

“Why the Inn Was Full”

by
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- What** A young Peter and his father contemplate a baby's future as they witness the coming of the Christ child, reminding us that we, too, can be fishers of people.
- Themes: Christmas, Nativity, Manger
- Who** Dad
Mom
Peter- Older child or young teen
Andrew- Child
Innkeeper
- When** At the birth of Christ
- Wear (Props)** Biblical attire for everyone
A small table. On the table sits an ancient looking scroll.
- Why** Matthew 4:18-19
- How** Keep the dialogue conversational, careful not to overact. Give yourself time to rehearse with you kid actors and give them specific direction/blocking so they aren't wondering around the stage during their dialogue.
Stage direction key: Stage directions are always from the actor's viewpoint, looking toward the audience. Downstage refers to the front of the stage.
Upstage refers to the back of the stage.
SL- Stage left
SR- Stage right
CS- Center stage
DSC- Downstage center
- Time** Approximately 5 minutes

At curtain, Dad, Mom, Peter and Andrew enter SL and stop at the table.

Dad: *(looking around)* Hello? Hello?! Anyone here? Guests arriving at your inn! Family that's traveled like a bazillion miles. Tired. Hungry. Hello?

Innkeeper runs in from SR and goes behind the table.

Innkeeper: Sorry folks, I'm the innkeeper and I was out in back, in the stables.

Dad: Stables?

Innkeeper: Yeah, a young couple came in. Woman was very pregnant. I'm booked up so I had to put them back in the—

Dad: *(interrupts)* Wait, you still have our reservations, right?!

Innkeeper opens the scroll pretends to read from it.

Innkeeper: Yes, yes, it's here. The Hendersons, right? Mister and Misses and kids, Andrew and Peter.

Dad: We sometimes call him Simon, but Peter will do.

Innkeeper: Um, sure. Anyway. *(referring to scroll)* Looks like most everyone else has checked in for this event. I understand I owe you thanks for choosing our inn for your Fisherman's Convention. I love the theme: "Cast your Nets and Pull in Profits".

Dad: *(proud)* I thought of that! By the way, if you are interested, I'm doing a breakout session called "Men Who are Fishers of Fish."

Innkeeper: Um, sure.

Dad: We thought the timing for the conference was good since we knew a lot of people would be here anyway for the census deal.

Innkeeper: Well again, thanks for being here.

Andrew: *(whiny)* Dad, can we get to our room now? I'm tired.

Peter: You're always tired. I wanna go out and see if they have a park.

Mom: Peter, quit being so impatient.

Dad: Look, I still have to set up my booth. You all go to the room and I'll be there shortly.

Peter: *(whining)* but I wanna—

Mom: You heard your father! And you are going to finish your scripture lesson, too.

Peter: Ugg. It's so boring. I'm never going to learn all that stuff.

Dad: *(ignoring Peter, looking up, then to Innkeeper)* By the way, does our room have good drapes? There's a lot of light out there and I need a dark room to get my sleep.

Innkeeper: Yeah, sorry about that. For some reason, a really bright star appeared and it's lighting up the whole town.

Dad: Swell. Just our luck. All right *(to family)* get going. *(to Innkeeper)* Where's the conference center?

Innkeeper points SR and Dad exits there. Mom, Peter, and Andrew exit SL, Innkeeper freezes, and all lights down on stage. After a few beats, lights come up. Peter enters from SL, obviously trying to be quiet and sneaks to CS.

Peter: They'll never miss me. I can't wait around anymore. Gotta find that park. *(wanders around a bit, then starts pretending to be pushed around by an unseen crowd)* Hey, watch it, little kid here! Hey! *(more jostling)* This stinks. I'm never gonna find it. Hey! Stop pushing! Hey! *(pretends to be being moved by the crowd to SL, then breaks away, and falls to knees)* Stupid people! *(looks around, smelling the air)* Yuck, what's that smell? Where am I? Wha? *(now focuses on a spot DSC)* Why are those people in that stable? And a baby? Whoa. So weird.

While he's watching, Dad has entered SR, sees Peter, and goes to him.

Dad: There you are! What are you doing out here?

Peter: *(defensive)* I wanted to see if they had a park, but I got lost in the crowd!

Dad: Your mother is out of her mind worried, so let's go—

Peter: But look *(pointing DSC)*, isn't that weird?

Dad: *(now seeing what Peter is seeing)* Whoa. So that's where that smell is coming from. *(looking closely)* No place for a baby, that's for sure. Must be those people the Innkeeper guy told us about. Hmm. Wonder if the Dad there is a fisherman? Maybe I can sell him booth space!

Peter: Huh?

Dad: Just kidding.

Peter: Who are those other guys?

Dad: *(disdainfully)* Shepherds. Part of the smell no doubt. Hmm. They seem pretty interested in the kid. Huh. Never thought of them as kneeling down to a baby kinda people.

Peter: Do you think the Dad could really be a fisherman?

Dad: Oh, I don't know. I was trying to be funny. I guess. Maybe. He does have that look.

Peter: Huh?

Dad: You know. Can adapt to circumstances. Wants to take care of his family.

Peter: *(pauses, then proudly)* I'm going to be a great fisherman.

Dad: You bet. It's a noble profession. We cast our nets. We bring in the catch. People get nourished. They don't remain hungry. We're a, um, a rock in their lives. They can count on us. Yeah. A rock.

Peter: *(ponders, then)* I wanna do all that. Be a rock.

Dad: You will, you will. You just need strong hand to guide you.

Peter: *(looking again at DSC)* Hey, why *are* those shepherd guys kneeling?

Dad: *(looking back at DSC)* Hmm. Maybe they see something that we can't from here. Ha! I got it! Maybe they think the kid's going to be a shepherd someday and they are trying to make a good impression. *(yelling at them)* He's going to have a real profession! He'll be a fisherman, you clods!

Peter: Dad!

Dad: Sorry, I couldn't help myself. They didn't hear me anyway.

Peter: *(pause, then with earnest)* Can he be both maybe? A shepherd and fisherman?

Dad: Huh? Hmm. I don't know, maybe. It's just a baby and Lord knows what'll happen to him. How he'll grow up. We need get back. *(looking up, shielding his eyes)* Weird that the star is so bright. Well, it'll help get us back. *(to Peter)* Good fishermen always find their way home. Maybe even shepherds, too.

As they start to exit. Peter takes another long look at DSC, then exits with Dad.