

# Bert is My Shepherd – Psalm 23 (ish)

## Characters, Props and Staging

**Bert** Shepherd with flat cap, beer belly and broad accent, optional sheep to carry. Bert has stick/crook, sat nav, small folding umbrella.

**Narr** Attempting to read Psalm 23. Narr has large Bible, hay and holly to put in hair.

Bert and Narr stand next to each other. At the start of scene 1, Bert is noble and worthy, staring thoughtfully into the distance, but picking his nose, cleaning ears etc at the start of scenes 2 and 3.

**Sound effects:** fall and crash (scene 1), twang and thwack (scene 2), large splash (scene 3)

## Bert is my Shepherd

### Scene 1

Narr: *[reading from large Bible]* Psalm 23.

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down ...

Bert: *[speaking out of the side of his mouth while still staring nobly into distance]* Bert.

Narr: *[sideways glance at Bert, then resuming]* Ahem. The Lord is my shepherd, I lack ...

Bert: Bert!

Narr: The Lord is my ...

Bert: BERT!

Narr: Is there a problem?

Bert: Yes. My name's Bert. I'm the shepherd round here, not this 'Lord' you keep waffling on about.

Narr: Oh, OK. Sorry. I'll start again.

Bert: Aye, you do that.

Narr: *[uncomfortable]* Bert is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads ...

Bert: Hold it. Hold it. I need to stop you there. Lyin' down in green pastures?

How are you going to burn calories doing that? Have you not heard of the body beautiful?

*[displays beer belly]*

Look at me. You don't get a physique like this by lazin' around in green pastures all day.

Narr: But ... *[pointing to Bible]*

Bert: Twenty laps round the hay meadow, you, and look lively!

Narr: Umm, OK. *[jogs off looking confused]*

Bert: Oh, mind that patch of mud. It can be a bit ...

Narr: *[offstage]* Arggh! *[sound effect of fall and crash]*

Bert: ... slippery! *[sniggers to self]*

*[end of scene]*

## Scene 2

Narr: [*jogs on stage, out of breath, with hay in hair*] Right. OK. Psalm 23.  
Bert is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me jog round the hay meadow twenty times,  
he leads me beside quiet waters, he ...

Bert: Ah, sorry to stop you again, but with new regulations about animal welfare and providing enrichment experiences for livestock, we have swapped the quiet waters for water-skiing lessons.

Narr: Water-skiing?

Bert: Aye.

Narr: For sheep?

Bert: 'happen.

Narr: Are they any good at it?

Bert: No.  
But I'm hopin' to get a lottery grant to fund a training school and then I'll have the first ovine water-ski display team in the world.  
And they make their own promotional jumpers!

Narr: OK, so it's: [*Bert mouthing along*] Bert is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me jog round the hay meadow twenty times,  
he leads me to the water-ski training sessions.  
... hmmm.  
He guides me along the right paths?

Bert: [*shakes head*]

Narr: Find my own way there?

Bert: [*nods head, hands over a sat nav, and indicates 'off' with head*]

Narr: [*glumly takes sat nav and slopes off*]

Bert: And watch out for the ...

Narr: [*offstage*] Arggh! [*sound effect of twang and thwack*]

Bert: ... low branch! [*smirks*]

[*end of scene*]

### Scene 3

- Narr: [*staggers back on stage with hay and bits of holly in hair*] Psalm 23.  
Bert is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me jog round the hay meadow twenty times,  
he leads me to the water-ski training sessions.  
He lends me his sat nav  
[*through gritted teeth and glaring at Bert*] which needs its map updating 'cos instead of Holyhead it sent me  
through a holly hedge!  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me, your rod and your staff ...
- Bert: Oh, no, no, no, no. That's not in my contract. I don't do dark valleys. You're on your own there, matey.
- Narr: But sheep can't protect themselves. What if there were wolves?  
They need the shepherd, and you've got that really good stick.
- Bert: Hands off! That's my stick, that is. Get your own.
- Narr: Can't I borrow it for a bit? Just for the dark valley, please?
- Bert: [*grumbling*] You can have my old umbrella, I suppose. [*hands over an umbrella*]
- Narr: [*looking very unhappy*] Bert is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me jog round the hay meadow twenty times,  
he leads me to the water-ski training sessions.  
He lends me his [*glaring at Bert*] broken sat nav,  
and lets me make my own way through the dark valley  
armed only with a manky old umbrella. [*throws umbrella away*]  
  
It's not quite the same, is it?
- Bert: [*shrugs*] I hope you're done, 'cos I'm off for a good nosh up.
- Narr: Ah yes. The food. I know that bit:  
[*reading Bible*] You prepare a table before me ...
- Bert: Too right! It's going to be a great feast, and all you lovely little sheep are invited!
- Narr: Really? That's so kind.
- Bert: Oh yes. We couldn't have the feast without you. [*counting on fingers*] There's going to be shepherd's pie,  
shish kebabs, mutton stew, chops and mint sauce, [*Narr realises it's sheep meat and looks appalled*]  
barbeque roast leg of lamb with rosemary ...
- Narr: What? But, but, you're supposed to *look after* the sheep, not ... That's dreadful!
- Bert: On the contrary, it's very tasty!
- Narr: **Enough!** You're nothing like what it says in here [*prods Bible*].  
With Bert as my shepherd I lack pretty much everything!  
Why don't you go and [*shoving Bert off stage*] anoint your head with oil. [*to self*] Preferably sump oil!  
And watch out for the ...
- Bert: [*offstage*] Arggh! [*sound effect of large splash*]
- Narr: ... overflowing cup! [*smirks*]  
  
[*to audience*] Jesus, on the other hand, is the *Good Shepherd*.