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The Birth

The Prequel to the
Greatest Story Ever Told.

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LOGLINE

This is a Rom-Com based about the most famous family of all time.

Two Thousand years before the Kardashians.

A young Jewish couple meet in a harsh, occupied desert. After finding herself carrying a prophesied child. She must convince her fiance to continue with the marriage, deal with their parents, culture, and an invading army to bring the child into the world.

It is a prequel to the Greatest Story Ever Told.

PACE, VISUAL STYLE, AND TONE.

Told in a modern voice this is a adaptation of the traditional sandal and sword movie.

Not showing a beaten and impoverished people the Hebrew see themselves and clean and above the Romans.



Meets



SHORT SYNOPSIS

This is the story we have heard since we were children. With one exception. This is not the story of the child. This is the story of the parents. We are familiar with the story from 30,000 feet, but what is it happened to friends of yours? It is the story of two Jewish teenagers in the 1st century. In a hostel occupied country, that had a tradition of honor and overcoming difficulties.

It cannot be stated enough that this is NOT a story about the start of the Christian faith but a story about two Jewish teens in the first century.

Part coming of age, part romance, part travel, part buddy movie. Always respectful and never vulgar and with a lot of laughing at yourself moments we all find ourselves in.

It is difficult to do a short synopsis in a story so familiar. I am reminded of a Pastor I had once that confessed that hate to preach on Christmas and Easter because everyone knew the stories so well. His mentor told him that was why people primarily came to church on these holidays. Because they love re-hearing the stories.

This is the story not many have thought of. The pre-quel.

FULL SYNOPSIS

The story takes place in a Roman-occupied Judea, a harsh desert land where the Jewish people are forced to work for the empire.

Conflict arises when young Jonathan from the Jewish work crew is caught stealing grain to feed his starving family. Philo orders a brutal punishment, but Mary intervenes with a heartfelt prayer.

Philo is surprisingly affected by Mary's faith and innocence. He shows mercy, reducing Jonathan's punishment and ordering crows to be shot instead. This encounter sparks a change in Philo, who begins questioning his own harshness.

Meanwhile, Mary's family is visited by Jacob, a carpenter, who needs a place to stay while working for the Romans. They agree to a deal, and Jacob's son, Yoseph, enters the picture.

The act ends with a scene of a transformed field and the arrival of the Angel Gabriel. Mary, initially skeptical, is overwhelmed by the heavenly display and Gabriel's message.

Act 2 opens with Mary gazing at a dove outside her window. She feels restless and has a strange dream about her cousin Elizabeth in Judea. Despite her mother's disapproval, Mary gathers some friends (Aaron, Sarah, Imma) and a newcomer, Yoseph (son of the Roman carpenter), for a trip to Judea.

On the way, they visit Jonathan, who was injured by the Romans. Mary's bravery in confronting the Roman leader is revealed, earning her the gratitude of Jonathan and his mother.

FULL SYNOPSIS

The group travels through the harsh desert landscape, facing challenges and bonding along the way. Mary and Yoseph develop a connection despite Aaron's hostility towards Yoseph's Roman-affiliated father.

One night, Mary points out a bush, hoping to impress Yoseph with "trees." He gently corrects her, highlighting his lack of experience with real trees. They share their dreams through pantomimes.

The journey continues with playful moments like the boys carrying the girls across a stream and a comical attempt by the group to create a "tree" out of reeds.

Reaching their destination, Mary learns her cousin Elizabeth IS unexpectedly pregnant in her old age. Filled with compassion, Mary volunteers to stay and help Elizabeth and her husband Zachariah. Meanwhile, Yoseph departs to deliver a message to Mary's parents and check on his father. He promises Mary a swift return, setting the stage for their blossoming romance.

Joachim and Yoseph arrive to find Mary visiting her cousins Elizabeth and Zachariah. Mary's father, Joachim, approves of Yoseph and grants permission for him to court Mary. They share a warm moment, and Yoseph expresses his desire to have children someday.

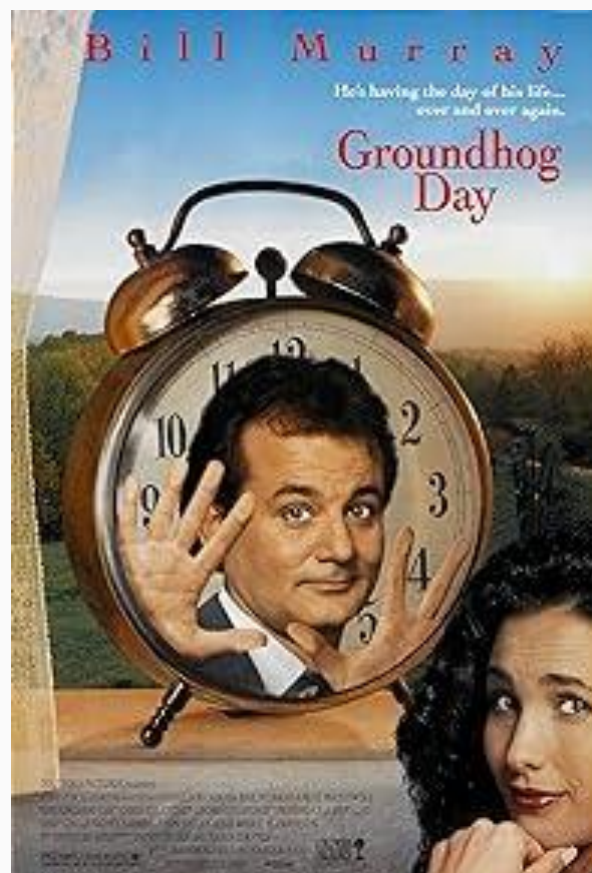
Three months later, Yoseph visits Mary again. He's smitten with John, Elizabeth's newborn son, and talks about John proclaiming the coming Messiah. Mary reveals she's pregnant with the Messiah, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Yoseph is initially angry and confused but has a dream with the angel Gabriel. After the dream, Yoseph apologizes to Mary, accepts his role as protector, and they are married.

FULL SYNOPSIS

Mary and Joseph preparing for a census mandated by Caesar. Despite Mary's advanced pregnancy, the couple embarks on a journey to Bethlehem, facing physical discomfort and unexpected twists along the way.

As they reach Bethlehem, the town is bustling with activity, and they find refuge in a humble manger. There, Mary gives birth to Jesus, surrounded by the unexpected presence of wise men and shepherds who recognize the significance of the newborn child. Amidst their offers of assistance and gifts, Mary and Joseph grapple with the magnitude of their son's destiny, ultimately embracing the divine guidance that leads them to Egypt for safety.

“Some stories are like old friends.”



THEMES

Period

Rom-Com

“A very familiar story told from a
unique point of view.”

THE WORLD

Ancient Jerusalem, if you haven't been there think of the Apple Valley in California. Mostly desert and what trees there are are rather large bushes.

We will use costuming as a point of reference. The Romans will see themselves as shiny and proud. They will see the Hebrew as impoverished and dirty. The Hebrews will see themselves as clean and upright and the Romans as sweaty old men wearing metal in a sauna.

Walking is the primary mode of transportation. This is a Jewish world. Not primitive but dependant on God.

INTRO TO CHARACTERS

MARY; Teenager, wildly intelligent and bright. Loves her family and her life but wonders if there isn't more destiny for her?

YOSEPH/JOSEPH; A few years older than Mary. New boy in town. From a smaller town and doesn't want to stir the pot. Born to attempt to do the right thing.

SARAH, IMMA, and AARON; Mary's friends in Nazareth. Traveling buddies to Jerusalem. Couldn't do a wedding without them.

ELIZABETH AND ZACHARIAH; Mary's grandmothers sister and her Husband.

Anna and Joachim; Mary's loving parent. Anna is always concerned for her happiness and Joachim for her safety. He is also the cantor in the local Synagogue.

Jacob; Joseph's father. A tough and hardened carpenter forced to work for the Romans. Truly with a heart of gold..

INTRO TO CHARACTERS

Earley and Zella; They run a small boarding house in Bethlehem. There two children are,

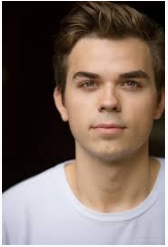
Mariah and Hannah; a handful. Consistently exhibiting sibling rivalry. To quote Earley ; They get up in the middle of the night just to kick each other.”

Andrew, Stephen and Fritz; The three wise men, scholars and merchants from afar. They bring presents and make a offer to the new parents they cannot refuse.

ACTORS WISH LIST



MARY;
Emma Drake



JOSEPH;
Zed Koterba



PHILO;
Michael Jones



MOTHER;
Paula Beck Williams



JACOB;
Nicolas Cage

ACTORS WISH LIST



ZACHARIAH;
Mel Brooks



ELIZABETH;
Barbra Streisand



EARLEY;
Billy Crystal



ZELLA;
Sarah Silverman



ANDREW;
Samuel L. Jackson

ACTORS WISH LIST



STEVEN;
Steve Martin



FRITZ;
Danny Devito

THE HOOK

Moments of tenderness, humor, and awe-inspiring revelation, “The Birth” illuminates the universal themes of faith, love, and the miraculous nature of new beginnings.

THE CASE

How did you get the idea to adapt this story?

It was at the Christmas program at Hillsong Church in DTLA that I heard a Voice.

We were singing Run, Run Rudolph. In Southern California you sing songs about Reindeer in church at Christmas.

The Voice said "I want you to tell my story."

I looked around the church at the hundreds of people and replied. "I am pretty sure everyone in here knows your story Lord."

It continued "I want you to tell the story of my parents."

"Um, one problem. I don't know anything about your parents??? I mean,,, I know their names but that's about it."

The reply "Don't worry, I'll take care of that."

Then came the typical human response. "Lord, you do know that I have only written a few screenplays and nothing has been picked up yet. Yes, I have been a songwriter all my life and in the music industry but are you sure you have the right person?"

"You'll be fine. I'll be with you." He continued, "I want people to love my parents as much as I do."

THE CASE

Then the miracles began.

I had been finishing another screenplay in Glendale and the next morning found me having coffee next to the group of gentlemen who gather at McDonald's every morning to solve the problems of the world.

You've seen them.

"What is your problem" one of them asked?

"I was told yesterday to write the story of Mary and Joseph but I don't really know anything about them."

"Well," they started, "Mary's father was Joachim and her mother was Anna. He was the cantor of their Synagog. Joseph was originally Yoseph and his father was Jacob. They were from Bethlehem. He changed his name during their wedding to Joseph. There is no record of a mother. People in those days use to have their children in Bethlehem hoping that one of them would be the Messiah. That is why so many people were there during the census"

"Okay hold the boat. How do y'all know this?"

Turns out that one man heard the same voice 3 years earlier and was told to write a lullaby that Mary would have sang to her child.

THE CASE

I guess each mother had a different song for each child back then.

Together they had done the research but he had not written the song yet.

“Okay,” I said “I’ll be back in March to get the song.”

With that I left thinking ‘What did I tell them March for? I am suppose to be in Nashville in March.’

When I got to Brand Library to continue on the screenplay I was working on, I opened my e-mail to find a message from Pilar Alessandra a screen writing coach I had met at the AFM.

“How would you like to write the First Draft of your next screenplay in 6 weeks?”

I slowly typed “Yes Please.” Then I hit send.

Four weeks later I had my first draft of The Birth.

THE CASE

Why does this movie need to be told?

As I was doing the research for this. I noticed a common theme. All the previous versions showed a dark and dismal environment.

Not the Jewish people I know. They are proud of their faith, clean, full of joy.

They are not a bunch of homeless looking zombie street people speaking in old King James English wearing dirty robes.

I walk with the Lord. Yes, bad things happen but there is a kind of comedy that would cause the Kings of Kings to speak to a musical Impresario during a song about fictional reindeer on a celebration of his Birthday telling him to write a story about people he didn't know.

See. Funny huh?

So what about a teenager being told that she would have a virgin birth?

What mother would then let her teenage daughter walk 80 miles to visit her 60+ cousin to see if she was pregnant because of a dream?

Joseph, his dad, and someday his son would be know as carpenters. Have you ever seen the desert? Have you ever seen a tree in the desert? By the way they had masons. They built Egypt not carpenters, masons. We still have them today. They built it out of stuff they have in the desert.

THE CASE

I also realized that no one had ever told the story from THEIR viewpoint. The more I developed their characters the more it became a romantic comedy.

My research showed so much speculation, why can't I have my speculation? How do we know that a monk in the 1300's knew more about the missing parts of the story than a dude in 2018? After all the missing parts of the story make up a really awesome story.

Yes, I do write Rom/Com's. I have a feeling the Voice knew that even if Hollywood hasn't discovered me,,, yet.

I also know that if I was given a big box of gold I would be traveling.

Oh yeah, they did travel for like 13 years before Jesus is mentioned again by Luke. So I am imagining a BIG box of gold.

The biggest comment (note) I have received from my non industry friends is that they opened their Bibles to check facts. That's a problem I can live with.

Like I said there have been a couple versions of the Nativity story. Told by different perspectives but none I have found have been told by theirs. So what if...

PS. I picked up the Lullaby in March.

FINANCIALS

BUDGET TOPSHEET					
Production Co.	Cyrene Productions,		Producers	Art Waxem	
Project Title	The Birth		Union/Non	Union	
Budget Date			Prepared by	Arthur Waxem	
Shoot Days		3	Locations	1	
ABOVE THE LINE					
10-00	Development Costs	1			\$1,350
11-00	Story & Rights	1			\$182,529
12-00	Producer Unit	1			\$0
13-00	Director & Staff	1			\$291,888
14-00	Cast	1			\$533,098
15-00	Travel & Living	1			\$13,800
Total Above the Line					\$1,022,665
PRODUCTION EXPENSES					
20-00	Production Staff	2			\$203,665
21-00	Extra Talent	2			\$0
22-00	Set Design	2			\$82,714
23-00	Set Construction	2			\$0
24-00	Set Pre-rig & Strike	2			\$7,920
25-00	Set Operations	2			\$0
26-00	Set Dressing	2			\$71,388
27-00	Property	2			\$30,800
28-00	Wardrobe	2			\$178,280
29-00	Electric	2			\$70,454
30-00	Camera	2			\$228,447
31-00	Production Sound	2			\$55,710
32-00	Make-up & Hair	2			\$134,560
33-00	Transportation	2			\$201,410
34-00	Locations	2			\$179,416
35-00	Picture Vehicles & Animals	2			\$73,410

FINANCIALS

36-00	Special Effects	2		\$235,890
37-00	Visual Effects - Post	2		\$32,890
38-00	Film & Lab	2		\$110,400
39-00	BTL Travel	2		\$0
Total Production				\$1,897,355
POST-PRODUCTION EXPENSES				
45-00	Film Editing	3	Roscoe	\$77,020
46-00	Music	3		\$144,600
47-00	Visual Effects	3		\$0
48-00	Post Production Sound	3		\$16,650
49-00	Post Production Film & Lab	3		\$750
Total Post Production				\$239,020
OTHER EXPENSES				
55-00	Publicity	4		\$7,750
56-00	Legal & Accounting	4		\$0
57-00	General Expense	4		\$0
58-00	Insurance	4		\$0
Total Other				\$7,750
Bond Fee	3%			\$95,004
Contingency	10%			\$316,679
GRAND TOTAL				\$3,578,473
<div>  Create stripboards, shooting schedules, call sheets and more on studiobinder.com © 2018 - StudioBinder </div>				

THE TEASER

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The Roman on horseback PHILO.

PHILO
What do you think you're doing
little girl?

MARY
I am praying Sir.

PHILO
Really?
(amused)
Which gods do you pray to?

MARY
There is only one God.

PHILO
Do I not scare you, little girl?

MARY
I am terrified of you, Sir.

Philo likes that answer.

PHILO
And is this God of yours all-
powerful?

Mary nods.

PHILO (CONT'D)
So can he make a rock so big He
cannot lift it?

His men laugh.

MARY
He already has, Sir.

PHILO
What, this hell of a world?

His men laugh louder.

MARY
No sir, your heart.
(She looks up)
But if you lift your heart to God,
he can again make it flesh.

THE TEASER

PHILO

What is your name child?

MARY

Mary.

PHILO

And Mary, you think your God can
turn my heart back to flesh?

MARY

With God, nothing is impossible.

EXT. ANCIENT STREET - LATER

ANNA and JOACHIM are walking arm in arm.

ANNA

I am worried about Mary.

JOACHIM

What is wrong with Mary?

ANNA

She just doesn't seem interested in
boys.

JOACHIM

I have told her that the first boy
she brings home she must not really
like.

Anna stops and looks at him with a question on her face.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

Because I am going to kill him.

Anna pushes him in the arm. They continue to walk.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Flowers of every color. Mary waves at a group of girls who
are dancing in the distance.

All wave back.

Rabbits hop and birds fly around. Hummingbirds are humming a
very Middle Eastern tune. (Maybe Mary's theme song.)

One lands on her finger.

THE TEASER

MARY

You only hum because you haven't
learned the words yet.

The bird sticks out its tongue and flies away.

A line of young boys her age are doing strongman poses to
impress her. She laughs at them.

Looking at her feet she sees puppies. She sits on the ground
and begins to play with them. She picks one up.

MARY (CONT'D)

Now you're the silly type of boy I
can hang with.

The puppy licks her face.

GABRIEL (OS)

Hey Mary, full of grace?

Mary turns to see GABRIEL standing behind her. He is wearing
a light beige tunic and has curly black hair. Super cute. In
fact, it is hard to tell if he is a man or a woman. Except no
breasts so he's a he. Just really a cute he.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

The Lord is with you.

MARY

Wow,

(to herself)

So, that's what the term tall drink
of water means?

GABRIEL

I am the Angel Gabriel.

MARY

Angel huh, I am not sure I believe
in angels.

GABRIEL

Just because you don't believe in
something does not mean it isn't
true.

MARY

Okay, now you sound like my dad.

GABRIEL

Good singer. I like his voice.

THE TEASER

MARY

I do too.

EXT. NAZARETH - DAY

Mary walks through the village passing a couple of people, but there are not a lot around. Two Romans walk by. As she passes a few other villagers standing together, they pay her no attention. She turns a corner and sees her father with Jacob.

Joachim sees her.

JOACHIM

Mary, Mary, come here.

Mary walks over.

MARY

(Sings)

Good Morning.

To Jacob.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hi.

JOACHIM

Jacob, this is my daughter, Mary.

MARY

Pleased to meet you, Sir.

JACOB

Joachim, I didn't know you had any children. Hello. Do you have any others?

JOACHIM

No, Mary is all the Lord has blessed me and Anna with.

Mary blushes at the fact she was just called a blessing.

INT. JACOB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Hearing voices outside Yoseph sneaks a peek out the window. Seeing Mary he backs up and begins to straighten himself up. Teasing his hair and checks his armpits. After making a face he reaches on the table and applies something to the pits.

THE TEASER

EXT. JACOB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

JACOB

Yoseph is my only child also.
(yelling)
Yoseph can you come out here?

YOSEPH (O.S.)

Be right out.

JOACHIM

What are you doing out, Mary?

MARY

I am going to the well to get some
water for Momma and to see if any
of the village kids are there.

A door opens and Yoseph exits.

JACOB

Yoseph this is Mary. Joachim's
daughter.

Yoseph and Mary see each other for the first time and are
unable to take their eyes off each other, they speak very
slowly and carefully.

YOSEPH

Hi.

MARY

Hi.

JOACHIM

Mary, you're getting water at this
time?

MARY

It's a long story. I wanted to see
if any of the kids wanted to take a
small trip.

JOACHIM

Where to?

MARY

I had a dream last night about one
of Momma's cousins and I just
wanted to check on her. Momma
didn't want me to go alone.

JOACHIM

Which one?

THE TEASER

MARY
Elizabeth?

JOACHIM
Elizabeth in Judea? Yes, that is
too far of a trip to go alone.

MARY
That is why I am seeing if Imma,
Sarah, Aaron, or maybe Jonathan
wants to come.

YOSEPH
Judea is about the same distance as
Bethlehem and we just came up from
there last week.

Both adults look at him.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
Just, saying.

Looking again at Mary.

JACOB
Mary, maybe can you show Yoseph
where the well is?

He turns to Joachim.

JACOB (CONT'D)
If that is okay?

Joachim nods.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Take a couple of pots with you.

YOSEPH
Two?

JACOB
For now. You can get more later. We
have a lot of cleaning to do.

MARY
C'mon. It's not very far. You sure
you can handle two?

Yoseph stands a bit straighter.

YOSEPH
Yes, of course, I can carry two.

THE TEASER

He looks at the pots concerned.

MARY

Okay, we'll be back in a bit.

MARY (CONT'D)

So you are from Bethlehem?

YOSEPH

Born and raised.

MARY

I've never been there. What's it like?

YOSEPH

It's about half the size of Nazareth I guess. We had a cart with all our stuff in it so it took us a bit longer to get here.

MARY

How long?

YOSEPH

Ten days.

MARY

Ten Days? It only takes us four to get to Jerusalem.

YOSEPH

We spent two days in Jerusalem. My dad had a bunch of business there.

MARY

I love Jerusalem.

YOSEPH

I know. Huh? It's great. I don't know if I could live there permanently, but it is so fun to visit.

MARY

Have you thought about where you would like to live permanently?

YOSEPH

No, right now I just want to travel. I would love to see Greece.

MARY

Egypt.

THE TEASER

YOSEPH
Asia.

MARY
Turkey.

YOSEPH
Rome?

They both stop, turn and look at each other.

MARY
No way.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
No way.

MARY
I am so not interested in going to Rome.

YOSEPH
I know can you imagine a city full of Romans?

MARY
Scary.

Both start marching like Roman soldiers.

YOSEPH
You must kneel before Caesar.

MARY
You must die.

YOSEPH
No, you must die.

MARY
And after you die make sure you kneel. Cause I am super smart. We wear metal in the desert.

Turning a corner they pass two Romans standing in the sun, sweating. Laughing they begin again to walk normally.

YOSEPH
I would like to go to Lebanon and see the cypress trees.

MARY
Being a carpenter's son, I bet you would.

YOSEPH
Wanna know a secret?

THE TEASER

MARY

Sure.

YOSEPH

I have never seen a real tree.

MARY

We have trees all around us. Olive trees, palm trees.

YOSEPH

I know, but most are just like tall bushes and you can't really make anything easily. I meant like an oak, and cypress and, and pine. I really would like to see a real pine tree. The stuff they use in Jerusalem for the temple. You know real wood.

Mary just looks at him and smiles.

MARY

Here, let me have one of your jugs.

YOSEPH

No, I've got them.

MARY

I know, just place one on my head and I can help carry for a bit. Just for a little while, we're almost there.

Yoseph puts one jug down and the other on Mary's head. He then shakes out his arms and picks the jug up again.

YOSEPH

I don't know how women do that?

MARY

We all have our gifts.

Yoseph is now looking at Mary the way she had just looked at him. Neither one noticed the other.