“The Innkeeper’s Dilemma: Duet”  
by  
Eddie James

What  
This drama covers the Christmas story from the point of view of an innkeeper who seeking to fill that hole in his spirit. 
Themes: Christmas, Holiness, Grace

Who  
Actor 1- Stuart  
Actor 2- Patron, Shephard and Wiseman

When  
Biblical times with a modern twist

Wear  
Stuart wears modern but neutral clothing and a work apron. 
Patron wears modern but neutral clothing. 
Shepherd wears a flannel shirt (over other shirt) and a ball cap 
Wiseman has on a suit jacket 
2 Coffee cups  
Bread with butter  
Briefcase  
Mint  
Business card

Why  
Luke 2:1-20; Matthew 2:1-12

How  
The pacing of this is high energy, but don’t rush through the lines. Keep the dialogue and the timing tight, meaning no pauses with entrances and exits. Actor 2 should practice his quick changes to make sure he gets back into the scene in time. For more ideas on how to perform this script, watch The Innkeeper’s Dilemma at SkitGuys.com.

Time  
Approximately 12 minutes
Stuart: It has been complete chaos outside Bethlehem this week. I mean, complete chaos! I have never seen anything like it before. You see, Caesar has issued this decree that everybody must come back to their home town and be registered for the census. Vendors are selling things like mad. It would take a complete miracle to top what I’ve seen here in Bethlehem. A complete miracle!

Before I get ahead of myself, my name is Stuart, and this is my inn. The Bethlehem Bed and Breakfast. We were gonna call it the Holiday Inn, but we just never thought it would catch on. It’s been quite a night, I tell you. There was this couple that came – later on after all the rooms were full. This couple came, and the girl said, “Please, sir. Do you have any place for us to stay?” And I told them like I’ve told everybody: “I’m sorry, but this Inn is full.” Please, we’ve been travelling for 85 miles. We’re so tired.” And my wife, she heard the whole conversation. And she saw something that I didn’t see. She saw that the girl was pregnant. And she kind of jabbed me in the gut. And I knew that meant a) I find them a place to sleep tonight or, b) I find myself a place to sleep tonight. So I chose “a.” And I told them they could stay in the barn…

The barn. It is no place for any human to be. I mean, it’s full of hay and manure and animals. But it’s all I had. And they were thankful. And as they were walking to the barn, the gentleman, I think his name was Joe, he turned around and he said, “God bless you,” Then he placed his hand on his wife’s stomach and he said, “because He’s about to bless us.” You should’ve seen this couple. There was something so different about them. Something amazing. You should’ve seen the way they treated each other. The way he treated her. The only word I can use to describe it is a word we don’t even use that much, but it’s the only word I can think of: Holy.

I know it’s an odd word, but you should’ve seen them. They were just set apart. There was something different about them. You know what? It’s just too hard to describe.

Patron enters

Patron: Uhh, describe your rooms for me, please.

Stuart: Pardon me?

Patron: Your rooms. I need a place to stay tonight.

Stuart: I’m sorry, but all my rooms are full. There are no vacancies here.
Patron: Boy, are you tellin’ me! This whole census thing…I mean, I wasn’t even gonna come and then my CPA said I had to so…here I am!
Stuart: Well, you’re out of luck here, sir.
Patron: Aw, c’mon, you’ve gotta have something! I’ve got money! And I know I didn’t misread the sign.
Stuart: Sign? What are you talking about? I turned the vacancy sign off about half an hour ago.
Patron: No, no. Not that. The star over there, ya know? I’ve been followin’ that star for like half an hour. And I just KNEW it meant vacancies. Apparently, it meant UN-vacancies. I mean, that star there? You can’t deny it’s shining right over your Inn…ahh. Come to think of it, it’s really not over your inn. It’s over your barn. But you wouldn’t put people in your barn, would’ja!
Stuart: No, not even a pregnant woman.
Patron: What?
Stuart: Nothing. Keep talking.
Patron: Well, listen. You’ve gotta have something for me!
Stuart: You know what? All I have for you is just a nice cup of coffee.

*Stuart grabs two coffee cups and hands one to Patron.*
Patron: Ooo, no, no. I get kinda jittery if I drink caffeine at night.
Stuart: No, no, no! It’s decaffeinated. Drink up!
They both take a drink.
Patron: You sure that’s decaffeinated? Because it tastes like the real thing.
Stuart: Oh, yeah! That’s the secret of new Pharaoh’s Naturally Brewed Decaffeinated Coffee. It tastes like regular, but it’s decaffeinated.
Patron: *(drinks coffee)* Mmm. That, my friend, is a good cup of Joe.
Stuart: That’s right.
Patron: You know, the only thing I really need here is—
Stuart: Some bread?
**Stuart** hands **Patron** bread, **Patron** takes bite.

**Patron:** MAAAN-NA! That is some good bread!

**Stuart:** You like that, do ya? I got a whole slew of ‘em down at Old Man Moses’ Deli down the street. Pick some up for breakfast in the morning!

**Patron:** It’s good. I just wish it didn’t have all that buttah on it. I’m trying to watch my weight.

**Stuart:** That is a butter substitute.

**Patron:** *(bites bread)* Tastes like buttah.

**Stuart:** It’s not. It has half the fat and calories of regular butter.

**Patron:** You sure it’s not buttah?

**Stuart:** It’s not butter.

**Patron:** I can’t believe it’s not buttah.

**Stuart:** Nope.

**Patron:** Well listen, friend, thank you for these things, but where can I lay my head tonight?

**Stuart:** Let’s see here…well, you know what? There is a motel down the street. It’s the second…no…it’s the sixth motel.

**Patron:** Alright, Motel Six.

**Stuart:** Yeah, the one with the lights on.

**Patron:** Ah. Well, thank you very much. And Merry Census to you!

**Stuart:** Whoa, whoa, whoa! “Merry Census?”

**Patron:** Oh, yes. This census is huge. It’s the biggest thing to hit in years! I mean, it’s turned commerce on its ear, you know? So I coined this phrase: “Merry Census.” Even had it trademarked, eh? So Merry Census to you!

**Stuart:** I like that! Merry Census!

**Patron:** You owe me a dollar.

**Patron** exits
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Stuart: *(to audience)* He followed that star as some type of sign. Maybe it could be a sign. It IS shining unusually bright over my barn. But a sign? No, no there’s just no way. My wife…she would look at that star and she would think maybe it’s a God thing. *(Pause)* No. No, no, Stuart, get a hold of yourself. There is no way that star means anything. There is no way that God has a purpose for that star. But what if…? No! That’s just crazy! No…

Shepherd enters

Shepherd: Crazy! This is CRAZY!

Stuart: Pardon me?

Shepherd: I know what’s goin’ on inside your barn. I’ve BEEN in your barn!

Stuart: You smell like my barn.

Shepherd: Oh, that’s just the sheep dip. I’m a shepherd.

Stuart: How do you know about my barn?

Shepherd: The star. The star said it all! Then, them angel alien things…There I was, just mindin’ my own sheep, right? And my sheep were like, “Baaaa,” you know? And then that alien angel thing appeared, and it was like “*(sings a note)*!” And then I was all like, “AAAAH!” And then that alien angel thing said, “Fear not.”

Stuart: And then what?

Shepherd: What?

Stuart: After the “baaa” and the “*(sings a note)*!” and the “AAAAH!” Then what?

Shepherd: And then the alien angel said, “Fear not. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you: You will find the babe wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” And then all of a sudden there was a BUNCH of them alien angels ALL OVER! And so then, we came to your barn, and it was just like they said! We walked in, *(makes a popping sound)* out came the baby. Just like they said.

Stuart: How do you know all this??

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Shepherd: It’s etched inside my brain. The alien angels put it in there. And I gotta tell everybody I come in contact with! *(Pauses suspiciously)* Did you hear that?

Stuart: No. No, I did not. No.

Shepherd: I gotta go.  
Shepherd exits

Stuart: Uh, Merry Census!

Patron: *(voice offstage)* You owe me two dollars!

Stuart: *(to audience)* So the girl had a baby. And that shepherd believed an angel led him to my barn. A shepherd really believes that God has a purpose for that star. The shepherd sees miracles every day, and I keep waiting for one. A miracle would be God showing Himself in the flesh. Now THAT would be a complete miracle. But I can’t get away from all the things he said. Maybe God has a purpose for that star. Maybe it’s guiding some weary travelers tonight. It would take a very wise man to answer that question. Where you gonna find a wise man in this place?

Wiseman enters

Wiseman: Is this the place?

Stuart: The place?

Wiseman: The place! The place! C’mon, I haven’t got time to waste!

Stuart: Alright, alright! Don’t be in such a haste! What’s in the case?

Wiseman: The case…

Stuart: The case!

Wiseman: Ahh, this is the place.

Stuart: What’s your name?

Wiseman: Reuben King.

Stuart: King? *(shake hands)* Stuart.

Wiseman: You can call me Ru.

Stuart: Call me Stu.
Finger guns at each other.

Wiseman: Here's my card. *(Hands Stuart a card)* I deal in impossibilities.

Stuart: Impossibilities?

Wiseman: That's my job.

Stuart: Alright, alright. What's in the case?

Wiseman: A barrage.

Stuart: A barrage of what?

Wiseman: Bulk.

Stuart: What kind of bulk?

Wiseman: Expensive bulk.

Stuart: For who?

Wiseman: The baby.

Stuart: The baby? How'd you know about the baby?

Wiseman: I followed the star.

Stuart: You followed the star?

Wiseman: I followed the star to the baby in the barn.

Stuart: You followed the star to the baby in the barn in Bethlehem?

Wiseman: Basically.

Stuart: The baby…the star…impossible.

Wiseman: That's my job.

Stuart: Alright, alright, no more barraging around. What's your beef?

Wiseman: Can I bounce a secret off you?

Stuart: *(to audience)* And as he leaned in closer, I could only think of one thing: *(back to Wiseman)* Tic-Tac?

Wiseman: Ah! Thank you. And only one-and-a-half-calories per mint! *(Eats mint)*
Stuart: Bingo.

Wiseman: Here’s the deal, Stu. I’m not gonna lie to ya. I’m gonna be straight. I’m gonna be frank. I’m not gonna be coy. I’m gonna be curt. I’m gonna be Captain Kirk. I’m not gonna pull the wool over your eyes. I’m gonna lay all my cards out on the table.

Stuart: Get on with it, Ru!

Wiseman: Alright, Stu. The baby in the barn?

Stuart: What about the baby in the barn?

Wiseman: The baby in the barn is the Son of God.

Stuart: The baby in the barn is the Son of God? Impossible!

Wiseman: That’s my job.

Stuart: Okay, Ru, I’m trying to get my head around all this. How did all this happen?

Wiseman: She said yes. She said yes, and the impossible became possible.

Stuart: And to think…I left the Messiah in the cold tonight.

Wiseman: I’d hate to be you. Well listen, I’m getting inside that barn. By the way, if two of my associates show up—and a drummer boy—send them—

Stuart: Whoa, whoa, whoa! A drummer boy?

Wiseman: A little drummer boy.

Stuart: What does the little drummer boy do?

Wiseman: He’s going to bang on his drum.

Stuart: He’s going to bang on his drum?

Wiseman: He’s going to bang on his drum for the baby in the barn.

Stuart: He’s going to bang on his drum for the baby in the barn in Bethlehem?

Wiseman: Basically.

Stuart: Beautiful. What ballad?

Stuart: Pa-rum-pa-pum-pum? You tell him to play his drum for Him.

Wiseman: Oh, he'll play his best for Him.

Stuart: Pa-rum-pa-pum-pum.


Both: *(singing in unison)* Rum-pa-pum-pum

Stuart: Catchy.

Wiseman: Yeah, I think so.

Stuart: Well, before you go, Merry Census!

Wiseman: What?

Stuart: Merry Census! I mean, it's the biggest thing to happen to Bethlehem, so Merry Census!

Wiseman: *(chuckles)* The biggest thing to happen to Bethlehem and the world is what's going on in your barn right now. No, no. You should be saying “Merry...Mary-had-the-Christ-child-in-a-barn-after-following-a-star-all-day...Day.” I gotta figure out how to shorten that. Well...I'm off to the barn.

Both: *(in unison)* Buh-bye!

Wiseman exits

Stuart: *(to audience)* Well, it's starting to happen. Bethlehem will soon be waking up. And they'll be wanting food in their stomachs, and they'll be getting in their own little worlds. What they won't realize is that a Savior just entered the world. What a night. A silent night. A holy night. There's that word again. And to think I almost missed this. Even in my own home.

Yes. Rest, Child. Rest while you can. For your work is about to begin. Speaking of work, I might as well be getting to mine, too. So Merry Cens—

...no, Stuart, don’t miss this. Don’t make it about money and things. Because it’s about...it’s about the Christ child.

Christ. Yes.
Merry Christmas. Yes. Merry Christmas.

Stuart exits
Lights down