

"Last Christmas"

by
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1

INT. A CROWDED BETHLEHEM INN - TURN OF THE CENTURY

1

Many people, dressed in robes and sandals, are milling about the inn's lobby. The INNKEEPER stands behind the equivalent of the front desk. HARRISON, a middle-aged man also in a robe and sandals, approaches the desk.

HARRISON

Excuse me.

INNKEEPER

Yes, sir? May I help you?

HARRISON

I *hope* so. I didn't realize there were so many inns in Bethlehem.

INNKEEPER

I'm afraid I can't offer you a room. We're full.

HARRISON

Excellent!

INNKEEPER

I'm sorry?

HARRISON

The other four inns I've been to all had vacancies. That's how I knew they *weren't* the right one.

INNKEEPER

(beat)

You're *happy* that I have no available rooms?

HARRISON

I am.

(beat)

I'm not looking for a room.

INNKEEPER

You're not here for the census?

HARRISON

No, I'm just passing through. I was hoping you might help me locate an old friend of mine. He would have arrived not long ago with his wife and a donkey.

(CONTINUED)

INNKEEPER

(long beat)

You mean Joseph of Nazareth?

HARRISON

Yes, that's him!

INNKEEPER

His wife. . . uhm. . .

HARRISON

Mary.

INNKEEPER

That's her name. She's *very* pregnant.

HARRISON

So they are here?

INNKEEPER

Well, they're not staying at the inn. Like I said, we have no vacancies.

HARRISON

You're letting them stay in your barn.

INNKEEPER

Yes, I. . .

(beat)

How did you know that?

HARRISON

I'm a good judge of people. You wouldn't deny Joseph and Mary some comfort, especially with her being great with child.

INNKEEPER

I felt bad, but I *really* have no rooms left.

HARRISON

Would it be alright if I paid them a visit?

INNKEEPER

I don't see why not.

(beat)

The barn is out that door and to the left.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

HARRISON

Thank you.

Harrison leaves the inn and heads outside. He glances about and spots the barn. Moving away from any other people, he smiles, reaches into a pocket in his robe, and removes a gun. He spins the magazine around a few times and chuckles.

HARRISON

(sotto voce)

No Christmas this year.

He starts walking toward the barn.

FADE OUT.

2 EXT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

2

No one is around as Harrison opens the creaky barn door and walks inside. Various animals, like cows, sheep, and donkeys, stand about vocalizing. On a pile of hay in the far corner of the barn, a man and his pregnant wife sit. Harrison approaches them.

JOSEPH rises and meets him halfway.

JOSEPH

Good evening, friend.

MARY calls to her husband.

MARY

Who is it, Joseph?

Joseph calls back.

JOSEPH

I'm not sure.

HARRISON

I see your wife hasn't delivered yet.

JOSEPH

What business is that of yours?

HARRISON

It's the reason I'm here.

Harrison removes the gun from his pocket and points it at Joseph.

(CONTINUED)

JOSEPH

(beat)
What's that?

HARRISON

It's called a *gun*.

JOSEPH

What does it do?

HARRISON

(chuckles)
You'll soon see.

With a sound like wind chimes, a glow appears about Harrison. He drops the gun and screams.

HARRISON

No! *Nooooooooo!*

He disappears, the glow and sound fading to nothing.

FADE OUT.

An array of computers flash and beep. HOROWITZ, an elderly professor, stands by a circular platform. He looks angry. We hear the wind chime sound again, followed by the glow. Harrison materializes on the platform.

HOROWITZ

Harrison!

Harrison tries to look innocent.

HARRISON

Professor Horowitz. Back so soon?

HOROWITZ

I leave you in charge of the Flashback Project for an hour so I can go grab some lunch, and you try to. . .

(beat)
Were you *really* going to do it?

HARRISON

You *bet* I was! And I would have succeeded too if you hadn't activated the emergency return sequence.

(CONTINUED)

Horowitz is amazed.

HOROWITZ

You were going to change the past
and rid the world of Christmas?

HARRISON

Once and for all.

HOROWITZ

Why?

HARRISON

We'd be better off without it.

HOROWITZ

That's *your* opinion.

(beat)

You took it upon yourself to make
that decision for everyone who
celebrates December 25th?

HARRISON

It's a *worthless* holiday -
everyone fighting for that last
parking spot at the mall, the
right-sized sweater, the latest
gizmo that beeps and boops. And
for *what*? On the 26th, they're all
back to the way they were
beforehand, knocking their
neighbor out of the way to grab
those cut-price decorations for
next year.

HOROWITZ

Thank God I stopped you!

HARRISON

Imagine it, Professor: Without the
25th, we could devote all that
money and effort toward feeding
the poor, stopping poverty, and
saving the planet from ourselves.

HOROWITZ

Noble motives, but I won't allow
you to use my time machine to
deprive millions of people of a
holiday they cherish.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOROWITZ (CONT'D)

I've never celebrated Christmas,
but I know that there is *good* in
it. It's important and worthwhile,
and it makes people *happy*!

Horowitz picks up the telephone and pushes a button.

HOROWITZ

(beat)
Security to the lab.

FADE OUT.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

The animals are vocal, as before.

MARY

Where did he go?

JOSEPH

I don't know. He just. . .
disappeared.

MARY

Was it a miracle?

JOSEPH

It *may* have been.

Joseph takes a few steps and bends to retrieve the gun.

JOSEPH

What is this he brought with him?

MARY

He called it a. . . a *gun*.

(beat)

What does it do?

JOSEPH

I don't have the slightest -

Joseph accidentally pulls the trigger. A shot rings out.
Mary screams. Frightened, Joseph drops the gun.

The door to the barn is hastily opened, and Horowitz runs
in. He is still wearing the suit he had on in the lab. He
quickly approaches Mary and Joseph.

HOROWITZ

Are you both alright?

(CONTINUED)

Joseph is noticeably shaken.

JOSEPH

I. . . *I* am.

(beat)

Mary?

MARY

I'm fine - just frightened. That
thing shot *fire*!

HOROWITZ

May I take it with me? I'll see
that it never troubles you again.

JOSEPH

Please do!

Horowitz picks up the gun.

HOROWITZ

Thank you.

(beat)

I'll be leaving now.

JOSEPH

But I don't know who you are.

HOROWITZ

I'm. . . a friend.

(beat)

Merry Christmas.

Horowitz pushes a button on his watch and, just like
Harrison did, he too disappears.

Mary is amazed.

MARY

Two miracles in one night!

JOSEPH

(beat)

Merry. . . *what*?

Mary urgently calls to her husband.

MARY

Joseph, it's time. I *feel* it!

FADE TO BLACK.