

SCENE FOUR: On a Hillside Overlooking Bethlehem

SHEPHERDS 1, 2 and 3 are surrounded by a number of SHEEP. SHEPHERD 3 carries a toy lamb.

- SHEPHERD 2:** I spy with my little eye something beginning with 'S'.
- SHEPHERD 3:** Sheep.
- SHEPHERD 2:** Correct. Your go.
- SHEPHERD 1:** I spy with my little eye something beginning with 'D'.
- SHEPHERD 3:** *(Surprised)* 'D'?
- SHEPHERD 2:** *(Also surprised)* 'D'?
- SHEPHERD 3:** *(Looking around)* I can't think of anything.
- SHEPHERD 2:** *(Also looking around)* Neither can I.
- SHEPHERD 3:** We give in.
- SHEPHERD 1:** *(Pleased)* Dark.
- SHEPHERD 3:** Except that you can't see 'dark' can you?
- SHEPHERD 1:** What do you mean? I can see loads of it.
- SHEPHERD 3:** But dark isn't a thing, is it? It's just an absence of light.
- SHEPHERD 2:** Now see what you've started! Why don't you stick with what we know?
- SHEPHERD 1:** *(Yawning)* Because I'm bored. It's boring being a shepherd. We can't even count the sheep because every time we do we fall asleep.
- SHEPHERD 2:** I know what'll cheer you up. *(Brief pause)* I spy...
- SHEPHERD 1:** And I'm bored with playing I Spy too. Why can't something interesting ever happen?
- SHEPHERD 3:** How about a nice philosophical discussion?
- SHEPHERD 2:** What about?
- SHEPHERD 3:** Well, for example, do sheep think?

SHEPHERDS 1 and 2 look at each other. Then they look at the sheep. Then back at each other again. There is a long pause.

SHEPHERD 2: I spy with my little eye something beginning with... 'A'.

SHEPHERD 1: *(Surprised)* 'A'?

SHEPHERD 3: *(Also surprised)* 'A'?

SHEPHERD 2: *(Pointing upwards/offstage)* Angel.

SHEPHERDS 1 and 3: *(Together)* Angel?

The SHEPHERDS all make an 'Oooh' sound as the ANGEL enters

ANGEL: Do not be afraid Shepherds.

SHEPHERD 2: We're not.

ANGEL: Do not be afraid...

SHEPHERD 3: Is this exciting enough for you?

SHEPHERD 1: It's brilliant.

SHEPHERD 2: Beautiful

ANGEL: Do not be afraid...

SHEPHERD 2: Wait till we tell the other shepherds about this.

ANGEL: Do not be afraid...

SHEPHERD 1: They'll be gutted.

ANGEL: *(Shouting)* Shush!

The SHEPHERDS shush.

ANGEL: *(Regains his composure)* Do not be afraid. I bring you tidings of great joy.

SHEPHERD 3: Fabulous. Thank you.

ANGEL: Please. This is a very important message. I'll forget it if you don't listen.

SHEPHERD 3: Sorry.

SHEPHERD 2: Go on.

ANGEL: I bring you tidings of great joy.

SHEPHERD 1: You already said that.

ANGEL: *(Shouting)* Please! *(In a rush)* I bring you tidings of great joy. For today is born in Bethlehem a child who is Christ the Lord. You will find this baby wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger.

SHEPHERD 2: Where?

Unseen by the SHEPHERDS, the ANGEL disappears/exits.

SHEPHERD 3: He just told you - in Bethlehem.

SHEPHERD 1: What's 'swaddling'?

SHEPHERD 3: It's strips of cloth. Wait a minute! Where did the Angel go?

SHEPHERD 1: Hey! Come back! How do we find him, this child who is Christ the Lord?

The ANGEL returns, irritated.

ANGEL: You are on a hillside overlooking Bethlehem?

The SHEPHERDS all nod.

ANGEL: Then I expect your best course would be to walk down the hillside into Bethlehem.

SHEPHERD 3: *(To SHEPHERD 1)* We knew that! What did you have to go and ask that for? You've made us all look stupid now.

The ANGEL disappears/exits again.

SHEPHERD 2: Come on, let's go and find this special baby.

SHEPHERD 1: What about the sheep?

SHEPHERD 3: They'll follow us.

SHEPHERD 2: Like a load of sheep. Come on.

SHEPHERD 1: Cool.

The SHEPHERDS all exit. The SHEEP follow them.