

DoveTale

By Ted Swartz, Lee Eshleman and Ingrid De Sanctis

NO ROOM AT THE INN

Characters: Joseph, Mary, Nigel the Innkeeper

Set: Nigel's Inn sign on the top of a free-standing door

Props: 2 hard suitcases, duffel bag, pregnancy belly

Length: _6_ minutes

(JOSEPH enters first carrying a number of suitcases. A very pregnant MARY follows. They are not happy. Clearly they have been on the road for some time.)

MARY: Reservations, I said! We should be sure we have a reservation. But nooo, you said, we don't need reservations. Reservations are for people who don't trust in God. There will be room.

JOSEPH: Okay, okay. I should have made reservations.

MARY: A map, I said. Couldn't we bring a map? But, no, you'd rather wander around half of Judea than depend upon something as insulting as a map.

JOSEPH: Okay, you're right. We should have made reservations and we should have had a map!

MARY: And that donkey ... where did you get that donkey? Gave out halfway here...

JOSEPH: I'm surprised you didn't eat it.

(MARY is clearly hurt by this comment. JOSEPH feels badly about this.)

MARY: You try carrying around two people for nine months—see how much you eat, buddy boy. Put those suitcases down. I want to sit down.

(JOSEPH sets up the suitcases and arranges a seat for her. She sits on the suitcases but slides off. Finally she gets situated.)

My feet hurt. You know they used to be a size six. Now it's size 10, at least.

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****PURCHASE REQUIRED FOR PERFORMANCE AND DUPLICATION****

JOSEPH: Here, let me massage them. (*JOSEPH starts to massage MARY'S feet.*) Listen, I know how you feel. (*She looks at him.*) Well, not exactly how you feel. I can just ... I can imagine that it's ... I don't have no idea how you feel.

MARY: It feels like it's close. I'm not sure how much more I can take. I thought you said this trip would be three days. Tops.

JOSEPH: Usually it is, however we took rest stops every camel length.

MARY: (*Almost about to cry*) I can't help it if I'm retaining fluid.

JOSEPH: I'm sorry Mary. Don't cry.

MARY: (*MARY is shocked.*) Are you telling me what to do!? I'll cry if I want to.

JOSEPH: Okay. Cry. Cry, don't cry. Whatever you want.

MARY: (*MARY is at the end of her rope—between crying and exploding, like any other woman who is about to give birth.*) Fine. You want to keep this marriage together? You want to keep this unit tight? It's three things. It's "Yes, Mary. Right away, Mary. Anything you say, Mary."

JOSEPH: All right.

MARY: Say it!

JOSEPH: Yes, Mary. Right away, Mary. Anything you say, Mary

(*MARY completely softens.*)

MARY: Give me a kiss.

JOSEPH: Yes, Mary. (*He does.*)

MARY: A hug.

JOSEPH: Right away, Mary. (*JOSEPH is amused and hugs her.*)

MARY: Now, go knock on that door.

JOSEPH: Anything you say, Mary.

(*JOSEPH knocks on the door. NIGEL opens the door and starts to talk. Oh, how NIGEL likes to talk. It is almost impossible to stop him.*)

and duplication rights.

NIGEL: Good evening and welcome. Ordinarily it would be welcome, I mean, but of course there are no vacancies. There appears to be a huge Parcheesi convention going on across town. Lots of shake, rattle and roll going on, don't you know, from the deck to the vestibule. I'm reminded of a story. It seems that I and a few of the old cronies from the war were tenting in Bethesda...

JOSEPH: *(Interrupting)* Excuse me. Sir, do you have anything? This is the ninth inn we've been to.

MARY: *(Yelling from down right)* Do you have a room yet?!

JOSEPH: We've been on the road for what seems like a year.

(MARY keeps interrupting and yelling to JOSEPH while he is talking with NIGEL at the door.)

MARY: Ask him if they provide breakfast.

JOSEPH: Do you have anything at all?

MARY: And if the kitchen's still open.

JOSEPH: My wife is tired; she's pregnant.

NIGEL: *(NIGEL looks over at MARY.)* That's true; she seems to be absolutely fabulous with child. But as I've said there just isn't room in the inn.

(MARY screams. The others freeze. MARY screams again and is going into labor.)

JOSEPH: We're gonna need some hot water! *(JOSEPH crosses to MARY.)*

NIGEL: Ah! Hot water, excellent idea, tea. Tea is a calming influence ... a nice herbal blend ...

(Another scream. By now MARY is hanging on to JOSEPH.)

JOSEPH: We're gonna need a PLACE here—right now!

NIGEL: Well, there is a barn out back, but this is highly irregular, we do pride ourselves—

JOSEPH: *(JOSEPH takes control of the moment.)* Excuse me. Here's how we'll get along. Show us the barn!

NIGEL: Yes, sir.

JOSEPH: Bring our things around.

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NIGEL: Right away, sir.

JOSEPH: And stop talking!

NIGEL: Anything you say, sir. Just keep going around to the back...

(MARY and JOSEPH exit to stage right and NIGEL grabs the suitcases.)

Cedric! Cedric will be there to help you. Cedric, could you fix something up for these folks in the barn. They're coming your way... oh, you'll recognize them ... very large woman ... anger management issues.

(NIGEL hands the suitcases to offstage hands and then goes on talking to the audience.)

You know, in all my 26 years as keeper of this inn nothing like this has ever happened. Good heavens. Birthing in our barn. Most irregular. Given just a tad of advance notice, I could have cobbled together a fine maternity suite, but ah well, in some cases time swings a particular way and you simply...

(NIGEL gets a look at the sky and it changes his mood. He slows down.)

My, but the stars are bright this evening. Glittering like a crystal goblet. There's a rightness in the air. Rather like that feeling you get when the Parcheesi dice fall just so. Well, I must check on my guests...

(NIGEL exits)

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