

Mystery Play

Stephen Fellowes – December 2010

Cast: (in order of appearance)

- A Herald/Narrator
- Shepherd 2
- Shepherd 1
- Shepherd 3
- Lamb/Inn Keeper's assistant
- Mak
- Gill
- Clarence the Angel/Inn Keeper

Direction

Act I

The stage is empty as the HERALD enters STAGE LEFT.
As the opening lines are delivered the 3 shepherds enter
STAGE LEFT with shepherd 3 holding the hand of the
lamb!

Herald:

Welcome to you all today,
that come to share our little play.
A show in two parts will be seen
(with food and good cheer in between).

As an aside

The first, of thieves and treachery,
the second, of a Mystery.

For here, three shepherds and their lamb,
are subjects of a clever scam
by two known thieves called Mak & Gill,
that have a mind to do them ill.

They say that one lamb, living wild
is, in fact, Gill's long lost child,
and so do dupe these shepherds three
in order to have meat for tea.

Our second shepherd leads the way
in this our '2nd Shepherds Play'.
So, with a passing nod to the Wakefield Master
We'll run the script, but slightly faster!

The Shepherds come
to stage banging their

arms and blowing
their hands to fight
off the cold.

Shepherd 2: It's cold!
It's cold out here with just lambs' bleating

Shepherd 1: Just like this place - (without the heating)

Shepherd 2: And what's this lamb up here with you?

Shepherd 3: A stray I think, without a Ewe

Shepherd 1: A funny looking lamb, that one
No wonder she has lost her Mum

Lamb: Baaaah!

Shepherd 3: What shall we do then? Play I-Spy?
Or watch that strange star in the sky?

Shepherd 2: What star?

Shepherd 3: *That one!* In dead of night.
The one that's moving
left to right

Looking skyward.

Pointing up at the sky

Shepherd 1: I think you must be seeing things.
Next you'll say I'm sprouting wings!

1st & 2nd Shepherds
laugh

Herald: As the day draws to a close
The weary shepherds start to doze
But as they bed down for the night
Two hazy shapes come into sight

The shepherds start
making themselves
comfortable for the
night.

Shepherd 2: Hang on, who's that up on the hill?
It rather looks like Mak & Gill.
Watch your step with this lad Mak,
He'll have the shirt right off your back

Mak: I'm tired...
I'm tired of gruel in hot pots brimming
I need some meat, with all the trimming

Gill: Mouldy cheese is fine for mice
But lamb with mint sauce would be nice!

Mak: Hang on mum, I've an idea
You see these shepherds over 'ere?
That lamb's just what we're looking for.

She'll last a week, or maybe more!

Gill: Oh come on Mak dear, don't be funny
You know we haven't any money
and they'll never *give* their stock to us
so come on home, don't make a fuss

Mak: Now don't give up so easily
Just take my lead
and follow me.

Mak runs up to the
sheep with
outstretched arms

Shepherd 1: You've found her!
You found my little sister dear
You're sister, where?

Mak: Why, this girl here.

The shepherds turn to
one another and
laugh whilst Mak &
Gill make to collect
the lamb

All Shepherds: Your sister?

Gill: That's my daughter there all right,
she ran away the other night
so I bid you simple folk good day.
We'll take her and be on our way.

Lamb: Baaaah!

Shepherd 3: Hey, not so fast
you evil pair.
Just put her down
and stop right there.
We know your tricks from times before
so you push off, we'll say no more.

Lamb: Baaaah!

Shepherd 2: Did you hear that?
She just cried 'baah'

Mak: I rather think
she called out 'Ma'!

Shepherd 2: Look! This 'ere's a lamb
and I can tell.

It's got four feet!

Gill: Ah. She's not been well!

Mak & Gill look at
one another

Mak: Now here's some proof you can't deny,
has she a birthmark by her eye?

All 3 shepherds stare at the lamb

Shepherd 3: There is no mark, her eye is clear
Mak: Well, neither has my sister dear!

Then we are right!
Mum, grab the lamb,
and let's take flight.

The shepherds start to debate the matter whilst Mak and Gill grab the lamb and run off.

Shepherd 3: So, What shall we do now? Play I-Spy?
Or watch that strange star in the sky?

Shepherds 1 & 2 groan.

Herald: (singing)

As I rode out this enders night,
Of three jolly shepherds I saw a sight,
And all about their fold a star shone bright:
They sang 'Terli Terlow';
So merrily the shepherds their pipes can blow.

Act II

Act II starts with the 3 shepherds looking fed up and dejected having just lost their lamb to Mak & Gill. Shepherd 1 starts playing a tune as the Herald joins in with the song.

Herald: (singing)

Down from heaven, from heaven so high,
Of angels there came a great company,
With mirth and joy and great solemnity,
They sang 'Terli Terlow';
So merrily the shepherds their pipes can blow.

As the song finishes, the angel enters STAGE RIGHT. He is dressed as a WW2 pilot complete with flying helmet.

Angel:

Glad tidings to you shepherds three,
(no need to go on bended knee)
Yea, I come with news of a king new born
in Bethlehem, tomorrow morn.

The shepherds look at one another in bewilderment

Shepherds: You what?

Angel: Now I say'th good fellows, don't delay
you have a goodly trip this day.

Shepherd 2: Now hang on, let me get this right.
You want us to 'up sticks' tonight

to make the trip to Bethlehem
and leave our flock - to the likes of them?

Shepherd 3: Who are you anyway,
And why do you speak that funny way?
We've already been had once today
so stop the jokes and go away!

Shepherd 2: That's the strangest brogue I've ever heard
Shepherd 1: I didn't understand a word!

Angel: My dearest friends,
why can't you tell?
I'm a messenger.
A real Angel.

The shepherds look at
Clarence and laugh

Shepherd 1: If you're an Angel, where's y'er wings?
Shepherd 3: Your halo, and those sorts of things?
Shepherd 2: And where's the blinding light they say
accompanies angels on their way?

Angel: Ah well, I'm not a 'first class' Angel yet
and have some merits still to get.
But each good deed I do on earth
All goes to evidence my worth.

Now where was I? Oh yes.

Clarence pulls out a
script from his pocket

Shepherd 1: I've news of what has come to pass...
You're what? An Angel; second class!

The shepherd laugh

Angel: I *am* an angel, here's my I.D.
And look, a picture of St. Pete, and me!
Now hurry up and go and pack
Your flock is safe 'till you get back.

The shepherds pass
the photo round and
agree it is genuine.

Shepherd 2: But if we made this trip today
How would we ever find our way.
It must be miles from here I bet.
And Sat Nav's not invented yet.

Angel: Now there's an answer that I know.
You watch that star

Pointing at the sky.

Shepherd 3: I told you so!

Nudging the other
shepherds

Angel: Now off to Bethlehem, straight way.
Pick up your things, and don't delay.

Angel exits STAGE
RIGHT, shepherds
STAGE LEFT

Herald:	<p>And so the shepherds made their way to Bethlehem, that very day. And as they went not one did say have we been tricked again today? For all the time the star still shone. Over hill and through the mud the three intrepid shepherds trod Just trusting in the star, and God. Mile after mile they trudged along.</p> <p>The light of day saw the city wall of Bethlehem, a city full of visitors who'd come, forlorn To make their mark on a census form.</p> <p>And then at last the star did stop above a humble Inn and shop.</p>	<p>During the speech the stage is re-set as an Inn by Mak & Gill.</p>
Shepherd 2:	<p>Hang on, my friend Don't I know you?</p>	<p>The shepherds enter STAGE LEFT. As they get to the Inn they see what they think is a familiar face. The Inn Keeper enters STAGE RIGHT followed by his assistant.</p>
Shepherd 3: Shepherd 1:	<p>He looks familiar He sure does, too.</p>	
Shepherd 2:	<p>Haven't we met once before? The other day, up on the moor?</p>	<p>The Inn Keeper looks puzzled.</p>
Shepherd 3:	<p>And there's something about that girl of his But I can't quite think just what it is.</p>	<p>Pointing at the assistant.</p>
Inn Keeper:	<p>I'm sure I would remember <i>you</i>, So what have you come here to do? Not to register again? The census closed last night, at 10</p>	
Shepherd 2:	<p>I know it might seem strange to some But an Angel instructed us to come. He said a King was born today An infant, all wrapped up in hay.</p>	
Inn Keeper:	<p>An Angel! Right! That's something new, I wonder why he picked on you?</p>	

But there's no kingly infant here.
You've had a wasted trip I fear.

Shepherd 3: This surely is where the Angel said.
Look, a bright star hovers overhead.

All look at the star.

Inn Keeper's assistant: Wait, what of those two yesterday?
The ones you nearly sent away.
They were both tired and hungry too
And the woman had a baby due.

Inn Keeper: You know, I think you may be right,
They came along the other night.
I thought they wouldn't come to harm
If I let them use the stable barn.

Shepherd 3: A barn! I don't imagine so
Why would a king be born so low?
Surely, there must be some mistake,
Were there not better rooms to take?

Addressing the other shepherds

Inn Keeper: No, all the rooms were full you see,
So I let them have the barn for free.

Assistant: It's just this way. Come, follow me.

The shepherds all exit STAGE LEFT whilst the Herald comes onto stage.

Herald: And so the shepherds went to see
The rest, as they say, is history.

Gill: For what they found *was* a king for sure

Mak: A king of men, both rich and poor.

Inn Keeper: So now it's time to end our show
and all our cast are set to go.

Shepherd 1: But when you leave here by and by,

Shepherd 2: Just take a look up at the sky.

Shepherd 3: And if a shooting star you see,

Assistant: Why, is that another mystery?

All: *While shepherds watched their flocks by night
all seated on the ground
The angel of the Lord came down
and glory shone around*

CURTAIN CALL

Fine