

Joseph reached down, gently brushing Mary's long dark hair off of her face. It tickled her nose and she rubbed it with the back of her hand without opening her eyes. Little Jesus was awake however, staring unblinking up at Joseph. Mary snuggled Jesus closer and breathed the little boy smell of sunshine and dirt. Joseph hated to wake her. "Mary . . . Mary," Joseph whispered, as he gently shook her shoulder.

"We have to leave. We have to leave now."

Mary opened her eyes and looked up at Joseph. What a strange request, she thought.

"It's still dark outside. Why would we leave?"

"An angel visited me in a dream. Jesus is in danger, and we must flee to Egypt the fastest possible way. It seems the Magi are not the only ones who are interested in him."

By now Mary's eyes were as wide as her little son's as she untangled herself from the warm blanket and swung her feet to the floor. Jesus crawled off the bed and stood watching his family's movements in the dim flicker of a single oil lamp.