

He's not Here

A promenade performance through the locations
of the Easter story

by
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Category: Radius Typescript 2009

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Cast and Order of Locations

Location 1: Outside the City

THE MESSENGER

Location 2: The Highway

JUDAH – owner of a livery stables just outside the city.

DAN – son or daughter of Judah.

GAD – nephew or niece of Judah.

Location 3: The Temple

JEB, JAZ, MOREH – proprietors of a money changing business.

Location 4: An Upstairs Room

ATTALIA – mistress of the house.

CHERITH – her servant.

Location 5: A Garden

MALC – a community police officer.

ARAM – a paramedic.

Location 6: The Judgement Hall

GATH-HEPHER – a barrister.

SALT – his junior.

Location 7: The Palace Gate

PONTUS – a sergeant of the guard.

KEILAH – a night-shift laundry worker.

Location 8: The Place of Execution

SHINAR – wife of the 'unrepentant thief'.

LYDDA – sister of the 'repentant thief'.

MYRA – mother of Bar-Abbas.

MILETUS – a civil servant.

Location 9: The Empty Tomb

THE MESSENGER

Location 3: The Temple

(The audience arrive amongst the wreckage of what used to be a money changing business in the outer court of the Temple. Two of the proprietors, Jeb and Jaz are stumbling around in the debris. Jaz is collecting up scattered coins and banknotes, Jeb is trying to piece together a broken electronic calculator.)

Jaz: Here's one, *(picking up a coin)* here's another one. *(polishing the coin and holding it up to examine it)* Ooh, yeh, that's nice. That's very nice... *(noticing the arrival of the audience, and drawing them to Jeb's attention)* Psst! Oy!

Jeb: What?

Jaz: Customers. *(putting on a smarmy grin for the audience)*

Jeb: What? Oh... Ah; ladies, gentlemen come in, please.

Jaz: Please.

Jeb: Yes, make yourselves comfortable, please.

Jaz: Please. *(obsequiously drawing in the audience)*

Jeb: Don't mind the mess; it's... nothing, really.

Jaz: A little corporate restructuring.

Jeb: Normal service continues as... well, as normal.

Jaz: All currencies converted, all rates guaranteed.

Jeb: Dollars, Sterling, Euros...

Jaz: Gold is quite acceptable, under current circumstances.

Jeb: Now, how much did you want to exchange? *(struggling to hold together the pieces of calculator and press the buttons)* Better too much than not enough, I like to think?

Jaz: We're always happy to buy back anything you haven't used.

Jeb: At a very favourable to rate.

Jaz: Favourable to us that is... Ooow! *(as Jeb stands on his toe)*

Jeb: *(to audience)* How much was that again?

Moreh: *(enters, carrying a brush)* I thought you were clearing this up, you haven't even... *(seeing the audience)* Oh, no. No sorry, we're closed. In fact, we're closed down; you'll have to take your business somewhere else.

(Jeb and Jaz, expecting the audience to leave, move to prevent them.)

Jaz No, no, she doesn't mean it.

Jeb: She's only joking. *(forcing a laugh)* Weren't you?

Moreh: We can't do this anymore; and we certainly can't do it here.

Jeb: What, this? This is nothing. *(the wreckage)* If anything, it's an opportunity to expand. Fundamentally, the business is still sound.

Moreh: No. This 'business' is fundamentally *un*-sound.

Jeb: Look, you know it works; they come to the Temple to make themselves right. Right?

Jaz: And if they want to be right, they have to pay their taxes.

Jeb: Which they have to do with official Temple-tax currency.

Jaz: Which they... *(smiling at the audience)* don't have.

Jeb: So we buy their money and give them Temple-tax money. We're providing a necessary service, that's all.

Jaz: We didn't make the rules.

Moreh: The rules say 'thou shalt not steal'.

Jeb: We're not stealing. Exploiting a monopoly situation, possibly, but that's all within the spirit of commercial enterprise.

Moreh: The spirit of the Temple is sanctuary; not exploitation. But you: you might as well just hide behind the pillars then leap out and rob them for all the sanctuary this place offers.

Jaz: *(grinning nervously at the audience)* She's frightening the punters...

Jeb: Look, they want to make themselves right. How do you put a price on that? We could charge ten, twenty times what we do –

Jaz: *(to the audience)* Not that we would... you understand.

Jeb: It would still be the best deal anyone could have. Putting yourself right isn't cheap, you know.

Moreh: I know. *(produces a document tied with red tape and offers it to Jeb)* Here. It's my share in the business.

Jaz: You... want us to buy you out?

Moreh: I'm walking out.

Jeb: I know what this is about; I know who this is about. But he isn't here now. Now it's just business as usual.

Jaz: As usual. *(reassuring the audience)*

Moreh: Don't you think there's something wrong with that; the man who wants to put everything right? If he's not here, in the Temple? If he's not *here*, what's this place worth?

Jaz: Seemed quite happy with demolishing the place, far as I remember.

Moreh: Happy? I think it broke his heart.

Jeb: Doesn't matter what he thinks. *(taking the document and passing it to Jaz)*

Jaz: *(taking the document)* Not for much longer anyway.

Moreh: What's that supposed to mean?

Jeb: There's a lot of money, a lot of power and a lot of prestige invested in this place.

Jaz: And he is competition.

Jeb: It was alright when he was *out there*; saying things, doing things. But now he's in here; in the city, in the Temple.

Jaz: He is a threat.

Moreh: He never said they shouldn't pay their taxes. He only said you should deal with them fairly.

Jeb: Fairly? That's a restrictive practice we can do without.

Moreh: Well, from now on you can do without me. *(pushes the brush onto Jeb and prepares to leave for good)*

Jeb: Give all this up? Where would you go?

Moreh: To look for him. Like you said, being made right's the best deal you can get, at any price.

Jeb: Go then. And take this lot with you – we'll get nothing out of them now. And if you do catch up with him, tell him he's lucky we haven't sued him for damages.

Jaz: Not that he'll be undamaged himself much longer.

(Jeb and Jaz leave with whatever they've managed to salvage from the wreckage of their stall. Moreh is left alone with the audience.)

Moreh: *(to audience)* Right. You'd better follow me, then. There's a house I know. It has an upstairs room. I know the owner's wife; she said he'd be there. Come on, follow me.

(Moreh takes over whatever sign identifies her as the guide. A music cue may signal the audience to begin the move to the next location.)