

A script from



“The Innkeeper’s Dilemma”

Youth Version

by

Eddie James

- What** This drama covers the Christmas story from the point of view of an innkeeper who is seeking to fill that hole in his spirit. (Themes: Christmas, Holiness, Grace)
- Who**
- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| Stuart | Tammy |
| Mary | Wiseman |
| Peggy | Patron |
| Drummer Boy | Paperboy |
- When** Biblical times
- Wear (Props)** 3 coffee mugs
Bagel
Briefcase
Mints
Newspaper
Drumsticks
Also biblical costuming for everyone but Wiseman - he should look like a Blues Brother.
- Why** Luke 2:1-20; Matthew 2:1-12
- How** This drama can be done as a large one-act, or spread over three sessions (there are message outlines to accompany each scene). Also it would be best to use a real baby for Jesus as it adds a lot emotionally.
- Time** Approximately 20-25 minutes; This script is 13 pages long.

Scene 1

The scene starts with Stuart, the innkeeper, yelling at his wife offstage.

Stuart: Tammy, Tammy! Put the bed down! I said put the bed down! Sweetheart, please put the bed down, I'll be right there. I'm trying to get some of my tools. Put the bed - (*To audience*) I'm trying to fix a bed in one of our rooms. She thinks that I intentionally try to make her mad. I would never try to do something to make my dear, sweet daughter mad. (*Offstage*) Honey, put the bed down, I'll be right there.

Peggy: (*Offstage*) What'd you say, Dad?

Stuart: I said, put the bed down. Oh, hold the bed up. (*To audience*) It has been chaos outside everywhere. You see, Caesar has issued this decree that everyone in the land should be counted. Everyone has come back to their hometowns to register and Bethlehem is packed with people. I've never seen anything like this before! The vendors are out selling like mad. The economy has never seen better days! Quite amazing. I tell you, it would take a miracle to top what I've seen in Bethlehem over these past few weeks. A complete miracle! I couldn't even begin to describe what it would take to top this.

Patron enters.

Patron: Excuse me, can you describe your rooms for me?

Stuart: Oh, I thought I turned the sign off. We have no vacancy.

Patron: Oh well, I could have sworn that sign was pointing to the inn but maybe it's over your barn. You wouldn't put anyone in your barn now would you?

Stuart: No, no of course not! No!

Patron: Well, where can I stay?

Stuart: There is a motel, lets see...one, two, three... six motels down!

Patron: Oh yeah, Motel 6™! Looks like they left their light on for me.

Stuart: Yeah, looks like it.

Patron: Well, thank you and Merry Census!

Stuart: What?

Patron: Merry Census. I mean, this has got to be the biggest time of the year economically. I even trademarked the phrase! Merry Census!

Stuart: Oh! Ok, Merry Census!

Patron: You owe me a dollar!

Stuart gives him a dollar, and Patron leaves.

Stuart: Forgive me for being so rude, my name is Stuart and I own this inn. My two daughters Tammy and Peggy would probably tell you differently. They'd tell you that I only work here part time... half-heartedly even at that.

(Offstage) Tammy, sweetheart, put the bed down. I said put the bed down. No, I didn't say shed a few pounds, I said... Oh never mind. Hold the bed up.

(To audience) The evening is upon us and I've already turned people away. At least half a dozen people if not more. There is one gentleman, a fisherman and his wife. Newborn baby in her arms. John, I think they said is name was. I visited with them awhile and they said they hoped their son would find something better to do with his life than haul fish all day. When I asked what they had in mind, they said they hoped he would write books. I inquired about the kind of books and they began to explain in great detail about how they wanted him to write about the meaning of life. Now, I'm a simple man who never has even attempted to ask those questions. I looked at them and said, "It would probably take a divine revelation to show your son John the meaning of life." The father looked at me and said, "That's what I'm hoping for."

Then there was this couple who came late tonight. They have made a lasting impression on me. The two looked very tired. I was on the front porch with my wife and they came up to us and the girl was on this donkey. She said to me, "Sir, we are very tired. Can you please find a place for us at your inn?" I told them like I told the people before them. I was so sorry but there was just no room here. She looked at me and said, "You don't understand, my husband has been on foot all this time. We've traveled eighty-five miles and we are very exhausted. Don't you have anything?" Now, please know I'm a businessman first. Always have been! I couldn't do anything. Bethlehem was packed! So when I say to you I was about to tell them to leave for the second time, don't think me rude. *(Pause)* My two girls did. Tammy did something to me at this moment, she did this thing where she jabs me in the ribs with her finger. I only had two options at this point. "A" find a place for them to sleep or "B" I'll have to find myself a place to sleep other than this inn. My girls both saw something that I totally passed by. The young girl, she was pregnant. I knew right then I couldn't leave them out in the cold night. I started to think where I could put them. The only place I could think of was

the barn. My mother would roll over in her grave if she knew I was thinking of sending someone there. It’s full of stench, manure, animals, hay. No place to put two people! It’s all I had. I said to them, “You can have the barn. There’s nothing else I can offer. It’s yours if you want it.” They both smiled at me and said, “Thank you.” They started to walk off and the gentleman turned around and said, “God bless you,” then looked at his wife, smiled put his hand on her stomach and said, “because He’s about to bless us.”

I tell you, there was something different about them. If only you could have seen the way he treated her. The way they treated each other! It was such a sight to see. I’ve tried to think of a word to describe this couple. The only word that seems to run through my mind is kind of a quirky word. We don’t hear the word very much but it’s the only word that seems to fit. The word “Holy.” Yes, that is the only word that can describe what I witnessed. Holy... they were just different. Speaking of different, my daughters...

Tammy: (*Offstage*) Dad, we need some help in here!

Stuart: (*To Tammy*) Tammy! Are you still holding the bed up? Why don’t you just put it down!

Tammy: (*Offstage*) Hurry!

Stuart: (*Yelling louder*) I said... (*Softening, to himself*) Holy. (*Laughing to himself*) To think I was almost too busy to catch this. Holy. I’ll be right there. I’ll be right there.

End of Scene 1

Scene 2

The scene begins with Tammy gazing at the star.

Tammy: Peggy, come here. Look at that star!

Peggy enters.

Peggy: Wow! It’s so beautiful and bright...

Stuart enters with 3 coffee cups and a bagel.

Stuart: Girls, girls? Where are you? It’s time to come inside, it’s getting late. With all the people we’ve put down to sleep in our inn, it’s time we do the same.

Tammy: (*Center stage, looking up*) Look at that star!

- Stuart:** Yeah, it's a star. What about it?
- Peggy:** It's huge, so bright. I've never seen anything like it!
- Stuart:** A star is a star is a star, girl... Come on inside. (*Pauses. **Stuart** can see the girls are too fixated on the star*) You aren't going to budge are you? Well, here at least drink your coffee I made for you.
- Peggy:** No. Coffee will keep us up.
- Stuart:** Not this coffee. It's decaffeinated. Drink up.
- Tammy:** (*Sips coffee*) But it tastes like regular. Are you sure this is decaf?
- Stuart:** Oh, yes. Quite sure. That's the secret of new "Pharaoh's naturally brewed decaffeinated coffee," it tastes like regular but it's decaffeinated.
- Tammy:** Mmmm. Good cup of coffee.
- Peggy:** That star. We've been mesmerized by it. I wonder if it's guiding some weary traveler tonight.
- Tammy:** Can you imagine what it would be like to be out in the middle of nowhere and your only guide is a star?

*Peggy grabs bagel from **Stuart**.*

- Stuart:** I think it would take a very wise man to answer that question.
- Peggy:** (*Eating bagel*) Good bagel. Where did you get it?
- Stuart:** Like it, do you? I bought a whole slew of them at old man Moses' Deli down the street.
- Peggy:** Is this butter on it?
- Stuart:** No, it's a butter substitute. It has half the fat of regular margarine or butter.
- Peggy:** Are you sure it's not butter?
- Stuart:** It's not butter.
- Peggy:** I can't believe it's not butter.
- Stuart:** I tell you girls, we are probably the only three people up tonight. I mean the whole town of Bethlehem is asleep. After the day we've

had, I don't know what we're still doing up. We're up and those shepherds are up. Why do they keep going into our barn?

- Tammy:** Maybe they know the couple inside.
- Stuart:** Oh yes, the couple. What are their names?
- Tammy:** Mary and...
- Stuart:** Joe, I think. (*Grabs coffee cup*) Take one more good look at that star and then let's turn in. Let's go.
- Peggy:** The star. What do you think it means?
- Stuart:** (*Pause*) Blue light special, I don't know.
- Peggy:** I'm serious, Dad. Do you think it's a (*Beat*) God-thing?
- Stuart:** A what?
- Peggy:** Well, we just thought... Dad...that maybe... (*Very flustered*)
- Tammy:** What my sister is trying to say is... maybe God has a purpose for that star.
- Stuart:** Girls, where do you get this kind of stuff... you're getting loopy on me again. We have been down this road too many times. It's just a star. Let's go inside.
- Peggy:** Dad, it could happen!
- Stuart:** Enough, already!
- Tammy:** Dad, give it a chance. It could mean something.
- Stuart:** (*Upset*) Enough! (*Freezes*)
- Tammy:** (*To audience*) Our Dad. Stuart. Or as others around here know him, the Innkeeper. He's a good man, a good Dad. He's been there for us since Mom passed away.
- Peggy:** (*To audience*) We both feel he's too busy and he misses the blessings of life. Tammy and I believe, as our mother did, that miracles happen all around us. Everyday.
- Tammy:** We feel like there are some things it's ok to talk to Dad about and then there are other things... like God stuff... that Dad just will hear nothing about. Maybe it's because he feels cheated about mom dying.

Peggy: It's funny how pain can make one person draw closer to God and others further away... We have this joy for God in our hearts. We'd like to share that joy with him... if only he'd let us.

Tammy and Peggy freeze.

Stuart: (*To audience*) My two daughters. They are marvelous young ladies. There is no doubt about it. Sometimes I feel they get a little carried away with what Tammy and Peggy call "God-things." They try to correlate everything in their life somehow around God. I mean a perfect example: The star. They want to parallel that star somehow with God. It's just absurd. At other times, I look at the inner peace Tammy and Peggy have and I must say I'd like some of it. I always find myself shying away from it because I feel like I wouldn't be good enough to understand the joy they find with God. I would like to know the faith they have but I get too fearful. Their mother was full of faith about God. Maybe I'm just bitter 'cause I feel like God dealt me a low blow in life. I do wish sometimes that God would just reveal himself in the flesh. God in the flesh... that would be a miracle, now wouldn't it! My girls... they see miracles all day long and I guess I keep looking for one.

Together: (*Stuart puts down coffee cup and stands between girls, which makes them unfreeze*) I guess... I desire intimacy.

Tammy: What did you say?

Stuart: I didn't say anything. What did you say?

Peggy: I didn't. I thought you...

Stuart: I heard you, something about "Macy's" or something.

Tammy: Well, "Macy's" is having their winter sale.

Stuart: It doesn't matter. Do me a favor and tell those shepherds to get out of our barn. The couple in there needs their sleep. Tell them they have to pay rent like everyone else!

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ENDING:

Tammy: You know, this kind of feels like it used to, when mom was still here.

Peggy: I was thinking the same thing. She was always the one trying to teach us something about this amazing God.

Stuart: I guess I was the one taught tonight. You both are a lot like your mom. I'm proud of you. Proud of her.

Tammy: Peggy come on, we have to go get ready. We have a lot of mouths to feed. *(Pauses with an awkward silence)*

Girls start to exit.

Stuart: Girls....

Girls: *(Stops before exiting)* Yes?

Stuart: I love you both.

Girls: *(Pause)* Eww! Dad that's gross! There are people watching! Etc. *(Exits)*

Stuart: *(To audience)* Bethlehem will be waking up soon and the people will want food in their stomachs and everyone will be rushing to register for the census. People everywhere will be in their own little world and what they won't realize is that a Savior just entered the world. Yes, indeed. What a night. What a silent night. Everything seems so calm, so bright. Silent night... *(Starts to exit and pauses)* Yes, child sleep while you can because your work is about to begin. *(Pause)* Silent night, Holy night...

Really, I must go. Merry Census! No, let's not make it about that. Merry Christmas.

Stuart exits. The end.