

Scene 1
Livingston Family Christmas

INTERIOR - DAY
THE LIVING ROOM OF THE LIVINGSTON HOME

We open on Granny Iris sitting by the fireplace with the twins, Sid and Sadie, who are eager to hear the story. In the background, we hear running up and down the stairs, kitchen timers going off, general chaos surrounding this small island of calm where Iris and the children wait.

SID

Granny Iris, can we read the story now?

SADIE

Pleeaase? We can't bear to wait any longer!

IRIS

Sid, Sadie...bless your little hearts! I'd like to but...

She looks around for the others

Everyone's busier than a one-legged man in a butt-kicking contest!

Sid and Sadie look at one another, scrunching their noses in confusion, trying to process the metaphor, then abandon the attempt.

SADIE

Pleading with her to read at least part of the story
Well, can we at least read the introduction?

SID

The publisher's notes? Appendix 1-A?!

IRIS

She gives them a stern look, then breaks into a smile
Just wait a little bit longer...they'll come around.

SAM

Wanders into the scene, frantic and frustrated
Has anybody seen my charger? SETH! Where is my charger?!

SETH

Walks into the room from the opposite side with a bright pink charging bank plugged into his phone. He is wearing bright pink headphones as well. He pulls them off to hear her.
Huh? What do you want, Sam?

SAM

Seth, have you seen my...

She recognizes the charger. AND the headphones. Shocked and annoyed, she points to the "stolen" possessions Seth is holding.

Is that my charger?! AND my headphones?!

SETH

Huh?

He takes the headphones off and looks at them with a shrug and a chuckle

Oh...What can I say, real men wear pink.

SAM

Nuh uh! That is MY shade of pink!

Lunging for the charger and headphones

Give it back!

IRIS

Stepping between them

Peace on earth! Good will to mankind!

Seth and Sam stop fighting, but continue eyeing one another with hostility

Sit down, both of you! It's time to read the Christmas story.

You know, you might learn a thing or two!

SID & SADIE

Together

Yay!

SID

Eagerly snatches the book from Iris

I'll read the Publisher's Notes.

SADIE

Upset, whining

You always get to read the publisher's notes!

SAM

Heaves a loud sigh in annoyance as she plops down into a chair.

Can we not? Please? We do this every year. Maybe we could watch a Christmas movie instead!

SOPH

Comes in from the kitchen carrying a bowl of popcorn
 You can gripe all you want, Sam but you know full well that's not how this goes!

Seth takes the bowl of popcorn from Sophia and starts devouring it. Sophia looks at him, dumbstruck, then shrugs as she takes a seat. Sure, fine. She didn't want any popcorn. She totally made that for you, Seth. Help yourself.

SAM

UGH.

She makes a mock bow to Sophia and speaks sarcastically.
 Sure thing, Queen Sophia.

She looks at Granny Iris as she takes her seat.
 Can we just start already?

SID

Begins reading the publisher's notes with great enthusiasm.

Ahem. Page ix. Publisher's notes. "In the following passage, the translation committee took great care to ensure that the subjunctive mood was accurately reflected..."

SAM

With an exasperated sigh, Sam throws herself backward against her chair in a melodramatic motion.

This is the WORST!

GRANNY IRIS

With a chuckle, she gently takes the Bible from Sid.
 Thank you for that bracing introduction, Sid.

If you don't mind, I'd like to start with Matthew's Begats.

SETH

Dramatically, in a British accent
 And Abraham begat Issaac who begat Jacob!
 Jacob begat Judah and his kin!

He sighs and looks at his phone.
 Welp...looks like we're gonna be here for a while. Might as well get a snack.

He hands the now empty popcorn bowl to Sophia.
She looks at him in annoyance, pushing the bowl away.

SOPH*Attempting to be diplomatic*

Granny Iris...why do we have to start all the way back at the begats?
 Can't we just...read the abridged version like a normal family?

SAM

Yeah! It's just a list of all these names of people we don't even know anything about!
 Just skip to the good part.

GRANNY IRIS

She lifts an eyebrow at Sam, a small smirk tugging at the corner of her lips.
 Straight to the good parts, huh?

Well, I happen to think the begats *is* the good part! The best part, in fact.

SAM*Scoffs*

It's just a long list of boring old people we've never heard of!
 What's so good about that?

GRANNY IRIS

You only say that because you don't know the whole story.
 I think if you had a sense of scope...of just what a big deal the Christmas story is, you might
 have more of an appreciation for this old list of names.

Because it's not just names...it's the history of where Jesus came from.
 Each of these names tells a story.

BETH

Enters carrying a tray of hot cocoa and quietly distributes cups to everyone as she speaks.
 Cocoa time! Have we started the story yet?

SADIE*Happily takes a cup of cocoa.*

Granny Iris was going to tell us the story of every name in the begats!

Seth, Sam, and Soph all groan

SAM

In a hushed whisper to Sadie
 Shut up, Sadie!

SETH

Yeah, don't give her any ideas!

SOPH

Looking at Granny Iris with an alarmed expression.
Oh, no. Granny Iris, really...that's so, um, generous of you!
But there's no need for all that...

GRANNY IRIS

Of course there's a need!
And if we start now, I'm sure we can get through all of them by New Year's!

She chuckles

SADIE

The doorbell rings.
Someone's at the door!

SID

Pause. I'll see who it is. Be RIGHT back!

He and Sadie run out of the room.

MARK

Enters, texting on his phone and barely avoiding a collision with the twins
Whoa, heads up!

He looks at everyone gathered around Granny Iris
Did I miss anything? Is it time to open presents yet?

BETH

Gives him an annoyed look
Mark...are you still working? You know it's Christmas Eve, right?

MARK

Quickly stows his phone
Ah, sorry Beth! You know how cut-throat the T-shirt business is. It's like I always say...there's no
holidays in Hustle-Town!

BETH

Sighs and shakes her head
You know, sometimes I wonder if you can actually hear yourself.

MARK

Well, someone has to make sure we don't run out of "I Survived Christmas 2024" shirts!
It's all about staying ahead of the game.

BETH

You'll survive Christmas 2024 if you put the phone away and actually join the family.

MARK

Makes a grand gesture of turning off his phone and gives her a mock salute.
Yes ma'am! No more t-shirt texts. Well...maybe after storytime.

SETH

Well, with how things are going, that is gonna take a while!

Takes a bite from a plate of Baklava he somehow has. Speaks with his mouth full.

Besides, we already know how the story goes! Jesus is born, then he dies, then he comes back to life and BOOM, turns water to wine. It's the ultimate plot twist.

SOPH

Looking at Seth in utter disbelief
Is that a plate of baklava? Where did you get...?
You know what, nevermind. Your story is missing a few key details, Seth.

GRANNY IRIS

She laughs
Lord, help us. If Seth were in charge of the Gospels, we'd only have about three sentences!

SAM

Annoyed
At least he would save us like, A THOUSAND HOURS!
Can we please hurry up and read this thing?
I just know there's a Lululemon belt bag under that tree and it's calling to me!

SID & SADIE

Run back in, struggling to carry a massive stuffed elephant between them.

SADIE

MOM! DAD!

SID

LOOK WHAT UNCLE FRANK GOT ME FOR CHRISTMAS!!

Uncle Frank enters the room with a flourish, wearing a tacky Christmas sweater.

BETH

Oh my word...Frank! What is that?!

FRANK

Ignores her and gives Mark a big bro hug

Good to see you brother!

He looks at Soph, Sam, and Seth

Hey kids! I've got your presents in the car, wanna see?!

They all begin to get up but Beth interrupts him

BETH

Not until you tell me what *that* is!

She points at the enormous elephant

FRANK

He feigns innocence

What? The twins love elephants! You said to get them an elephant, so...

BETH

I didn't mean a LIFE-SIZE elephant!

SID

Looking at and speaking to the elephant in a very serious tone

I shall name you...Gilgamesh!

FRANK

He claps his hands together and looks around at everyone

So! We opening presents or what?

GRANNY IRIS

Trying to get everyone back on track

Well, we were JUST about to read the Christmas story!

BETH

Yeah, take a seat. Is my brother with you?

FRANK

Ugh, you mean captain Buzzkill?

I passed him at a red light about four blocks ago.

FRANC

Franc enters, his arms full of presents
Merry Christmas, family.

He glares at Frank

Frank...running red lights on Christmas Eve? For shame. What would Santa say?

FRANK

Oh, you know me. Just trying to stay on schedule!
He laughs and playfully claps Franc on the back.

Franc laughs back and claps him back a little harder. Frank laughs dryly and claps him back even harder. The laughing and clapping back escalates until Franc stumbles forward and trips over Gilgamesh!

FRANC

What is this?

BETH

That, dear brother, is your nephew's new elephant, Gilgamesh. Courtesy of the fun uncle, Frank.

FRANC

The fun uncle? Nonsense. Everyone knows I'm the funcle.

FRANK

In a smug, sing-song voice
I dunno, I think Gilgamesh begs to differ!

FRANC

Putting his neatly wrapped presents under the tree
Honestly Frank, this is why no one lets you near the gift registry.
You should try to give gifts a little more like mine. Thoughtful and practical, not giant distractions!

FRANK

Because nothing says Christmas like a nice pair of socks!

FRANC

Excuse me? What's wrong with socks? They're comfortable! And practical! And-

FRANK

Interrupting
BORING!

FRANC*Flustered and utterly speechless*They're *wool* socks, Frank! *Pause for a beat.* Moisture wicking!**FRANK***Begins to argue back*

Oh, you've got to be kidding-

FRANC*Interrupting him, adamant*

Moisture! Wicking!

GRANNY IRIS*Claps her hands to get everyone's attention.*

Okay, okay, that's enough you two. As much as I adore a good pair of moisture-wicking socks, I believe we have a story to tell. And some children who are getting impatient.

FRANK

Oh, time for the begats, huh? Hope you got plenty of coffee.

GRANNY IRIS*With a knowing smile*

That's right, Frank. The begats.

She glances at the children, noting their lack of enthusiasm.

But you know, I've been thinking... maybe this year, we need to do things a little differently.

SETH*Puts down his snack and perks up, hopeful.*

Wait, no begats?

SAM*Leans forward, excited*

Did we just skip to the part Jesus gets to open presents?

Please tell me we're going straight to that!

GRANNY IRIS*Chuckles softly, shaking her head*

No, not quite. I think we've all been a little too focused on what happens at the end of the story

Her eyes drift to each of them

And maybe...we've forgotten why it matters in the first place.

SOPH

Confused

What do you mean, Granny?

GRANNY IRIS

Serious and thoughtful

Well...you know, we think about Christmas as being just about the baby in the manger.
But it's really the culmination of something much, much bigger.

Pauses, looking around at the family, her voice soft but firm

You see, the Christmas story—Jesus coming into the world—it didn't just happen in a bubble or out of nowhere. It's the hinge point in a long history that started all the way at the beginning.

She holds up the Bible

The begats? They're not just names. They're the story of where Jesus came from. But before we even get to the begats, before we even mention the manger...we need to go all the way back to the beginning. Back to Genesis.

SADIE

Eyes wide with curiosity, she looks at Gilgamesh

Whoa...did you hear that, Gilgamesh? We're going back to Genesis!

GRANNY IRIS

Nods

Exactly, Sadie. You see, if we want to understand why Jesus came, we have to understand why the world needed Him in the first place. And that story starts way back with the first humans, Adam and Eve.

BETH

Watching her children's faces as they slowly begin to understand

So, you're telling us that this year, we're going to go through all of that history?

GRANNY IRIS

Smiling broadly, full of conviction

That's exactly what I'm saying! The whole story—from Genesis to Jesus.
And when we get to the manger, maybe it'll mean something more to all of us.

They all look a bit uncertain

Believe me, by the time we're done, you'll see why the story of God is the greatest story ever told!

SONG: KING OF THE WORLD

