



Three Men and a Baby

a Christmas sketch

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5 *Our three shepherds enter furtively, glancing back over their shoulders nervously, as if trying to get away from someone or something that has frightened them. They are traveling huddled closely together for security—which causes them to keep tripping over each other's feet.*

10 *Caleb, the eldest, is in the lead. He is our strong leader who thinks he has all the answers. Ephraim is the nervous one in our trio, always fussing and fretting, worrying about tomorrow. Jacob is the sober-headed diplomat of our group. Count on him to keep things straight.*

Caleb

(turning quickly to halt the others)

Now hold it! Just wait a minute. What's got into us here?

Ephraim

15 *(pointing back in the direction they have just come; stuttering)*

B—b—b—but—

Caleb

(sarcastically)

Well said.

20 **Jacob**

(to Caleb; for once, almost as nervous as his friend Ephraim)

I agree with Ephraim.

Caleb

(trying to calm his companions)

25 We gotta slow down here.

Ephraim

Y—you heard what he said.

30

Jacob

(to Caleb)

You heard what they all said.

Caleb

(after a beat)

We were dreaming.

35

Jacob

(incredulous)

All three of us?

Ephraim

(firmly)

40

I wasn't dreaming.

Caleb

But we can't just leave the sheep.

Jacob

(to Ephraim; calming down)

45

Caleb's right. That wolf from last night might come back.

Ephraim

(to Jacob)

But the angels said—

Caleb

(cross-examining)

50

Now, how do you really know they were angels? I mean, maybe the sun was in our eyes.

Jacob

At midnight?

55

Caleb

('have it your way')

All right then—the moon.

Ephraim

(with firm resolve as much to convince himself)

60 I've never seen an angel before, but I swear on my mother-in-law's
life—those were angels.

Jacob

(slowly turning toward Ephraim; after a beat)

Your mother-in-law?

Caleb

(turning Jacob by the shoulder; with feigned confidentiality)

65 I've met his mother-in-law. He's got nothing to lose.

Jacob

(to both his companions)

70 Look, I think we can all agree we saw something extraordinary tonight.
The only question is: What are we going to do about it?

Ephraim

Caleb says we dreamed up the whole thing. The only way to prove it really
happened, is to go into Bethlehem and check it out for ourselves.

Caleb

(after a pause; more seriously; thoughtfully)

75 It wasn't just what we saw. Can you imagine! The angels said the Christ
child has been born. All these centuries—and finally, He's here!

Ephraim

(trying to remember)

80 What did they say now . . .

Jacob

They said,

(reciting—but not too smoothly)

85 "The sign will be that you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a
manger."

Ephraim

(with quickly fading confidence)

90 Well, how hard can that be. Just find the right cave . . . and the right stall .
. . . and the right cows . . .

Caleb

(assuring Ephraim; with some disdain)

We'll ask directions.

Jacob

(after a short pause)

95 What's so hard to believe is that we'd be chosen as the messengers in
the first place.

Ephraim

(wryly)

100 Or the last place.

Jacob

I was sure the Messiah would reveal Himself first in Jerusalem—on the
temple mount!

Caleb

(wryly)

105 But instead He comes to Bethlehem, of all places.

jacob

110 I don't know. I guess it doesn't really matter where the Savior shows
up—as long as He does.

Ephraim

(after a beat; thoughtfully)

What do you think's going to happen?

Caleb

115 What do you mean?

Ephraim

I mean for us. What's going to happen to us, now that Messiah is here?

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