Of every kind of tree,
The hawthorn blows the sweetest
Of every kind of tree.

My lover she shall be,
My lover she shall be,
Of earthly girls the fairest

My lover she shall be.'

(MAK enters with a cloak covering his smart tunic - he has acquired a livery and 'southern' airs and graces. He tries to join in the singing)

GIB

Who is that that pipes so poor?

COLL

Mak! Where have you been?

DAW

Is he come? Then watch out for your things!

(They pull off MAK'S cloak and laugh)

MAK

I shall make complaint, and have you flogged at a word.

COLL

Now take out that southern tooth,
And put in a turd!

MAK

I am true as steel, as all men know;
But a sickness I feel that holds me in woe:
My belly fares not well, it is out of estate.
I eat not a morsel
This month and more.

GIB

How fares thy wife? By my hood, how fares she?

MAK

Lies sprawling - by the fire, lo!
And a house full of bairns. She drinks well too;
She eats as fast as she can,
And each year that comes to a man
She brings forth a baby,
And, some years, two!

GIB

Mak, come hither! Between shall you lie.
We are weary and cold and want for a fire,
Naked, worn out with walking in mire.

*(They lie down to sleep while MAK still sits.
MAK pretends to sleep and after a while he
tiptoes away)*

MAK
Now were a time for a man that lacks what
he would,

To stalk quietly unto a fold ...
But about you a circle, as round as a moon,

(He circles them)

Till I have done what I will, till that it be
noon
That you lie stone-still, till that I have done.
Over your heads, my hand I lift.
Out go your eyes! Forgo your sight ...
Lord, what they sleep hard!
A fat sheep now tonight!

*(He makes various ludicrous attempts to
catch a sheep and eventually gets one; he
goes off with it to his house. His wife, GILL
is spinning)*

MAK
How, Gill, are you in? Get us some light.

WIFE
Who makes such din at this time of the
night?
I am set for to spin.

MAK
Good wife, open the door! Can't you see
what I
bring?

WIFE
Why didn't you say it was you before?
Come in my sweeting!

MAK
Care you not outside I'm standing?

WIFE *(Seeing the sheep)*
By the naked neck, I can see you hanging!

MAK
Come away!
For in a night can I get
More than they that toil and sweat
All the long day.
But come and help fast,
I would he were skinned; I am eager to eat
This twelve month was I not so longing for
some sheep meat.

WIFE
What if they come before he's slain and hear
the sheep bleat?

MAK
Then I might be taken: that's a cold sweat!
Go bar the gate-door.

WIFE
Yes, Mak,
For if they come at your back
Here shall we him hide, till they be gone,
In my cradle. Look! Let me alone
And I shall lie beside in childbed and groan.

MAK
Make ready,
And I shall say you were delivered right
Of a boy-child - born this night!

WIFE;
It's good disguise, it'll get us past
See, a woman's advice helps at the last!

MAK
I will go back to sleep
With that company.
And I shall stalk stealthily,
As it had never been I
That carried off their sheep!

(MAK returns and lies between the shepherds. COLL wakes)

GIB
Lord, what I have slept well,
As fresh as an eel.
As light I me feel
As a leaf on tree.

DAW
See you where Mak is now?

GIB
He is here.
Rise Mak, for shame! You lie too long.

MAK
What is this? Ah, my neck has lain wrong.
I thought Gill began to croak and labour full
sad
Well-nigh at the first cry of a young lad.
I must go home, by your leave, to Gill, as I
thought.
I pray you look up my sleeve, that I steal
nought.

(He runs off)

COLL
Go forth!
Now would I we checked, this morn,
That we have all our flock.

(They count the sheep)

GIB
Alas, that ever I was born! We are tempest
tossed -
A fat sheep we have lost.

COLL
Marry, God forbid!

DAW
Who should do us that scorn?
Now believe me, if you will,
Either Mak or Gill made it their intent.

COLL
Peace man, be still! I saw where he went.
You slanderest him ill; you ought to repent.

GIB
Now should I even here die,
I would say it were he.

DAW
Go on then, I say, let's run on our feet,
Nor never eat bread, till with him we meet.
(Exeunt the shepherds, running. MAK enters his cottage, running)

MAK
Unlock this door! Who is there? How long
shall I
stand?

WIFE
Who makes such a din? Come in, by this
hand!

MAK
Ah, Gill what cheer? It is I, Mak, your
husband.

WIFE
How is it with the shepherds, Mak.?

MAK
The last word they said when I turned my
back,
They would look they had their sheep, all
the pack.

WIFE
Listen, here they call, they will be here
soon.
Come and make ready, and sing on your
own.

(She organises him while he panics - the sheep is put in the cradle and she sits in a chair. MAK starts to sing and GILL groans. GIB, DAW, COLL enter)

GIB

Mak, unlock your door soon!

MAK

Who is it that speaks, as if it were noon.

Who is that, I say?

GIB

'Tis your fellows.

MAK *(Opening the door - they push in past him)*

You have run in the mire, and are wet yet; I shall make you a fire, if you will sit.

Why, sir, what ill is your fate?

DAW

The sheep that we tend are stolen,

Our loss is great.

COLL

Mak, some men believe that it should be ye.

DAW:

Either ye or your spouse, so say we.

MAK:

Now if ye have suspicion of Gill or of me,
Come and search our house, and then may
you see.

(They all start to search)

WIFE

Ah, my middle!

I pray to God so mild,

If ever I you beguiled,

That I may eat this child

That he's in the cradle.

MAK

Peace woman, for God's pain, and cry not
so,

You damage your brain, and make me full
woe.

GIB

I think our sheep be slain. What find you
two?

COLL

We work all in vain; as well may we go.

DAW *(To MAK)*

Is your child a boy?

MAK

Aye, when he wakens, he smiles that joy is
to see.

COLL

Mak, friends will we be, for we must agree
In all things.

*(The SHEPHERDs depart; MAK sits down
with exhaustion and relief; GILL laughs)*

COLL *(On the way home)*

Gave you the child anything?

GIB

I vow not one farthing.

DAW

Back we must go to remedy this thing.

(They return and hammer on the door)

Mak, take it to no grief if I come to your
bairn.

GIB

Mak, with your leave, let me give your bairn
But sixpence.

MAIK

Nay, get away! He sleeps.

GIB

Methinks he peeps.

MAY

When he wakens he weeps.
I pray you go hence.

(They press round the cradle)

GIB
Give me leave him to kiss, and lift up the
clout.

(Sees the sheep)

What the devil is this? He has a long snout!

COLL
He is misshapen, we should not pry about.

DAW
I must say his smell comes most foully out:
He's just like our sheep.

MAK
Peace,
I am him that he begat, and my woman him
bore.

WIFE
As pretty child is he
That sits on woman's knee.

GIB
I know it by the ear mark; that is good
token.

MAY
I tell you sirs, hark! His nose was broken.

WIFE
He was taken by an elf,
I saw it myself.
When the clock struck twelve,
Was he misshapen.

COLL
For this trespass
We will neither quarrel nor curse,
Nor make matters worse,

But cast him in canvas.
*(They toss MAK in a blanket and an ANGEL
suddenly appears; sounds of 'Glory to God
in the Highest'. There is a blinding light)*

ANGEL
Rise, gentle herdsmen, for now is he born
From Satans foul grasp he Adam has torn.
God is made your friend now at this morn.
He commands you
At Bethlehem go and see
Where lies he
In a crib poorly.

COLL
Hurry we therefore,
Though we be wet and weary,
To that child and that lady
There to bend the knee before.

(They move towards Bethlehem)

GIB
Go we now - the place is near,
I hear the virgin sing.

*(They approach the stable with tentative
steps. MARY sings a cradle song' and
JOSEPH greets them)*

COLL
Hail, comely and clean; hail young child!
Hail, my maker, born of a maiden so mild!
Lo, he smiles,
Lo, he laughs, my sweeting!
A full fair meeting.
I bring thee my greeting:
Have a bob of cherries.

GIB
Hail, sovereign saviour, for you have us
sought!
Hail, fair child and flower, that all thing hast
wrought!

Hail, full of favour, that made all of nought!
Hail! I kneel and I cower. A bird have I
brought

To my bairn.
Hail, little tiny mop!
Of our creed you are crop;
I would drink form your cup,
Little day-star.

DAW

Hail, darling dear, full of Godhead!
I pray you be near when that I have need.
Hail, sweet is your cheer! My heart would
bleed
To see you sat here in so poor weed,
With no pennies.
I give you my all,
I bring you but a ball:
Have and play you withal,
And go to the tennis.

MARY

The Father of heaven, God omnipotent,
That created all things, his Son has he sent,
And now is he born
To keep you from woe!
I shall pray him so.
Tell forth as you go,
And remember this morn.

*(The SHEPHERDS go to MARY, raise her
up, and process singing as they go)*

HEROD AND THE SLAYING OF THE INNOCENTS

[Three Kings, Herod, Messenger, Two
Counsellors, Angel, Mary, God, Two
Knights, Joseph, Women]

(HEROD enters)

HEROD

I am the cause of great light and thunder,
Before me the elements quiver and quake.
I am viewed by the world with great
wonder,
To me all peoples do shiver and shake.

Behold now my attire and my complexion,
Brighter than the sun in the middle of the
day.
Am I not God-like, near to perfection?
Come forward you all with your homage to
pay.

MESSENGER

Sir Herod, King of great renown...

HEROD

Peace, dastard in the Devil's name...

MESSENGER

But I bring news that near this town...

HEROD

What boy! I will thee tame;
Go, beat that boy and break his back!

MESSENGER

Lord, messengers should no man smite,
My word deserves not such attack.

HEROD

Well, speak to me. Release him knight.

MESSENGER

My Lord, I heard upon this morn
Three kings together speak
Of one that is new born;
News of him here they seek.

HEROD

Three Kings, by Jove.

MESSENGER

Sir, so I say,
For I myself saw them appear.

1ST COUNSELLOR

My Lord, ask him more, we pray.

HEROD

Say, fellow, are they far or near?

MESSENGER

My lord, they will be here this day.
This is the truth and that is clear.

HEROD

Have done! Dress us in rich array.
And every man make merry cheer,
That nothing may be seen
But friendship and good will,
Till we know what they mean;
Whether it be good or ill.

(The KINGS approach HEROD)

1ST KING

The Lord who sends us holy light,
And has led us from our land,
Keep you, Sir King and comely knight,
And these folk here at hand.

2ND KING

In our separate lands, we all did view
A star which appeared to us one morn.
This, we hope, will lead us to
Where the child we seek is born.

HEROD

What, to find a babe? Have you gone mad?
What silly, stupid men are here?

To leave their lands to find a lad?
At this nonsense I must sneer.

3RD KING

Sire, the child has been foretold,
A king to rule Jewry and other land.
For it is written in our books of old,
This is God's will and His command.

HEROD

King! The devil take you! Fie!
Now I see well how you rant and rave.
How can a shimmering in the sky,
Show where is such king or knave?
Nay, I am King and none but I
Have power in this land to spoil or save.

2ND COUNSELLOR *(aside)*

My Lord, although these fellows do defame,
Their true purpose we should know;
And, my King, why they this way came,
So ask them more before they go.

HEROD

I thank you for your counsel plain,
Indeed it shall be so.

(To the three KINGS)

Now, Kings, I'll cast all care away,
So go in peace my friends so wise.
But say before you go this day,
Your reasons why this babe you prize.

1ST KING:

A prophet foretold a star should spring
From the Jews, Jacob's kith and kin.

2ND KING

Isaiah, that a maid would bring
A new born babe, full free from sin,

3RD KING

That of all countries would be King
And the world's honour win.

HEROD *(aside)*

Alas, then I am lost for sure,
And threatened all about.

1ST COUNSELLOR

My Lord Herod, fear no more,
Let these men leave without a doubt,
But say they should return to you
Once they have this baby found.

HEROD

Your counsel again is good and true,
With my cunning I shall astound.

(To the three KINGS)

Now go your way, but I beg one thing,
That once the babe is found, that you
Come back this way with news to bring,
So I may go and worship too.

2ND KING

Sir, we shall do as you say
And tell you of this child.
We shall return here, come what may.

2ND COUNSELLOR

Farewell, you are beguiled.

(KINGS exit)

HEROD

For sure this is a subtle scheme.
I send these fellows on the quest
To find the babe of which they dream;
When they return their wit I will test.
If this be true, I'll make them scream.
They shall be slain at my behest!

*(HEROD exits and the three KINGS re-
enter, seemingly lost)*

1ST KING

Ah sirs, we have followed far.
Where is our sign, our guiding light?

3RD KING:

Oh sirs, behold, I see it stand

Above the place where he is bom.
Lo! the house is here at hand.
Blessed be this holy morn!

(ANGEL leads them to the stable. One by one, the KINGS go forward to present their gifts)

1ST KING
Hail, Lord that all this world has wrought!
Hail, God and man together in one!
For you have made all things of nought,
Though humbly you lie here, God's son.
A cup of gold to you I've brought,
Your holy will on earth be done.

2ND KING
Hail to you, Lord of magnificence,
For your dignity and priesthood!
To you, I offer a cup of incense,
For your sacrifice, our Heavenly Food.

3RD KING
We hail you, Lord that we longed for!
My gift is myrrh for your mortality.
In coming, you shall mankind restore
To life by your death upon a tree.

MARY
Sirs, you have not been deceived,
For you have found what you did seek.
My child was from God conceived,
Though born in such a place and weak.
He is God's Holy Son perceived
Bom to the world a baby meek.

(MARY and JESUS withdraw)

2ND KING
Let us now to King Herod go,
So that he may find this place,
And gladly kneel also
Before the King of every race.

1ST KING
First let us rest, for need
We surely have of sleep.

Then unto Herod's court speed
Our promise there to keep.

(KINGS lie down and sleep and GOD and ANGEL appears)

GOD
Herod the King on your murder is bent;
For he with envy plans your end,
So, to save you from his cruel intent,
'Tis my will another way home you wend.

(KINGS flee. HEROD enters with his court of KNIGHTS and COUNSELLORS)

HEROD
Why have they passed me by? Give breath I
gasp!
Oh Fie! Scoundrels, I say you should have
spied
And told when they went by!
Traitors and much worse! Knaves, but
Knights none!
Had you been more diligent, they would not
have gone.
I'll get those vagabonds, I'll break their every
bone.

Counsellors, tell me quickly what you find?

1ST COUNSELLOR
Truly Sir, the prophecy is not blind.
We read by Isaiah, he shall be so king,
That a maiden, sweetly, who has never
sinned
Shall him bear,
And him shall honour
Both King and Emperor.

HEROD
Why should I to him cower?
Nay, should I scare?
Fie knaves!
Fie dottypolls, with your books,
Go cast them in the brooks!
Should a child in a cave, but one year of age,
Thus make me rave?

2ND COUNSELLOR
Sir, quieten this outrage!
For he is nought but a page
Of one year.
We two shall be so keen,
With our wits between.
If you do just as I mean
He shall die on a spear

1ST COUNSELLOR
Throughout Bethlehem and every other
village
Give knights orders now to slay
All boy-children of two years' age.
For, by this way,
The child's blood may you spill
Thus, at your own will.

HEROD
What you suggests does me thrill;
It shall be as you say.
Knights! To Bethlehem you must go and all
the coast around,
All boy-children for to slay.
I command you
Spare no kin's blood.
Let all run in a flood!
Crush all babyhood
And do it swiftly too!

*(HEROD and COURT exit. GOD appears
to the sleeping JOSEPH)*

GOD:
Awake, Joseph, and prepare!
Move quickly if you have a care.
Leave this place with haste, for
I, The Lord, this word have sent
To warn you of impending doom.
Take now your wife and babe and flee
And swiftly leave this land.

JOSEPH
I thank you, Lord, for this your word
That tells us of the dangers nigh.
Your warning I have fully heard,

And so to Egypt we will fly.
*(MARY and JOSEPH and the child exit.
Enter a group of women with their babes.
They sing the Coventry Carol)*

WOMEN
Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child.
By, By. Lully, lullay.
Thy poor youngling, To whom we do
sing
By, By. Lully, lullay.

Herod the King in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
His men of might,
In his own sight,
All young children to slay.

*(They repeat the first verse and during this
the SOLDIERS enter and slay the babies)*

JOHN THE BAPTIST

[John, Jesus, God]

*(A crowd is forming by the River Jordan;
the voice of JOHN approaching is heard)*

JOHN

Repent, and be baptised!
I am a voice, crying in the wilderness,
Repent, and come to baptism!

(Enter JOHN)

Almighty God and Lord always,
Full wonderful is man's sinning,
For, if I preach to them for days,
And tell them of your coming,
You who made all heaven and earth,
Men are so dull that all my preaching
Has no worth.

When I have, Lord, in the name of Thee,
Baptised the folk in water clear,
Then have I said that, after me,
Shall he come that has more power,
Than I entire.
He shall give baptism more complete
In spirit and in fire.

*(The people come to him and he baptises
them in the Jordan. Jesus has now joined the
people and comes forward to be baptised)*

Full well I know, baptism is taken
To wash and cleanse man of his sin;
And well I know that there's no sin
In you, be it without or within.

JESUS

Come, baptise me, John, in this place.

JOHN

Lord, save your grace, that I forbid
That this can be;
For, Lord, I think that it were more need
You baptised me.

How should I, that is in sin
Give you baptism, that righteous is,
And has been ever?
For you are the root of righteousness
That trespassed never.

JESUS

You speak full well, John, certainly,
But suffer now, for heavenly mead,
That righteousness be not only
Fulfilled in word, but also in deed.
Now baptise me in my manhood
Openly here.

JOHN

Lord, I am ready at your will.

*(JESUS enters the water and kneels before
JOHN)*

Jesus, my Lord of might the most,
I baptise you here in the name
Of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

*(A brilliant shaft of light falls on JESUS and
the voice of GOD heard)*

GOD

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am
well pleased.

JOHN

I love you, sovereign and healer, Lord,
That comes to soothe men of their sores.
Man was in thrall,
But, Sirs, that babe that Mary bore
Be with you all!

THE MINISTRY: TEMPTATION AND TEACHING

[Jesus, Two Doctors, Arfex, Young Man,
Woman]

JESUS

Blessed are the poor in spirit:
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that mourn:
For they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek:
For they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst
after righteousness:
For they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful:
For they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart:
For they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers:
For they shall be called the children of God.
Blessed are they which are persecuted for
righteousness' sake:
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you, when men shall revile you,
and persecute you,
And shall say all manner of evil against you
falsely for my sake.
Rejoice and be exceeding glad:
For great is your reward in heaven:
For so persecuted they the prophets which
were before you.

*(Exit JESUS. The 1ST DOCTOR and
ARFEX, who have been listening, run to
meet a 2ND DOCTOR)*

1ST DOCTOR

Alas, our law is all forlorn!
A false hypocrite, Jesus by name,
That of a shepherd's daughter was born
Will break our law and make it lame.

ARFEX

On him believe many a score,
For his preaching holds such sway,
Each man him follow the more and more,
Against what he says no man says nay.

2ND DOCTOR

A false quarrel if we could feign,
That hypocrite to put in blame,
All his teaching would all disclaim,
And then his worship would turn to shame!

ARFEX

Hark, Sir Pharisee, and Sir Scribe!
A right good sport I can you tell,
I can devise a wondrous jibe,
If that you will keep counsel.
A fair young woman lives nearby,
Both fresh and gay upon to look,
And a tall man with her does lie,
The way into her chamber right he took.

Let us three now go straight there:
That way, be sure, I shall you lead,
And we shall take them both together
While that they do that sinful deed.

2ND DOCTOR

We shall have fun, if this be true.
We will bring her even before Jesu,
And of her life the truth present,
How in adultery her life is spent.
Then him before, when she is brought,
We shall him ask the true judgement,
What lawful death for her is wrought.

Of grace and mercy ever he does preach,
And that no man should be vengeful.
So, if he will do as he will teach,
To her he must be merciful.
And if we find him variable
In his preaching that he has taught,
Then have we cause both just and able
For a false man that he be caught.

1ST DOCTOR

But if he still keeps his usual stance
And preaches mercy, her for to save,

Then we have matter of great substance
Him for to kill and put in grave.
Great reason why I shall make clear:
For Moses law does strong proclaim
That every adulterer we should fear,
And with cruel stones they should be slain.

ARFEX
You wait too long, sirs, I tell you,
They will soon part, as that I guess;
Therefore, if you will have your prey now,
Let us go take them in their wantonness.

2ND DOCTOR
You go in front, our way to guide.

(They approach a doorway)

1ST DOCTOR
Break up the door and go we in,
Set to your shoulder with all your might.
We shall take them even in their sin,
Their own trespass shall them indict.

(They force open the door. A YOUNG MAN runs out in his doublet, his shoes in his hand, holding up his breeches.)

ARFEX
Arrest the harlot, and hold her tight
That in adultery here is found!

YOUNG MAN
If any man hinders me this night
I shall give him a deadly wound!

(drawing a dagger)

If any man my way does stop,
Ere we depart, dead shall he be.
I shall this dagger put in his crop,
I'll kill him before he shall me!

2ND DOCTOR
Great God's curse now go with ye!
With such a shrew I will not meddle.

YOUNG MAN
That same blessing I give you three,
And bequeath you all to hell and the devil!
(Exit)

1ST DOCTOR
Come forth, you whore and stinking
bitchclout!
How long have you known such harlotry?

(The WOMAN is dragged forward)

WOMAN
Ah, mercy, mercy, sirs, I you pray;
For God's love have mercy on me!
Of my misliving me not betray;
Have mercy on me for charity!

ARFEX
Ask us no mercy: it shall not be.
You shall die for your adultery.

WOMAN
Sirs, my worship if you will save,
And keep me from a public shame,
Both gold and silver you shall have,
If in innocence you keep my name.

2ND DOCTOR
You shall be brought before the law,
Your bawling bribes are all in vain,
As Moses taught us all before
With great stones you shall be slain.

(JESUS enters; the WOMAN is taken to him. JESUS bends down and writes on the ground with his finger, ignoring the accusations)

Hark, Sir Prophet! We all you pray
To rightly judge and pass sentence
Upon this woman, which this same day
In sinful adultery has done offence.

ARFEX

See, we have brought her to your presence
Because you are a wise prophet,
That you shall tell by conscience
What death for her you think most fit.

1ST DOCTOR

In Moses' law quite clear we find:
That such false lovers shall be slain;
Straight to a stake we shall them bind,
And with great stones burst out their brain.
Of your conscience tell us it plain,
This woman who in sin we caught:
Shall we let her go free again,
Or to her death shall she be brought?

*(JESUS still does not reply, but goes on
writing with his finger)*

WOMAN

Now, Holy Prophet, be merciful!
Upon me, wretch, take no vengeance.
For my sins abominable,
In heart I have great repentance.

ARFEX

Have done, Sir Prophet, tell us your lore:

1ST DOCTOR

In a cold study methinks you sit,
Good Sir, awake, tell us your thought.
Shall she be stoned? Tell us your wit,
Or by what rule shall she be brought?

(JESUS stands and looks at them)

JESUS

Whichever of you has sinned no sin,
And lead a cleaner life than she,
Cast the first stone, and lay well in
If clean of sin you truly be.

*(He squats down and writes again. The
WOMAN has sunk to the ground in grief.
The ACCUSERS, put to shame, slink away)*

JESUS *(looking up at the WOMAN)*

Where are your enemies that did you
accuse?
Why have they left us two alone?

WOMAN

Because they could not themselves excuse,
With shame have they fled, every one.

JESUS

You shall not becondemned by me,
Go home and walk free in this land:
Be sure you live in honesty,
And sin no more, I you command.

(The WOMAN pauses, then runs off)

If any of you of sin repent,
You can of God full mercy crave
For God of mercy is never spent,
And what you ask for, you shall have.

THE MINISTRY: HEALING, TEACHING AND PLOTTING

[Jesus, Martha, Mary, Lazarus, Two
Beggars, Mary Magdalene, Judas, John,
Anna, Three Doctors, Arfex, Caiaphas,
Ruffin]

(JESUS enters with his disciples)

JESUS

Come now, brothers, and go with me,
We will pass from Galilee;
To Bethany will we send,
To visit Lazarus, who is our friend.
For truly I would with him speak,
For I know, he is ill and weak.

(Enter MARTHA who falls at JESUS' feet)

MARTHA

Help me, Lord, in my most need!
Lazarus, my brother, now is dead,
That was to you both loved and dear;
He had not died had you been here.

JESUS

Martha, Martha, from grief refrain,
Your brother shall rise and live again.
I tell you all, both man and wife,
I am the resurrection and the life,
And who truly believes in me,
That I am and ever shall be,
One thing I shall him give,
Though he be dead, yet shall he live.
Now say woman, believe you this?

MARTHA

Yes, I do, my Lord of bliss,
You come to me in this my need,
For all your words are truth indeed.

JESUS

Go tell your sister Mary plain
That her Lord is coming again.

*(MARTHA runs to MARY who is with a band
of mourners)*

MARTHA

Sister, leave this sorrowful band,
Our Lord comes here at hand
And his apostles with him also.

MARY

Ah, for God's love let me go.
Blessed be he that sends me grace,
That I may see Him in this place.

(Goes to JESUS)

Lord, much sorrow may men see
Of my sister here and me;
We are heavy as any lead,
For our brother here lies dead.
Had you been here and had him seen,
Dead surely he would not have been.

JESUS

Dear sister, we have come to you
To bring you comfort in your woe.
Tell me, where is his body laid?
Then I shall do as I have said.

MARY

Lord, if it be your will,
I fear by now that he will smell,
For it is now the third day gone
Since he was laid beneath his stone.

JESUS (He kneels to pray outside the tomb)

Father, I pray you that you raise
Lazarus, that servant of yours and mine,
And bring him from his lonely grave
In hell no more to pine.
When I pray, you say all ways
Your will's the same as mine.
Therefore we will prolong his days,
I know to me you will incline.
Come out, Lazarus, and stand us by;
In earth you shall no longer lie!

(LAZARUS comes from the tomb, the grave-clothes still wrapped round him; there is astonishment)

Take and loose him foot and hand
And from his throat now take the band,
Loose the shroud that binds him so,
And all that gear, and let him go.

(Some onlookers approach LAZARUS and do as JESUS says.)

LAZARUS *(approaching JESUS after embracing his sisters)*

Lord, that all things made of nought,
Love I give to ye,
That such wonder here has wrought,
Greater may none be.
When I was dead to hell I sought
And then your power mightily
Raised me up, and here me brought.
Behold and you may see!

MARTHA *(Addressing the audience and bystanders)*

He is a Lord of grace.
Meditate on this case,
And pray him, full of might,
He keep you in this place
And have you in his sight.

(Enter two blind BEGGARS)

FIRST BEGGAR

You son of David, on us have mercy!
As we must steadfastly believe in ye,
Your goodness, Lord, let us come near,
We lie blind here and may not see.

SECOND BEGGAR

Lord, let your mercy to us be shown
And restore to us our bodily health.
The smallest morsel from your throne
Brings to our longing hearts great wealth.

JESUS

Your faith has made you both to see

And delivered you from all mortal pain.
Blessed be all that believe in me,
For they true sight of me will gain.

(He reaches out his hand slowly and touches their eyes)

FIRST BEGGAR

We thank you, Lord, for your great grace:
I that was blind now may see!

SECOND BEGGAR

Here I forsake all my trespass
And steadfastly will believe in ye.

(Sick people are brought to JESUS and in silence he heals them)

MARY MAGDALENE

As a cursed creature, clothed all in care,
And as a wicked wretch, all wrapped in woe,
Of bliss was never a woman so bare
As I myself that here now go

Mary Magdalene is my name,
Now will I go to Christ Jesu
For he is Lord of all virtue,
To rid me of my shame.

(MARY goes to JESUS who has sat on a stool with his disciples around him; they are drinking)

(Kneeling at JESUS' feet. MARY anoints JESUS' feet with ointment and dries them with her long hair)

Wherefore, king of grace,
With this ointment that is so sweet,
Let me anoint your holy feet,
And from my wickedness win some release.
Mercy, Lord, for my trespass!

JESUS *(lifting her gently by the hand)*

Woman, for your weeping, will
Some succour God you send.
You to save I have great skill.

For a sorrowful heart may sin amend.
(Sternly, as if casting out spirits)
All your prayers I shall fulfil
To thy good I will attend,
And save you from your sin so vile
And from the devil you defend.

JUDAS *(with irony)*
Lord, I think that you do act in haste
To let this ointment go to waste.
This harlot's oil was earned in sin
She spills it here your grace to win.
I'd sell it all and buy some meat
To give to poor men in the street.

JESUS
Judas, the poor are always with us;
This poor woman you do wrong.
I say that, from this moment on,
Of mercy shall be her morning song!

Enough! I see the time has come
Go forth you two, Peter and John,
By a house within the town
You'll find an ass no man has trained.
Untie that ass and bring it here, I say.
If any ask what you do,
Say that I have right full clear,
And he shall not stand in your way.

(Exeunt all. Enter ANNAS and TWO DOCTORS, all richly attired)

ANNAS
I am the prelate, I help rule this land,
And I uphold the law, as a judge of the
Jews.
I, Annas, by my powers do now command,
That the laws of Moses no man shall refuse.

Now, Sirs, let me tell why I for you sent.
One Jesus of Nazareth our law exceeds.
If he continues we all shall repent,
For he breaks our laws daily with his deeds.

Of your good advice I now must take heed:
How shall we act for the best in this case?

If we simply do nothing and let him
proceed,
Against our law and Caesar would we then
trespass.

FIRST DOCTOR
Sir, here's my advice about what we should
do:
Send to Caiaphas for counsel, hear what he
says.
For if Jesus proceeds and carries on so,
Our laws shall be ruined in very few days.

SECOND DOCTOR
Sir, remember the burden that on you is laid,
The law you must keep, it cannot fail.
If proof of fault against you is made,
The Jews in truth will you assail.

Take care of whose advice holds sway:
For Ruffin and Leon I suggest you send,
They are temporal judges, who know the
way
With your cousin Caiaphas this matter to
amend.

ANNAS
Now surely this counsel revives my heart.
Your advice is best as I can see.
Arfex, in haste look that you start
And ask Caiaphas, my cousin, come speak
with me.

To Ruffin and Leon go you also,
And ask them to speak with me in haste
On a vital matter that we must do,
And must be done ere this day be passed.

(EXUENT all. Enter CAIAPHAS, who appears, gaudily dressed, with his entourage of learned doctors)

CAIAPHAS
I, Caiaphas, am judge, and I have the clout
To destroy all those who our laws do flout.

This person, Christ, I would well harass,

He perverts the people with his preaching
ill.

We must seek a means, with my cousin
Annas,
To destroy him, or our law he will spill.

THIRD DOCTOR

My Lord, please you to pardon what I say,
The blame in you is as we find,
To let Christ continue thus day by day
With false witchcraft the people to blind.

CAIAPHAS

Well, Sirs, you shall see within a short while
I shall correct him out of his trespass:
He shall no longer our people beguile;
Out of my danger he shall not pass.

*(Enter ARFEX, RUFFIN and LEON.
ARFEX kneels before CAIAPHAS)*

ARFEX

My reverent sovereign, and it do you
please,
Sir Annas, my Lord, has to you sent.
He asks that you will not cease
Until you be with him present.

CAIAPHAS

Sir, tell my cousin I shall not fail,
It was my purpose him for to see.

*(LEON, RUFFIN and CAIAPHAS meet and
whisper together while ARFEX returns to
ANNAS)*

CAIAPHAS

Now on to Annas let us wend
Each of us to know the other's intent.
Many matters I have in mind
And them to him I shall present.

*(CAIAPHAS and all the DOCTORS with
RUFFIN and LEON go to ANNAS)*

ANNAS

Welcome, Sir Caiaphas, and you judges all!

A wondrous case, Sirs, here is befall
This Christ, God's son himself does call,
Says he is prince of princes all!

CAIAPHAS

It's true he claims in every place
He's King of Jews in every degree,
Therefore he is false, know well the case;
Caesar is king and none but he.

RUFFIN

He is a heretic and a traitor bold
To Caesar and to our law most certain,
Both in word and in work as you behold;
He is worthy to die with much pain.

SECOND DOCTOR

Now shall you hear advice from me:
Take Jesus that brings us all great shame,
Put him to death - let him not flee
Or else the people will you blame.

ANNAS

Now, brethren,
These nine days let us abide,
We must not give so hasty judgement,
But each man enquire on his side,
Send spies about the country wide
To see and record and testify:
And then his words he shall not hide
Nor have no power them to deny.

CAIAPHAS

This counsel accords with my reasoning.

ANNAS

Then we are all agreed!

THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

[Peter, John, Four Citizens]

(A crowd has gathered. PETER and JOHN enter)

PETER

O, you people despairing, be glad!
For good cause you have as you shall see;
The Lord who all things from nothing has
made
Is coming, your comfort for to be.
All your sicknesses heal shall he;
He comes to satisfy the meek,
He shall cure the blind so they shall see,
The deaf shall hear, the dumb shall speak.

1ST CITIZEN

Neighbours, great joy in our hearts we may
make
That this heavenly king will visit this city.

2ND CITIZEN

If our earthly king such a journey should
take
To honour and worship him we would be
ready.

4TH CITIZEN

Let us then welcome him with flowers and
branches of the tree
Because, in the sweet perfume, great
pleasure will there be.

*(The citizens take branches and flowers and
spread their clothes in the path of JESUS,
some kneeling. They wave their branches
calling 'Hosanna! Hosanna!')*

1ST CITIZEN

Blessed be he that comes in the name of the
Lord!

2ND CITIZEN: Hosanna to the son of
David!

3RD CITIZEN

Son of David, be our support
On our last day when we shall die!

*(JESUS dismounts and continues up the
steps on foot)*

THE LAST SUPPER

[Jesus, Peter, John, Simon the Leper, Judas]

*(JESUS looks over Jerusalem and weeps:
He speaks to his disciples)*

JESUS

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, woeful is the ordinance
Of the day of your great persecution!
You shall be destroyed with woeful grievance.

The vengeance of God there shall be seen.

The time is coming, his woe shall descend,
The day of trouble and great grievance,
Both temple and towers, they shall fall
down clean
O city, full woeful is this ordinance!

PETER *(unsure how to approach JESUS,
who is still weeping.)*
Lord, where will you keep your Passover?
I pray you now to tell us.

JESUS

Sirs, go now and you shall meet
A poor man in simple array
Bearing water in the street.
Tell him I shall come that way.

PETER

At your will Lord, it shall be done:
To seek that place we shall be gone.

JOHN:

We hurry while the sun is high
Your commandment never to deny.

*(JESUS withdraws. PETER and JOHN go
onward and meet SIMON THE LEPER
carrying a pitcher of water)*

PETER

Good man, the prophet our Lord Jesus
This night will rest within your hall.

With this message to you has he sent us,
That for his supper prepare you shall.

SIMON

What, will my Lord visit my place?
Blessed be the time of his coming!
I shall prepare within short space
For my good Lord's welcoming.

*(He takes them with him and they are joined
by the other disciples, who assist in setting
up a trestle table, benches and a simple meal
of meat, bread and wine. When it is ready,
JESUS enters)*

PETER

All ready, Lord, is our feast,
As I hope to you pleasing shall be.

SIMON

Gracious Lord, welcome you be,
Reverence be to you both God and man.
My poor house I give willingly,
To show I am your servant as I can.

*(JESUS lays a hand on his arm and then
signals them to sit round the table. JUDAS
keeps a little apart, JOHN sits very close to
JESUS. They begin to eat)*

JESUS

Brethren, this lamb that is set us before,
That we all have eaten this night,
It was commanded by my father to Moses
in law
When they were with the children of Israel
in Egypt.
With a fervent desire of my heart's affection,
I have entirely desired to eat this meal
Among you, before I suffer my passion.
As the paschal lamb eaten have we
In the old law was used for a sacrifice,
So the new lamb, that shall be sacred by me,
Shall be used as a sacrifice of highest price.

*(JESUS takes bread and looks to Heaven,
saying)*

Wherefore, to the Father in heaven that art eternal,
Thanks and honour I yield, that Thou wilt show this mystery,
And thus through Thy might, Father, and blessing of me,
Of this that was bread is made my body.

(He breaks the bread and distributes it to all except JUDAS)

This is my body, flesh and blood
That for you shall die upon the rood.

(As He comes to give bread to JUDAS)

Judas, are you aware what you shall take?

JUDAS
Lord, your body I will not forsake.

JESUS
My body to you I will not deny
Since you will presume thereupon.

(He sits)

One of you has betrayed me,
That at my board with me has eaten,
Better for him to have been
Both unborn and unbegotten.

(Each disciple looks at the others until PETER speaks)

PETER
Lord, is it I?

(Each disciple except JUDAS says this)

JUDAS
Is it not I, Lord?

JESUS
Judas, you say that word.
Me you have sold that was your friend.
What you must do, bring to an end.

(JUDAS leaves; they all watch him go)

Now in memory of my passion,
For to dwell with me in my kingdom above,
You shall drink my blood with great devotion,
Which shall be shed for man's love.

(He takes the cup, blesses it and passes it amongst them)

Take this chalice of the New Testament,
And keep this ever in your mind.
As often as you do this with true intent,
It shall defend you from the fiend.

This is my blood that, for man's sin,
Out of my heart shall run.

Whoso eats my body and drinks my blood,
Of God and man he shall partake!

(JESUS takes a basin of water and wraps a towel around his waist. He kneels in front of PETER)

Another example I shall you show,
How you shall live in charity,
Sit here down with words few
And what I do you must allow me.

(He goes to wash PETER'S feet)

PETER
Lord, what will you with me do?
This service of you I will forsake;
To wash my feet you shall not so:
I am not worthy it of you to take.

JESUS
Peter, if you refuse this act of love
This service to you I would do,
No bonding with me shall you have
And never come my bliss unto.

PETER

That bonding Lord I will not forgo
Wash head and hands I pray also.

(JESUS washes the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel. Then He again sits at the table)

JESUS

Friends, this washing shall now prevail
Your lord and master you do me call,
And so I am without fail,
Yet I have washed you all;
A memory of this have you all
That each of you shall do to the other;
With humble heart, submit equal,
As each of you were the other's brother.

Now, this night from you be led I shall,
And you for fear from me shall flee,
Not one dares speak when I you call
And some of you forsake me.
For you shall I die and rise again;
On the third day you shall me see
Before you, all walking plain
In the land of Galilee.

PETER

Lord, I will never thee forsake,
Nor for no perils from thee flee,
I will rather my death take
Than once, Lord, forsake thee.

JESUS

Peter - you're in deeper than you can know
So promises you should not make,
For before the cock twice does crow,
Three times you shall me forsake.

(He silently prevents PETER'S protests)

The time is come; the day draws near;
On to my death I must haste.
Now, Peter, give all you fellows cheer,
My flesh for fear is quaking fast.

(They stand and leave)

THE BETRAYAL

[Judas, Ruffin, Leon, Jesus, Peter, Malchus, Angel, Mary]

(RUFFIN, LEON, GAMALIEL and others as if in conference together. Enter JUDAS running)

JUDAS

Hail, princes and priests here present!
New tidings to you I come to tell,
If you will follow my intent,
My master Jesu I will sell.

LEON

Now welcome, Judas, our own friend.
Take him in, Sirs, by the hand.
We shall you both give and lend,
And in every quarrel by you stand.

RUFFIN

Judas, what shall we for your master pay?
The silver is ready; and, if we agree,
The payment shall have no delay
But be laid down here, depend on me.

JUDAS

Let the money here down be laid,
And I shall tell you as I can.
In old times I heard it was said
That money makes a merchant man.

RUFFIN

Here are thirty pieces of silver bright
Fast tied within this glove,
If we may have your master tonight,
Then you shall have all our love.

LEON

There be many that him never saw
Which we will send to him in fear;
Therefore by a signal we must him know,
That must be secret between us here.

JUDAS

As for that, Sirs, you need not doubt,

I shall make sure you shall not miss,
When you come near you need not shout,
But take the man that I shall kiss.

(They TOSS JUDAS the money and go out laughing, leaving him to pick up the coins. Exit JUDAS. JESUS enters with his disciples)

JESUS

Now, my dear friends and brethren each one,
Remember the words that I shall say;
The time is come that I must be gone
For to fulfill the prophecy.

(They reach the Garden of Gethsemane)

Peter, with your fellows here shall you abide,
And watch until I come again,
I must say my prayers here you beside;
My flesh quakes sore for fear and pain.

PETER

Against this wish, Lord, I would strain
But in this place I shall remain.

(JESUS goes a short distance away, falls to his knees and prays)

JESUS

O Father, Father, for my sake
This awful cup thou take from me,
Which is ordained that I should take
If man's soul saved should be.

(JESUS rises and goes to PETER and the other disciples, and finds them sleeping)

Peter, Peter, you're sleeping fast;
Awake your fellows and sleep no more!
At my death are you not aghast?
You take your rest and I suffer sore!

(JESUS goes and prays again)

Father in heaven, I beseech thee,
Remove my pains by thy great grace,
And let me from this torment flee,
As I did never trespass.
The drops of sweat upon my face
Foretell of pains that I shall take.
My flesh it quakes in fearful case
As though the joints apart would shake.

(JESUS goes to his DISCIPLES again and finds them sleeping. He lets them sleep and prays again)

Father, the third time I come again
To plead my cause before thy face
Deliver me, Father, from this pain,
Sustain my spirit through thy grace.
Unto thy son, Father, take heed.
Thou knowest I have done nought but good,
It is not for me that I must bleed
But for man I sweat both water and blood.

(An ANGEL appears and holds out a chalice to JESUS)

ANGEL
Hail, both God and man indeed!
The Father has sent you this present
He bids that you should not it dread,
But fulfill his loving intent.
This chalice is thine own dear blood,
For man's sin ever offered shall be
To thy Father of heaven that is almighty.

(The ANGEL departs)

JESUS
Father, thy will fulfilled shall be.

(A noisy crowd is heard approaching: they enter, carrying swords, sticks and torches)

Rise up, sirs, I you pray.

(The disciples stand confused and JESUS goes to confront the crowd which is led by JUDAS)

Sirs, in your way you have great haste
To seek him that will not flee,
Tell me, Sirs, whom seek ye?

LEON
Whom we seek here I tell you now:
A traitor who is worthy to suffer death.
We know he is here among you.
His name is Jesus of Nazareth.

(The crowd presses forward)

JESUS
Sirs, I am here and will not flee,
Do to me all that you can.
For truth to tell you, I am he,
Jesus of Nazareth, that same man.

(The crowd falls back)

I say again, whom do you seek?

RUFFIN
Jesus of Nazareth we seek,
If we might him here espy.

JESUS
I told you now with words meek
Before you all that it was I.

JUDAS
Welcome, Jesu, my master dear,
I have you sought in many a place.
I am full glad to find you here
For of you I could find no trace.

(JUDAS goes to JESUS and kisses him. The mob takes hold of JESUS)

PETER
I draw my sword now this time.
Shall I strike, master? Truly would I know.

(He slashes off the ear of MALCHUS, a servant, who cries 'My ear, my ear!' JESUS heals the wound)

JESUS

Put up your sword, Peter,
He that lives by the sword shall die by the
sword!

LEON

Bring forth this traitor! Spare him nought!
Unto Caiaphas, your judge, we shall you
lead.

In many places we have you sought,
And to your works have taken good heed.

RUFFIN

Come on, Jesus, and follow me.
I am full glad that caught you be,
You shalt be hanged upon a tree;
A million of gold shall not save thee!

*(JESUS is led away. Enter the VIRGIN
MARY, who watches the party leave)*

MARY

Ah, jesu! jesu! jesu! jesu!
How may they find in their hearts you to
pursue
That never trespassed in no manner of
degree?
For never a thing but that was good thought
he.
Wherefore then should he suffer this great
woe?
I suppose, truly, it is for the trespass of me;
And I think that my heart would break in
two.

Now dear son, since you have ever been so
full of mercy,
Think of your mother, that woeful woman!

THE TRIAL OF JESUS

[Jesus, Three Torturers, Caiaphas, Annas,
A Woman, A Servant Girl, Peter, A Man,
Pilate, A Crowd, Herod]

(Enter JESUS driven by two torturers)

1ST TORTURER

Get on there, go! Make it fast,
To Annas will we go and Sir Caiaphas;
Be sure, from them two you'll get no grace,
But everlasting pawn for the wrongs you've
done.
Your fate, mate,
Is far worse there
Than you've been anywhere,
False traitor to the state!

(Enter ANNAS and CAIAPHAS)

2ND TORTURER

Good, sirs, full of power and might,
Why do you not ask we have fared this
night?

CAIAPHAS

Can you him impeach? Fled his friends in
fear?

1ST TORTURER

Aye, and he has been heard to preach for
many a year.

2ND TORTURER

Sir, I heard him say he would destroy our
temple so gay
And then build it anew on the third day.

CAIAPHAS

How might that be true? It took much to
array,
The masons I knew that hewed it I say,
So wise, that hewed every stone.

1ST TORTURER

Ah, good Sir, let him alone,

He lies - for a smooth tongue
I give him the prize.

CAIAPHAS

Now attend and cease your talking, For now
I myself will begin examining.

(To JESUS)

Harlot of all; we'll make you sing!
How dare you call yourself emperor or
king?
I defy you!
What the devil are you up to?
Your deeds will cost you dear.
Come now, and whisper in my ear,
Or I shall destroy you.

(JESUS does not speak)

Speak but one word now in the devil's
name!

(JESUS is still silent)

Lad, I am a prelate, a lord of high degree,
All in my glory you can see.

ANNAS *(To CAIAPHAS)*

Ah, Sir, be not downcast, though he not
answer;
He is inwardly shaken, we must be gentler.

CAIAPHAS

A foul fate him befall!

ANNAS

Sir, be not so angry withall,
And perhaps he shall
Hereafter please you.
We must by our law examine him first.

CAIAPHAS

Unless I give him a blow, my heart will
burst!
I shall ring his neck that it may crack.

ANNAS

Some skill in this matter you do lack.

(To JESUS)

Hark fellow, come here!

(JESUS stays still)

Will you never beware?

I'm amazed that you dare.

Say, did you this wrong? Have you got an excuse?

Why stand you so still when you are accused?

(Pause) Say, are you God's son of heaven
As you like to claim?

JESUS

They're your words not mine.

But truly I am.

On the last day you shall see me

From heaven in brightness come down.

CAIAPHAS *(Rending his own garments)*

Blasphemy! Cursed be the feet that brought
you to town!

You are worthy to die I say, thief; where is
your crown?

1ST TORTURER *(Taking JESUS and
handing him a stool)*

Come Sir, sit down. Must you be prayed?
Like a Lord of renown your seat is arrayed.

(JESUS is forced to sit on the stool)

3RD TORTURER

Here is a veil - I hope it will last.

2ND TORTURER

Bring it here good son, that's what I ask.

3RD TORTURER

How should it be done?

1ST TORTURER

About his head cast and, when you've well
bound,

Tie the knot fast.

(JESUS is blindfolded)

Now, since he is blindfold, I will begin,
He shall prophesy who struck his chin!

*(They strike him, jeering 'Prophecy, who
smote you?' JESUS does not reply and is
eventually hauled up before CAIAPHAS
again)*

CAIAPHAS

Now, since he is well beaten, take him
through the gate

And tell the charge to Pontius Pilate,
For he sits in the judgement chair among
men of state,

And look that you be not late!

1ST TORTURER *(To JESUS)*

Come on old crate,
Believe me, we shall lead you a dance.

*(JESUS is led away. Enter PILATE and a
crowd - amongst them is PETER who is
unobtrusively trying to see what is
happening. He is spotted by a WOMAN)*

WOMAN

Sir, do you not know this man?

PETER

No, I know him not, by him that made me!
If you will believe me when I say as I do
I will swear before this company
That what I say is true!

SERVANT GIRL

Ah, good man, it seems to me
That one of his disciples you must be.

PETER

No, woman, I have never seen this man
Ever since the world began!

A MAN
Fellow, welcome here!
You're the one who cropped my cousin's
ear.
And now you may not run away
For you are from Galilee, I dare say.

*(At this moment, JESUS is dragged through
the crowd)*

PETER
What you're saying isn't true
I know him no more than I know you.

*(The cock crows twice. JESUS turns and
looks at PETER. PETER weeps and runs
out. Enter CAIAPHAS and ANNAS. They
go to PILATE as JESUS is led to stand
before him. PILATE is flanked by
SOLDIERS)*

CAIAPHAS
Sir Pilate, listen to this case.
Before you, Jesus we have brought,
Who to our Law brings much disgrace,
And great distress has wrought.

ANNAS
Yes, Sir, more - and worst of all
Defying Caesar, our Emperor renowned,
The King of the Jews himself he calls,
And brings our Emperor's power down.

PILATE
Jesus, I understand you are a King
And the Son of God; you are also
Lord of Earth and of everything:
Tell me if this be so.

JESUS
In Heaven is known my Father's intent:
But in this world was I born;
By my Father was I sent,
To comfort those who are forlorn.

PILATE
Now, sirs, you have heard this man.
Think you not, using your reason,
That what he say may well be true?
I find in him no guilt or treason

CAIAPHAS
The Emperor shall be told of this,
If you let Jesus thus depart.

PILATE
Then, tell me, sirs, one thing.
What is the charge?

ANNAS
Sir, we tell you all together,
For his evil works we brought him here.

PILATE
Take him then to your own court,
And judge him according to your law.

CAIAPHAS
For us, it is not lawful
To execute a criminal:
That is why we bring him thus,
For he shall not be King over us!

THE CROWD
Caesar is our king! Long live Caesar!

*(PILATE quietens the MOB and turns to
JESUS again)*

PILATE
Jesus, are you King of the Jews?

JESUS
So you say.

PILATE
Tell me then, where is your kingdom?

JESUS
My kingdom is not of this world,
I tell you in a word.

If my kingdom had been here
I never had been delivered to you.

PILATE

Sirs, find some other judge if you can, I find
no error in this man.

*(THE CROWD shouts 'Condemn him to
die!' etc)*

Now, one thing make plain to me,
Was Jesus born in Galilee?

ANNAS

Sir, he was born in Bethlehem of Judea,
As all will tell who are assembled here,
And that stands in Galilee.

PILATE

Well, Sirs, the judgement of Jesus lies not
with me,
For Herod is King of that country.
Therefore, commend me to Herod in word
and deed,
And take Jesus before him with all speed.

*(Exit PILATE. Enter HEROD. JESUS is led
before him)*

HEROD

This deed of Pilate's is truly kind;
And will hereafter be his friend.
Jesus, you are welcome to me.
I have desired so long you to see,
To understand what your miracles be,
For I have heard great wonders of ye.
Now, Jesus, let me see,
A miracle done here, just for me!

(JESUS remains impassive)

In haste now with all diligence,
You are in my royal presence!

(JESUS is unmoved; HEROD rages)

Jesus, why do you speak not to your King?

What is the cause of your squatting so still?
You know I am Judge of everything,
Your life and death are in my will.
What! Speak, Jesus and tell me why
These people do you accuse.
Spare not - tell me openly
What is your excuse?

(JESUS is still silent)

CAIAPHAS

Sire, this is his clever subtlety.
He speaks only when he chooses.

HEROD

What! Speak, I say! You foul nave,
Damn you with curses!
Look up! The devil will teach you.
Sirs, beat his body with scourges,
And make him speak!

*(They pull off JESUS' robe and flog him with
whips and put a crown of thorns on his
head)*

1ST TORTURER:

Jesus, your bones may not break,
But we shall make you skip.

2ND TORTURER

You may have lost your tongue,
But you shall taste this whip.

*(They beat him until he is bloody; HEROD
Stops them in alarm)*

HEROD

Cease, I command you by the devil of hell!
His errors never will he tell.
Sirs, take Jesus without further pain
And lead him back to Pilate again.
Greet him well and tell him straight
I give him power over Jesus.
Take him out of my sight!

*(JESUS is led away. Exit HEROD. Re-enter
PILATE)*

CAIAPHAS

Lord Pilate, Herod has once more sent
Jesus to you, that you may give judgement.

PILATE

In Jesus I find no fault, not one,
Nor does Herod, since he sends him on;
Therefore it is right we let him be gone.

A MAN

Nail him, we cry with one voice!

CROWD

Nail him to the cross! Nail him!

PILATE

You men, for shame! Silence your din!
My counsel I will say.
You know the custom, each man here,
That I release to you a prisoner
On the Feastday that draws near.
Shall it be Jesus?

A MAN

No! He is worthy to suffer death,
And so we cry with one breath,
Barrabas be reprieved!

CROWD

Barrabas! Barrabas!

PILATE

You prelates, now what do you think?
What would you do? Will you let him go?

CAIAPHAS

Nail him to the cross!

ANNAS

Condemn him!

PILATE:

Jesus, tell me, I pray you, say
If you be king, say yes or no:
Are you King of the Jews?

JESUS

Do you hope that this should be
Or have men told you this of me?

PILATE

By the gods, you know and see
That I am no Jew.
Men of your own nation
Call for your damnation,
And have done so all this day.
Are you King, as some men say?

JESUS

I have told you that my realm
Is not of this world, for if it were
No man would take me here.

PILATE

Therefore you are a king, or were?

JESUS

It is no more than you suggest;
But now I tell you, I confess
That King I am, and shall be King;
To the world I came to bear witness
To truth, and therefore was I born.

PILATE

Tell me Jesus, what is truth?

JESUS

It comes from God's own goodness.

PILATE

On earth then the truth may not exist,
In your opinion?

JESUS

How can truth live on earth, tell me,
When so condemned on earth is he
By those who have authority
On earth, over reason?

PILATE

Lords, I find no cause, I fear,
To sentence this man that stands here.

CROWD

Crucify him! Crucify him!

PILATE

Shall I crucify your King?

CAIAPHAS

Pilate, do as we say you must:

Condemn to death this Jesus,

Or to Caesar we shall him entrust

And make our friendship cold.

CROWD

Crucify him!

(Their cries rise to a tremendous climax)

PILATE

I am innocent of this man's blood. Now see,
My hands completely washed shall be.

*(He signals for a bowl to be brought him
and he washes his hands)*

This blood you spill will cost you dear.

CROWD

Yea, on us let it fall!

We have no fear.

PILATE

Listen all you standing here!

This man has been condemned to die.

I give my orders loud and clear.

Upon a cross to hang him high.

Now go.

(JESUS is led away)

THE CRUCIFIXION

[Jesus, Four Soldiers]

(JESUS is given his cross and led through the crowd. He reaches Calvary and lays down his cross. Four SOLDIERS enter with tools)

1ST SOLDIER

Sir knights, the time has come well nigh
This task that now befalls us four.
And know you now as well as I,
How the lords and leaders of our law
Have judged this dope now doomed to die.

2ND SOLDIER

Sir we've heard all that before!
But now we've come to Calvary,
Let's get on and say no more.

3RD SOLDIER

I am ready to do my lot,
And your commands I'll heed.

4TH SOLDIER

Just work out whose job is what,
And we shall do the deed.

1ST SOLDIER

Sirs, we had better start right soon,
If we are to any wages win.

2ND SOLDIER

He must be dead, needs must, by noon.

4TH SOLDIER

Then it is good time we begin.

3RD SOLDIER

Let's ding him down! Then he is done.
He shall not daunt us with his din.

1ST SOLDIER

He needs a lesson, learn him one,
With pain for him and all his kin.

2ND SOLDIER

The foulest death of all,
Shall this lad receive.

3RD SOLDIER

Yes, and on this cross so tall!

4TH SOLDIER

Come then, roll up thy sleeve!

1ST SOLDIER

Right, to this work we must take heed,
So that our working be not wrong.

2ND SOLDIER

Come on, dear friend, do take the lead,
We must to labour and get along.

3RD-SOLDIER

And I have brought the gear we need,
Hammers and nails, both large and long.

4TH SOLDIER

Then may we boldly do this deed,
Come on, let's kill this traitor strong! *(the "strong" applies to "kill", not to "traitor")*

1ST SOLDIER

This lad is not the last
We shall nail upon the wood.

2ND SOLDIER

And we'll fasten him full fast,
For the general good.

3RD SOLDIER

Since every thing is well arrayed
Our work will wiser be.

(possibly he takes a drill to make starter holes for the nails)

4TH SOLDIER *(you fool - the cross makers have already drilled holes)*

This cross we have is well made
And even drilled, for all to see.

1ST SOLDIER

Look that the lad on length be laid,
And then be tied unto this tree.

2ND SOLDIER

For all his boasts he shall be paid,
That soon you all shall see!

3RD SOLDIER *(To JESUS)*

Come forth, thou cursed cur!
Your comfort soon shall end!

4TH SOLDIER

Your payment now you will incur!

1ST SOLDIER

Walk on, I say! Attend!

JESUS

Almighty God, my Father free,
'Tis clear my blood must now be spilled
You said that I should ready be,
For Adam's fate I must be killed
Here to death I do pledge me,
From all their sins to save mankind,
And of thy mercy I beseech I thee
That they from me may favour find;
And from the fiend them well defend,
So that their sinning souls be saved
In joy without an end:
I nothing more do crave.

1ST SOLDIER

Oh hark, Sir knight, for the devil's blood!
Of Adam's kin is all his thought.

2ND SOLDIER

The warlock waxes worse than wood.
This dreadful death he dreadeth nought.

3RD SOLDIER

You should think now well and good
Of wicked works that you have wrought.

4TH SOLDIER:

'Tis pity you did not conclude

To stop the lying tales you taught.

1ST SOLDIER

Those lies he shall regret,
And all his bragging too.

2ND SOLDIER

Justice to him be met
And death for all to view.

4TH SOLDIER

Come on, my boy, get off your gown,
And bend your back unto this tree!

(JESUS unfastens his gown and lies on the cross)

3RD SOLDIER

Behold, he himself has laid him down
In length and breadth as he should be!

1ST SOLDIER

This traitor here be tainted of treason,
Go fast and fetter him then, you three;
And, since he claims a kingdom's crown,
Even as a king here, hang shall he!

2ND SOLDIER

For certain, I shall not cease
Till his right hand be fast.

(Taking his right hand)

3RD SOLDIER

The left hand then's my piece,
For I will not be last.

(Taking his left hand)

4TH SOLDIER

His limbs on length then shall I lead,
And even unto the hole them bring.

(Going to his feet)

1ST SOLDIER

Unto his head I shall take heed,
And with my hand help him to hang.

2ND SOLDIER

Now since we four shall do this deed,
And meddle with this unseemly thing,
Let no man spare for special speed,
Till we have made an ending.

3RD SOLDIER

We'll manage, have no fear
We've set the thing in train

4TH SOLDIER

This boy here in our care
Shall bear full bitter pain.

(They tie Jesus' hands to the cross)

1ST SOLDIER

Sir knights, say now, work we ought?

2ND SOLDIER

Why sure, I hope. I hold this hand.

3RD SOLDIER

And to the hole I have it brought,
Easily, without a band.

1ST SOLDIER

Strike on hard, for him you bought.

2ND SOLDIER

Yes, here's a nail that will stiffly stand;
Through bones and sinews it shall be
brought

(A nail is hammered in Jesus' hand)

This work is well. Right grand!

1ST SOLDIER

Say Sir, how do we use these?
This bargain we will win.

3RD SOLDIER

It fails a foot and more;
The sinews are so gone in.

(The nail hole is in the wrong place)

4TH SOLDIER

I think the hole is wrongly bored.

2ND SOLDIER

Then he must wait in agony.

3RD SOLDIER

In faith it was too lightly scored
That's why it's wrong, you see.

1ST SOLDIER

Why carp ye so? Fast on a cord
And tug him to, by top and tail.

(They stretch the arm by means of a rope)

3RD SOLDIER

As thou commands us, haughty as a lord;
Come help us to haul him with ill hail!

1ST SOLDIER

Now for sure, that I shall do
Full quickly as a snail.

3RD SOLDIER

And I shall fasten him too,
Full nimbly with a nail.

(Hammers nail into JESUS' hand)

This work will hold, and that right neat.
His hands held fast I will contend.

4TH SOLDIER

Go then we all four to his feet,
'Tis well our time we now there spend.

2ND SOLDIER

This will give him pain so sweet.
To that my back now will I bend.

4TH SOLDIER *(he won't stretch that far!)*

Oh! This work is just not right,
This drilling must we now amend.

1ST SOLDIER

Ah peace, man, for the devil,
Let no man know this wonder,
A rope shall pull him out
If all his sinews go asunder.

2ND SOLDIER
This cord here I have is strongly knit
For to do this job it surely will.

1ST SOLDIER
Hold it fast all ye that are fit.
And worry not, if his blood you spill.

2ND SOLDIER
Pull on ye both! Oh use your wit!

3RD SOLDIER
I shall not cease, I'll use my skill.

4TH SOLDIER
Dear sirs, let's hope he does not split!

2ND SOLDIER
Oh heave!

4TH SOLDIER
Ho now! Pull I still!

1ST SOLDIER
Have done, drive in that nail,
So that no fault be found.

4TH SOLDIER
This working would not fail
If four bulls here were bound.

1ST SOLDIER
These cords have much increased his pain,
They had to be so tight and taut.

2ND SOLDIER
Yea, see how stretched his flesh and veins,
On either side where we have fought.

3RD SOLDIER
Now all his tricks give him no gain
For all his bragging he is here caught.

4TH SOLDIER
And I will go tell our sovereigns
Of all these works that we have wrought.

1ST SOLDIER
Nay, Sirs, another thing,
Falls first to you and me;
They bade we should him hang
On high that men might see.

2ND SOLDIER
We know well what their words were
But, Sir, that deed will cost us dear.

1ST SOLDIER
It will not help to argue more.
This rascal must be hang-ed here.

2ND SOLDIER
The mortice is made fit therefore.

3RD SOLDIER
Fasten your fingers then, you hear.

4TH SOLDIER
Nay, we can never lift it there,
We will not raise it up this year.

1ST SOLDIER
Say, man, why grumble so?
The lifting is but light.

2ND SOLDIER (*look to the audience for help*)

I think there should be more
To heave him up on height.

3RD SOLDIER (*we don't want to have share out our pay though*)

Now sirs, I hope we will not need
More fellows here to help us try;
Methinks, we four should do the deed
And bear him up on high.

1ST SOLDIER
Now it must be done with all speed

No more chat, I will have no reply!
For this part shall I lift and lead,
On length he shall no longer lie.
Therefore now make no more sound,
Let us bear him to yon hill.

4TH SOLDIER
Then will I bear him down,
And tend his toes I will.

2ND SOLDIER
This cross will come out all cock-eyed,
And likely this lad will do it wrong.

3RD SOLDIER
I am ready, good sirs, abide.
I'll not fail, for I am strong.

1ST SOLDIER
Oh, stop your boasts and let me guide.
Lift up!

(They lift the cross)

4TH SOLDIER
Let's see!

2ND SOLDIER
Oh, lift along!

3RD SOLDIER
From all this harm he would hide
If he were God.

4TH SOLDIER
The devil him hang!

1ST SOLDIER
Oh my Lord! Something cracked,
My shoulder must be torn.

2ND SOLDIER
And for sure I am whacked
So long I have this borne.

3RD SOLDIER
Oh, this load no longer will I win.

For this cross doth weigh a ton.
4TH SOLDIER
Lay down again and leave your din;
This deed just can't be done.

(They lay it down)

1ST SOLDIER
Sirs, let us see if some engine
Can be brought now we've begun.
For here should workers worship win
Our time for this is overrun!

2ND SOLDIER
Workers worthier than we
To find will be tough.

3RD SOLDIER
This labour right finishes me.
I'm proper out of puff.

4TH SOLDIER
Never have I come upon such a chore!
I think this cur a spell has cast.

2ND SOLDIER
My burden made me wondrous sore,
That to the hill I may not last.

1ST SOLDIER
Lift and he shall be there for sure.
Put your backs in it, fasten fast!

3RD SOLDIER
Oh, lift!

(They lift the cross again)

1ST SOLDIER
We lo!

4TH SOLDIER
A little more!

2ND SOLDIER
Hold then!

1ST SOLDIER

How now!

2ND SOLDIER

The worst is past.

3RD SOLDIER

He weighs a wicked weight!

2ND SOLDIER

So may we all four say;
Here he is seen at height,
All raised up in this way.

(They have stood the cross up)

4TH SOLDIER

This made me bust my bollock stones
So weighty was he for to bear.

1ST SOLDIER

Now let's raise him and no moans,
And set him by this mortice here,
And let him fall in as 'tis known
The pain for sure will have no peer.

3RD SOLDIER

Heave up!

4TH SOLDIER

Let down, for all his bones
Asunder now on all sides tear.

(JESUS is now in place)

1ST SOLDIER

Say Sir, how likes you now
This work that we have wrought?

4TH SOLDIER

We pray you tell us how
You feel, all faint or aught?

JESUS

All men that walk by way or street,
Take care lest you forget this time.

Behold my head, my hands, my feet.

My Father, that sits on holy seat,
Forgive these men that are unkind.
They know not what they do.

Therefore, my Father, I thee crave
Let these sins not them undo,
But soon their souls to save.

1ST SOLDIER

Oh hark! He jangles like a jay!

2ND SOLDIER

Methinks he patters like a pie!

3RD SOLDIER

He has been doing so all day,
Mercy for others did he cry!

4TH SOLDIER

Is this the same that some did say
Was the Son of God on high?

1ST SOLDIER

Therefore he feels full foul today,
Condemned this way to die.

3RD SOLDIER

Yes, let him hang there still
And make faces at the moon.

4TH SOLDIER

Then may we go at will.

1ST SOLDIER

No - good sirs, not so soon.
Hold, there's another thing we need to do.
Which of you would this robe crave?

2ND SOLDIER

No Sir, I rather we by lot drew
To see which of us it falls to have.

4TH SOLDIER

The short cut shall win what is due.
Whether it fall to knight or knave.

(They draw lots)

1ST SOLDIER
Brothers, look I have won!
The mantle's mine, I say.

2ND SOLDIER
So our work here is done.
Come let us wend our way.

(They exit)

JESUS *(from the cross)*
Now is my passion at an end
Father of Heaven, into Thy hands
I here my soul commend.

*(He dies) (Singers sing Kyrie Eleison
quietly)*
(Enter MARY, Mother of Jesus)

MARY
My dear son Jesus, raised on high
See how my heart is heavy as lead;
I bid to you a sweet goodbye
Alas, my darling son is dead!

Alas, for my sweet son I say,
That dreadfully to death is done!
Alas, for full lovely you lay
Within my womb, my darling son.
Alas, that I should see this sight
My son so still is he;
Alas, when this blossom bright
Is falsely tied unto this tree.
Oh, my Lord! My life!
I am with full great grief
They hang you as a common thief
That never did trespass.
Alas, Alas!

PILATE *(entering)*
Woman! Silence your weeping.
(to the audience)
He that on this cross hangs high
With guilt and shame, his blood to spill,
The blame for this I do deny
For 'crucify' was all your will!

Now, get out from my sight,
And all the rest depart away;
There'll be no more to see this day.
Guards! Clear this place, I say.

(He exits)

THE DEPOSITION and ENTOMBMENT

[Jesus, Four Soldiers Crowd]

THE GOOD FRIDAY PERFORMANCE

The GUARDS start to move the CROWD back. The CROWD begins singing 'When I survey the wondrous cross'. The GUARDS pause, non plussed until the hymn is finished, then complete the removal of the CROWD. JESUS is taken down from the cross, and carried away.

JUNE PERFORMANCES

The GUARDS push the CROWD back. JESUS is taken down from the cross, placed on the cart and carried in procession back to the 'tomb' in Ousebank Gardens. The CROWD follows.

In Ousebank, JESUS is placed in the tomb, and the GUARDS take up their positions outside the tomb.

THE RESURRECTION and APPEARANCES

[Jesus, Pilate, Annas, Four Guards, Mary mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Salome, Angel, Cleopas (Everyman), Lucas (Everywoman), Peter, John, Thomas]

(Enter PILATE and ANNAS)

ANNAS

Sir Pilate, listen close to me
I shall tell it you anew,
Of one thing you aware must be,
Or else we may it rue.

We know full well how Jesu
Spoke of it in words so plain,
That we should find it true
The third day he would rise again.

If his disciples steal his corse
Then preach him risen again
Our cause is made the worse
And brings us all much pain.

PILATE

Come, good sir, you did vouchsafe
To go with me and seal the grave
Of him that is now dead.
When it is sealed, and watched also
Then we be safe and without woe,
And have of him no dread.

(He seals the tomb with Annas, watched by the Guards)

Guards, keep watch I say
(To Annas) Together, let us wend our way.

(They exit)

GUARD.1

I tell you straight
I shall keep him tight
No fear of that!
I will with robbers fight!

GUARD 2

Ay, we are ready here
Around this room
With all our gear
To keep this tomb!

GUARD 3

Here will I sit and bide
None shall pass this door.
If any come this side
I'll give 'em all, what for!

GUARD.4

It is well said,
And on this grass
I'll make my bed
That none this way shall pass

(They all settle down and fall asleep)
(Enter MARY, SALOME, and MARY MAGDALENE - all are weeping)

MARY

Alas, to bitterness am I brought
With all this woeful sight.
Of sorrow am I taught
For I did see
How Jesus the most of might
Is dead to me!

MAGDALENE

How stand I on my feet?
When I think of his wounds all wet,
Jesu, that was of love so sweet
And never did do ill,
Is buried and in blood is set;
For naught they did him kill.

SALOME

For no cause our foes, each one,
That lovely Lord to death have done!
Alas! Alas!

MARY

Now he is dead, my sisters dear
Let us go there with full cheer,
With our ointments fair and clear

That we have brought.
We shall anoint his wounds so dear
His enemies have wrought.

(They approach the tomb)

MAGDALENE
I know not how best may be
As help here have we none.
Which of us say,from us three,
May move the mighty stone?

MARY
Sisters,we need no further fear
Nor make our mourning,
See a man sit silent there *(she points to the
open tomb)*
The one dressed in white clothing.

*(An ANGEL has appeared in the entrance to
the tomb)*

ANGEL
Mourning women,in your thought
Here in this place,who have you sought?

MARY
Jesus,who to death is brought.

ANGEL
He is not here,the truth to say,
The place is empty where he lay.
His burial cloths there see you may
That on him laid.
He is risen and went his way
As he has said.
Even as he spoke,so done is he,
Through peerless power he rose up free
And will meet you all in Galilee
In flesh and bone.
Go now to his disciples,all three,
And make this known!

(The ANGEL exits)

SALOME
Sisters,let us go from here

To Galilee we should draw near

MAGDALENE
Not till I see him clear
My Lord of might.
I say to you,my sister dear,
Go forth to tell it right

SALOME
As we have heard,so shall we say
Mary.sweet sister, have good day

(She exits with MARY)

MAGDALENE
Alas,nothing has any worth for me
My wretched heart will break in three
When I think of his body free
How it was spilt.
I who loved that sweet lad so
Who bore every bitter blow
And buried is in earth below
My bonny boy!
Unless we meet before I go
I'll never more know joy.

(JESUS appears behind her)

JESUS
Woman,why are you weeping,
Whom do you seek?

MAGDALENE
Tell me,gardener,I pray
If you have taken my Lord away,
Tell me the truth and say
Where that he lies.
And I shall remove him,if I may
In some kind wise.

JESUS
Why,what was he to you
In truth to say?

MAGDALENE
Ah.so dear he was to me
No longer live I may

JESUS
Mary,Mary,you seek your God
And that am I!

MAGDALENE
Rabboni! My Lord so dear!
Now I am whole that you are here!
Let me now to you come near
And kiss your feet!

(She kneels)

JESUS
Do not come near,my love,let be,
For to my Father,I tell thee
I have not yet ascended.
Go tell my brothers wrapped in woe,
Say to them I told you so
That comfort I shall bring.
Say that I shall be
Before them all in Galilee,
To Peter tell this thing.

MAGDALENE
Lord,to Galilee will I speed
To meet the disciples in their need

(She exits)
*(JESUS takes out a an alarm clock and sets it
off near the sleeping GUARDS then he exits)*

GUARD 1
Aargh! Out I say,what is this din
(he looks in the empty tomb)
Devil take us,there is nobody in!

GUARD 2
What ails you man,have you seen a ghost?

GUARD 1
Rise up and see,then tell me the worst!

GUARD 2 *(looks in the empty tomb)*
Alas,thieves! We are lost!

GUARD 3
What the devil ails you two?

GUARD 1
He is gone!

GUARD 4
When you speak sense,who?

GUARD 2
He that was in the tomb.

GUARD 3
How did he get away?

GUARD 1
I may safely say,he rose alone!

GUARD 2
When Pilate learns of this we shall make
moan!

GUARD 3
Can nothing more be said?

GUARD 4
Ay,soon we shall be dead.

GUARD 2
Yea,if it is told to him
We were asleep when he did flit
I tell you,we shall forfeit
All life and limb.

GUARD 1
Then take we tales complete
To tell to him.

GUARD 2
Ay,that shall I do

GUARD 3
Me too!

GUARD 4
Then shall we say a thousand men
Well armed,with horse,
O'erpowered us then
And took his course.

GUARD 3
Methinks two thousand we should claim

(JESUS appears among the crowd as they walk along)

GUARD 2
Nay,three thousand,in the devil's name!

JESUS
My path,good folk,it is the same
May I walk with you along the way?

GUARD 4
Seven thousand fierce foe came!

LUCAS
You are welcome,sir,in God's name
Join us in fellowship,we pray.

(They go off arguing...)

GUARD 1
Eight!

JESUS
What are you speaking on
That makes your faces sad?
You seem to mourn,
As if no mirth you had.

GUARD 3
Nine!

GUARD 4
Ten, for shame!

CLEOPAS
Sir,I see you are a poor pilgrim
Walking by yourself alone
For in the city of Jerusalem
You know nothing of what is done.

(Enter CLEOPAS and his wife LUCAS - alias Everyman and Everywoman)

CLEOPAS:
Good people,listen now to us
We journey together to the town Emmaus

JESUS
Why,in Jerusalem what is wrought,
What tidings there is new?

(They lead the CROWD towards Emmaus)

CLEOPAS:
Good wife,I am weak willed
When Christ our Master comes to mind;
And I think how he was killed
Joy in my heart I cannot find.

LUCAS
Ah,they have slain a man for nought!
Gentle he was,as I tell you.
A holy prophet from God was he
Mighty in word and also deed.

LUCAS
He was so lovely,true and kind,
Holy of life,and meek of mood
Alas,the Romans are to blame
For him they spilled who was so good
When cause in him they could not find.

CLEOPAS
Yea,sir.and right great trust had we
That Israel he would soon have freed.
But since his death it is the third day,
And puzzling news we bear.
The women went where he did lay
And said he was not there!

CLEOPAS
Ay,he did help both lame and blind
And all such people to him brought.
Yet,him they tortured,sparing nought
Alas,alas,why did they so?

JESUS
Oh,how foolish and slow of heart
You are to believe what you do see
In Holy Scripture of the prophet's part,
On Christ who raised must be.
Turn your thoughts and try to start

Believing he of death is free!

CLEOPAS

Sir I beg you, be at peace!
How should a dead man rise?
I counsel you such words to cease
In company, if you are wise.

JESUS

Why do you find it hard to trust?
Did Christ not raise of his own might
Lazarus that dead lay in the dust;
To life he lifted him, in full sight.

LUCAS

Truly, sir, your words are good
I hear them with a great delight.
I pray you, sir, stop for some food
And stay with us tonight.

JESUS

I would abide here if I might
But think I should move on.

LUCAS

Do not go from us this night
It is near dark, the sun is down

CLEOPAS

Good sir, from us you shall not go
But abide here with us still,
Your words they stir us so
We have not had our fill!
Yet, after your long walking
Take this loaf and eat some bread;
Then we shall do more talking
Of our Master who is dead.

(They sit)

JESUS

I shall make you hearts be glad
For Jesus, who was your friend
You no longer need be sad
For he is alive in life without end.
With my hands this bread I bless
(He lifts it and breaks the loaf)

And brake it here, as you do see.
I give you each a part of this
To eat and know that I am he.

(He disappears from their sight)

CLEOPAS

Ah, mercy Lord! How came he here?
Is Christ our Master living?

LUCAS

Cleopas, you are so slow, I fear,
Sat He not with us, talking?
To Jerusalem we must go, my dear,
To tell this news amazing!

(They turn into EVERYMAN and EVERYWOMAN)

EVERYMAN

Time to move on. We are nearly there.

EVERYWOMAN

Come with us, don't stop and stare
Some fishermen we're meeting

(The CROWD follow to the edge of the river where the DISCIPLES are fishing)

PETER

I am tired and heavy of heart
But a man must earn his crust.

JOHN

Ay, a long night from its start
When the devil drives, work we must.

(JESUS appears, calling out to them)

JESUS

Lads, cast your net the other side
And full of fish it soon will be

JOHN

Do I dream? No. I will not hide
My thoughts so fancy free.
It is the Lord!

(They drop the net and rush to him,standing open mouthed)

JESUS
Peace to you. Bring your fish to cook
So all of us can eat his fill.
Why do you stand amazed and look,
I am your Master still.

(He takes some fish)

Come let us eat together

(They share the food,awestruck)

Brethren,I am no ghost you see
Here,touch,my head,my hand

(Peter does so tentatively)

Peter, love you me?

PETER
Lord,I do as here I stand

JESUS
Feed my sheep,I say.
Peter,love you me?

PETER
Lord,I will do for ay!

JESUS
Feed my lambs for me
All of you,my dearest friends,
Follow in my Way.

(He stands and moves off followed by the disciples and crowd. THOMAS runs up and halts him)

PETER
Thomas,where have you been?
Look,the Master alive you see!

THOMAS
A ghost has form that can be seen,

But has it wounds that prove to me
It is the Christ?

JESUS
Thomas,Thomas! Doubt no more.
Come close,my wounds to see.

(THOMAS touches JESUS)

My Lord! My God! I you adore.

(He falls to his knees)

JESUS *(lifting him up)*
Thomas,you have seen this sight.
Blessed shall they ever be
Who trust in my risen might
Yet me they do not see.

(JESUS walks on to a prominent place,than faces the CROWD...)

THE ASCENSION

[Jesus, Crowd, God]

JESUS *(to the CROWD)*

Brethren and sisters, beloved and dear,
To me is granted full power
O'er heaven and earth, both far and near,
From God my Father.
Go into all the world and by His grace
Preach my word in every place
That saved all may be

(We hear music and a cloud descends around him)

I ascend to my Father, and your Father
My God and your God.
Lift up your hearts on high and cry
Alleluia!

CROWD

Alleluia! Alleluia!

(GOD appears alongside JESUS)

GOD

My precious child, come unto me,
With me to live now shall you wend;
There joy and bliss shall ever be,
Your life in liking, world without end.
Now is fulfilled all my forethought,
For ended is all earthly trace.
All worldly works that I have wrought
Are finished now, and in their place.
They that have sinned and ceased naught
Of sorrows great now shall they sing.
But they that have mended while they might
Will live and dwell in my blessing.
I am Alpha and Omega,
The Life, the Way, the Truth,
The First and the Last.
Amen.

THE END