

## Day 15

“...at least we didn’t have to do a puzzle just to get directions to the myrrh shop this time” said Melchior.

He and Balthazar were hurrying along a street, looking for a shop with a purple sign. Night was falling, and they were determined to buy the replacement myrrh that day, so as not to fall behind their travel schedule. Melchior had calmed down a little, but Balthazar was still feeling rather vexed with Caspar for accidentally posting their first box of myrrh back to the East.

“Thinks he’s so wise...” he muttered. “And what if we hadn’t been in Somalia, where myrrh producing trees grow? How would we have got more myrrh then?”

“In fairness, we only knew that myrrh trees were native to Somalia because of one of Caspar’s little speeches he uses to make himself look clever, so he’s not completely useless. Perhaps we could consider letting him...”

“Absolutely not” interrupted Balthazar. “Until we have a full complement of gold, frankincense and myrrh, he is completely banned from any form of showing off his wisdom, such that it is. Ah, here we are--”

They had reached the myrrh seller’s shop- the slightly garish purple sign read “Bargain Myrrh Market- low, low prices guaranteed”.

“It’s not as mystical as the last place, is it?” said Melchior, but Balthazar was already rushing inside the shop.

“Evening, we’d like to buy some myrrh, just give us a puzzle or riddle or word game or whatever, then we’ll get the myrrh and be on our way” Balthazar said, rather abruptly.

The myrrh-seller looked a little taken aback, but said “Fine, since you’ve asked...” and disappeared off to the back of the shop, and came back with some scrolls and a selection of boxes of myrrh.

While he was doing this, Caspar and the camels had caught up with Melchior and Balthazar. Caspar, having no camel treats, implored the camels to be good, and left them outside while he snuck into the shop. He was hoping for a chance to redeem himself by hoping solve whatever puzzle this myrrh-seller posed.

“Here you are!” said the myrrh-seller. He unfurled a scroll on the counter, which read:

*The word in brackets is made up from letters from the words on either side. In the second group of three words the missing word in the brackets is made up in the same way. What is it?*

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|-------------------------|----------------|--------|
| 1- carols (snow) winter | sugars (_____) | rotund |
| 2- seer (wise) wisdom   | gift (_____)   | manger |
| 3- jingly (joy) halo    | narrow (_____) | yule   |

Answers: 1- star 2- magic 3- new
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