

## THE SHEPHERD (CHRISTMAS ON WOODWARD, PART 2)

by Rikki Schwartz

**GENRE:** Drama

**SYNOPSIS:** Part Two (of Four) depicting the “Shepherd” of the Modern day Nativity story, which takes place in an underprivileged community. Each church will change those names to customize them to its own church’s neighborhoods/cities/states.

**DIRECTOR’S TIP:** Behind an upstage scrim is a Boiler Room where we see silhouettes of life-size cutouts of Mary, Joseph, the Innkeeper and his wife, and a well-dressed “Birmingham” couple holding shopping bags – all huddled around a large toolbox with lid open. There is a gap in the “huddle” (where eventually “Marm” will take her place at the end of this scene). In the distance you can see a neon sign that reads “SAV-MOR INN – NO VACANCY”. Downstage is an outdoor street scene with a street bench, and a street sign that reads “Woodward”.

**TIME:** Under 5 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 1

**TOPIC:** Christian Living

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Luke 1:8-20

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** Christmas

**SUGGESTED USE:** #2 of a 4-part series

**CHARACTERS:** MARM—a homeless woman

**PROPS:** Shopping cart filled with “Marm’s” worldly possessions, including a half-empty bottle of Jack Daniels

**COSTUMES:** Casual

**SOUND:** One wireless microphone

**LIGHTING:** Begins with lighting behind upstage scrim. Moves to general stage lighting once drama begins. Ends with lighting behind scrim again.

**SETTING:** A city street

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*Lights up on MARM, who enters scene pushing a shopping cart—slightly inebriated, with ever so slightly slurred speech.*

**MARM:** Whew!!! These dogs are screaming. (*Sits on park bench where she begins rubbing her feet while delivering the next line*). I must of (*sic*) walked 8 miles or more since the angel came. (*Thinks about what she just said and looks up*). Now that was a terrible way to begin a conversation if I didn't want you to think I'm crazy or drunk, wasn't it? (*Sighs, disappointed at herself; sits there for a moment trying to figure out how to fix the situation.*) See? This is exactly what I told the angel would happen. I told him nobody is going to believe me! Look at me. (*Looks down at herself, then quietly, sadly with shame*) Look at me. I didn't always look like this. Of course, that holds true for all my friends...my "flock" as I call 'em...on the street. Most of us have been together for, gosh, three or four years now. Me and Jack and Selma and Sissy and Bug – Sissy and Bug are the same age as my kids. (*She stops a moment to contemplate this fact*) My name's Marjorie...(*Stops again and thinks and suddenly laughs really hard*)...wow, nobody's called me Marjorie in year. "Marjorie" (*Draws out the syllables so that it sounds almost foreign and strange – laughs again*). They all call me "Marm", because I kind of take care of them. So, they put Marj and Mom together—Marm. (*Shrugs her shoulders*) I like it. I'm sure it's better that what my real kids call me (*Looks down*).

Here's a little irony for you. Back when I didn't look like this...I lived on Woodward, just a few miles (*Clears her throat*) "up" the road. But then, it didn't mean actually living "ON" Woodward (*Laughs at her own joke*). Nope. Back then (*As if she is going to recap how she got from there to here, but instead*) I had the best haircuts. (*Laughs*) I had a pretty good job, too. And then I got – how'd they put it – (*Says it with a pompous "air" about it*) let go (*Thinks about it*) which made me feel even more like a helium balloon than I already did. (*Big sigh*) And now I'm here. (*Pauses/shrugs*) Sorry, but everything else is a little secret between me and "Jack." (*Fingers the Jack Daniels bottle, which has been sitting in plain view*) Besides, if we're honest about it, I'm not sure any of us can really explain how we ended up where we are now, right? (*Right at the audience – challenging them*) Right?? (*Long pause*) And, really, I'm no more (*Struggles*) invisible now than I felt then (*Recuperates*) and I still don't have a job! (*Laughs*) So, I guess nothing's really changed but the haircut. (*Sarcastically/sadly*) What a relief.

(*Recuperates*) Anyway, this is what takes me to my argument with the angel. Last night, he came to me and my friends down at the Greyhound, and told me to come here, to the Sav-Mor Inn, and I'd find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a toolbox. (*Conceding to strangeness of that statement*) I know...but I swear, I was wide awake and sober as a judge at the time, and it's not like I wasn't paying real close attention.