## PLAY FOURTEEN- The Nativity

## (The Tile Thatchers)

**JOSEPH** All wielding God in Trinity
I pray thee, Lord, for thy great might,
Unto thy simple servant see,
Here in this place where we are \*pight, (\*put)
Ourself alone;
Lord, grant us good harbour this night
Within this \*wone. (\*dwelling place)

For we have sought both up and down
Through diverse streets in this city;
So \*mickle people is come to town (\*many, much)
That we can nowhere harboured be,
There is such press.
\*Forsooth I can no succour see (\*in truth)
But \*belde us with their beasts. (\*shelter)

And if we here all night abide
We shall be stormed in this \*stead; (\*place)
The walls are down on \*ilke a side, (\*each, every)
The roof is reaved above our head,
As have I \*rue. (\*i.e. sorrow)
Say, Marie, daughter, what is thy \*rede? (\*advice)
How shall we do?

For in great need now are we \*stedde, (\*stood)
As thou thyself the \*soth may see, (\*truth)
For here is neither cloth nor bed,
And we are weak and all weary
And \*fayne would rest. (\*happily, eagerly)

Now, gracious God, for thy mercy,
\*Wisse us the best. (\*advice, give wisdom)

**MARIA**  God will us \*wise, full well \*wit ye; (\*advise, give wisdom) (\*know, understand)
Therefore, Joseph, be of good cheer,
For in this place born will he be
That shall us save from sorrows \*sere, (\*severe, diverse)
Both \*even and morn. (\*evening)

Sir, \*wit ye well the time is near, (\*know)
He will be born.

**JOSEPH**
Then behoves us bide here still,
Here in this same place all this night.

**MARIA**Ya, sir, forsuth it is Goddis will.

**JOSEPH**Then would I \*fayne we had some light, (\*desire)What so befall.It waxes right murk unto my sightAnd cold withall.

I will go get us light \*forthy, (\*therefore)
And fuel find with me to bring.

**MARIA**

All wielding God, you govern and \*gy, (\*guide)
As he is sovereign of all thing,
For his great might;
And lend me grace to his loving
That I me \*dight. (\*do)

Now in my soul great joy have I:
I am all clad in comfort clear.
Now will be born of my body
Both God and man together in \*feere. (\*company, unity)
Blessed \*mote he be. (\*may, must)
Jesu, my Son that is so dear,
Now born is he.

Hail, my Lord God, hail prince of peace,
Hail my Father, and hail my Son,
Hail sovereign \*sege all sins to cease, (\*seat, throne)
Hail God and man in earth to \*wonne! (\*live, dwell)
Hail, through whose might
All this world was first begun,
Murkness and light.

Son, as I am simple subject of thine,
Vouchsafe, sweet Son I pray thee,
That I might thee take in the arms of mine,
And in this poor \*weed to array thee. (\*clothing)
Grant me thy bliss
As I am thy mother chosen to be
In \*sothfastness. (\*truthfulness, steadfastness)

**JOSEPH**
A, Lord God, what the weather is cold,
The fellest freeze that ever I feeled;
I pray God help them that is old
And namely them that is unwield(y),
So may I say.

Now, good God thou be my \*bilde, (\*shelter, comfort)
As thou best may.

A, Lord God, what light is this
That comes shining thus suddenly?
I cannot say, as have I bliss,
When I come home unto Mary
Then shall I \*spirre. (\*ask, enquire, search)
A, here be God, for now come I.

**MARIA**
Ye are welcome, sir.

**JOSEPH**Say, Marie daughter, what cheer with thee?

**MARIA**
Right good, Joseph, as has been \*ay. (\*ever, always)

**JOSEPH**
Oh, Marie, what sweet thing is that on thy knee?

**MARIA**
It is my Son, the \*soth to say, (\*truth)
That is so good.

**JOSEPH**
Well is me I bade this day
To see this food.

Me marvels \*mickle of this light (\*greatly)
That thus gets shines in this place,
\*Forsuth it is a \*\*selcouth sight. (\*in truth) (\*\*miraculous, marvellous)

**MARIA**
This has he ordained of his grace,
My Son so young,
A star to be shining a space
At his bearing.

For Balam told full long before
How that a star should rise full high,
And of a maiden should be born
A Son that shall our saving be
From cares keen.
\*Forsuth it is my Son so free, (\*in truth)
By whom Balam \*gon mean. (\*did)

**JOSEPH**
Now, welcome, flower fairest of hue,
I shall thee \*menske with main and might. (\*mention, i.e. honour)
Hail, my maker, hail Christ Jesu,
Hail, royal king, root of all right;
Hail, Saviour,
Hail, my Lord, \*lemer of light, (\*glimmer, gleam)
Hail, blessed flower.

**MARIA**
Now Lord that all this world shall win,
To thee my Son is that I say,
Here is no bed to lay thee in;
Therefore my dear Son, I thee pray,
Since it is so,
Here in this crib I might thee lay
Between the beasts two.

And I shall \*happe thee, mine own dear child, (\*cover, wrap)
With such clothes as we have here.

**JOSEPH**
Oh Marie, behold these beasts mild,
They make loving in their manner
As they were men.
\*Forsothe it seems well be their cheer (\*in truth)
Their Lord they \*ken. (\*know)

**MARIA**
Their Lord they \*ken, that \*\*wate I well, (\*, \*\* know)
They worship him with might and main.
The weather is cold, as ye may feel,
To hold him warm they are full \*fayne (\*eager, happy)
With their warm breath,
And \*oondis on him, is not to \*layne, (\*breathe, snort/whinny) (\*lie)
To warm him with.

O, now sleeps my Son, blessed \*mot he be, (\*may, might)
And lies full warm the beasts between.

**JOSEPH**
Oh now is fulfilled, \*forsooth I see, (\*in truth)
That \*Abacuc in mind gone mean (\*Habakkuk- nb. This doesn’t seem to exist- could be Isaiah 11:6-7?)
And preached by prophecy.
He said our Saviour shall be seen
Between beasts lie,
And now I see the same in sight.

**MARIA**Ya, sir, \*forsooth the same is he. (\*in truth)

**JOSEPH**Honour and worship both day and night\*Aylastand Lorde, be done to thee (\*everlasting)Always as is worthy,And Lord, to thy service I oblige meWith all mine heart holy.

**MARIA**
Thou merciful maker, most mighty,
My God, my Lord, my Son so free,
Thy handmaiden \*forsoth am I, (\*in truth)
And to thy service I oblige me
With all mine heart entire.
Thy blissing, beseech I thee,
Thou grant us all in \*feere. (\*fellowship, togetherness)