

The Christmas Prints

A Children's Musical
By Steven Sandy

CAST

Name	Character	Number of Scenes
Mathew Locke	An ace detective investigating strange happenings in Bethlehem.	7
Shirley Locke	Mathew's sister, another detective and animal expert.	7
Caleb	The lead Shepherd in Bethlehem	3
Benjamin and Abigail	Other shepherds in Bethlehem.	2
Woolson	A very cute sheep.	2
The Boss	Mat and Shirley's boss at the Jerusalem Detective Agency.	2
Innkeeper	Bethlehem Innkeeper.	2
Mr Grape	A citizen in need of Mat's help.	1
Hairy Harry	A suspect in a case.	1
Rachel	Another citizen in need of help.	1
Angel(s)	The angels that appear to the shepherds.	1
Mary and Joseph	Jesus' earthly parents, non-speaking roles	1

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Approximate Run Time: 29 Minutes

Act 1

SCENE 1: Bethlehem / Flashback to Jerusalem Detective Agency.

[Noir Trumpet Music. Enter Matthew Locke]

MATTHEW LOCKE

December 25th, 0000. What I thought would be another silent night in this little town instead brought a noise that turned the world upside down. A case as cold as a sheared sheep in a snowstorm now had even an ace detective like me sweatin' like Shadrach. It all started a few weeks ago, back at the Jerusalem Detective Agency.

SONG: ELEMENTARY

[Enter Shirley, Boss, and ensemble]]

MR. GRAPE

Are you detective Mathew Locke?

MATTHEW LOCKE

The one and only. But please, call me Mat.

MR. GRAPE

Mat, I need some help.

MATTHEW LOCKE

What's the case?

BOSS

This man owns a vineyard. He says he caught the suspect stealing his grapes at night, but the suspect says he took a nazarite vow and has no motive.

HAIRY HARRY

Nazarites can't even eat grapes, I'm innocent!

MATTHEW LOCKE

What's that nick on your ear?

HAIRY HARRY

Huh?

MATTHEW LOCKE

(Mat yanks off his wig, everyone gasps). Just as I suspected, a fresh haircut. This Nazarite is Naza-wrong. Case closed.

(Mat Solo)

IT'S ELEMENTARY, FIND AN OBSERVABLE FACT
CONNECT THE PIECES, REPEAT UNTIL THE CASE IS CRACKED
WHEN THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR, AND YOUR HEART AND MIND SINCERE
THE CONCLUSION WILL APPEAR

HAIRY HARRY

Just from a nicked ear?

(Mat Solo)

IT'S ELEMENTARY

RACHEL

Hello, I need help. A stranger has been vandalizing my property, leaving trash everywhere!

MATTHEW LOCKE

Can you describe this person? (Get's out sketchpad)

RACHEL

He was small, had gray hair, and was wearing a mask.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Is this him? (Holds up a picture of a raccoon.)

RACHEL

Yes! That's him! Can you help me?

MATTHEW LOCKE

Shirley can.

RACHEL

Great, follow me-

MATTHEW LOCKE

No, not me. My sister, Shirley, can help you.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

(extends hand) Shirley Locke, ace detective and animal expert at your service! This little guy is a repeat offender, but I'll make sure he keeps his hands clean this time.

(Shirley Solo)

IT'S ELEMENTARY, FIND AN OBSERVABLE FACT
CONNECT THE PIECES, REPEAT UNTIL THE CASE IS CRACKED
WHEN THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR, AND YOUR HEART AND MIND SINCERE
THE CONCLUSION WILL APPEAR

RACHEL

Thank you, dear!

(Shirley)

IT'S ELEMENTARY

(ALL SING)

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED BY THE MYSTERY
JUST KEEP PUSHING FORWARD, FOLLOW EVERY LEAD
AND YOU'LL EVENTUALLY SEE
YOU HAVE THE CLUES THAT YOU NEED

IT'S ELEMENTARY, FIND AN OBSERVABLE FACT
CONNECT THE PIECES, REPEAT UNTIL THE CASE IS CRACKED
WHEN THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR, AND YOUR HEART AND MIND SINCERE
THE CONCLUSION WILL APPEAR
IT'S ELEMENTARY

SCENE 2: Boss's Office.

BOSS

Matthew, Shirley, can I speak to you in my office?(they follow)
We've just received word from Governor Quirinius. There is going to be a census, and everyone is required to go to their hometown to register.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Wait, you mean we have to go back to Bethlehem? (Sighs) We came to the big city because we wanted to be where the *action* is.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Nothing ever happens in *Bethlehem*.

BOSS

Rules are rules. Besides, word on the street is that there are important people taking an interest in Bethlehem.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Like who?

BOSS

Priests, Magi, even kings. Have you seen the star?

MATTHEW LOCKE

Yeah, what does that have to do with anything?

BOSS

That's what I want you to find out. (Boss excuses Mat and Shirley, they exit)

MATTHEW LOCKE

Do you really think there's something going on in Bethlehem, or is the boss just trying to make us feel better about this whole census thing?

SHIRLEY LOCKE

(Shrugs) You're an ace detective. But...do you remember the song mom used to sing us? From the prophet Micah?

SONG: BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM

(Shirley solo)

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING
WHO WILL SHEPHERD GOD'S PEOPLE

(Round begins, ensemble split into two groups)

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING
WHO WILL SHEPHERD
GOD'S PEOPLE
WHOSE ORIGINS ARE OLD
FROM ANCIENT TIMES FORETOLD

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING
WHO WILL SHEPHERD
GOD'S PEOPLE
WHOSE ORIGINS ARE OLD
FROM ANCIENT TIMES FORETOLD

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING
WHO WILL SHEPHERD
GOD'S PEOPLE
WHOSE ORIGINS ARE OLD
FROM ANCIENT TIMES FORETOLD

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING _____

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING
WHO WILL SHEPHERD
GOD'S PEOPLE
WHOSE ORIGINS ARE OLD
FROM ANCIENT TIMES FORETOLD

BUT YOU, O BETHLEHEM
THOUGH SMALL AMONG JUDAH
FROM YOU WILL COME A KING

(All together)
IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

SCENE 3: Bethlehem.

SHIRLEY LOCKE
This place hasn't changed one bit!

MATTHEW LOCKE
That's what I was afraid of...

SHIRLEY LOCKE
Still remember how to get to the inn?

MATTHEW LOCKE
Naturally.
[Cue Noir Music. Both approach the innkeeper]

INNKEEPER
Well if it isn't the Locke siblings... never thought I'd see you again.

MATTHEW LOCKE
The world is full of surprises.

INNKEEPER
And my inn is full of weary travelers. If you're looking for a place to stay, you're out of luck. I already turned away a pregnant woman and her husband, so I'm not going to make an exception for you. You'll have to go somewhere else.

MATTHEW LOCKE

(To the audience) Kept out by an innkeeper. This whole town was backwards.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

(To the innkeeper) We'll make do. Say, have you seen anything strange around here lately?

INNKEEPER

Now that you mention it, I did get an odd reservation request from three Magi who are supposed to arrive soon, but they didn't say exactly when.

MATTHEW LOCKE

(To the audience) Magi? The boss had said something about Magi too. Still, something smelled a little funny...

(Caleb Shepherd walks by confused, sniffs armpit)

CALEB SHEPHERD

Who're you talkin' to?

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Oh, he does that sometimes. It's part of being a detective. Just ignore him.

(Caleb Shepherd shrugs)

CALEB SHEPHERD

Sorry to intrude, but I heard you two need a place to sleep. There's plenty of grass out on the hillside, and we have a fire and food to share!

MATTHEW LOCKE

You mean like... sleep on the ground?

SHIRLEY LOCKE

That sounds great, thank you!

CALEB SHEPHERD

Right this way, we'll be there in no time. (Pause) Here we are! Home sweet home.

SHIRLEY

Wow, the stars look so beautiful here.

CALEB SHEPHERD

They sure do. These are my friends, shepherds from the next hill over. Everyone, this is Mat and Shirley Locke. They are detectives from Jerusalem.

ALL SHEPHERDS

Hi! Nice to meet you (All give different greetings.)

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Oh my goodness! Who is this little lamb?

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD

That's Woolson.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

He's so cute! (She goes to pet him.)

WOOLSON

Baaaaa

BENJAMIN SHEPHERD

Hey detectives, maybe you can help us solve a case.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Sure, that's my specialty. What kind of case?

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD

A missing person...sort of.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Sort of? Who is missing?

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD

God. And he isn't missing, exactly, it's just that he hasn't said anything in a really long time.

BENJAMIN SHEPHERD

The last time God spoke to us through a prophet was 400 years ago! Where is he now? He might as well be a missing person!

(Trumpet Noir, Monologue)

MATTHEW LOCKE

(To the audience) No detective worth his salt wouldn't be intrigued by an unsolved mystery, but this was beyond my pay grade. The way I see it, a person stays quiet for one of two reasons: either he has nothing to say, or he's about to say something big. (End monologue)

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Well, maybe the star *is* God saying something!

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD

The star?

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Yeah! Maybe it is a sign from heaven. The psalmist writes, *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.*

BENJAMIN SHEPHERD

That's beautiful Shirley!

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD

Still, don't you wish God would speak in a way we could understand better? You know, like, with words?

SONG: A SIGN FROM HEAVEN

CALEB SHEPHERD

I just wish I could know, somehow, that he was still here with us.

(CALEB Solo)

I SEE THE STARS IN THE NIGHT, SHINING WITH HEAVENLY LIGHT
BUT A STAR'S JUST A STAR BURNING BRIGHT FROM AFAR
YOU CANNOT HOLD IT IN YOUR HANDS

CHORUS

O LORD GIVE US A SIGN FROM HEAVEN
THAT WE MAY KNOW YOU ARE NEAR
A SIGN DECLARING OUR GOD IS WITH US
FOR ALL THE WORLD TO HEAR

(BENJAMIN Solo)
WONDERING DAY AFTER DAY IF YOU CAN HEAR WHEN I PRAY
WHEN MY WORDS FADE AWAY, I DON'T HEAR WHAT YOU SAY
LORD CAN YOU HELP ME UNDERSTAND?

CHORUS
O LORD GIVE US A SIGN FROM HEAVEN
THAT WE MAY KNOW YOU ARE NEAR
A SIGN DECLARING OUR GOD IS WITH US
FOR ALL THE WORLD TO HEAR

BRIDGE
YOU PARTED THE SEA, GAVE US BREAD FROM ABOVE,
BROUGHT US INTO THIS LAND, AND TAUGHT US HOW TO LOVE
BUT IN THIS TIME OF SILENCE WE FEEL ALL ALONE
WE'RE LONGING FOR THE DAY YOU MAKE YOUR PRESENCE KNOWN

CHORUS
O LORD GIVE US A SIGN FROM HEAVEN
THAT WE MAY KNOW YOU ARE NEAR
A SIGN DECLARING OUR GOD IS WITH US
FOR ALL THE WORLD TO HEAR

Scene 4: Shepherds Field.

MATTHEW LOCKE
Sorry I couldn't be more helpful.

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD
It's OK.

SHIRLEY LOCKE
I wouldn't have expected to have such a deep conversation with
a bunch of shepherds...no offense.

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD
Not much else to do out here at night while watching the sheep
except talk. Unless we have to chase off a bear or something.

MATTHEW LOCKE
Bears!?

BENJAMIN SHEPHERD
She's just teasing you. But it's getting late, you two should
get some sleep.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

What about you?

ABIGAIL SHEPHERD

We'll keep watch, like we always do.

(Shirley and Mat lay down to sleep but sheep keep making noise)

MATTHEW LOCKE

How do any of you ever get a good night's sleep with all these bleating sheep?

CALEB SHEPHERD

We don't, we get a baaaaad night's sleep.

(The shepherds all laugh but Mat and Shirley are not amused.)

MATTHEW LOCKE

We'll sleep over there, come on Shirley.

(They exit, angels appear to the shepherds, who are terrified)

ANGEL

Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

(Music Begins as Angel continues)

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

SONG: GLORY TO GOD

CHORUS

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN
PEACE ON THE EARTH AMONG ALL HE FAVORS
GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN
A SAVIOR IS BORN THIS DAY

(ANGEL)

DON'T BE AFRAID, I BRING GOOD NEWS
ON THIS DAY IN THE TOWN OF DAVID
A SAVIOR BORN, CHRIST THE LORD
SON OF GOD, SON OF MAN

CHORUS

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN
PEACE ON THE EARTH AMONG ALL HE FAVORS
GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN
A SAVIOR IS BORN THIS DAY

(ANGEL)

WONDERFUL COUNSELOR
MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER
PRINCE OF PEACE, EMMANUEL
GOD WITH US NOW AND EVERMORE

CHORUS

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN
PEACE ON THE EARTH AMONG ALL HE FAVORS
GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN
A SAVIOR IS BORN THIS DAY
A SAVIOR IS BORN THIS DAY

BENJAMIN SHEPHERD

Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened,
which the Lord has told us about.

[Shepherds exit, Matthew Locke and Shirley re-enter]

Scene 5: Shepherd's Field.

MATTHEW LOCKE

On second thought, I prefer noisy sheep to hungry bears...huh?
Where did everyone go?

SHIRLEY LOCKE

It isn't like a shepherd to just abandon their sheep.

MATTHEW LOCKE

No it isn't...and it couldn't have been bears or kidnappers
because the sheep are sleeping so peacefully...

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Then why do you think they left?

MATTHEW LOCKE

I'm not sure, but we are going to get to the bottom of this.

(Noir Monologue)

MATTHEW LOCKE

Another strange occurrence-

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Hey Mat. (Music stops abruptly) Can I try this one?

MATTHEW LOCKE

I don't know Shirley, it's kind of my thing-

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Just this once!

MATTHEW LOCKE

...Alright, I guess.

(Noir Monologue, Mat looks around in background with magnifying glass)

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Vanished without a trace...If there's one thing I know about shepherds, it's that they don't abandon their sheep. The best might even lay down their lives for their sheep. Could they have been kidnapped? Or maybe a bear did pay them a visit...an untrained eye might think so, but the sheep sleeping peacefully nearby tell a different story. Whatever caused these shepherds to abandon their post must be important, more important than even their own lives.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Not bad, Shirley.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Thanks! So, any leads?

MATTHEW LOCKE

Yep, I found footprints heading into town. Come on, let's go!

(Fade lights, scene change with music)

Scene 6: Town/Inn.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Excuse me, have you seen some shepherds pass through here?

INNKEEPER

Why, yes! And they have been telling the wildest stories I have ever heard.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

What do you mean?

INNKEEPER

Better if you hear it from them. Here they come now!

CALEB SHEPHERD

Friends!

MATTHEW LOCKE

Shepherd! We were worried about you when we saw you had left your flock. What happened?

(Angels music starts)

CALEB SHEPHERD

You won't believe it, it is an incredible story.

SONG: ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH/SILENT NIGHT

(Caleb Solo)

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH
SWEETLY SINGING O'ER THE PLAINS
AND THE MOUNTAINS IN REPLY
ECHOING THEIR JOYOUS STRAINS

CHORUS

GLORIA, IN EXCELSIS DEO
GLORIA, IN EXCELSIS DEO

(Mat Solo)

SHEPHERDS, WHY THIS JUBILEE?
WHY YOUR JOYOUS STRAINS PROLONG?
WHAT THE GLADSOME TIDINGS BE
WHICH INSPIRE YOUR HEAVENLY SONG?

CHORUS

GLORIA, IN EXCELSIS DEO
GLORIA, IN EXCELSIS DEO

(Mary and Joseph enter the nativity scene, Joseph comes forward)

(Joseph Solo)
COME TO BETHLEHEM AND SEE
HIM WHOSE BIRTH THE ANGELS SING
COME, ADORE ON BENDED KNEE
CHRIST THE LORD, THE NEWBORN KING

CHORUS

GLORIA, IN EXCELSIS DEO
GLORIA, IN EXCELSIS DEO

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

CALEB SHEPHERD

We hurried off and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in a manger. The baby's name is Jesus and he is really cute! The others went to go tell the sheep!

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Can it really be true?

MATTHEW LOCKE

Let's look at the facts: Prophets long ago told us a king would be born in Bethlehem. We know Kings and Magi are asking questions about this place.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Then there is the star, and the angels! And the shepherds must believe what they saw and heard, since they were willing to leave their sheep. But why would God's messiah be born in a manger? And why tell shepherds, of all people? No offense...

CALEB SHEPHERD

None taken! Remember, we're in Bethlehem, the city of David, the place where a Shepherd boy became Israel's greatest king! God has never been concerned about whether someone is rich, poor, important, or common.

MATTHEW LOCKE

Precisely. God's fingerprints are all over these strange happenings in Bethlehem.

SHIRLEY LOCKE

Then I guess God isn't missing any more...case closed!

MATTHEW LOCKE

Case closed. But I don't think God ever was truly missing. I think he has been with us all along, working silently, mysteriously, wanting us to trust his word, and discover him for ourselves. The clues are all there. God says through the prophet Jeremiah, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

CALEB SHEPHERD

But God also sought us and sent Jesus to help us find him... Now, I have to run and tell everyone I know!

SONG: A SIGN FROM HEAVEN REPRISE

(CALEB Solo)

THE LORD HAS GIVEN A SIGN FROM HEAVEN
THAT WE MAY KNOW HE IS NEAR
EMMANUEL, OUR GOD IS WITH US
FOR ALL THE WORLD TO HEAR

(Caleb Shepherd exits)

SONG: O WONDROUS MYSTERY

CHORUS

O WONDROUS MYSTERY
SEEK AND FIND THAT OUR GOD WILL ALWAYS MAKE A WAY
A BABY IN A MANGER LAID

O WONDROUS MYSTERY
THAT THE GOD OF EVERYTHING WOULD COME AND LIVE WITH US
CHANGING THE WORLD ON CHRISTMAS

VERSE

NO EYE HAS SEEN
NO EAR HAS HEARD
NO MIND CAN UNDERSTAND
THE HIDDEN WISDOM OF OUR GOD
AND THE THINGS THAT HE HAS PLANNED

CHORUS

O WONDROUS MYSTERY
SEEK AND FIND THAT OUR GOD WILL ALWAYS MAKE A WAY
A BABY IN A MANGER LAID

O WONDROUS MYSTERY
THAT THE GOD OF EVERYTHING WOULD COME AND LIVE WITH US
CHANGING THE WORLD ON CHRISTMAS

CHORUS

O WONDROUS MYSTERY
SEEK AND FIND THAT OUR GOD WILL ALWAYS MAKE A WAY
A BABY IN A MANGER LAID

O WONDROUS MYSTERY
THAT THE GOD OF EVERYTHING WOULD COME AND LIVE WITH US
CHANGING THE WORLD ON CHRISTMAS

Scene 7: Town.

SHIRLEY

I still don't quite get it. How is a baby going to help anyone find God?

MATTHEW LOCKE

Sounds like another mystery worth solving. What do you say, partner, shall we take the case?

SHIRLEY

My schedule is a little tight right now, what if we revisit this case in a few months? Maybe sometime around Passover?

MATTHEW LOCKE

Deal. Until then, let's tell everyone what happened here.

Slideshow:

(“Where are they now” slideshow plays with pictures and music)

The Shepherds continued praising God and spreading the news of the savior.

Shirley formed a special bond with Woolson and decided to embrace the simple life in Bethlehem rather than return to her job in the big city. Shirley and Woolson became partners and opened their own detective agency in Bethlehem.

Mat returned to Jerusalem and continued to amaze as the agency's ace detective. He devoted the rest of his life to understanding the “mystery of Christ.”

Baby Jesus grew up and preached about the kingdom of God. He lived a perfect life, died for the sins of all mankind, and defeated the power of the grave when he rose again to life. To this day, he offers forgiveness of sins and eternal life to all who believe in his name.

SONG: ELEMENTARY REPRISE

CHORUS

IT'S ELEMENTARY, FIND AN OBSERVABLE FACT
CONNECT THE PIECES, REPEAT UNTIL THE CASE IS CRACKED
WHEN THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR, AND YOUR HEART AND MIND SINCERE
THE CONCLUSION WILL APPEAR

ALL

God was here!

IT'S ELEMENTARY

THE END