

THE CHOSEN STAR

by Wilma Atkinson



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The Chosen Star

A Christmas play with many child roles

by Wilma Atkinson

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HENRY: An angel, the choir director.

GINSON: An angel.

HEATH: An angel.

MANY MORNING STARS: Faces are framed with star-shapes that sparkle. There are eight speaking parts for stars: NAT, NICKLAS, REMUS, JARRED, and #1, #2, #3, and #4. The other stars can be part of the choir.

ANDREW/AMANDA: A morning star (one whose face-frame is filled with small Christmas lights so he/she can be plugged in to “glow”). He/she must be able to sing alone. Although the name “Andrew” is used throughout the script for simplicity’s sake, please substitute “Amanda” if a girl is playing this lead role.

NARRATOR: Someone with a good voice.

VOICE: Use a man with the most musical speaking voice you have available.

OPTIONAL NATIVITY CHARACTERS: Shepherds, Wise Men, Mary, and Joseph.

PRODUCTION NOTES

COSTUMES

All stars are dressed in white robes. We made these very economically from white broadcloth. The pattern was A-line and required only two seams, neck facing, inset, flowing sleeves, and a hem. We tied pieces of tinsel roping around the middle. The children wore white socks and no shoes. Each star had a “star” (not five-pointed) around the face, which we cut out of heavy cardboard and covered with glitter. Be careful not to get glitter on the part that touches the face, as it is very uncomfortable to the child. The star faces were held on by elastic that went around the head.

The angels were dressed in gold-colored robes (we happened to have baptismal robes of this color), but white or blue would also work well. These robes were tied around the waist with strings of tinsel roping also. The angels wore wings which had been cut from heavy cardboard (we used refrigerator boxes), and then covered with glitter. They were held on with tinsel which was fed through the wings, then over the shoulders. The tinsel crisscrossed in front and was tied in the back.

The flowing sleeves of the angels and stars are used to veil their faces whenever the name Jehovah is used.

The costumes for Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and wise men are the ones normally used for this and require no suggestions.

Andrew/Amanda’s Face

We made Andrew/Amanda’s face like the other star faces, except we made small holes and inserted lots of tiny Christmas lights (no blinkers) in it. A cord was run down the sleeve of the robe and he/she was plugged in as the need arose. We always plugged the face in when Andrew/Amanda was singing alone and whenever he/she was supposed to “shine his/her brightest.” Especially be sure to have it plugged in during the song at the end of the play.

For the “cosmic dust” on Andrew/Amanda, we sprayed the robe with glitter glue and sprinkled varicolored glitter on it. As he/she brushed the robe to try to tidy himself/herself, some fell.

SETTING

The scene is outdoors in heaven. The stage is decorated with many trees, and flowers if you have them. (They provide a place for Andrew/Amanda to hide.) I used artificial Christmas trees and some small cedar trees. If you use flowers, make sure you have those that would look as if they are growing. Also needed are risers for the choir and a music stand for the director, as this is where choir practice is held.

PROPS

Music (should be placed on the music stand) and a baton — both for Henry.

NATIVITY SCENE

If you use the Nativity scene, have the choir sing “Silent Night” while three or four girls (either stars or angels or both) pantomime it. The simple actions are described on pages iv and v. The only thing needed in addition to the characters is a manger with hay and a doll wrapped in a blanket.

MUSIC

You may adjust the playing time of *The Chosen Star* according to your needs by the amount of songs included and their length. If a shorter playing time is desired, you may skip some of the songs and only sing one verse of those you include. If you wish the performance to last an hour, sing several verses of each song and include extras.

Most of the songs may be found in your church’s hymnal. The familiar song “Down in My Heart” may be found in numerous Christian songbooks for children, including *Wee Sing Bible Songs* by Pamela Conn Beall and Susan Hagen Nipp. It is published by Price Stern Sloan, Inc., 11150 Olympic Boulevard, Suite 650, Los Angeles, CA 90064. The ISBN number is 0-8431-1566-1. “Star of the East” is available in sheet music form from Carl Fischer, Inc., 62 Cooper Square, New York, NY 10003, (212) 777-0900. Feel free to substitute songs of your choosing based on what is available in your church library.

SILENT NIGHT PANTOMIME

Words of Song

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
 Round yon virgin, mother and child.
 Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
 Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
 Glories stream from heaven afar,
 Heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia,"
 Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
 Radiant beams from thy holy face,
 With the dawn of redeeming grace,
 Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
 Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Actions

1. "Silent night" — Lift left arm slowly, palm down and fingers drooping, along the left side of the face. Be finished when the "Silent Night" is finished.
2. "Holy night" — Lift right arm the same way left arm was raised. The two arms are now framing the face.
3. "All...bright" — Slowly move arms outward and downward so they are extended straight out from the shoulders resembling Christ's cross.
4. "Round...child" — Slowly bring arms around to the front almost touching palms while arms are extended.
5. "Holy...mild" — Slowly cross arms at the wrists and bring gently to rest on the chest.
6. "Sleep...peace" — Slowly touch palms and bring them to the left cheek. Lay the head, eyes closed, on the hands.

When first verse is finished, slowly drop hands to the side to begin again.

Second Verse

1. "Silent night, holy night" is always the same — arms framing face.

2. “Shepherds...sight” — Quickly clasp hands to chest and step backward with the right foot. Hold this position. Look upward.
3. “Glories...heaven afar” — Keep left hand on chest, but reach upward with the right hand and, moving in a sort of circular sweep to the right, bring it back to the left hand. Look upward.
4. “Heavenly...Alleluia” — Move both arms upward and then outward to indicate hosts. Bring left hand back to the chest and cup the right hand around mouth on the word “Alleluia.” Look upward the entire time.
5. “Christ...born” — Step forward on the right foot, keeping it about eight inches in front of the left. Lift both hands upward, pointing slightly to the right, framing the face. Look upward.

Third Verse

1. “Silent...night” — Repeat as above.
2. “Son...light” — Kneel with hands clasped to chest, head bowed and eyes closed.
3. “Radiant...face” — Look up. Lift right arm, sweep to right, then bring hand in, tracing down face, and return to left hand.
4. “With...grace” — Keeping palms together, lift both hands upward. When fully extended, rotate outward and lower arms, bringing them back to the chest. Keep looking up.
5. “Jesus...birth” — Extend both hands upward, palms facing up. Keep the palms only about ten inches apart so the arms frame the face.

1 **SCENE:** Choir practice in the heavenly courts.

2

3 *(NARRATOR enters.)*

4 **NARRATOR:** The angels of glory find their joy in giving—
5 giving love and tireless watchcare to souls who are fallen
6 and unholy. Heavenly beings woo the hearts of people. In
7 the heavenly courts, a tide of love, praise, and joyous
8 service flows out to all. By love's self-sacrifice, the
9 inhabitants of heaven praise Father God for his
10 unspeakable gift: God the Son, Immanuel, "God with us."
11 Now let me introduce you to Henry, choir director of
12 angels and morning stars. *(Enter HENRY.)*

13 **HENRY:** What? No one here? I had hoped that Ginson and
14 Heath would be here by now. Oh, well, it's still early. I do
15 hope everyone will be on time, though. I'm not sure why
16 we've been given *these* songs, but if we are to do them
17 for the concert, I want to perform them well. *(Busies
18 himself with the music on the music stand until GINSON and
19 HEATH enter.)*

20 **GINSON:** Why, hello, Henry. I thought we'd beat you here
21 tonight.

22 **HEATH:** Why are you so early, Henry?

23 **HENRY:** I guess it's just because I'm so eager for all to go well.
24 The heavenly Father has especially requested this music.
25 Usually he is happy to let me choose. But this time, he
26 made all the choices. I wouldn't want to disappoint him.

27 **GINSON:** He chose the music? Is it for a special occasion?

28 **HENRY:** I'm not sure yet, but perhaps. Anyway, he wishes to
29 hear us in concert soon. We only have two practices to
30 learn the music.

31 **HEATH:** We'll do our best. You know that. Everyone wants to
32 do well when we sing for the heavenly Father. Oh, here
33 are some singers now. *(NAT and JARRED enter.)*

34 **HENRY:** Greetings, friends. I'm glad you're early. We have so
35 much to do tonight.

- 1 NAT: We thought your message sounded urgent. What's
2 going on?
- 3 HENRY: We have only two practice periods before we sing for
4 the great Jehovah.
- 5 ALL: *(Veil faces)* Praise his name! We exalt thee, O King! We will
6 praise your name forever! *(Enter NICKLAS and REMUS.)*
- 7 NICKLAS: Hello, everyone. Henry, do we have a concert
8 soon?
- 9 HENRY: Yes. In fact, we only have two more practices before
10 we sing in concert for the heavenly Father.
- 11 NICKLAS: I thought so. I was on Mount Zion yesterday and
12 heard Gabriel say he had just returned from earth. I
13 wasn't sure what he meant, but he said the time was
14 near. He seemed quite anxious.
- 15 REMUS: I heard him too, Nicklas. He said that John was now
16 almost three months old and that Elizabeth and
17 Zechariah were happily looking for the other baby.
- 18 NAT: Perhaps you misunderstood. Zechariah and his wife
19 weren't expecting any baby but John.
- 20 REMUS: I don't know what it all means, but I could tell
21 Gabriel was pretty excited about something. I'm
22 repeating what I heard because I'm hoping one of you
23 can help me understand it.
- 24 NICKLAS: He mentioned Mary also, and he said Caesar had
25 already sent out the taxation decree.
- 26 GINSON: Then he must mean it's time for Mary's son to be
27 born!
- 28 HENRY: Of course! Why didn't I think of that? That's why
29 we've been given all these special songs. Quickly!
30 Quickly! Take your places! Oh, we must be ready to
31 announce the birth! Take your places quickly, I say! *(All*
32 *other STARS enter and take places on risers. There is obviously*
33 *one place vacant.)*
- 34 HENRY: *(Sighs.)* Where's Andrew? Did anyone see him?
- 35 JARRED: I saw him earlier this afternoon. He was out among

1 the meteoroids. He was covered with cosmic dust, but he
2 said he would be here.

3 HENRY: Well, he's late! That's inexcusable!

4 JARRED: Isn't it a few minutes until it's time for us to start?
5 Maybe he'll be here on time.

6 GINSON: Yes, it's still a little early. Henry, don't be so cross.
7 Maybe — (*ANDREW enters, brushing off cosmic dust.*)

8 ANDREW: I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Excuse me, please. Excuse
9 me! (*ANDREW pushes other STARS aside as he climbs to the*
10 *top riser.*)

11 HENRY: Andrew Star! Why are you late? You need to learn
12 proper respect for time.

13 ANDREW: (*Descending to stage floor*) I know, sir. I didn't mean to
14 be late, but I was flying along when I saw the *big-g-g-g-gest*
15 meteoroid I have ever seen. (*Stretches arms wide — then*
16 *brings hands together to "zap and zoom."*) It was zapping and
17 zooming along and making a funny little humming
18 sound. It seemed so happy, I had to listen. Its little tune
19 seemed to be saying, "'Tis almost time, 'tis almost time,"
20 over and over again. What did it mean, sir?

21 HENRY: Andrew, you know meteoroids don't talk!

22 ANDREW: I didn't say it talked, sir. It was zapping and
23 zooming and zigzagging and making a funny little
24 humming — (*ANDREW zigzags with his body, two steps left,*
25 *then two steps right, while zapping and zooming with his hands.*)

26 HENRY: Skip it, Andrew. We must begin our practice now!
27 We have only this time and one other before we sing for
28 the great Jehovah.

29 ALL: (*Veil faces*) Praise his name! We exalt thee, O King. We
30 will praise your name forever! (*HENRY taps baton and*
31 *leads CHOIR in "Joy to the World." The CHOIR sings two*
32 *verses. ANDREW sings with the group to the end of verse two*
33 *and then takes off on his own, singing "Down in My Heart" — "I*
34 *have the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart. Where?"*)

35 HENRY: (*Taps baton angrily.*) Andrew! This is a choir for *all*

1 voices, where stars and angels sing together. There is no
2 provision for you to do your own thing! Besides, you
3 were a little off-key!

4 **ANDREW:** I'm sorry, sir. Really, I am. It's just that my heart is
5 so full of love and joy that —

6 **HENRY:** Never mind! We will try the next song, and you pay
7 attention! *You watch me!*

8 **ANDREW:** I will, sir. (*CHOIR sings "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."*
9 *Andrew sings with the others, and then takes off on his own with*
10 *the "gloria" chorus of "Angels, We Have Heard on High."*)

11 **HENRY:** Andrew Star! What are you doing?

12 **ANDREW:** I'm sorry, sir, but it's just as I told you before. My
13 heart is so full of love —

14 **HENRY:** You are spoiling our practice! Now you're not to sing
15 for a while so that you can get ahold of yourself. *You just*
16 *stand there and be quiet!*

17 **ANDREW:** I will, sir. (*CHOIR sings without ANDREW. If you have*
18 *a varied group, this is an excellent time to feature younger*
19 *children singing the Christmas song of your choosing.*)

20 **HENRY:** Most of you are excused. Andrew Star, please
21 remain. Ginson, Heath, could you also please wait a few
22 minutes? (*All others exit.*) Now, Andrew, I have asked my
23 fellow angels to stay so that they might help you
24 understand the seriousness of what you do when you get
25 sidetracked with your own tunes.

26 **ANDREW:** I'm sorry, sir. I won't do it again. I didn't mean to
27 do it this time. I certainly don't want to spoil your nice
28 practice. It's just that —

29 **GINSON:** We understand, Andrew. But you see, it's almost
30 time for the Son to be born of a virgin. We are to sing to
31 announce the birth. We will soon demonstrate to the
32 heavenly Father how well we can sing harmoniously —

33 **ANDREW:** Do you think that was why the meteoroid was
34 humming, "Tis almost time"?

35 **HEATH:** Very likely, Andrew. What Ginson was trying to tell

1 you is that we are to sound harmonious, for this is the
2 will of the great Jehovah.

3 **ALL:** (*Veil faces*) Praise his name! We exalt thee, O King! We
4 will praise thy name forever!

5 **ANDREW:** I really do want to do my part well. (*Puts out his*
6 *arms as if flying and says the following as he exits:*) I'll just jet
7 off to a corner of heaven and I'll practice, and practice,
8 and practice, and —

9 **HEATH:** Poor Andrew! I hope he doesn't feel too bad.

10 **GINSON:** We'll help him all week. Then we'll stand beside him
11 when we sing for the heavenly Father. If he takes off on
12 one of his tangents, we can tug on his robe or do
13 something to stop him. It's just that his heart is so full of
14 love, he can't help but bubble over.

15 **HENRY:** Well, I just hope he doesn't "bubble over" in concert.
16 I'll be so embarrassed if he lets go with one of his
17 impromptu solos. (*All exit.*)

18 **NARRATOR:** The next practice period went just about like
19 the first one had. Andrew was late — or almost late. And
20 although he had practiced all week, he was so tense that
21 he sang just a little off-key. He hoped Henry, the great
22 singing angel, wouldn't notice, but Henry *did* notice and
23 ordered Andrew to be quiet. He even told Andrew that he
24 could not sing with the others when they sang for the
25 heavenly Father. Then, when he saw tears mixing with
26 the cosmic dust that constantly clung to Andrew, he
27 relented a bit and said that Andrew could *stand* with the
28 others and shine his brightest, but he was not to sing —
29 *not* even one single note.

30 Now it is time for the great concert. What a
31 magnificent night it is! (*STARS and ANGELS enter and take*
32 *their places — all but ANDREW.*) Here come the stars with
33 their shining faces. Aren't they a lovely sight? And the
34 angels are ready. This is what they have practiced for!
35 Listen!

1 HENRY: Where is Andrew? I specifically told him not to be
2 to late!

3 GINSON: Oh, Henry, I'm sure he'll be here. Really — it's early
4 yet. (*ANDREW rushes in.*)

5 ANDREW: Oh, no! I'm not late again, am I? I just stopped for
6 a little while. The angel of the Lord was making so many
7 trips to earth, and I wanted to know why. Really, sir, I
8 only stopped for a little while.

9 HENRY: You aren't late, Andrew, but you had me afraid you
10 would be. Take your place, but remember: *Don't you sing*
11 *one extra note!* We all sing together!

12 ANDREW: Are you saying I can sing, sir? Oh, you don't know
13 what this means to me! I really will be good, sir. Oh, thank
14 you for relenting. Now, before we start, could I ask...

15 HENRY: Not now, Andrew. We are ready to begin. Now,
16 remember — you shine your brightest, but don't you add
17 one extra note! Not one! And be on key! Do you
18 understand me?

19 ANDREW: I'll remember.

20 HENRY: (*Bowing low to the audience*) We have come to sing our
21 praise to the God of heaven and earth.

22 (*After several songs [your choice] are sung, the CHOIR sings "In*
23 *the Bleak Midwinter."* ANDREW sings well until the CHOIR has
24 finished the first verse. Then he takes off on his own with the last
25 verse. GINSON and HEATH try desperately to hush him at first,
26 and then they turn toward him, pretending he is supposed to
27 sing alone. Following ANDREW's singing, all exit.)

28 NARRATOR: Andrew felt terrible. He was so embarrassed
29 that his sparkling light went out completely. For the
30 next several days, no matter where he went, he heard...
31 (*ANDREW enters and hides behind some trees as STARS*
32 *1-4 enter.*)

33 STAR 1: That Andrew Star! Who does he think he is, anyway?

34 STAR 2: He just ruined our songs of praise.

35 STAR 3: Henry got so flustered he forgot to have our part of



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