



## Who Packed the Turkey – Sample Chapter

### Chapter 19 – Night Sky

“No Christmas?” Anna couldn’t imagine life without her favourite time of the year. Stunned, she looked at the Three Wise Movers. “I don’t understand. If they didn’t have Christmas, were people happy?”

Cass leaned out the window, looking up into the night sky, and shook her head. “People weren’t happy,” she answered. “They longed for someone to come and save them and make their lives better.” She settled back into the seat, still head shaking. “Many searched for the wrong hero, expecting a warrior.”

Zari wryly added, “A champion who swoops in like a celebrity driving a fancy sportscar.” The Three Wise Movers laughed as if she’d made a joke, and Mel affectionately patted Joyful Camel’s steering wheel.

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“We’re into practical and ordinary transportation.” Anna chuckled uncertainly. *Joyful Camel isn’t ordinary!*

Cass faced Anna and Zari in the back seat. “They were waiting for a big, flashy sign. God’s signs are often quieter... and more beautiful — Look at that sunset!” Slowly, a curtain of pink and orange drew mesmerizingly across the cloudless sky. Anna gasped, suddenly aware she’d held her breath since Cass pointed out the sunset. *This is what people mean by breathtaking.*

Cass smiled and nodded. “The stars will be shining bright tonight.” Mel, focussed on the road, rapidly descended the hills. “This is usually my part,” she said, “so we might have to wait until we’re on the flat.”

“Oh no, please can I hear it now. I need to know about the first Christmas.” Anna wriggled in her seat.

Zari laughed, reaching over playfully slapping Cass’s arm. “Hey you two, I was in the middle of my turn being storyteller, but seeing as Mel’s preoccupied, and Cass, you seem keen, do you want to pick up from here and tell us about the big moment?”

“With pleasure!” Cass looked from Mel to Zari triumphantly, then turned to face Anna. “I get carsick looking backwards, but I want to see your reaction to the next bit.”

With gusto, she launched off. “Remember Zari left off with Joseph and Mary unable to find somewhere to stay in Bethlehem?” Anna nodded. Cass continued. “Well, they found a friendly stranger with a stable. The air was thick with the scent of hay and manure. The animals, disrupted by the intrusion of guests, were restless and noisy. Joseph sighed and shrugged; it was shelter. He adjusted bales of straw, loosening the tight strands to make a comfortable bed for Mary in the cramped space. Mary shrieked. ‘*The pain!* Joseph, the baby! I think he’s coming. Soon!’ She was right. The baby couldn’t wait. They were in Bethlehem, and he was ready to arrive!”

“Wait is this still before Christmas?” Anna, her eyes glued on Cass, saw her nod. “In a way it was right before Christmas, but I guess it was also Christmas happening right then and there.”

Anna’s brows shot up, making Zari laugh. “I think we’d better let Cass talk.”

“So, here’s Joseph and Mary, surrounded by animals. Away from home and family, they made the best of things. Mary gave birth to the baby. God-With-Us arrived into the world. As the angel had told him, Joseph named the baby, Jesus, ‘the one who saves.’ He was the baby everyone had been waiting for...” Cass’s voice slowed and in a piercing whisper she added, “This was the first Christmas — the night Christ was born.”

A thrilling shiver ran through Anna. *Christ-mas*. The story of God-With-Us was the beginning of Christmas. She'd had no idea. The cab of Joyful Camel was silent. A shared stillness settled over the Three Wise Movers, their faces reflecting awe.

Zari's hushed voice broke the silence. "Look at those stars!" In the time Cass had taken to tell her part of the story, the sun had fully disappeared, and the sky was slowly filling with a glittering array of tiny twinkling lights.

Tears formed again. *I'm turning into a regular waterworks factory*. Anna whispered into the vast sky, "God, I know you are with me."

She felt a sudden response, not in words, but a warmth that spread through her whole body, chasing away the shivers. She didn't jump; she felt settled, as if a gentle hand rested on her shoulder. She knew God had heard her.



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This creates a real-time online book club where you can choose to participate in the conversation, read the comments, or simply enjoy the story each day.

The story has been written by Caroline Bindon for Kererū Publishing.

Caroline is a published author of several children's books. Subscribers may be more familiar with her writing of creative Christian resources, through a variety of organisations, churches and Kererū Publishing.

Next Christmas, this story will be published in book format (print and digital).

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