

## MAKING ROOM

by SCOTT CRAIN

**GENRE:** Drama

**SYNOPSIS:** The innkeeper who turned away Mary and Joseph reflects on his decision many years later.

**DIRECTOR'S TIP:** This monologue should be delivered soberly and in the actor's own time in order to create a 'feel' of genuine reflection.

**TIME:** Under 5 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 1

**TOPIC:** Easter, Biblical Times

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Luke 2:1-7, 23:33-46

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** Easter

**SUGGESTED USE:** Easter Service

**CHARACTERS:** SIMEON – an innkeeper, 50 or older

**PROPS:** None

**COSTUMES:** Biblical attire

**SOUND:** Wireless mic, if desired

**LIGHTING:** General stage

**SETTING:** An inn

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*Lights up.*

**SIMEON:** It's her eyes that I remembered most. Even though it's been over thirty years now, in my line of work it pays to remember faces: One of my customers, Octavius Justus, he likes to have a flagon of red wine in his room when he checks in. There's a cloth merchant named Rasheed who always wants breakfast brought to him. Things like that. Remembering customers and their little quirks'll sometime keep 'em coming back year after year, so I've learned to pay attention and try to remember faces, even if they only stay a single night. *(smiles)* There are plenty of larger inns in this part of the country, especially as you get closer to Jerusalem, so I have to stay competitive.

*Beat, he drops his head and sobers a bit, coming back to the point.*

Anyway, like I say, what stuck in my mind about this particular woman was the look in her eyes. She was scared. Her husband was too, but the woman was barely more than a girl herself, and just about to bust with the baby she was carrying. It was a busy night—year of the census—and cold, I remember that. This place was packed to the gills—I had people sleeping in every corner of the floor, every room jammed with two or three families, and my wife and I running around like a couple of headless chickens trying to keep everybody happy, when all of a sudden there's a knock on the door and when I open it, there stands this young couple, the woman in labor, and they're asking me—begging me—for a room.

I told the man we were full and he should check up the road a ways, even stepped back from the door so he could take a look inside and see that I meant it. But he said this was the last place in town, they'd been turned away at every inn in Bethlehem. 'Bout that time one of our customers yelled out for more blankets and I mumbled to the man, "Try the barn, then." and I shut the door. I know that sounds pretty calloused, even heartless, but you understand that there was nothing else I could do. *(pauses)* The last thing I saw before the door shut was that woman's eyes and the fear in 'em.

*He sighs. Beat, and when he continues, it's very sadly.*

Two days ago I was headed into town for the Passover and I came up on a mob of people watching an execution. Had three criminals pegged up, and I wasn't planning on stopping; but next thing I know, I find myself standing at the foot of the crosses, thinking what a sad world we live in where three young men choose a life of crime over honest work and end up stretched out on a wooden cross for all the world to see their shame. After a while, I turned away to head back to the road, and come face to face with this woman. And I recognize that look. *(pauses, his voice turning hoarse with emotion)* She had her eyes locked on that middle cross, and the young man nailed to it.