

DoveTale

By Ted Swartz, Lee Eshleman and Ingrid De Sanctis

THE DREAM

Characters: Gabriel, Joseph, Mary

Set: Loveseat, pizza box stuffed inside the loveseat cushions

Props:

Pizza box, old pizza crust, black shawl for Mary, baby wrapped in blanket, wedding napkin

Length: 10-11 minutes

GABRIEL enters and talks directly to the audience.)

GABRIEL'S TRANSITION: JOSEPH'S STATE

GABRIEL: Do I wear too much gel? Well, Mary accepted that invitation, and she went off and spent some time with her Uncle Zech and Aunt Elizabeth. She had some time to let this news, this bizarre news, soak into her body and bones. In fact, she was there for three months. That's a trimester. Now, during that time, she and Joseph had no contact at all. In fact, Joseph was burying himself in his work, putting in lots of overtime at the woodshop and making some very strange things. For example, he made this five-legged chair, and he looked at it and he knew that something was wrong, so he lopped off two legs. Well, that didn't seem right, so he lopped again and again and again, and well, it's a cutting board now. Back in his apartment, things were no better. He was letting the place go, and he was letting himself go. He wasn't sleeping right, he wasn't eating right, he just wasn't taking care of himself, and he was walking around like a kind of a zombie, and I decided it was time for somebody to step in and see if they couldn't snap him out of it.

(JOSEPH enters in a bathrobe, checks the pizza box, yawns, lies down on the couch. Soon he's asleep. GABRIEL steps in like an announcer at a huge wrestling match, pretending he is holding a microphone coming down from the ceiling.)

GABRIEL: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to center ring for the main event: The Worldwide Wrestling Association championship match. In this

corner, weighing in at 387 pounds, from parts known and unknown, since before time as we know it—it's the angel of the opera—please welcome ... Gabriel!!!! In this other corner weighing in at 185 pounds, from Nazareth on the Galilee, please welcome ... Joseph, son of Jacob. Let's get ready to rumble!!!!!!

(GABRIEL pulls JOSEPH off the couch. They circle and face each other. GABRIEL takes a "karate kid" pose.)

JOSEPH: Wait a minute. This is a dream isn't it? You're not real; you can't do anything to me. *(To audience)* It's a dream, he can't hurt me.

(GABRIEL winks at audience then kicks JOSEPH. Slaps him over the back of his head. JOSEPH turns to GABRIEL and begins to swing as GABRIEL puts him arm-length away with his hand on his forehead.)

GABRIEL: How's Mary?

JOSEPH: Mary who?

GABRIEL: Your fiancé.

JOSEPH: I don't have a fiancé

(GABRIEL lets JOSEPH fall forward on his face.)

GABRIEL: She dump you?

JOSEPH: No!

GABRIEL: Not man enough for her?

JOSEPH: No ... yes! I mean, no ... that doesn't have anything to do with it.

(He points at GABRIEL. GABRIEL takes his index finger in hand and leads him over to the couch. Drops him. Sits on couch.)

GABRIEL: No?

JOSEPH: No.

GABRIEL: Miss her? *(Tickles him)*

JOSEPH: No.

GABRIEL: Really?

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JOSEPH: Hey, that's old history. I'm doing fine.

GABRIEL: (*Pinching his face*) You look like you lost weight.

JOSEPH: I've been working out.

GABRIEL: Right. (*Lifts JOSEPH by his hair.*) Where is she?

(*Lets him go ... does the up the chest to under the chin school-kid thing, then slaps his face back and forth with both hands.*)

JOSEPH: How should I know?

GABRIEL: Where is she?

JOSEPH: She's at Zechariah and Elizabeth's.

GABRIEL: Now we're getting somewhere. HAAAAAIIIIII! (*Strikes the arms ready pose, which causes JOSEPH to do it, too.*) Dating around?

JOSEPH: Well, I've been—(*Gabriel swings him around by the arm and throws him over the couch. Runs to audience for a high five.*)

JOSEPH: (*Appearing from behind couch*) I'm doing okay.

GABRIEL: Don't measure up do they? (*No answer*) That must have hurt. Here, take a seat. It's okay. Tell me about work. How are things at work?

JOSEPH: Work is work.

GABRIEL: Trouble concentrating?

JOSEPH: I'm on probation.

GABRIEL: More five-legged chairs. (*JOSEPH goes to sit, as GABRIEL pulls the chair from under him.*) Why did you let her go?

JOSEPH: What do you mean, why? She was pregnant. It wasn't mine. What was I supposed to do—marry her anyway?

GABRIEL: (*Pulls JOSEPH to him by the ear.*) Whose baby do you think it is—anyway?

(*GABRIEL "lifts" JOSEPH and hurls him down center without touching him. GABRIEL induces the audience to applaud. They quiet down in expectation of the speech they are about to hear. JOSEPH becomes aware that he is hopelessly unprepared.*)

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JOSEPH: Ah ... this evening ... I ... ah ... am so glad to be here ... It's a profound honor of course ... to be asked ... ah ... to address such a distinguished ... ah audience ... this evening, it's ... the lasting impression that one will take from this gathering will be ... I'm sure that you were all, in fact ... here. ... In conclusion ... I'm sorry, I don't seem to have my notes... (*GABRIEL hands him a note.*) I've just been handed a note. It appears that my wife has gone into labor. I need to get over to the hospital ... Wait a minute, this can't be for me, I'm not married. (*He hands the note to GABRIEL. Addresses audience.*) You see, this can't be for me. I'm not married.

(MARY enters carrying a bundle. She wears a black fabric over her head and looks into JOSEPH'S eyes when she hands him the baby...)

JOSEPH: Mary? What's the matter? (*She is shrouded as if in disgrace, hands the bundle to JOSEPH, looks at him, then exits.*)

Mary, this isn't my child ... This isn't my child ... (*He is looking for anyone to give the bundle to.*) Please, this isn't mine. Please. (*He glances down at the bundle, sees something there. Is stilled. GABRIEL enters, gently takes the bundle and leads JOSEPH back to the couch.*)

GABRIEL: Marry her, Joseph; it's the right thing to do. (*Tucks an item in his shirt. Exits with the baby. When door shuts, JOSEPH wakes up with a start. Realizes it was all a dream, notices what's in his shirt, pulls out a napkin, reads it.*)

JOSEPH: Forever on.

(JOSEPH gets up and as he exits he realizes his arm hurts.)

JOSEPH: Ow!

GABRIEL TRANSITION: "DREAMS"

(GABRIEL enters, stands inside the doorframe, leaning on top of cutaway door.)

GABRIEL: Did you ever have a dream like that? A dream that was so intense and vivid that when you woke up, you could swear that it had actually happened to you? Well now, sometimes a dream like that is simply the result of worry. It's the last thing you were thinking about right before you went to sleep. And sometimes a dream like that is the result of diet. It's the last thing you ate right before you went to sleep. But sometimes, in the middle of all that crazy jigsaw imagery, there is something else, there's a hint toward an idea. There's a nudge toward a new way to see things. And if you listen closely enough, you can hear the voice of God.

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***** SCRIPT PREVIEW *****

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PREVIEW

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