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### SCENE THREE

[Shepherds with staffs sit in a circle around a smoldering fire, talking comfortably. Throughout the scene, a sound effect of sheep gently bleating is heard in the background. Stanley is still sitting where he was on the floor.]

**Stanley:** *[opens his eyes and looks around him]* Goodness gracious me! What in the name of the theory of relativity is going on here? Where is everybody?

**Shepherd #1:** Hi there, stranger! Come join us! Sit by our warm fire.

**Stanley:** *[stands and approaches Shepherds]* Well, bless my soul! Authentic Semitic sheep herders! Incredible!

**Shepherd #3:** *[to other Shepherds]* What did he say?

**Shepherd #2:** I have no idea.

**Stanley:** *[sitting down with Shepherds]* You can have no conception of how pleased I am to meet genuine specimens of historical culture!

**Shepherd #1:** *[confused and offended, points his staff warningly at Stanley]* Now listen, I don't normally mind strangers, but I'm going to have to ask you to leave if you keep using that kind of language.

**Stanley:** Excuse me?

**Shepherd #1:** *[a little flustered]* Insulting my friends like that. Who are you anyway?

**Stanley:** Oh, forgive my negligence. My cognomen is Stanley Murphy.

**Shepherd #2:** Your what?

**Stanley:** Cognomen. *[Shepherds look perplexed.]* You know, an appellation. A personal designation by which my kinsmen and colleagues refer to me.

**Shepherd #1:** *[frustrated]* Look, just...what's your name?

**Stanley:** It's Stanley, as I have just stated. I'm pleased to make your acquaintance. *[extends his hand in greeting]* *[Shepherds recoil in fear.]*

**Shepherd #3:** *[to other Shepherds]* What's he doing?

**Shepherd #2:** Don't ask me. But I wouldn't touch his hand — he might have sand fleas!

**Stanley:** Oh! Of course. *[lowers hand]* I apologize, I forgot my situation for a moment.

**Shepherd #3:** *[to other Shepherds]* You know, I get the feeling he's not from around here....

**Shepherd #2:** *[nodding]* Must be one of them Greeks.

**Shepherd #3:** Or a barbarian.

**Stanley:** *[not hearing them]* Well, my good sirs, I must ask — what year is this? Are we in B.C. or Anno Domini?

**Shepherd #1:** Come again?

**Stanley:** Ah-ha! B.C., obviously. Otherwise you would know.

**Shepherd #3:** *[to other Shepherds]* He is making less and less sense.

**Shepherd #2:** *[nodding]* Definitely Greek.

**Stanley:** Oh! I've nearly forgotten. Do you fellows know of any exceptional presents that define the significance of Christmas?

**Shepherd #2:** *[gesturing and speaking slowly and loudly, as if to someone who doesn't know English]*  
WE — NOT — SPEAK — GREEK. YOU — SPEAK — ANYTHING — ELSE?

**Stanley:** I beg your pardon?

**Shepherd #1:** You're forgiven. Just try to stay away from foreign languages in Israel from now on.

**Stanley:** Israel? Oh! You must be *those* Shepherds.

**Shepherd #1:** *[slightly offended again]* Even Israelite Shepherds are perfectly respectable. Why, King David was a Shepherd!

**Shepherd #3:** *[indignant]* We may smell a little, but that ain't nothing to be ashamed of.

**Stanley:** Oh, I apologize, gentlemen, if you thought I was slighting you! Quite the opposite.

*[knowingly]* You see, I happen to know that you are about to be visited by an angel, so you're actually rather legendary.

**Shepherd #2:** *[incredulous]* An angel?

**Shepherd #1:** *[skeptical]* Yeah, sure.... Us, legendary!

**Shepherd #3:** *[chuckling]* I'd say he's a few candles short of a full menorah!

**Angel:** *[The bleating sound effect stops. Immediately, Angel of the Lord enters in a bright spotlight, with a deep echoing sound effect, and darkness falls across the rest of the stage. Shepherds and Stanley look very frightened and fall backward in the darkness, staring.]* No, don't be afraid! I bring you good news of great joy that will be for everyone. Today, in the city of David, a Savior has been born for you. He is Christ, the Lord. And this is the sign: you will find a baby wrapped up in cloth and lying in a manger.

**Shepherd #1:** *[in awe]* A Savior?

**Angel:** Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth, and good will for men! Glory to God!

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**End of script preview.**