



On your marks

Finding a new way to tell the story of Christmas is always a challenge. This charming version, with illustrations available on [PowerPoint](#), could be just what you need to share the wonder of Christmas with adults and children at a special festival service.

The story was written and illustrated by Fay Garrett, who works with a Schools Trust in Essex, regularly takes Primary RE lessons and leads a Christian club at her local school. Fay has kindly given permission for her story to be distributed free of charge via this website.

Get set

Read the story through several times before you use it, to make sure you can convey its rhythm and connect each part with the illustrations on the PowerPoint.

Go!

Mrs Dinn at The Inn

Has anyone ever said to you, 'What a din'?

Here's a story about a lot of Dinns. You might want to cover your ears!

Now you might think that there would be some time in any day when there was no noise - or almost no noise. Perhaps just a cricket, or the rustling of other small creatures. A time when everything stops and the world takes a deep breath.

At the inn of the Dinn family, this was not the case.

It was the busiest inn in town. People came in at all hours.

Their camels were noisy; their wives and children were noisy; sometimes even their luggage was noisy. But noisiest of all were the Dinn family themselves.

Mr Isaac Dinn had a voice like a foghorn.

Master Issachar Dinn had a voice like a French horn.

Miss Izzy Dinn had a voice like a flugel horn (look that one up!).

Friends and family loved to stay at the inn. Foreigners flocked to it. They called it the Dinn at the Inn - Bethlehem's loudest!

You may have noticed that Mrs Dinn has not yet been mentioned.

Her name was Mrs Ishbel Dinn, and that is a clue. A clue to what? Did you spot the 'sh' sound in her



name? Mrs Ishbel Dinn did not have a voice like a foghorn, or a French horn, or a flugel horn. She did not have a voice at all.

And the crashes and bangs, crunches and calls, yodels and yells, and things that went BUMP in the night did not bother her either, because she could not hear anything at all... not a pin drop!

Mr Dinn felt very sorry for his wife. 'Poor Ishbel, if only she could shout like the rest of us.'
Master Dinn felt very sorry for his mother. 'Poor mother, if only she could listen like the rest of us.'
Miss Dinn felt very sorry for her mother. 'Poor mother, if only she could talk like the rest of us.'

But nobody knew what Mrs Dinn felt. Not really.

Did she mind? Did she care that, for her, there was no din at the inn? She seemed happy, caring for her customers. She seemed jolly with those on journeys. She smiled, she nodded, she cooked, she cleaned.

One day, a messenger arrived at the inn. 'Mr Dinn, Mr Dinn!' he shouted. 'Prepare for extra people. There's been a proclamation!'

The people came from far and wide, all looking for a room at the inn, all looking for a meal at the inn. Shouting! Yelling! Proclaiming!

Miss Dinn ran about: 'Stables! Stables!'
Master Dinn ran about: 'Meals! Meals!'
Mr Dinn ran about: 'Rooms! Rooms!'

What a din!

Mrs Dinn noticed a quiet man at the back of the crowd. He had quietly asked Mr Dinn, but Mr Dinn hadn't heard.

'No room! No room!'

He had quietly asked Master and Miss Dinn, but they were too busy shouting at each other to hear.

'No room! No room!'

Mrs Dinn did notice the man. She noticed the small, scruffy donkey; she noticed the tired, dusty wife.

No words were needed, just a smile.
No words were needed, just a stable...

Later that dark night, that noisiest of nights, Mrs Dinn looked in the direction of the stable and saw that no light was needed... just a star!



As the night wore on, there was a bit less din at the inn. The travellers were tired. They slept; they slumbered; they snored, UNTIL...

Mr Dinn heard a new noise, and it was waking up his customers.

Mr Dinn started shouting, 'Where is it coming from? Stop that noise!'

Master Dinn started shouting, 'Where is it coming from? Stop that noise!'

Miss Dinn started shouting, 'Where is it coming from? Stop that noise!'

And they woke up *all the customers!*

But Mrs Dinn went straight to the stable. How did she know? In the stable, the baby was crying, the mummy was crying, the daddy was pacing the floor.

There was a group of singing shepherds - with sheep.

There were three men in funny hats - with camels.

Even a man with glittery headgear was rustling and flapping.

You certainly could not hear a pin drop, not even an extra-specially large and heavy pin.

Mrs Dinn looked all around. She looked at the baby. She picked him up... and adjusted his pin... and he stopped crying - stopped crying and smiled.

He smiled at Mrs Dinn, until that smile met his ears. A big, gummy, baby smile.

And everyone else stopped - stopped and looked. It seemed that even the world had stopped. You could have heard a pin drop!

And then - did the baby somehow, in some way, ask Mrs Dinn a question? (But how could he?) Because she smiled and slowly shook her head.

She gave the baby one kiss on the top of his head and smiled again. Then she went back outside into the din.

Perhaps she was just happy to be Mrs Dinn, who couldn't hear a pin drop... but felt it!

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