

DoveTale

By Ted Swartz, Lee Eshleman and Ingrid De Sanctis

THE PHONE CALL

Characters: Elizabeth, Zechariah, Gabriel

Set: small table, two chairs

Props: Phone, checkers and checkerboard, pregnant belly for Aunt Elizabeth

Length: 9 minutes

(ZECHARIAH enters, with checkers and board. Sets up and begins to play against himself. After a few rounds, the phone begins to ring. ZECHARIAH reacts. Looks back like he is waiting for someone to enter. Keeps playing. We hear a voice from offstage before we see ELIZABETH, an adorable older lady. She has to do all the talking and ZECH does his best to communicate without words. It is exhausting.)

ELIZABETH: *(From offstage)* Zechariah, would you get that please?
(ZECHARIAH looks at phone; can do nothing.) Zechariah, for heaven's sake would you get the... *(Enters wiping hands on her apron, sees him looking at the phone and she smiles at him, teasing him.)* Oh, you can't get the phone, can you? You can't talk. I forgot.

(Answers the phone) Hello? Mary! It's Mary, Zechariah. *(He rolls his eyes. During the phone call, ELIZABETH goes back and forth between talking to MARY and talking to ZECHARIAH.)*

How are you child? ... What? ... You know about bullfrogs? She knows about bullfrogs. ... The plumber ... Who? Who was the plumber? ... Mary, slow down. Breathe child, breathe. *(To ZECHARIAH)* She's not breathing. Start again ... uh, huh ... they were at Bartholomew's ... uh huh ... corner cupboards ... they were dancing ... a singer ... I see ... I see...

(ZECHARIAH wants to know what's going on. To him.) Joseph's gone. Where? Oh ... gone. Oh dear. She's pregnant, it's not Joseph! Are you sure? She's sure. Mary, start at the beginning. It was an angel. *(To ZECHARIAH)* It was an angel.

(ZECHARIAH is now very interested. He begins charades. ELIZABETH is not very good at his game of charades. He indicates angel by flapping his arms...) Your uncle wants to know about this angel. *(He is now on to another charade. She guesses a number of times before getting it.)* Oh, Gotcha, dear. Your uncle Zech has been doing his morning calisthenics. *(He looks at her.)* I'm wrong. Aunt Elizabeth is wrong.

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(ZECHARIAH climbs on his chair and this takes a while.) What are you doing, dear? You are scaring me to death. You are tall as a skyscraper. *(He points. ELIZABETH talks to MARY.)* Was the angel tall, dear? *(To ZECHARIAH)* Yes, it was tall.

(ZECHARIAH climbs down and starts to motion with his hand. ELIZABETH guesses) Did the angel have hand puppets? *(To ZECHARIAH)* No puppets. *(She tries again. Very confident now.)* I got you, dear. Mary, did the angel have bad breath? *(He looks at her, then tries again.)* Did the angel talk a lot? Yes, Mary says the angel talked up a blue streak.

(ZECHARIAH starts to make gestures with his hair.) Okay, dear. I got you. Mary, did the angel have things coming out of his hair. Did the angel have dandruff? *(He alerts her again)* Okay, okay, dear. I'll try again. But look ... Your hair is such a mess. *(He reacts with a big smile)* Okay, I gotcha. *(To MARY)* Mary, did the angel have bad hair? *(To ZECHARIAH)* He wore too much gel.

(They look at each other with the realization.) Mary, dear, we think it's a good idea to listen to this particular angel. *(Another expression from ZECHARIAH)* And don't get him upset. *(He nods vigorously.)* Tell her, Zechariah ... oh, that's right. *(To MARY)* Dear, Zechariah can't talk right now—he's become such a good listener. Mary, now this angel, he said what ... Oh, I see ... a baby. Oiy!!!

(The baby jumps. A hand to her stomach.) Mary. Mary. Who do you think sent that angel?

(ZECHARIAH taps at her.) Hang on, dear; Uncle Zack's trying to tell me something... *(He starts with charades again. And she guesses, again and again.)* Your uncle has been learning the monkey dance. No, that not it. The hokey pokey. I'm wrong. Aunt Elizabeth is wrong. *(ZECHARIAH tries again to indicate something.)* Oh, that's a good idea. I gotcha, dear. *(Into the phone)* Mary dear, why don't you come here for a little while? No it's no trouble. Pack your bags and come down and see us. Love ya, girl.

(She hangs up the phone and as she leaves, Elizabeth pats her belly and thinks of her baby.) I hope he's a quiet boy. You've become such a good listener, Zech. I might just send up a little prayer that you never get your voice back.

(ZECHARIAH gets up and follows her out.)

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

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SCRIPT
PREVIEW

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