Nestled in the Stable

By
David Moberg

Performance Rights

It is an infringement of the federal copyright law to copy this script in any way or to perform this play without royalty payment. All rights are controlled by Eldridge Publishing Co. Inc. Call the publisher for additional scripts and further licensing information. The author's name must appear on all programs and advertising with the notice: "Produced by special arrangements with Eldridge Publishing Co."

ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY
© 2006 by Eldridge Publishing Co. Inc.
www.95church.com

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing
https://95church.com/nestled-in-the-stable

Dedicated to Rev. and Mrs. Frederick Moberg.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Various animals in the stable aren't happy when two strangers intrude upon their quiet night. The sparrows, cows, and sheep, along with mice and doves are upset and wish the humans would find another place to stay. They don't want to share their grain or warm hay. And after walking for miles, the poor donkey is too tired to help Joseph and Mary. But then God fulfills his most glorious promise: Baby Jesus is born. Everything changes as each group of animals gives a special gift to comfort the Baby and his parents. At last, as all finally sleep, the tired donkey stays watchful over the beautiful stable.

This play is designed to solve the common production and rehearsal problems of Sunday school and youth programs. It requires minimal scenery, adjusts to any performance space, needs no special lighting, requires minimal costumes, can be rehearsed in small units, and has a flexible cast size.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Storytellers

(Storytellers can be either adults or children.)

STORYTELLER #1: Talks directly to the audience from SL.
STORYTELLER #2: Talks directly to the audience from SR.

Animals

(Each grade or age group can represent a group of animals.)

SPARROWS: Group of children, ages 5-8.
COWS: Group of 4 children.
SHEEP: Group of 3 or more children.
DONKEY: One child.
MICE: Group of young children who speak as one.
DOVES: Group of 4 or more children, speak in hushed tones.

Citizens

TOWNSPEOPLE: Group of 4 or more who will later portray Angels.
INNKEEPER: One child.

Performance Time: 25-30 minutes.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The scenery is a simple wooden manger in the center of the playing area. To the left and right of the manger are small wooden fence pieces that help suggest the inside of the stable. Down stage of the manger is an open playing area large enough for each group of children to execute the movements of the animals. The manger should be filled with "angel hair," a white fibrous material that resembles cotton. Underneath the angel hair is a bright light that can be turned on at the moment of Jesus' birth. The light will symbolically be the Baby Jesus. The angel hair will hide the lighting instrument. When the lighting instrument is turned on, the angel hair will diffuse the light and give the illusion that the entire manger is glowing with God's warm and captivating love.

Storyteller #1 and #2 are on opposite sides of the manger and talking directly to the audience. They should sound almost like one voice; clarifying and explaining the story kindly and carefully. Their lines suggest possible movements to help the children characterize the animals. The lines should not continue until the children complete the movement. An actual Joseph and Mary is not needed. The narrators describe Joseph and Mary's actions. The emphasis in the manger scene needs to be the Baby, which is represented by pure light.

For example, the first graders could be the sparrows, the fourth grade girls could be the doves, etc. The specific lines can be reassigned to include more students as animals. Elaborate costumes are NOT required. Simple prop or costume accessories would suffice to suggest the personality of the animals. For example, pretty feather masks for the doves; mice ears and tails for the mice; etc. The physical gestures and actions of children are much more effective than extensive costuming to create the personality and presence of the animals.

The entire selection should be underscored continuously with a medley of Christmas carols played softly on the piano or organ.

Nestled in the Stable

STORYTELLER #1: Long, long ago,
STORYTELLER #2: In a country far, far away,
STORYTELLER #1: On a night that MIGHT have been just like any other winter night;
STORYTELLER #2: With a brisk cutting wind,
STORYTELLER #1: That blew the clouds south,
STORYTELLER #2: And left the sky crystal cold and black.
STORYTELLER #1: The kind of night that made the tiny sparrows ...

(The SPARROWS enter from audience or from offstage into playing space DS of the manger.)

STORYTELLER #2: Lift wings ...

(SPARROWS lift their arms.)

STORYTELLER #1: Flip their tails ...

(SPARROWS spin in place.)

STORYTELLER #2: And soooar!

(SPARROWS run tight circles with arms outstretched.)

STORYTELLER #2: *(Continued.)* Resting finally in their warm stable nests.

(SPARROWS stop running and pose in center for the lines.)

SPARROWS: *(In unison.)*
It's so cold outside
We think we'd better hide.

STORYTELLER #1: And just as fast as tiny sparrows could glide ...

(SPARROWS stand with arms outstretched, ready to take off again.)

STORYTELLER #2: They flew this way ...

(Half SPARROWS run SL and the remaining half run SR.)

STORYTELLER #1: Then that way ...

(SPARROWS run to opposite sides of the stage.)

STORYTELLER #1: *(Continued.)* Now this way.

(SPARROWS run clockwise, forming a big circle around the circumference of the stage.)

STORYTELLER #2: Again back way.

(SPARROWS run counter clockwise around the circumference of the stage.)

STORYTELLER #1: Until at last ...

(SPARROWS tighten and slow the circling motion until they are all nestled in a bunch at the center of the stage.)

SPARROWS:
Now at last we can be still and rest
and pile all our straw into a cozy warm nest.

STORYTELLER #2: Then the sparrows chirped ...

SPARROWS:
This straw is ours.
And we don't care,
Who else is cold,
Because we don't share.

End of Freeview

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing
https://95church.com/nestled-in-the-stable

Eldridge Publishing, a leading drama play publisher since 1906, offers more than a thousand full-length plays, one-act plays, melodramas, holiday plays, religious plays, children's theatre plays and musicals of all kinds.

For more than a hundred years, our family-owned business has had the privilege of publishing some of the finest playwrights, allowing their work to come alive on stages worldwide.

We look forward to being a part of your next theatrical production.

Eldridge Publishing... for the start of your theatre experience!