

**Pleased As Man With
Man To Dwell
(or, the Third Shepherd's Play)**

A Nativity Play by
Duncan Pflaster

PLEASED AS MAN WITH MAN TO DWELL

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PLEASED AS MAN WITH MAN TO DWELL

PLEASED AS MAN WITH MAN TO DWELL (or, the Third Shepherd's Play) was produced by All Out Arts' Fresh Fruit Festival at the Jan Hus Theatre in New York City in 2011, with the following cast

Asher.....John Heath
NicodemusSam Rosenberg
SaraiCaroline Samaan
JacobIsaac Bale
BalthasarMichael Hagins
Linus/Angel/SightseerDavid J. Goldberg

It was directed by the playwright.

It also had a reading with Lafayette Salon in 2018 as part of an evening of Duncan's short Xmas plays "Christmas Pflasterpieces", and in December 2020 with Emily's Winebox Players over Zoom.

*"Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald Angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

- 2nd Verse of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing", Charles Wesley, 1739

*"In the morning, they'll come looking
for the shepherd on the hill.
What could make her leave her flock,
For surely she must love them still?"*

- "Star of Wonder" – The Roches

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- Dramatis Personae

Late teens, male. A Shepherd.

20s, male. A Shepherd.

20s, female. A poor widowed seller of olives.

5-10 years old, male. A little boy with a drum. Sarai's son.

30s-40s, male. An astrologer from Persia. Should be played by a non-Caucasian actor.

30s, male. Sarai's cousin, a soldier for Herod, King of the Jews.

A man come to see Jeshua. Played by the same actor as Linus.

The offstage voice of an Angel. Beautiful, frightening and androgynous. Can be pre-recorded, or executed live by the performer playing Sarai or Linus.

Time and Place

1. Star of Wonder: A field outside Jerusalem, almost 1 B.C.
2. This Little Babe: Outside the stable of an inn, Jerusalem 15 days later
3. Coventry Carol: Sarai and Nicodemus' house in Jerusalem, a year later.
4. Away in a Manger: Outside the stable again.

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SCENE 1 "Star of Wonder"

A field outside Bethlehem, with sheep, at night. A rock for sitting. At Rise, NICODEMUS and ASHER, shepherds, are watching their flock by night. Or, rather, Nicodemus is sleeping, under a blanket in the field, while Asher, dressed, sits on the rock and looks at the sheep.

ASHER. The sheep remain so peaceful in the night,
They sleep together without any fear,
When morning comes, they blink into the light,
Still safe because their shepherd's lying near.
But shepherds are not always what they seem,
Because we shear and cook them, as we must,
The little lambs unknowing of our scheme,
We're not the ones the sheep should trust.
And yet they meekly follow us to death,
To each indignity they will submit,
To lose their wool, their kids, and even breath,
To roast deliciously upon a spit.
Although each sheep upon us will depend,
We use them for our pleasure in the end. *(he sighs and shivers)*
Oh, cold and morbid thoughts this evening. This night is full of portents.

NICODEMUS. *(waking)* Asher? What are you doing awake?

ASHER. I like watching the sheep at night. They're so peaceful, as they sleep. During the day they're frightened by everything, but now they can rest.

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NICODEMUS. Come to bed.

ASHER. It's not a bed, it's a blanket. And a thin blanket at that.

NICODEMUS. Come to my blanket then, come lie with me and I shall warm you.

ASHER. I'm frightened.

NICODEMUS. Of my blanket?

ASHER. Yes. No. Yes. I'm frightened about what happened to Uncle Isaac.

NICODEMUS. It's best to put it out of your mind.

ASHER. How can I? He was stoned to death for the very same sin which we engage in nightly! He and his lover were executed in the public square! The same could come to us!

NICODEMUS. Calm yourself, my dear one. No one comes out here but shepherds, and no one cares what shepherds do. It's understood that when two men are alone, they do what they must do. Your uncle simply made the mistake of continuing it at home, where people talk. He was too open, and I'm sorry to say it served him right for that.

ASHER. Oh, Nicodemus, do not say such things!

NICODEMUS. Why are you so worried?

ASHER. Because I would like to be so open with you, if only we could. I wish that when we came into town, I could hold you in my arms and show the world my love for you. To hold you in my bed at home, and sleep the night in comfort, instead of on this cold hillside in this simple woolen blanket. But I know it mustn't be, or we should both be killed. I am not ashamed, and that's a dreadful thing. Sometimes I fear I'll just go mad with passion, and run through the streets of Jerusalem, wantonly shouting unto the world how I do love.

NICODEMUS. But you mustn't. It's bad enough that neither one of us is married, at our ages. My wife is dead, but you mustn't arouse any more suspicion, my sweet.

ASHER. I know. I fear that one day we might be discovered, here in our field. And despite what is understood: if we should be exposed, why then, what would we do?

NICODEMUS. Be calm, my love. (*Nicodemus rises from his blanket, and holds Asher from behind, to comfort him.*)

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ASHER. The world is so cold sometimes. But you are warm.

NICODEMUS. Let me hold you.

ASHER. The evening is so beautiful, the stars above so bright— look, that one over there seems to be shining right down on the city. The night, the stars, the air...

NICODEMUS. ...redolent with the scent of sheep and sheep droppings? Lovely.

ASHER. It's nice, it's natural. I just want to stay awake a little longer. How can the world be so beautiful, and still be so harsh?

NICODEMUS. It's the way of life, my boy. I am a lucky man; we both are, to have found each other so. When I first took you on as apprentice shepherd, I found you irresistible, and though we did eventually lie together, I never thought you'd share my love. I kept your beautiful body from my thoughts as long as I could- Although I found you tempting, I'd hoped to keep you free from my perversity...

ASHER. But lo, I am as perverse as you, if loving can be thought perverse.

NICODEMUS. It can.

ASHER. We are lucky indeed, my master; for us to find ourselves here.
(Asher kisses Nicodemus)

NICODEMUS. Your lips are sweet.

ASHER. I still am frightened.

NICODEMUS. But here I embrace you. Is not an embrace the purest form of comfort?

ASHER. It's difficult to be comforted by an embrace when it is the very embrace which I fear.

NICODEMUS. You will not be comforted, then? *(Nicodemus pulls Asher into a regular embrace, and kisses him again.)*

ASHER. I can feel your heart beating- it is as rapid as mine.

NICODEMUS. Now, my love, my sweet: come back to bed.

ASHER. I still do fret, I am not sleepy.

NICODEMUS. Then simply come and lie with me? I shall beguile the time until you do wish to lay down your head. *(There is suddenly loud music (perhaps trumpets), wind, and a bright light. It should be quite*

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startling. An ANGEL appears to them, though not to the audience. Asher and Nicodemus scream and attempt to hide.)

ASHER. What? What is that?

NICODEMUS. Oh shit!

ASHER. We're all going to die!

NICODEMUS. Oh help me! It's an Angel!

ASHER. Oh it's so magnificent! Glorious! Hold me, I'm frightened!

NICODEMUS. Not in front of the Angel!

ANGEL. Fear not! ...for I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. *(And suddenly, there is with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying)* GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH: PEACE AND GOOD WILL TO MANKIND! *(The Angel disappears, along with any special effects)*

NICODEMUS. A miracle!

ASHER. We saw an Angel— This is incredible news!

NICODEMUS. I can't believe— why us?

ASHER. What do you think it means?

NICODEMUS. Means?

ASHER. "A Savior"? The Messiah? What will happen?

NICODEMUS. Well, you heard the Angel as well as I did: Peace.

ASHER. Peace, no more war.

NICODEMUS. And good will to mankind.

ASHER. That would be nice for a change.

NICODEMUS. And we know of course the Messiah will restore the twelve tribes and lead the faithful to the promised land. Cast out the foreigners from Israel, and make us whole again. He'll be a prophet like Moses, a new king, a sage. A warrior.

ASHER. The Angel didn't say that. The Angel only said peace and goodwill. And a baby.

NICODEMUS. But isn't that what the prophets say? Isn't that what's expected of the Messiah? That he'll make the world a better place?

ASHER. The world is already a better place for me, when you are near, Nicodemus.

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NICODEMUS. And for me as well, of course, my love, but there are weightier matters at stake here. The fate of all humankind! Asher, we stand at the brink of a new epoch! One of compassion and love. A new world. ...I mean, isn't it? Shouldn't it be?

ASHER. I don't know. I have doubts. Will a new world mean a new understanding for us?

NICODEMUS. We shall go and see this boy, this savior. We'll go to Bethlehem and find the stable and manger and we shall see for ourselves.

ASHER. But what about the sheep? They shall fret without us here in the morning.

NICODEMUS. We'll leave the sheep asleep and go. They're not so fragile as you fear. We'll be back, I'm sure, before they wake. It's just a short walk into town. Come with me.

ASHER. I still don't know.

NICODEMUS. O come with me, for I cannot live if you are left behind. Now that we have discovered our affinity, our love, I never want to be parted from you. (*Nicodemus kisses Asher.*)

ASHER. Very well, for your sake I shall come. Our sake. And we shall see what there is to see together.

NICODEMUS. Of course, my love. We'll go to meet our savior proudly hand-in-hand, as one. (*Nicodemus and Asher take hands and exit.* **END OF SCENE**)

SCENE 2 **"This Little Babe"**

15 days later, outside the stable of an inn. At first, Asher is standing outside the door of the stable, as a guard. SARAI, a poor woman enters, holding a swaddled baby (Aron) and followed by JACOB, her 5-year old son, who carries a drum.

SARAI. Is this where the newborn King lies?

ASHER. This is the place.

SARAI. I thought it would be bigger, somehow.

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ASHER. Mary and Joseph have refused to move to a larger space. There was no room for them at this inn when they arrived, but even now that there is, they still prefer the stable. There's more room to receive all their visitors.

SARAI. It's not the setting you'd expect would befit a king.

ASHER. The baby is lying in a manger filled with straw. I'm sure it's quite comfortable.

SARAI. It's probably better than what we have to lay Aron, here, in. Can we go in to see him? My son keeps asking.

JACOB. I want to play my drum for him!

SARAI. Everyone's been talking about the baby, telling us to come, and Jacob got it in his head he wanted to give him a present. Though as you can see, we're poor. So he wants to play his drum.

JACOB. Like this! Pa rum pa pum pom! (*Jacob plays his drum*)

ASHER. I don't know if that's really appropriate. And anyway, it's almost time for his nap; they might not receive any more visitors today.

SARAI. Oh, but we've come all this way, and it was the only time I could get off from working. I sell olives in the marketplace.

ASHER. Oh yes! I've seen you. (*Nicodemus enters, from the stable, escorting a SIGHTSEER out.*)

SIGHTSEER. Oh, he's glorious, glorious!

NICODEMUS. Thank you for coming to see the newborn king. I hope you enjoyed your time with him.

SIGHTSEER. Oh, I did, I did. It is a miracle, and I did get to witness it! A miracle! Thank you! (*The Sightseer runs off.*)

NICODEMUS. Is there anyone else in line to see Jeshua?

SARAI. Yes, me! Me and my sons.

NICODEMUS. Very well, come on in. You're the last of the bunch. It's been a long day.

SARAI. Oh thank heaven! Come, Jacob, let's go see him.

JACOB. Rum pa pum pum! (*Sarai, Jacob, and the baby go into the stable. Nicodemus ushers them in, then leans on the door.*)

ASHER. A long day, indeed.

NICODEMUS. It's amazing. So many people coming to see this little boy. And all because of prophecies and portents.

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ASHER. And I thought we were special somehow.

NICODEMUS. We are special! We saw an Angel. Those three astrologers who came from the East just saw a light in the sky and followed it.

(Drumming is heard from inside the stable) Oh, what are they doing now?

ASHER. The little boy didn't have a present for the child king, so he wanted to play his drum.

NICODEMUS. Well, that's ...adorable. It's wonderful, this feeling of hope... this Jeshua is magical, he makes me feel better and alive, all of us. I feel that everything will be all right now that The Messiah has come. And it's not only me, everyone I see in the streets is happy, there's a bounce in their step. I feel like laughing and crying all the time now.

ASHER. Crying?

NICODEMUS. Because it's all so beautiful. And exciting. It's all quite overwhelming. We're living in a new world.

ASHER. I suppose. Nicodemus, when will we go back to our flock? It's been more than two weeks; they must be sick to death with worry!

NICODEMUS. Sheep never worry, they just follow. You know that. I'm sure they'll not have moved much. They had plenty of grass and things in the valley to graze on and keep them occupied.

ASHER. And the wild beasts? And inclement weather? What can the lambs do when their shepherds go away?

NICODEMUS. This is important, Asher! This is the Messiah! We need to spread the word! The sheep will learn to fend for themselves till we can return to them. We cannot oversee their every move, their every decision: to eat this blade of grass or not? To move into the shade? The problems of a sheep are trivial.

ASHER. I do not feel like a diligent shepherd.

NICODEMUS. Oh come, my sweet, buck up and kiss me.

ASHER. No, not here! Nicodemus, do you want us to be killed?

NICODEMUS. Oh come, no one will care- it's a new world!

ASHER. It is, but it is not. We are still not welcomed as I'd hoped we would be. I want to go back to the sheep, to the pastures, where we were happy already, at least in our own private arcadia. Even to our stupid blanket. Will you not come with me? *(As Asher pulls away, BALTHASAR enters, stealthily, backward from the stable doors. He is an elegant man of*

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color in sumptuous embroidered robes. He carries a hookah. He bumps into Nicodemus, and they are startled.)

BALTHASAR. I say, young fellow, I'm terribly sorry. Ah, Nicodemus, isn't it? You're the guide to those who come to see the Newborn King.

NICODEMUS. I have been lucky enough to have that honor, your grace.

BALTHASAR. Oh please, I am no grace, merely a man of science. My colleagues and I, we study the stars. ... When we're not being tortured by small children with drums. Good heavens. I came out here to get some peace and quiet.

ASHER. He insisted on taking the drum in with him. (*Balthasar begins setting up the hookah.*)

BALTHASAR. No no, I understand, children can be quite insistent. And I must say that the baby seems to like the rhythm, anyway. It's just my ears are sensitive. I thought I'd come out here for a smoke. Would you like some? It's very relaxing.

ASHER. No, thank you. We were just...

NICODEMUS. I would like some.

ASHER. Nicodemus!

NICODEMUS. What? I would like to to relax a bit. What?

ASHER. Nothing, I'm... going for a walk. I'll see you. (*Asher exits. Nicodemus and Balthasar share the hookah.*)

BALTHASAR. This young man, he's your special friend?

NICODEMUS. What do you mean?

BALTHASAR. He seemed quite upset when he left, I've only seen that depth of anger in a person spurned in love.

NICODEMUS. I don't know what you're talking about.

BALTHASAR. You needn't fear my censure, I am not of your people, and

It is not my place to judge you.

NICODEMUS. Well, we are shepherds...?

BALTHASAR. Ah yes. Far away from rules and society, one may simply follow one's heart.

NICODEMUS. You are wise to the ways of men, sir.

BALTHASAR. It comes from looking for meaning in the skies. God will have his way with us, and those ways are written in the stars.

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NICODEMUS. And only in the stars?

BALTHASAR. Why no, there is much to be seen in anything, if you only know how to look. The secrets of the universe can be derived from the patterns of the stars, the scattering of sand upon the ground, the droppings of the sheep you tend.

NICODEMUS. Sheep!

BALTHASAR. Yes.

NICODEMUS. You came here to see this boy because of the stars.

BALTHASAR. The Star. The beautiful one that hangs like a rich jewel in the sky above this stable. It does not move from East to West, as other stars, but from North to South. It is a portent, a miracle.

NICODEMUS. But what does it mean? You looked it up in your books of prophecy, I suppose? The coming of Messiah, and what does it all signify?

BALTHASAR. God has taken a part of himself and made a son, and given him to us to lead humanity to true salvation. This child is born unto us, the son and servant of God. He is a deity incarnate, yet pleased as man with man to dwell.

NICODEMUS. Is that so?

BALTHASAR. His life shall be hard. My colleagues and I brought him gifts: Gold, to symbolize his reign as king, Frankincense, for his ties to our religion, but also Myrrh, the embalmer's perfume, which foreshadows his destruction.

NICODEMUS. Destruction?

BALTHASAR. Oh yes. Jeshua will bring light and hope to many, but death and destruction also will follow in his wake. He, the new-born, already has enemies—my colleagues and I met your King Herod along our journey here; he asked if we would tell him of the child, if we found him, but we shall not: we fear he'd see the baby dead, to protect his throne and title.

NICODEMUS. No doubt. He's already tried to silence the Pharisees, and he executed his wife for treason, when she only spoke against him. At least he's kept the taxes low, so there is some recompense.

BALTHASAR. Recompense for the wealthy. He will not be best pleased by Jeshua's coming. Many will not: atrocities and cultivation both proceed from the infant lord as he will grow. The birthing pains of a new world.

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NICODEMUS. And in this new world, shall we be free to love as we choose? To... to be happy as we choose?

BALTHASAR. You worry about your friend, I think.

NICODEMUS. I do. You see correctly; I love him.

BALTHASAR. I wish that I had pleasant news for you, but according to the prophesies, Jeshua does not come to alter the law, but to fulfill it. Do not think he has come to bring peace on earth.

NICODEMUS. No peace? But the Angel said...

BALTHASAR. Angel?

NICODEMUS. We saw an Angel, Asher and I, in the fields at night, and he told us to come, we didn't simply follow a star. The Angel said "Peace on earth, Goodwill to men".

BALTHASAR. Well, the stars and prophecies don't know everything, they're open to many interpretations. I did not see an Angel, so I cannot say, but somehow I am more inclined to believe the science of the stars over an apparition of a winged messenger.

NICODEMUS. He seemed very real.

BALTHASAR. Many visions often do. I have seen many things in my life, especially in my smoke, but I have never seen an Angel. Perhaps you saw what you needed to see to bring you here, and my colleagues and I saw the vision that we required.

NICODEMUS. And the vision, then, is not a vision of peace?

BALTHASAR. Not entirely. Some wonderful events, in truth, but in the long term, the subsequent times will be sharp as sword-point. The nations shall rage against the lord, but things shall go badly for those who do not serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in him with trembling. The Christ child brings division, not unity. His cleansing fire shall turn father against son, brother against brother, lovers against each other. Your own life will not be made easy by the coming of this boy. (*The drumming has stopped. Balthasar begins packing up his hookah.*)

NICODEMUS. Then what should I do? Asher and I— our love is proscribed by law already, and things will never change?

BALTHASAR. Never? I cannot say. Perhaps all that is needed is one man to stand up strong and say he loves another man. Sometimes it only takes one pebble to start a landslide. Or else, be subtle and peaceful: hide your

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strange love away and marry a woman: be a sheep amongst the wolves. You're an old enough man: you should have been married many times over, by the standards of your people.

NICODEMUS. I was married once already, to a woman, how I escaped detection till now. But what of Asher?

BALTHASAR. Perhaps you'd do the boy a favor by leaving him to go his ways. If you truly love him, you should break it off. It shall be hard, and he may not thank you for it now, but he'll be better prepared for the coming world. You both will.

NICODEMUS. I thank you for your words.

BALTHASAR. I wish they had been sweeter.

NICODEMUS. True medicine is never sweet. (*Balthasar exits, with his hookah.*)

His potent words do chill me to my soul.

This coming time is not for me alone,

But for the world to be discovered whole;

I must be selfless as the seeds are sewn.

Though Asher truly is a shining light,

I must be strong, think of the greater good,

I wish someone would tell me plain, outright

What I should do, and not misunderstood.

Now everybody knows Messiah's come,

They bring him golden gifts of highest rate,

Or else the only thing they have, a drum,

Because they seem to know the baby's fate.

And I believe their adoration, true.

If I would stay, I know what I must do. (*Enter Jacob, excitedly, followed by Sarai, still holding her baby.*)

JACOB. He smiled at me, he smiled at me!

NICODEMUS. That's wonderful.

SARAI. It seemed as though the babe was pleased by the tribute.

JACOB. I went and asked if I could play for him, and his mother nodded, and I played. And he smiled. The baby king smiled!

NICODEMUS. It was probably just gas.

SARAI. Don't hurt the boy's feelings.

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BALTHASAR. I'm sorry. (*Jacob starts drumming again, quietly.*)

NICODEMUS. I hope you enjoyed the time with the baby Jeshua. No one else has stayed so long.

SARAI. Oh, it wasn't for me, it was for Jacob. He insisted. I told him we didn't have the time; since my husband's death, I have to handle our olive stand all by myself. The babies are too young to help.

JACOB. I help!

SARAI. Yes, of course you do, Jacob, you're a good boy.

NICODEMUS. Your husband died?

SARAI. Yes, leaving me alone with the boys. Jacob, and little Aron here: he's not even two. It's been hard, but we're bearing up. My cousin Linus works in the King's palace, and he comes to help out whenever he can.

NICODEMUS. Could you use some more help? ...I mean, would you be interested... (*Jacob's drumming has become very loud*)

SARAI. Jacob! Be quiet, I'm trying to talk to this man- and if you wake your brother, you'll get a spanking! (*Jacob starts to whine*)

JACOB. Aw mother! I was only playing my drum!

SARAI. Your brother is sleeping.

JACOB. Oh it's always about Aron! Aron gets whatever he wants! The baby king liked it; I don't know why I can't play my drum whenever I want! Aron's a stupid baby! (*Sarai hits Jacob, who starts to cry.*)

SARAI. That's it, I am taking you home right now, young man!

NICODEMUS. Wait, I wanted to ask...

SARAI. Yes, what is it? (*Asher enters, unnoticed by them*)

NICODEMUS. What's your name?

SARAI. Sarai.

NICODEMUS. Well, Sarai, perhaps you'd like to do something with me tonight? Go for a walk...? I'd love to... I mean, a woman alone... I want...

SARAI. Oh. Oh, I see. Very well, come to our house for dinner tonight. We're having lamb stew. We're the last house on the left before the Sheep's Gate. Come just before sunset. I'll wait for you. (*She tentatively kisses him on the cheek and leaves, pulling the crying Jacob after her.*)

ASHER. What was that?

NICODEMUS. You're back.

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ASHER. Yes. And what have I found?

NICODEMUS. Nothing. The poor woman, her husband's dead, she's running an olive stand. I was listening to her troubles.

ASHER. Is that all? (*Pause*) Listen, I think we must go back and tend the sheep, for if we abandon them, what shepherds are we? We've spread the word of the boy-king's birth enough already, worked in this shrine of his, we've done enough; it's best we return to our lives, our responsibilities.

NICODEMUS. And if our lives don't want us back?

ASHER. What do you mean?

NICODEMUS. This baby, this new world: I think we do not belong within it. The world will not be altered for the better from the simple coming of a child. At least not better for us as we were. I was a fool. I have been changed. I mean to marry that woman you just saw.

ASHER. The one with the annoying children?

NICODEMUS. I thought them rather sweet.

ASHER. You have been smoking with that dark astrologer, Balthasar; he put things in your head. You know not what you say, you are in a fog and blinded to the world.

NICODEMUS. No, at last my eyes are opened.

ASHER. And so you'd have us break apart, after just a fortnight with this Baby Lord? Two weeks back in Jerusalem society and you're fishing to be married again. No doubt you are tired of me, to cast me off this way. So I am not your love, and never have been.

NICODEMUS. Asher! Do not say that! You know you've been my only love, in all the world, the only one for whom I care. You must know that.

ASHER. Then why?

NICODEMUS. To keep us safe from harm, my dove. Please try to understand. We may still be together, from time to time, but I shall protect your innocence, and mine, as best I can.

ASHER. What use is innocence, when the world turns against you? Will innocence protect me from the arrows of those who'd do me harm? Will my naked breast stand for a shield? It seems to me that innocence is naught but ignorance, and ignorance is not what I desire. If we should divorce ourselves, and you should marry a partner more fitting in the eyes of the

PLEASED AS MAN WITH MAN TO DWELL

Lord, what do we gain for your cowardice? Nothing but sorrow and feigned joy.

NICODEMUS. Instead you would have joy and feigned sorrow?

ASHER. Wouldn't you? Wouldn't you? Should we not bring our joy to the world?

NICODEMUS. It frightens me.

ASHER. Remember what the Angel said: "Fear Not". Did you think she was a liar?

NICODEMUS. She? I thought it was a man.

ASHER. I saw a woman: she reminded me of my mother, a noble woman, clad all in white. She carried an olive branch in one hand, and a jug of pure water in the other. Her feet were bare, and a radiance came from her head like a cloud, her mighty wings holding her aloft. What did you see?

NICODEMUS. A beautiful man, bare to the waist, his muscled form outlined with light: he bore a trumpet in his hand, and he was glorious and terrible to behold.

ASHER. Our visions do not correspond.

NICODEMUS. No.

ASHER. Then how can we know—

NICODEMUS. How can we know anything? What did we see? We both saw something.

ASHER. We both saw an Angel.

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS--
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