

Day 20

The three wise men handed over the lost sheep to the anxious shepherd boy, and headed towards the inn. The streets of the town were packed with people, and the wise men had to use no small amount of pushing, shoving and elbowing to reach their destination.

On reaching the inn, Caspar took a moment to compose himself in an effort to impress the innkeeper with his air of astuteness and spiritual demeanour- his ultimate goal was to secure an upgrade to a better room.

“Good evening ,” he began, before continuing in a quiet, mystical tone: “my companions and I have travelled a great many miles from the East to seek refuge in this fine establishment...

“Speak up!” said the inn-keeper. “I can’t hear a word you’re saying”.

Caspar cleared his throat, then continued a little louder and with his crispest annunciation:

“We have travelled a great many miles from the East, and have three rooms booked under the name of ‘The Magi’ ...”

“Ah, the Maggies!” exclaimed the inn-keeper. “Good thing you booked, we’re packed out. I have to say, we were expecting three nice ladies, not three bearded chaps likes yourselves”.

“*Magi*” hissed Caspar, but the inn-keeper had already disappeared into a back room, shouting “The Maggies have arrived, and you’ll never guess what...”

A few minutes later, the Magi were settled in their rooms. The inn-keeper hefted the last of Caspar’s bags of manuscripts up the stairs and into his room, then left, cheerily shouting over his shoulder “If there’s anything I can do to help, Maggie, just give me a shout!”

“Magi!” growled Caspar through gritted teeth.

Balthazar’s room was undoubtedly the best (much to Caspar’s annoyance). It had a very comfy bed, and an even comfier sofa- a very welcome change from sitting on a camel. It also contained a wooden table, upon which Balthazar had spread out his gift wrapping materials with great excitement. He was just pondering whether a gold coloured gift bag for the bag of gold was the right choice or not when Melchior popped his head round the door.

“Balthazar,” he said, “I can see you are terribly busy wrapping up the gold, frankincense and myrrh, so I wondered if it would be helpful for me to just nip over the street to Woolworths, and stock up on some pick’n’mix for the final leg of the journey?”

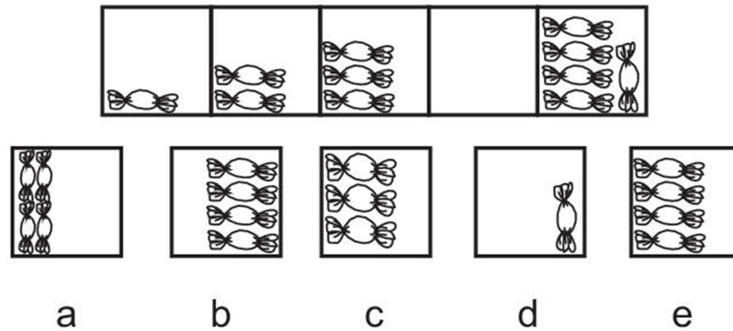
“Well,” began Balthazar, but before he could continue, Caspar’s voice rang out from across the corridor-

“In my humble opinion, given the great likelihood of us encountering a much higher than average number of signs and wonders in the next twenty four hours, asceticism would be far the better path- let us eschew the comforts of the flesh in order to better appreciate on a higher plane the significance of the extraordinary events we will see”.

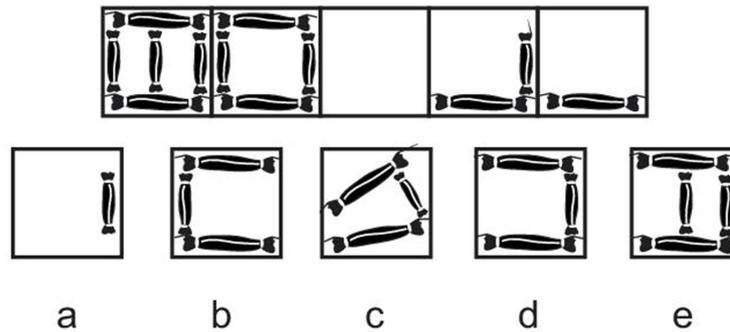
“Great idea, Melchior” whispered Balthazar, handing him a bag of coins. “Make sure you get lots of chocolately things, and fudge”.

Melchior just can't stop adding more sweeties to the pick'n'mix bag. Which comes next in each sequence?

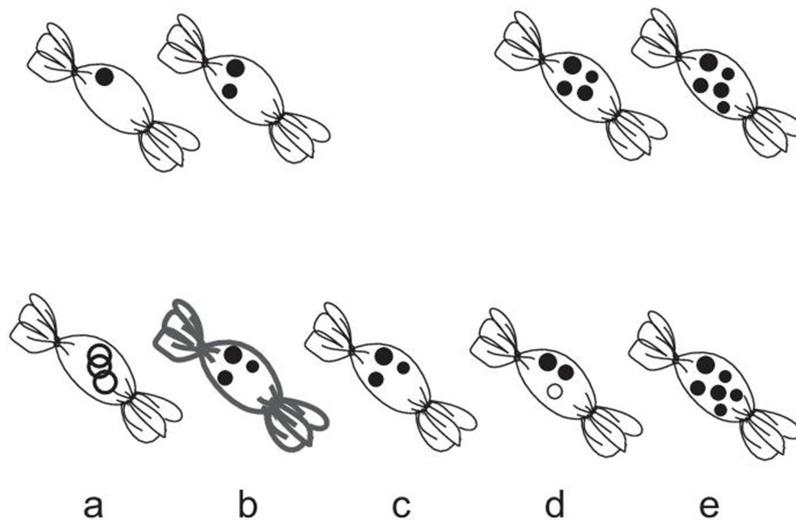
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2



3



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Answers: 1-e 2-d 3-c