Mary and Joseph's Mum (the village midwife)

Ryan: So, some people are clearly expecting God to do something dramatic pretty soon, and others are less so. I guess, the next thing is to find out whether Mary is definitely pregnant. Now the best person to answer that question is the village midwife who, slightly embarrassingly, is Joseph's mum. This is a conversation worth hearing, I think!

Midwife: Right. Well. This is a bit awkward. You seem to be pregnant, Mary.

Mary: Yes.

Midwife: And you think so too?

Mary: Yes.

Midwife: Ok. Well, I have to say that you, Mary, are the last person I would have expected to be pregnant before you were married. Does Joseph know about this?

Mary: No.

Midwife: Do your parents know?

Mary: My dad does. Not sure about mum.

Midwife: Well, soon the word will be out and everyone in the village will know. You and Joseph should have behaved yourselves…and, to be quite honest, I'm surprised you didn't. Right now, as Joseph's mother, I do feel angry and disappointed in Joseph. He knows better than to behave like this!

Mary: It wasn't Joseph's fault.

Midwife: What do you mean? Everyone knows you are a good girl, Mary. No one will believe you seduced Joseph…and neither would I. No, people in the village will assume Joseph put pressure on you…and they'll put the blame on him.

(pause)

Well, at least the two of you will be getting married soon...

(pause)

Tell me you ARE getting married!

Mary: I don't know.

Midwife: What do you mean, you don't know? You WILL get married! You MUST get married. You and Joseph will live up to your responsibilities and that is that.

(pause)

The baby is…Mary, tell me the baby IS Joseph's!

(pause)

Mary, tell me, who's the father of your baby?

Mary: You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

Midwife: Tell me anyway.

Mary: There was this man…and I believe he was an angel because he just appeared out of nowhere and started talking to me. He told me that I was going to have a baby, and he said the baby was from God.

Midwife: Ok, Mary, I'm more interested in what the man did to you, than what he said to you.

Mary: He didn't do anything to me.

Midwife: But, he didn't touch you at all?

Mary: No, not at all. He stood at the far side of the room, and when he had finished speaking, he just disappeared.

Midwife: So, nothing of a physical nature happened between you and this man.

Mary: I understand what you are saying, and the answer is no, okay? Nothing happened. He spoke, and then he left.

Midwife: And there was no one else around who would have seen or heard this man speak to you?

Mary: No.

Midwife: A baby from God! Well, I haven't heard that one before. I don't know how you're going to tell Joseph about this "baby from God" thing. He might find it a little hard to believe. I'm pretty sure he will think you've been with another man.

However, I'M not so sure now.

(pause)

Isn't your cousin Elizabeth expecting a baby?

Mary: Yes, and I don't know if you've heard but her husband, Zechariah, said that an angel had appeared to him and told him that they were going to have a baby.

Midwife: Yes, I had heard that. Elizabeth is well past child-bearing age, and now she is pregnant. Then, here you are, saying that you haven't been with Joseph or any other man, and that an angel appeared to you…and now you are most definitely pregnant. Well, this is not the day I was expecting when I started work this morning!

(pause)

Well, maybe it would be a good idea for you to get out of Nazareth for a while, before this news breaks, and your cousin Elizabeth's would be a good place to go. I should think she would welcome your company right now, as well as your help around the house…and you can compare angel stories while you're about it.

Mary: That's what my dad thinks I should do too…but what about Joseph?

Midwife: Leave Joseph to me. I'll speak to him when he gets home from work this evening. He will be very angry, so it would be better if you'd already gone by then. Having some space from you will give him time to think.

If Joseph won't take you as his wife, Mary, no one else will. Not from around here anyway. It's a very traditional society that we live in, and you can't just go off and do your own thing.

(pause)

But I've always been very fond of you, and I was looking forward to having you as my daughter-in-law.

(pause)

Well let's see if we can sort this out. I can't guarantee anything, but I'll do my best for you.

Mary: Thank you. You are an answer to my prayers!

Midwife: If what you say is true, Mary, then God, in his wisdom, has put you in a very difficult situation. Somehow, we have to continue to trust that he knows what he's doing.

Now go home. Pack a bag, and I'm sure your father will see you safely to your cousin's. I will send you a letter, at some point, so you know how things are working out here.