

Panasonic 90

Mary

ETHIOPA PROJECT

A. CHRISTMAS CARD

(A Holiday Satire)

by

J.L. Camicia

Sun.
Dec. 16th

4:00 (3:00)

Scenes

The First Card
Shepards in the Fields
Angels with Wings
Wisemen at Home
The Halt Mark Corp.
Outside the Stable
A King and A Shepard Boy
Things A.D.
The Christmas Card

110 E. 23rd St. 2nd Fl

bet Park & Lex

647 Limbo Sat 15th
↓
E 9th bet B & C

Characters

Abraham Ribonowitz
Ehtyl
Samual Silverstein

14th Fri 1:00 A.M.

Ohio Theatre

C Wooster St. bet Broom & Spring

Thurs - rehearsal at Ohio

Elmer Klein ← Wed 10:30

23 W 73rd #516
off CPW

AA

23rd 724-2456

Park Royal Hotel

SAT-11:00

Mark Hannay

240 E. 4th cor B.

#2B
477-8756

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THE FIRST CARDS

STILL: A KING CONSORTING WITH HIS HIGH PRIEST IN A RICHLY DECORATED ROOM OF BROCADES AND GOLDS.

ETHYL

Abraham Rabinowitz, I'm telling you now, and I'm not saying it again. If you don't do something immediately, your whole North Kingdom will go bankrupt, and this palace, with all these tapastries, and brocaded draperies and palastinian chackas and... what's this thing?

ABIE

Oh, that? That is a little thing one of my inventors thought up. You just fill it with air, like this. When it is fully blown up, you let go and it floats up into the sky. When it gets way up there, a candle inside lights up, but it is so far away, you can only see the glow, not the candle. Its something to do with mirrors. But it is a very bright glow. You just do this and there it goes. (A balloon rises)

ETHYL

You and your inventors. They've brought you to the brink of ruin and disastor. Them and the girls and the drugs. I'm telling you, Abie, this card business is the only thing that can save you.

ABIE

Card business, Ethyl? Tell me again. What is a card?

ETHYL

Do I have to tell you a thousand times, Abie? A card is a piece of paper. One one side is a picture of something. On the other side is a little greeting. All you have to do is send it off to a friend or relative.

ABIE

Abie, Ethyl?

ETHYL

Send one to Arnie. And one to Moe. And one to Sam. And maybe they will come in on the business with ~~them~~^{us}. We can use some financial assistance from them and they'll be only too glad to reap the profit once we get rolling.

ABIE

Well then, lets send three samples. Just to see how it works. If they like them, we'll all go into the card business with you, Ethyl.

ETHYL

I just happen to have 3 right here. All you do is sign the bottom.

ABIE
What is this picture, Ethyl?

ETHYL
It's a jewelled container, Abie.

ABIE
Yes, but what does it hold? Frankensence? Myrr? What?

ETHYL
Nevermind, Abie, just sign the card.

ABIE SIGNS THE CARDS

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SHEPARDS IN THE FIELDS

STILL: ON A HILL, ON A STARRY NIGHT, TWO SHEPARDS SLEEP,
WRAPPED IN ONE BIG SHEEPSKIN.

SHEP
(Waking up) What's that light up in the sky? Like some
tremendous star?

OTTO
Probably some new trick of the King. He's always up to
something crazy.

SHEP
(Getting up) I feel I must go.

OTTO
Shep, are you seeing someone else?

SHEP
It's a feeling I have, Otto. Can't you feel the power?

OTTO
It's over between us, Shep, isn't it?

SHEP
No, Otto. You don't understand. I feel the urge to follow
that light.

OTTO
In the middle of the night?

SHEP
But Otto, can't you hear the call?

OTTO
You're just going out cruising. It's a bright night and you're
I wasn't born yesterday.

SHEP

OTTO

SHEP

It's a chance I have to take. I must follow the light.

SHEP

EXITS

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STILL: TWO ANGELS WITH WINGS. ONE IS LIGHTING THE
OTHERS CANDLE. *Lucy lighting Gabriel's candle.*

GABRIELLE

What exactly is going on, Lucy?

LUCY

I don't know. Some crazy whim of the King. But there IS money in it.

GABRIELLE

Thank god, because I'm broke. What do we have to do?

LUCY

Simply go to some designated place and stand around all night holding these candles and singing.

GABRIELLE

There must be more to it than that?

LUCY

No. Just these wings. We have to wear them.

GABRIELLE

Are we suppose to be birds or something?

LUCY

I guess. All I know is the money's good and we sing until dawn.

GABRIELLE

I'm not good at memorizing words. What do we sing?

LUCY

Just one word. Hallillulia.

GABRIELLE

LUCY

st have to sing it. Over and over.
ia.

GABRIELLE

y?

LUCY

Fine. Now, in the morning, we simply return the wings to the palace and we get paid. Do you have a light?

Lucy's
(Lighting ~~the~~ candles) Sounds simple enough. What's that word again?

LUCY

Hallillulia.

GABRIELLE

Hallillulia.

ANGELS
"HALLILLULIA,

EXIT

SING
HALLILLULIA

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WISEMEN AT HOME

STILL: THREE WISE MEN CONSORT IN THEIR PALACE.

SAMUAL

Listen, Arnold? I got a message from Abie with a picture on it. But I can't make out the picture. He's been in financial difficulties lately, do you think he's having a break-down?

ARNOLD

I don't know. I got a message too. I think the picture is a Myrr container. What I can't figure is, does he want some or is he giving some away?

MOE

That Abie! Why didn't he just write what he wanted? All he did was sign his name. He's always up to something. Maybe we should go visit?

SAMUAL

And I'll bring a little Frankensense, just incase he does need some?

ARNOLD

And I'll bring a casket full of jewelry. Costume stuff. Cheap. This way, I'll have a casket to fill in case he is giving something away.

SAMUAL

Good thinking, Arnie. Let's go see what that Abie is up to?

THREE KINGS EXIT
BEARING GIFTS.

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HALT MARK CORP.

STANDING BEFORE A FUTURISTIC SIGN WHICH READS "THE
HALT MARK CORP.", A MAN IN MODERN, 20TH C. CLOTHES
ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE.

NEWSCASTER

Here we are ladies and gentlemen, thanks to our Teleport Time &
Space Machine and sponsored by the Halt Mark Corporation, to
bring you a Christmas you'll never forget. We are on the
actual site of the original nativity. And inside that barn are
Mary, Joseph and the infant. If you
angel or two hovering around the place
Yes, this is a joyas occasion. Of co

this is also a little depressing in
that this infant, this new-born babe will grow up in dire
poverty, roaming, barefoot, through deserts and little bankrupt
towns only to end up, followed by a few, well, we can hardly
call them friends. Followed, chased, hunted, tried, accused,
passed on and, in the end, whipped and made to carry a cross up
a hill, on his bleeding back to a place where they will drive
nails through his little hands, place a crown of piercing
thorns on his darling little head, and, ultimately, crucify him.
Of course, he will rise again and all of that, but that is the
spirit. And here, tonight, it is the babe we are concerned
with.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, now I think I see someone
peeking out of the stable door. I do. I do see someone
peeking out of the stable door and it's Joseph, the earstwhile
father. Let
s see if we can get him to say a few words to the future.
Excuse
me?
Sir?

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WEARING ROBES AND CARRYING A LANTERN & CANE JOSEPH
ENTERS.

8

JOSEPH

Look, I'm an old man. Don't bother me. What do you want? You wanna buy a bench? I'll sell you a bench. You want to know about my personal life? Get lost. Mary is none of your business. I knew her father. We learned the trade together. The girl is simple. Simple. She don't know nothing.

Then that masugana king comes along.. of course she was impressed when he invited her up to his place. She's a poor, ignorant farmgirl. What does she know? Her old man couldn't even make a success out of carpentry. They were poor. Poor. I'm talking dirt-poor.

And she's at an impressionable age. What? 15? Then who knows how they drugged her once he got her up there to that palace of his. Anyway, one thing obviously led to another and the next thing I know, her old man's knocking on my door in the middle of the night begging me to take her off his hands. She's with kid. The king don't remember her name. No one will marry her. Only I could save the family from complete disgrace.

So I said to myself, I said, 'Joseph, you're an old man and you're still not married. I have to do all my own cooking and cleaning up. That's the worst part. Cleaning up. A young girl like that, confused, frightened, she'll do right by you. One hand washes the other. Right?

So that's the story. Are you happy? Are you satisfied now? Good, then get out of here.

MARY ENTERS

MARY

JOSEPH

aby?

MARY

the wings. I had to get some air. Who

That stable!

JOSEPH

Never you mind about him. You can't leave that baby alone like that. I'm going in. And forget the man? There'll be no more talking to strange men for you, young lady.

JOE EXITS

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NEWSCASTER

Hello, Mary.

MARY

(Shyly) Hi.

NEWSCASTER

Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

MARY

I have to hurry back. Joseph has a terrible temper. You don't know him.

NEWSCASTER

I'm sure he's under a lot of strain.

MARY

You don't know the half of it.

NEWSCASTER

What happened?

~~happened?~~

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MARY

1 Well, it was like this. One night, I simply got the spirit in the dark and the next thing I know, I am pregante. My boyfriend Joe, he freaks because it ain't his kid and he wants to give me the shove. But I warn him, my baby might be the Lord and he better be good to me, because you can't mess with the mother of God. So he sticks.

2 But my folks and friends, they all disown me because I am pregante and not married and all the neighbors are talking. Joe and me, we have to move to a different town. So we travel night and day trying to find a place, Joe muttering obscenities all the way. And when I'm too tired to go on.. Do you think anyone will give us a place? NO. We're Jewish, don't forget.

3 So finally, we wind up in some pigstye.. a real barn. And that's where my baby was born. In a hole. That dump back there.

4 So now Joe starts to drink, and the baby is always crying because the straw sticks him and the animals smell and stuff.

5 And there are these angels with candels all over the place and I'm scared shitless in case they start a fire or something. But I can't keep them out because there ain't no lock on the door. In fact, there ain't even a door.

6 Then And all these weirdos keep tramping through to see the freaks in the pigstye with the baby. And these three guys dressed up for a drag ball bring rhinestones and incense and, that, mixed with the cows and sheep doing number-twos all over the floor. It becomes very heavy.

7 And those darn angels keep the place lit night and day so you can't get a moment's rest, and everytime you happen to doze llillullia, hallillulia' all over the lose to having a nervous breakdown, that having

lling and the visiting and the fire and too much. It's just too much. And if I gain.. well, I don't know. I just don't

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baby starts crying

STILL: KING SAMUAL LEADS THE SHEPARD BOY, SHEP, BY THE HAND.

SAMUAL

So, do you live around here?

SHEP

Just over that hill. But I live with a friend.

SAMUAL

Too bad. I'd invite you back to my place, but it's quite far away. And besides, I'm on my way to see the King of the North, Abie, because I got a message from him. But Abie is such a scatterbrain, and the message was so confusing, that I figured I'd better stop over and see what he wanted. I'm here with two friends. They got mixed messages also. We stopped to take in the scenery, but, somehow, we all wandered off into different directions. You know how that is. And that's when I bumped into you.

SHEP

I've heard of Abie. He's real royalty around these parts. But I have never met him.

SAMUAL

Well, then, maybe that solves our problem. Why don't you come with me to Abies? He's got a big place. You could spend the night.

SHEP

I'd love to.

SAMUAL

But I must find my two friends first. And unless I am them? Over there, by that lighted hat light at this time of night?

SHEP

by before. A lot of women and actors candles singing. And they all have wings

SAMUAL

Do they? Kinky! I must see this.

KING & SHEPARD EXIT

STILL: TRADITIONAL PICTURE OF 3 KINGS WALKING IN SINGLE FILE, ARNIE, MOE & SAM, AND FOLLOWED BY SHEP.

ARNIE

Do you believe that Sam? We haven't been here 15 minutes and already he picks someone up.

MOE

I just hope he's not bringing him over to Abie's. Really!

SAMUAL

what a
~~Did you believe that~~ scene? With the barn and the baby and that grumpy old man and that young girl? She certainly has a lot on her hands. That baby never shut up for a minute. What a life she's going to have.

ARNIE

I have the feeling I've seen that girl before.

MOE

I can't believe you, Samual Silverstein, suggesting we leave the Frankensense and Myrr. Now, what are we suppose to bring to Abie's?

You know how I hate going to people's places empty-handed.

ARNIE

I wish I could remember where I saw that girl before.

SAMUAL

I didn't get the bit with the women with the wings? What was that all about?

MOE

Something tells me Abie's behind all this.

ARNIE

At Abie's. I'm sure of it.

MOE

g with a girl like that? She hasn't got teenager.

SAMUAL

You don't know Abie, Moe. He takes liberties with the local-yokals. He lures them back to his place. Naturally, they're knocked-out by the decor. A few drinks. A few drugs. And they don't know what they're doing. The next morning Abie is terribly busy, and he stays busy for weeks afterward. Until he forgets their names. And he does like them young!

MOE

You should know.

SAMUAL *(ignoring this)*

So, it wouldn't surprise me at all if Abie's finger isn't poking around in the middle of all this. And let's face it. Did you see that babies eyes?

MOE & ARNIE

ABIE!!!!

ARNIE

I can't wait to talk to Mr. Rabinowitz. Let's go.

3 KINGS & SHEPARD EXIT

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THE FIRST XMAS CARD

STILL: A KING, ABIEHAM RABINOWITZ, CONSORTS WITH HIS
HIGH PRIEST, ETHYL.

ETHYL

I'm telling you, Abie, it will work. We'll both make a mint. It's a little long range, of course, but invest now and tomorrow you relax. That's what I always say.

ABIE

It's already costing me too much. How many angels do we have down there? Twenty?

ETHYL

Fifty. I had to double them. We need impact. By tomorrow, everyone in town will wonder what happened tonight. Once those three Yentas arrive and we talk them into the deal, the word will spread clear cross to Rome in less than a month. With their backing, we got it made. Then you can throw a feast or something in honor of this 'mysterious' occassion. That's when the myth will take off. In a year they'll be looking for another feast. You know how dull and bleak winter can be. And that's when you'll have them hooked. And that is when we start with our Card Business.

They'll all want cards. Cards to remember. Cards to forget. Cards to apologise, and to cheer up the elderly. But most important, and this is our biggest seller by far, cards to celebrate the mysterious occassion. In 3, 4 years, you'll be kissing me in gratitude.

ABIE

And what's in it for you?

ETHYL

The old religion IS getting tarnished. I build a new religion around might bring followers. And what better way to start occassion?

The religion won't really be anything like a few of the old practices. Change the statues. Give those old statues some new faces.

Things like that. And the bigger my religion, the more cards you sell. I tell you this can't miss.

ABIE

Suppose it all gets out of hand?

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ETHYL

We'll cross that bridge when we come to it. Believe me, Abie, we got it made.

ABIE

What about the girl?

ETHYL

What about her? She'll get her fair share of company stocks. She'll be well taken care of. *We'll put her picture on the first card*

ABIE

No. I mean, what if she talks?

ETHYL

What's she gonna say? She doesn't know a thing. As far as she's concerned, we got a few innocent kisses, a few drinks, and she passed out. She'll be a little confused, but then, aren't we all?

THERE IS A KNOCK ON
THE DOOR

THE 3 KINGS & SHEP *enter*

ENTER

ARNIE

Abie? How are you, bubbala?

MOE

What is going on in this town? Abreham Rabinowitz, exactly what have you been up to?

SAMUAL

Abie, I want you to meet Shep. Shep, Abie. Abie, Shep.

ABIE

just kick off your shoes and get ready,
deal for you.

- fin -

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