

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/exists.

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/exists 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.