

Wise Men

The Two-Man Play about Three Wise Men

By Joey Martineck

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Something is wrong with Melchior, and it is driving Balthasar insane. Ever since Melchior went to see the baby, he has changed. After a long journey with his fellow magi travelers, Balthasar wants to experience what happened to his friend as he impatiently waits for the third companion to finish meeting the newborn "King." And what could be more peculiar than the bright star shining above them against the dark night? Finally Melchior explains: "You will walk in with your gift and your prepared speech. Then you will see the babe and everything will change. It will feel like your soul is leaping out of your body toward this Jesus. Your gift will drop to the ground and so shall your knees. You will gaze at him awestruck with your mouth open, and all the words that you intended for him will turn into tears." About 45 minutes.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

Georgia Tech Catholic Center, December 3rd, 2009.
Balthasar was performed by Bryan Lewis and Melchior by Joey Martineck.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 m)

BALTHASAR: Late twenties, skinny impatient king, travels with Melchior.

MELCHIOR: Seasoned king with a beard, an astrologer who follows the star.

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PLACE

Outside of a small home in Bethlehem.

TIME

A Winter night, shortly after Christ's birth.

SET

Across the stage is an old wooden house with a closed door at the center. There are two bales of hay stage left and right in front of the house. Stage right there are blankets carelessly tossed about and an enormous amount of scrolls overflowing messily from a crate. Stage left has blankets neatly laid out beside astrology tools.

PRODUCTION NOTE

Scripture is noted in the text within quotation marks. Consider having the actors sing these sections acapella to give more distinction to the scripture.

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(AT RISE: It is night. Two MEN are waiting dressed in full kingly apparel. MELCHIOR sits in meditation on a bale of hay stage left. BALTHASAR fidgets anxiously and paces for some time stage right, holding a gift.)

BALTHASAR: Rude.

MELCHIOR: Did you say something?

BALTHASAR: Rude.

MELCHIOR: What?

BALTHASAR: Someone is being very inconsiderate.

MELCHIOR: Who?

BALTHASAR: Who do you think?

MELCHIOR: Are you talking about me?

BALTHASAR: Am I— Of course I'm not talking about you; I'm talking about Gaspar!

MELCHIOR: You could have been talking about me.

BALTHASAR: You haven't been paying me any attention.

MELCHIOR: What's the matter with Gaspar?

BALTHASAR: Nothing, I think. He seems to be doing pretty well to me.

MELCHIOR: Then what's the problem?

BALTHASAR: Boy, he's got a lot of nerve, I'll tell you. I've been waiting for him to finish for about two hours now. You didn't take this long, that's for sure. You took your time, but you were reasonable. This, this is unreasonable. *(Pause.)* I'm insulted. I take this as a direct insult. He knows that I'm the last one to visit so he thinks he can take his sweet time. Well. We should have agreed on a time limit: fifteen minutes each. You get pulled out by the neck with a cane if you go over. *(Pause.)* How much does he have to say to a baby anyway? The kid just got out of the womb. By the time I get a chance to see him, he'll be asleep. I wonder, is Gaspar going to come out all strange and everything after seeing him like you did? All milky-eyed and stuff? What went on in there anyway?

MELCHIOR: I gave him my gift.

BALTHASAR: Oh yeah? Did he like it? Of course he liked it. Little kids love getting gifts. God, I cannot wait to meet him. *(Pause.)* Mel? Do you know what I got him? Myrrh. It's spelled M-Y-R-R-H. Not M-E-R. He's going to love it. *(Pause.)* No, sir. It's not every day that someone gives you some brand-new, quality myrrh. *(Pause.)* I am nervous about the presenting of my gift though. About stuttering or tripping over something. Or even getting an asthma attack. I wouldn't want that to happen. Not if this baby is going to be the King of Israel. We are sure about him being King of Israel, right?

MELCHIOR: Yes.

BALTHASAR: Born of a virgin?

MELCHIOR: Just like in the scriptures.

BALTHASAR: Wow. Now, that - that is something. You don't see that every day. And we lucky few are the first to know about it. I'm telling you, God has a plan for us. Think about this. Out of all the people in the world, we are the ones here right now. This is big. People are going to write about this for years to come. Maybe they'll even write about us!

MELCHIOR: We are blessed to be here.

BALTHASAR: A lot of people think this Jesus is going to be special, but I bet they don't know about him being king and all. That's right. "But to you, Bethlehem too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; whose origin is from of old...he shall be peace," and he shall receive my myrrh. It's in the scriptures. Herod is going to be so impressed when we tell him we found Jesus. *(Pause.)* I'm likened to practice, I think.

MELCHIOR: Practice what?

BALTHASAR: Giving him my myrrh.

MELCHIOR: I don't think you need to worry about that, Balthasar.

BALTHASAR: But I want to get ready for what happens in there.

MELCHIOR: Not now.

BALTHASAR: What was he like? What goes on in there?

End of Freeview

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