

### - 3 wise men sketch -

**Caspar** – I am so bored. I mean, nothing's going on. I've been on the trail of the Star of Bethlehem for weeks. I mean, we've had this prophecy about this star for years. To be honest, I'm tired of all this astronomy and star gazing. Doesn't pay enough either, all these secular magicians keep under-cutting us, especially that Derren Brown (UK performer who uses psychological illusion, perceptual manipulation and persuasive technique). I'm thinking of becoming a monk and taking up horticulture..

**Melchior** – Numbers 24.17 is the Hebrew text – *"There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."*

**Balthasar** – Trust you to know that off by heart.. Boffin. You've always been top of the class ever since Primary school.

**Melchior** – And you were always on top of the class. Running across the roof causing trouble mainly..

**Balthasar** – I still don't understand what this whole trip is about anyway. "There shall come a star out of Jacob?" I mean, who's Jacob anyway? Is it a TV show? Does it mean a star like Leona out of X-Factor? (Pop star from 2007 UK TV series). She's a star now. Besides, why are we looking for a star? It's so 1<sup>st</sup> century. Why didn't we get a satnav?

**Melchior** – (Looks and shakes head). I sometimes wonder how you passed the wise man test at wise man university in wise man town.. We've been on the trail of an astronomical event and you're talking about pop stars..

**Caspar** – It's on about a Messiah coming for the people of Israel, someone will come out of the house of Jacob – Israel – and change things for the people. That's why we're excited. It's about stars in the heavens and a new star on earth. He may not be a pop star, probably can't sing like Leona, but it's going to be massive.

**Balthasar** – So why did we have to come on these camels? I mean, look at my camel, Horace. Typical. I got the miserable one. Offered him some water yesterday and he spat it back in my face. And man are they uncomfortable.. Why didn't we at least come in a wagon? Even a Dartmoor pony would have been more comfortable. My bottom aches, feel like I've been on a rollercoaster every time I dismount from Horace. I mean, we could have at least had the latest eastern reclining camel seat, turbo model. Unbelievable journey. I mean, we've gone through more traffic lights than they've even got in Exeter (replace with your local town). And the snow.. Unbelievable. The Met Office said there would be light showers with sun. And we get snowstorms worse than the ones in Ottery St Mary (replace with an area with heavy snow) And the food? Don't get me started. Worse than I'm a Celebrity.. (TV series)

**Melchior** – It's well known that wise men have camels. It's just the done thing. And besides, with the credit crunch you know there's no money in the pot. I mean, they didn't even pass the VAT cut onto us.

**Caspar** – Well, I did tell the management not to invest money in Icelandic banks or in subprime mortgages, but would they listen..

**Balthasar** – It's all completely ridiculous. When we get back home, I'm leaving Horace in the director's parking space. Not sure which one has the smelliest breath, Horace or our director.. I do know which one talks the more sense..

**Melchior** – Let's not lose focus. We're here to find the star as written in the prophecy and then find and worship the new-born King.

**Balthasar** - What gifts did they give us to bring? I know what we should be bringing - maybe some new clothes from Mecca-care... definitely a few nappies. I especially like the new Huggies range myself ([brief discussion about disposable and normal nappies](#)). I'd also throw in some little toys.

**Caspar** – Don't forget some books. I like the Mr Men range myself, possibly Mr Impossible to sum up this journey. Good to get a kid started early.. I also think we should get him a Facebook account..

**Melchior** – I'd get him one of those early years astronomy sets from ELC – you know, the Eastern Learning Centre toy shop..

**Caspar** – To be honest, I haven't looked at the gifts yet. Let's get them out ([reaches behind him and brings out 3 boxes. Looks inside each box, one by one](#)). First of all they've given us... gold! Nice one. Pity they never give us any gold..

**Balthasar** – Gold?! GOLD?!! They can't pay us a decent wage and send us out for miles on camels. And they give us gold to give away!! The only gold I ever get are those edible chocolate ones.. Well, that just about does it.. I'm off to work for Derren Brown. At least he's got his on TV series. No-one ever writes about us..

**Melchior** – We're bringing gold for a King. It's what Kings get.

**Caspar** – What else did the management send for this King? What is this? Frankincense? What's that for?

**Balthasar** – It's for aromatherapy isn't it? Ridiculous. Do I look even remotely like an aromatherapist..? I don't even have a white coat. They should have sent us on a course at Exeter College ([replace with your local college](#)). Anyway, talking after shave, it's got to be Hugo Boss..

**Caspar** – No chance, it's Lacoste or nothing. With a hint of Linx of course..

**Balthasar** – No, no, it's got to be Calvin Klein or Ralf Lauren at a push...

**Melchior** – ([cuts in](#)) Anyway, it's also used in perfume and eye liner in Egypt..

**Balthasar** – So let's get this straight. We're off to see the King of the Jews and we're taking him a substance used for aromatherapy, perfume and black eye liner.. Surely that's abuse, unless this is a gothic birth or it's for the mother of the baby..

**Melchior** – It's really about worship. In the Hebrew texts it says, *"He is to take a censer full of burning coals from the altar before the LORD and two handfuls of finely ground fragrant incense and take them behind the curtain."* Leviticus 16:12

**Balthasar** – (takes long hard look at Melchior and shakes head). You really need to get out more. No-one will be reading these Hebrew texts in 2000 years time anyway..

**Caspar** – Let's see what else there is in the bag. I hope it's something really good. Lego maybe or perhaps something made by Fisher Price, maybe the hop'n'pop range.... (Has a look. Disappointed). Myrrh.

**Balthasar** – (no longer surprised). Myrrh. I am no longer surprised by these ridiculous gifts. Unreal. Melchior, I expect you'll have some clever comment on this..

**Melchior** – The Hebrew texts say, *"And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah."* - Exodus 15:23

**Balthasar** – Oh brother.. Are there any Hebrew texts you don't know..

**Caspar** – He's right you know. They use myrrh for burial. I wonder what these gifts signify for the life of the King of the Jews. It must be a sign, although I haven't seen anything written in the skies. Maybe we've just missed it..

**Balthasar** – No, we haven't seen a sign because it's been snowing. It's been snowing because we've been looking. Really, the Met Office are to blame for this trip. I can tell the weather better by looking out of my window.. And I've got to say, it really is a weird choice of gifts for a baby.. Maybe we could stop off at a tourist shop in Israel and maybe pick up a couple of handmade wooden toys or something. It's ridiculous. They haven't sent us to meet the King of Jews, we've come all this way to have a baby shower. I mean, really. That's if we even get into Israel. You know what their customs and border police are like towards Gentiles..

**Melchior** – (looking at the sky, calculating). I hate to be the bearer of good news but if I'm not mistaken, and I never am, there's a new star rising in the skies over there (points up to the distance). After all, the prophecy could be translated as a rising star.

**Balthasar** – Are you sure you haven't seen another UFO? You've been watching X-Files again haven't you? (Sings music from Close Encounters of the Third Kind, X-Files or similar).

**Melchior** – No, seriously.. The skies are clearing and can you see that star rising.

**Caspar** – I can see it, at last it's the sign in the skies the charts have been foretelling. Where is the star going? Bethlehem?

**Melchior** – That would line up with Micah 5.2 in the Hebrew texts.

**Balthasar** - You and your Hebrew texts. In a minute, you'll be telling me the baby will be born to a virgin called Mary.. (They exchange glances to suggest this is the truth. Balthasar rolls his eyes)

**Caspar** – Right, let's go get Horace and the other camels. Looks like you'd better get some padding for your backside Balthasar. Seems we're off to meet the King of the Jews. Pack up the gifts. And Balthasar.. put back the gold!! (They walk off stage)

## Background to Characters

**Melchior** – A well educated background. He comes from a good family and is very principled, rigorously applying the principles of his trade. He hopes to move up the ranks and into the upper echelons. Sometimes knows a bit too much and slightly distant from other wise men in the organisation.

**Caspar** – Been in the trade for some time and getting a little fed up with the whole thing. Only stays on to support his family of 4. Is looking at other career opps but not quite sure of how or whether to make a change. A bit stuck in life. The leader of the three, somewhat reluctantly, but the most experienced wise man.

**Balthasar** – A bit of a jack the lad. He's intelligent and gifted but doesn't work that hard. Quite active outside the job and has fun, but sometimes at the expense of work. Slightly resented by Melchior. Street smart and street cred.