



## Scene 2

*(The main stage becomes busy with visitors and Bethlehem townsfolk, some selling from baskets and others inspecting the wares. Four older shepherds enter and stand centrally, with four older sheep for sale.)*

**Narrator 2** Everyone enjoyed market day in Bethlehem. The sights, sounds and smells were truly something to behold! It would certainly be an exciting place for a young shepherd or sheep to visit, if they were allowed...which they weren't!

**Narrator 3** But today it was much busier than usual, as lots of visitors had suddenly arrived in the town. On the orders of the Roman Emperor, Augustus, every man had to return with his family to the town of his birth, to sign a register.

**Narrator 4** Judging by the numbers who had arrived here, it seemed that many had been born in Bethlehem over the years! It all made for a very lively atmosphere indeed and for the older shepherds and sheep lucky enough to be at market, it was an exciting break from their quiet lives on the hillside.

### **Song Market Day** *(CD 4 & 12, lyrics p17)* *(Whole cast)*

**Older Shep. 2** *(shouting)* FINE SHEEP FOR SALE! TOP QUALITY SHEEP!

**Sheep** *(proudly)* Baaaa!

**Older Shep. 3** ALL FED ON THE GREENEST, LUSHEST GRASS!

**Sheep** *(licking their lips)* Mmmmm! Baaaa!

**Older Shep. 4** *(patting the sheep's backs)* EXCELLENT FOR WOOL.....

**Sheep** *(proudly again)* Baaaa!

**Older Shep. 5** *(behind hand so the sheep don't hear)* OR FOR THE POT!

**Sheep** *(they do hear!!)* Baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!

*(A local woman examines a sheep, pats it a few times, hands over some coins to Shepherd 2, and leads the sheep off.)*

**Older Shep. 2** *(nodding at the woman in appreciation)* Thank you, Madam. That one will clothe and feed your family for months!

*(Joseph and Mary, with their donkey, then enter and stand by the shepherds.)*

**Older Shep. 3** Sir, Madam, perhaps I could interest you in a sheep? They all have excellent fleeces and plenty of meat on their bones.

**Joseph** I'm sorry, but what we need is a place to spend the night. We are very tired and, as you can see, we're expecting a baby soon!

**Mary** Please, do you know of anywhere? Every inn we've tried so far is full. There don't seem to be any spare rooms in the town.

**Narrator 1** Like most of the other visitors who had turned up in Bethlehem, this man and woman, whose names were Joseph and Mary, had travelled a long way.

**Narrator 2** Exhausted from their journey, they had searched all around the town for somewhere to stay, but without any luck.

**Narrator 3** With their baby on the way, time was running out....

## **Song A Place To Stay** *(CD 5 & 13, lyrics p18)* *(Whole cast)*

**Narrator 4** The shepherds couldn't really help and suggested they look for a room in another part of town. To be honest, they didn't want to waste any more time talking to people who weren't interested in buying sheep. So Joseph and Mary wearily led their donkey away, in the direction the shepherds had pointed, hoping they'd find somewhere soon.

*(Joseph and Mary exit wearily.)*

**Narrator 1** And as the evening closed in, the streets of Bethlehem became empty. The market sellers and locals headed home and visitors went to their lodgings. The shepherds, along with the sheep they hadn't sold, returned to their hillside to sit by the fire and warm their toes.

**Narrator 2** It had been another busy and exciting day at market.....but for some it was going to be an even busier and more exciting night!

*(As the backing track to the previous song is played again, all exit. Fade the music when ready for the next scene.)*

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