

A NATIVITY PLAY

**WELL, IT'S A SPOOF ON THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE BIRTH OF JESUS,
REALLY.**

By Tom Considine

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SYNOPSIS

This is a spoof on the events leading up to the birth of Jesus Christ with the addition of the everyday bureaucratic obstacles we all have to put up with today to the problems they had then. This is not meant to denigrate the beliefs of people but to present in a comedic manner what Mary and Joseph and the other characters would have had to put up with if Christ were to have been born today.

CAST

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Fat Tuesday | Tuesday is a man of medium colouring and wears extra medium size clothes. |
| Narrator | Might be a man. Speaks well. |
| Prompt | Might be a woman, a little bossy. Can be Mary in the last act. |
| Balthazar | Balthazar is shortish and stocky. Something of a con man always looking for a chance to make money either legally or not, if necessary. |
| Melchior | Melchior is good-looking. He is dressed as a racecourse tout with a checked suit and a loud tie. He is fast with his mouth. |
| Gaspar | Gaspar is tall and thin with knobby knees which are unsuccessfully hidden by long shorts and hiking boots. He is of a gloomy disposition as he suffers from chronic dyspepsia. Cadaverous would describe him. He talks slowly with a melancholy voice. Think of Marvin the paranoid android. |
| Ben Yehuda | Ben Yehuda is a stereotypical tough cop |
| Ben Dover | He is a total queen, a very annoying one. He is wearing very short, very tight shorts, with a floral shirt open to the waist, and nail polish. His sandals are pink. |
| Customs Officer | Usual civil servant type |
| Policeman in street | Usual policeman type |
| Desk policeman | Usual policeman type |
| Voice in stable | May be a slightly dotty old man or a slow younger man. |
| The Angel Gabriel: | A stern, resigned (to human frailty) man. Think of Alan Rickman |
| Baaasil, Baarry and Fraannk | Shepherds. They wear T-shirts with rude slogans on the front and gumboots – wellies and are Australians. |
| Mary | Mary is rather bossy. If you have ever wondered why the Bible says nothing about Jesus after the age of twelve until he turned thirty it's because after the cheeky reply he gave in Temple when he was 12, he was grounded for 20 years. |
| Joseph | Henpecked by his wife. |

ACT 1

Narrator: The story you are about to hear is true. Only the facts have been changed to comply with Worldwide Press standards.

Narrator: Out in the trackless desert stands a lone figure of a man. It is Fat Tuesday, stalwart guardian of the frontier. The desert, 8:22 pm, 25 December, BC Zero. He works for the Police Department.

FX: Wind sounds

Narrator: He was named Fat Tuesday 9 months after his mother returned from a fun-filled week at the Mardi Gras

Prompt: The week wasn't the only thing that was fun-filled.

FX: Play sounds of drunken crowds.

Narrator: From far across the trackless desert come 3 men on a camel.

Prompt: Can 3 men ride on 1 camel?

Narrator: Probably not but it makes the storyline flow more easily.

Prompt: OK.

Tuesday: I see 3 men on a camel. They are shaped like guitars. Must be the Riffs

Narrator: There is no camel; the 3 men are swaying as if riding on camels.

Prompt: They are not Riffs; they are tone deaf besides they are wearing tall hats, giving the impression to shortsighted policemen that they are guitars.

FX: The theme from "Lawrence of Arabia" is playing.

Tuesday: *Stops them.* Good evening, sirs, "Do you know why I stopped you?"

Melchior: Because you were bored and wanted someone to talk to?

Narrator: Tuesday drills them with a hard look.

FX: Sound of electric drill

Narrator: And cheek will endear you to policemen?

Tuesday: Would you mind stepping off the camel please?

Narrator: They dismount, knocking off some cargo while doing it.

FX: Sounds of dishes crashing onto floor

Balthazar: What is this all about, h'officer, china?

Tuesday: Just routine, sir, just routine. May I see your camel driving licence, please, sir?

Narrator: Balthazar rummages around and eventually takes out his licence from his pocket.

FX: Sounds of keys and coins jangling

Balthazar: Here it is china.

Narrator: Tuesday takes and examines the licence

Tuesday: Thank you sir. Your licence does not have an International Driving Licence stamp.

Balthazar: I did not know I needed one, china.

Tuesday: You should check these things before you leave your own country.

Balthazar: I would 'ave, china, but the licencing office was on strike and 'as bin for 3 yeers.

Narrator: Tuesday walks around the camel and checks the camels licence disc.

Tuesday: And your camel licence is out of date, too.

Balthazar: Well, we have been travelling for 2 years, China.

Tuesday: Why so long?

Melchior: What wif the fightin' in Britain, the bluddy Romans an' Queen Boadicea 'aving a go at each uvver an' the bluddy Germans invading Gaul, it took a bluddy long time to get here.

Melchior: On top of that, when we were in Gaul, I picked up a nasty disease.

Tuesday: Clap?

3WM: *They clap!*

FX: *Sounds of multitudes clapping*

Tuesday: I was asking a question, not giving an instruction. *Aside.* Schmuck!

Tuesday: OK, What is it?

Melchior: A condition that causes pain, an elevated temperature, and lassitude, but that's not relevant copper!

Gaspar: 'e got Gaul stones, 'e did

Balthazar: We were laying bets that he would pass them but he fell at the last fence. China.

Gaspar: Damn shame, he was going so well up to then. Just as well dat I laid orf the bets.

Tuesday: I thought you were supposed to come from the East?

Balthazar: Of course we come from the East, we wuz all born within the sound of the Bow Bells china, that means we comes from the h'East h'End of Londoninium, china

Narrator: Tuesday rolls his eyes.

FX: *Sound of ball bearings rolling on a steel plate*

Tuesday: What are you going to do in Israel?

Balthazar: We are going to the newborn king of the Jews baby-shower. We saw his star rising in the East like and so we came hotfoot.

FX: *Smoke comes out of their sandals*

Tuesday: Yes, I can see the smoke

Melchior: Like ober Canterbury, like. So we went off to Canterbury and met a bunch of pilgrims on the way. Cor, they couldn't arf yarn. The tales they told would make your barnet stand on end. We got lost in Europe because ESKOM (an *electricity utility*) turned the Star off during the journey.

Tuesday: Herod is the king of the Jews and he hasn't got a newborn son. He has a daughter though, Salome. She works as a stripper at the Copacabana Club in Jericho Street in Jerusalem.

FX: *Arabian music playing*

Tuesday: She does the dance of the 7 veils.

Gaspar: Cor! Tell us more.

Tuesday: I can't. The Publications Control Act, number 17 of 1994 as amended makes it an offense to describe pornographic acts.

Balthazar: Don't worry about that, china. It's only AD Zero; the act hasn't been passed yet.

Melchior: No new-born son, don't give us that, copper!

Tuesday: Well, sorry, sir, but that's the way it is.

Balthazar: What about ar licences, china?

Tuesday I am afraid there is nothing that can be done. I will get on the horn and call in a squad camel and have you transported to the nearest police station and a policeman will ride your camel to the police station there.

Narrator: Takes out and blows a Rams horn.

FX: Sound of someone blowing a trumpet badly

Tuesday: May I look in your luggage please, sir?

Balthazar: Certainly, h'officer, china

Tuesday: What do we have here, gold, frankincense, and myrrh? Strange things to take to a baby shower.

Gaspar: It is a tradition in Britain.

Tuesday: I see. Do you have a permit to import unpackaged vegetable matter into Israel?

Balthazar: Nah, do we need one?

Prompt: CHINA!

Balthazar: China

Tuesday: I am afraid that you do.

Balthazar: Blimus, I fort our government in Britain were bad but you lot tike the Humus. (He struggles to say Humus by dropping the "H" but finds it difficult as the "H" in Humus is not pronounced as an "H")

Prompt: Humus is pronounced ghumus

Tuesday: Why are you putting on a Roman accent?

Melchior: Well, we 'ad to go through Rome didn' we? You know, all roads lead to Rome. When in Rome do as the Romans do.

FX: Sound of police siren

Tuesday: Here comes the squad camel. You will be charged with an out-of-date camel driver's licence, an out-of-date licence for your camel and importing vegetable matter into Israel without a permit.

FX: Theme from Numbers or any other Police show or film plays in background

Narrator: *Sergeant Ben Yehuda and Constable Ben Dover arrive and climb off the camel.*

FX: Whoosh, thump

Ben Dover: Oooh! That camel is hard on the spine

Narrator: Walks bent over feeling his lower back

Ben Yehuda: Straighten up, man!

Ben Dover: BD straightens up slowly. Ooh.

FX: Sounds of door creaking

Ben Dover: *(To 3 Wise Men)* Ooh! it's High, Wide and Handsome. Hello, Handsome! (Simpers) What have you naughty boys been doing?

Balthazar: We are following a star.

Ben Yehuda: Ah, stalking them are you? We have ways of dealing with people like you in Israel.

Ben Dover: Oh! You're not going to find any stars here, ducky. They are all further south at Sharm-el-Shaik lying about on the sands with lots of Martinis. You won't find any stars here, no trendy places within a 100km.

Balthazar: Not that sort of star, the kind you find in the sky.

Ben Dover: Oh! He's dead is he; well I wish you luck in finding him.

Gaspar: No, we are following the star of the newborn King of the Jews.

Ben Dover: That's ridiculous, there is no new born son, and he's not dead either. Must be a soap opera that you're in. Sounds like Santa Barsheeba.

Melchior: Who are the Martinis?

Ben Dover: Silly boy, Martinis is the plural of Martinus. It's a drink that the Romans love. You take some Gin, wave a bottle of Vermouth over it, and add some olives. It's dry but you can drink it.

Tuesday: I must warn you that anything you say may be held against you...

Narrator: *Ben Dover is jumping up and down.*

FX: *Boings*

Ben Dover: Me! Me!

Ben Yehuda: Shut up, Constable.

Narrator: *Continues with the warning*

Tuesday: ...in a court of law.

Gaspar: Strewth, standing out in the desert talking to coppers is making me nervous. I fink I'll have a fag.
{Reaches into his pocket}

Ben Dover: Yes, yes, we'll just go behind this little dune here.

Ben Yehuda: This is a no smoking desert!

Gaspar: Sorry, copper.

Tuesday: Sergeant Ben Yehuda, cuff these gentiles – gentlemen and take them to the station and charge them with out-of-date drivers and camel licences. Also, charge them with importing unpackaged vegetable matter into Israel. Better advise the Treasury people about the gold they are bringing into Israel as well. Constable Ben Dover, take over here on patrol while I follow those Pommy bastards back to the station.

Ben Yehuda hits Gaspar

Gaspar: Ow!

Melchior: Police brutality!

Tuesday: Not that sort of cuff, you idiot! The handcuffs!

Ben Yehuda: *Cuffs them roughly. Throws them onto camel. There is no camel so they fall on the stage floor*

FX: Sound of heavy objects falling

BD: Look at those guys, young, handsome, and rich and off to a baby shower. Why can't I find men like that?

FX: Sounds of horses galloping away.

Prompt: Those sound like horses, not camels?

Narrator: The effects department didn't have camel galloping sounds

FX: Lawrence of Arabia theme plays

Curtain falls