

# Just a Dumb Ole Shepherd

*By Karen Jones*

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### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Owen is disgruntled. It's time for the annual Christmas pageant and he's been chosen for the role of a "dumb ole shepherd." This fact is made worse by the fact that his older brother will be playing a king and his sister an angel. While they will be dressed in regal finery and carrying gifts of gold, Owen will be clothed in a "ratty old bathrobe with a towel wrapped around his head" carrying a stick. It just ain't fair!

While he is stewing over his fate, he drifts off to sleep where he is transported back to the hills of Bethlehem. There he meets the shepherds, Simon, Jacob and Esau, where he learns just what it took to be a "good" shepherd. He even gets to witness the angles announcing the birth of the Messiah and make the trip down to the manger to see the child for himself.

Upon waking from his dream, Owen is reminded that the little baby in the manger was in fact a shepherd himself. The "Good Shepherd" that was willing to give His life for His sheep.

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*Speaking roles: 1 m, 1 - 2 w, 3 teen boys, 1 teen girl*

*Non-Speaking roles for manger scene: 4 m, 1 w*

*Plus angelic choir (2 songs)*

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Church play director.

**OWEN:** Young pre-teen boy.

**JOANIE / ANGEL:** Teenage sister / Angel.

**GAIGE / JACOB:** Young teenage brother / Shepherd.

**PARKER / ESAU:** Gaige's friend / Shepherd.

**JANITOR / SIMON:** Older gentlemen / Shepherd.

**MOM:** Mother to Owen, Gaige and Joanie.

**EXTRAS:** Manger roles: Mary, Joseph, angels, kings, angelic choir.

**Doubling:** The roles of Ms. Reynolds and Mom can be doubled, and/or Mrs. Reynolds can double with Mary.

## **COSTUMES**

**Church scenes:** Casual modern-day clothes.

**Bethlehem:** Period costumes.

## **SETTING**

**Scene 1:** The church lounge. A comfortable setting with three main furniture sections: a card table and chairs, an easy chair with side table and lamp, and an old radiator at the back of the stage.

**Scene 2:** The hills over Bethlehem. This can be done in front of the lounge set. A blue backdrop with clear Christmas lights can portray the night sky. A grouping of cardboard boulders is CS separating one side of the stage from the other. Bushes scattered around the stage. There is a large rock SL.

**Scene 3:** The hills over Bethlehem. Add a campfire to the stage.

**Scene 4:** The stable in Bethlehem. Add some hay bales and manger to the scene.

**Scene 5:** The church lounge. Remove everything to reveal the lounge setting again.

**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: LIGHTS up on the church lounge. MS. REYNOLDS enters, carrying a box of costumes. She is followed by JOANIE, GAIGE, PARKER, and OWEN. Joanie is busy texting on her phone. Gaige is carrying a basketball. Owen, a book bag slung over his shoulder, is dragging behind, obviously disgruntled.)*

**MS. REYNOLDS:** I want to thank all of you guys for taking part in this year's pageant. I'm sure you will do a great job. Remember "There are no small parts—"

**GAIGE:** *(Interrupts.)* Only small actors. *(HE smiles broadly as he looks at his brother, OWEN.)*

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Exactly. *(Smiles at GAIGE.)* Now your mother called earlier and said she was running a few minutes late. So, you're to wait in here and work on your homework until she arrives. She said to put you in charge, Joanie.

*(GAIGE and PARKER moan. JOANIE looks up from her phone with an annoyed look.)*

**JOANIE:** Whatever. *(Returns to her texting.)*

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Now be sure to give her these costumes to clean and iron. *(Places the costumes on the table.)* Can't have wrinkled kings running about, now can we? And please thank her for me. That's going to be a big help. *(Turns to leave.)* Now I will be in the props room if you need anything. I still haven't been able to find the "Angel of the Lord" costume for you, Joanie.

**OWEN:** What about me? What do I get to wear?

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Well, Owen, our shepherds generally just bring their father's bathrobe and a bath towel. Do you think you can do that?

**PARKER:** Did you hear that, Gaige? Owen gets to wear your dad's ratty old robe with a towel wrapped around his head. *(Punches GAIGE in the arm.)*

**JOANIE:** Okay, guys, hold it down.

**OWEN:** *(Ignores them.)* But that ain't special.

**GAIGE:** That's because shepherds weren't special.

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Now boys...

**JOANIE:** Leave them to me, Ms. Reynolds. They're just being wise guys.

**GAIGE:** Just trying to stay in character. We are the wise men after all.

*(GAIGE and PARKER give each other a high five.)*

**PARKER:** Right on. Hey, Ms. Reynolds, would it be all right if Gaige and I go outside and shoot hoops? We've got all our homework done. Haven't we, Gaige?

**GAIGE:** Sure do.

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Hmm...I'm not so sure.

**PARKER:** Please. We'll be right outside.

**MS. REYNOLDS:** Well, I'm all right with it if you promise to stay within sight of the window. But I guess that would actually be up to Joanie, now wouldn't it. After all, she is in charge.

*(JOANIE smiles triumphantly at the BOYS. They moan and drop their heads.)*

**PARKER and GAIGE:** Aw, man...

*(MS. REYNOLDS exits SL. GAIGE and PARKER turn to face JOANIE.)*

**PARKER:** What do you say, Joanie? Can we go out and shoot some hoops?

**JOANIE:** Mom says—

*(SFX: Her phone rings. SHE turns aside to answer it. The BOYS crowd around her and mimic asking her permission. Perturbed she waves them off and exits SL. The boys turn SR. OWEN starts to follow.)*

**GAIGE:** Just where do you think you're going?

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**OWEN:** I want to play too.

**GAIGE:** Nah. You're too small. You'll just get in the way.  
Besides, you need to study your part for the play.

**OWEN:** But I don't have any lines to learn.

**PARKER:** Oh, that's right. You're just a shepherd. All you  
have to do is act scared.

**GAIGE:** Yeah, you're, "sore afraid."

*(The two older BOYS laugh and mimic being frightened. The JANITOR enters the stage carrying a caddy of cleaning supplies. He stops, takes out some cleaning rags and starts wiping down the tables, etc.)*

**OWEN:** That's not fair. I can't help that Ms. Reynolds chose  
me for a shepherd.

**GAIGE:** Well, I guess she figured you were a natural for the  
part. After all, you do scare easily.

*(While GAIGE is speaking PARKER sneaks around behind OWEN.)*

**OWEN:** I do not.

**PARKER:** *(Jumps at OWEN from behind.)* BOO!!!

*(OWEN jumps and cries out. Laughing, PARKER and GAIGE give each other a high five.)*

**OWEN:** Cut it out, you guys.

**GAIGE:** Face it, Owen. You were born to be a shepherd.

**PARKER:** Just like we were born to be kings. *(Puffs out his chest.)* We're just naturally more regal.

**OWEN:** You're a royal pain, if that's what you mean.

**GAIGE:** It's a tough job, but somebody's got to do it. So, since  
you don't have any lines to memorize, I suggest you do your  
homework like Mom said.

**PARKER:** Yeah, don't you have a book report or something  
due?

**OWEN:** I can do it when I get home. You're not the boss of  
me.

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