

Fawly Christmas Inn



A Christmas comedy modeled on the misadventures of Fawly Towers. This one stars four characters who may or may not be related to anyone – in the picture below is Basil, Sybil, Polly and Manuel (although in these overly sensitive times, the idea of slapping a Spanish waiter may not be approved of, so we've dropped him from the script...) Polly isn't there either.

Scene – Hotel Lobby

All that's needed is a table with a cloth, a phone and a bell on the table. Basically go as far as you'd like in recreating the front desk of a hotel. The characters are as they are in the TV comedy but this time the location of the hotel is in Bethlehem and you're busy. Make sure the front desk is positioned diagonally so the audience can see everyone's faces on stage.

The comedy will work more if you really play up the characters. Throw in your own in-jokes and contemporary references.

You'll also need a frying pan and a pretend 'scroll' (for taking the bookings). If you have a feather to pretend to write with (like in the olde days) all the better.

Characters

Basil – gets very agitated very quickly, panics, gets very frustrated, speaks as if he needs to go to the toilet all the time. He is manic.

Sybil – very calm but treats her husband as a complete idiot and has no respect for her fool of a husband. Has a strong South East accent. She is so calm it's frustrating for Basil.

Joseph – 'father' of Jesus who arrives at a bad moment.

Fawlty Inn – Script

Basil – *(running backwards and forwards, stressed)*

Cybil, Cybil, where are you? Why do you have to disappear the very moment that things get busy. That woman seems to vanish more often than in a magic show.

(he starts shouting, pacing backwards and forwards)

Sybil! SYBIL! SYBIL! SI...

Sybil – *(Sybil has quietly appeared while Basil is shouting for her, without him initially seeing her. Basil is about to say her name when he realises she is right there in front of him, so suddenly stops moving and shouting. Sybil is annoyed by Basil but tries not to show it)*

Yes, Basil.

Basil – Ah, yes, Sybil, my dear. You're always there when I need you. What a precious gift you are.

Sybil – *(isn't taken in by all Basil's flattery)*

Basil, why are you seemingly unable to cope for even half a minute without me? What is it now? Lost the booking scroll?

Basil – Sybil, we've run out of room. There's nothing left. Nothing. Nada. Niet. Nought. Zero. Nowt. Less than one. Even the hallways are being taken up.

Sybil – *(folds her arms, shaking her head)*

Basil, it's the census. When it's the census there are lots of people. Lots of people means that we get booked up.

Basil – yes, but, but, but... But where's Manuel, that Spanish id... I mean, our fellow EU citizen.

Sybil – you know very well that Manuel isn't here. You know very well that you hit him just one too many times. As an EU national he felt he wasn't getting enough protection so he's left. You've only got yourself to blame.

Basil – But I've already had Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby trying to help out. The stupid old bats...

Sybil – *(scolds Basil for what he's said)*

BASIL!

Basil – Sorry my dear, I mean those lovely ladies who live here...

(Turns aside and shudders, whispering)

About as batty as you, Sybil.

(Basil turns back to Sybil, with a half-hearted smile but she's not amused)

Sybil – I'm in the back room Basil, trying to crunch the numbers and sort out this evening's kosha meal for everyone.

Basil – But Sybil, we've got people in the hall, we've got people sleeping in the dining room, people everywhere. I've already had one guest who tried to eat their food only to find out it was a small child sleeping on the dinner table. And Major Gowen is pacing around, barking orders at people, drinking too much olive oil wine and singing old army songs.

It's a mess I tell you – a mess – a mounting mountain from the immense movement of the masses of modern multitudes...

(Basil gets increasingly manic as he's saying all this)

Sybil – *(firmly)*

BASIL!

(Sybil looks fierce for a moment, then calms down and speaks patronisingly to Basil)

I think we'll be alright Basil. It's all in hand. So if you don't mind, maybe you could handle the front desk for just a moment...

(Sybil walks off stage)

Basil – *(mutters to himself)*

Unhelpful woman. Thinks she knows best. Crunching the numbers. I'll crunch her one of these days.

Sybil – *(quickly re-appears with a frying pan in her hand)*

I heard that!!

Basil – *(realises he's been heard, puts his hands up to say sorry, slightly bowing and backing off in fear. Sybil stops for a moment, pointing at him then pauses, then exits)*
(Basil shudders. Then starts marching around the place, muttering about who is where, health and safety. This should go on for 10-20 seconds).

(Enter Joseph)

Joseph – Evening!

Basil – *(he freezes from his manic marching about the place. Stops, then slowly turns to Joseph)*

Oh I'm so sorry, I was just reciting verses from the Old Testament as part of my daily rituals...

Joseph – *(Uncertain about what he's just walked into)*

Er, yes, right...

Basil – How may I help you?

Joseph – It's myself and my wife...

Basil – *(looks around, walks behind Joseph, lifts up the table cloth and looks under Joseph's armpit).*

Wife? Wife? I don't see a wife anywhere...

Joseph – No, she's outside. She's pregnant.

Basil – *(panics and starts running about shouting, talking to himself)*

Pregnant? Pregnant? We've got an inn full of people and he tells me he's come with his wife. And she's pregnant. She's going to give birth here, I know it. It's going to be a mess. Even more of a mess. We can't have this. This used to be a respectable hotel. Now we've become a birthing centre – what does he want a natural birthing pool to give birth to the little sprog...

(Basil walks round and round Joseph with Joseph turning to try and follow him)

Sybil – *(hears all the commotion, walks in and slaps Basil on the cheek right as he's in mid-flow)*

(Basil stops. Everyone freezes for a moment)

Basil – *(turns and looks at Joseph politely)*

Ah, a room. I'm afraid we're completely booked sir. Full. Complete. Brimming over. Too many. In excess. Crammed. Burdened. Overflowing. Crowded. Jam-packed. Chockablock. In fact, chockablocked. Running over. Profusely plethoric.

Joseph – *(confused and unsure what to say)*

But we're here for the census. All the way from Nazareth. My wife is pregnant. We're exhausted. Is there nowhere to stay?

Basil – *(takes Joseph's arm and starts to lead him out of the room the way he came in)*

No, I'm sorry, you'll have to go. Go and have your baby somewhere else.

Sybil – *(shouts)*

BASIL. STOP!

(Basil and Joseph stop)

Look at me, Basil

(Basil slowly turns around. After he does, Joseph slowly turns around)

Now. Basil. You know there's a little place outside with the animals. It may not be perfect but it's full of straw and hay. Go and brush it out Basil. There's plenty of room.

(Basil goes to speak several times but each time he does, Sybil puts her fingers to her lips and says 'shhhhh', then flicks her hand to order him out)

Joseph – Thank you. The name is Joseph. My wife is called Mary. Our baby. He's going to be called Immanuel – God with us. Thank you. I'll go and let Mary know. Thank you for your kindness....

(Joseph pauses, nods at a smiling Sybil then exits)

Sybil – *(aloud, to herself, thinking)*

Immanuel – God with us. Amazing...

(Pauses)

Just think of the advertising potential this will give us.

(Sybil pauses, then exits)

END