



### BARABBAS

There are several ways of writing sketches. The best way, I find is when something or someone sparks off an idea, which sets the creative wheels in motion. Once in motion, they move so fast, that I must get it down on paper straight away. Another way is to think around a Bible story, 'get inside' one of the characters, and write the sketch from the character's point of view. By far the most exacting way, when the wheels of creativity grind exceeding slow, is when someone asks you 'Oh, Sue can you write a sketch about Barabbas for next Sunday?' The resulting sketch is in five small 'scenes', each portraying a stage in the life of Barabbas. It was performed for, and by children, and is to illustrate that sin, if not dealt with, goes from bad to worse and hurts not only ourselves but those around us. I'd like to think that Barabbas was a changed man after Jesus took his place on the cross; only Eternity will tell!

**CAST:** Barabbas, Teacher, Joshua, Judge, Two soldiers, Mum, Girl, Levi, Jury (2-4), Pilate

The same children would double up as classmates, gang and crowd.

Barabbas is eating breakfast:

**Mum:** Barabbas! It's time you were at school, here's your packed lunch and bus-fare, now come on, hurry up!

**Barabbas:** I don't want to go to school!

**Mum:** But you must go, if you miss school again, your Social worker will come round and she'll want to know why!

**Barabbas:** She's a silly old bag; I'll put a spider down her neck.

**Mum:** Oh, Barabbas, you are Naughty! One of these days you'll be in Trouble! (she gives him his school-bag, and sends him to school. (exit)

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**Teacher:** (claps hands) Now children, quiet please! Today we are going to study the Book of Leviticus. (all the children groan) It's all right; I didn't mean the whole Book. Just a minute, where's Barabbas?

**Girl:** He's late, Miss.

**Teacher:** Not again, that's three times this week! (Barabbas appears at the door, unseen by the teacher, sticking his tongue out at her. All the children giggle, teacher turns) Barabbas! Come in and sit down at once! (grabs him by the ear – as he passes her chair, he puts an outsize drawing-pin on it – or a whoopee cushion, depending on the sensitivities of your audience). Now then, children, copy out the first chapter in your best handwriting (she sits down and jumps up again, screaming) Barabbas! You are BAD! One of these days you'll be in Serious Trouble!

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Several years later, Barabbas is talking with his gang:

**Barabbas:** Now I want an update on last month's activities, starting with the robberies to date – Joshua?

**Joshua:** (rising) Total robberies for this month amounted to eight burglaries, two Post- Office jobs, five security vans and seventeen muggings on the Jericho road.

**Levi:** With a net profit of – (they all join in and sing)

**All:** 10 bags of shekels, 9 polished daggers, 8 bales of linen, 7 jewelled buckles, 6 silver earrings, 5 gold rings, 4 fatted calves, 3 French hens, 2 turtle-doves and a casket of precious perfume.

**Barabbas:** Well done, gang, but I've been thinking – we ought to expand.

**All:** How?

**Barabbas:** I'm talking... (looks over shoulder) insurrection! Political intrigue! REVOLUTION! (salutes with right arm)

**Joshua** Oh, Barabbas, you are AWFUL! One of these days you'll be in VERY SERIOUS TROUBLE.

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**Judge:** Ladies and gentlemen, you reached a verdict on which you are all agreed?

**Jury:** Yes, my Lord.

**Judge:** What is your verdict?

**Jury:** GUILTY! (all point at Barabbas)

**Judge:** Barabbas, you have been found guilty of robbery with violence, inciting to riot, insurrection against the state and murder! I sentence you to death by crucifixion. (all gasp)  
Oh, Barabbas, you are WICKED! YOU ARE IN VERY SERIOUS TROUBLE! Soldiers!  
Take him and lock him away!

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**Pilate:** Whom do you wish me to release to you? Barabbas? Or the man Jesus, who is called the Christ?

**Crowd:** Barabbas!

**Pilate:** Which of the two have I to release to you?

**Crowd:** Barabbas!

**Pilate:** What have I to do with Jesus?

**Crowd:** Let Him be crucified!

**Pilate:** Why? What evil has He done?

**Crowd:** Let Him be crucified!

**Pilate:** I am innocent of the blood of this Man! You must see to it!

**Crowd:** We'll take the blame for it. And our children!

(enter Barabbas)

**Barabbas:** Oh, Jesus! You are so GOOD! You are in VERY SERIOUS TROUBLE ...instead of me...  
(Pause. Exit)