

Have you heard the News?

Actor 2 is already on stage; Actor 1 comes up through the audience to tell him the news. Their conversation should seem quite realistic but stilted. The audience should be starting to get the impression that the script is poorly written with unrealistic dialogue, and that the actors involved aren't very good.

Actor1. Have you heard the news?

Actor2. What news?

Actor1. About Jesus of Nazareth

Actor2. Who?

Actor1. Jesus of Nazareth.. You know that bloke who's been going around claiming he's the son of God.

Actor2. Pretty impressive heritage – you can't say he's not ambitious

Actor1. Yeah well, he's certainly a trouble maker, stirring up trouble against our precious Roman state, which protects and guides us all. **Both characters stand momentarily with their arms across their chests, hands on heart, to show allegiance.**

Actor2. You're right my friend! right my friend! You've really opened my eyes – what a nasty man!

Actor1. And what about this latest stunt – escaping from a grave, making a mockery of local security.

Actor2. Dreadful!

Director. **From the back of the room somewhere, which should surprise people. CUT! Comes forward onto the stage.** What are you doing?

Actor2. Making an advert, like you told us.

Director. I told you to produce an advert that would turn people against Jesus, not turn off completely.

Both look rather wounded at this.

Actor1. We did our best

Actor2. I thought it was quite good actually

Actor1. Quite realistic

Actor2. I thought you were very good

Actor1. You were marvellous too darling, very moving

Director. Look luvvies *(Puts arms around them both)* this is the biggest contract we have ever had here at TV AD

All take a step forward to promote

All. We are all ahead of our time

Director. We need excitement.. pazazz.. action. Don't mess this up *Pushes Actor 1 off stage to original starting position and produces a clapper board. looking in to TV lens-* TV AD take 2!

Suitably dramatic music is played as actor 1 bounds on to the stage. The acting should be over the top in its dramatic style.

Actor1. Have you heard the news?

Actor2. What news?

Actor1. About Jesus of Nazareth

Actor2. Who?

Actor1. Jesus of Nazareth, you know, claims he's the son of God.

Actor2. Wow, impressive stuff

Actor1. Well, he's obviously a complete mad man *(shaking up hair and acting appropriately strange)*

Actor2. Crazy *(does the same)*

Actor1. A complete nutter

Actor2. Yeah I bet he looks completely wild *(really in to the flow of this now)*

Actor1. Yeah.. well.. *(Realising this is not the case, begins to stumble)*

Actor2. Torn clothes, crazy hair, mad eyes

Actor1. Well, he's no Robert Powell, but he's not that bad.

Actor2. Yeah. But going on like that I bet he's a real loner, no following at all.

Actor1. Yeah.. *(trying to play along but realising that the truth does not match up to the image that they are trying to create)* well.. apart from those 12 hippies who seem to have given up everything for him

Actor2. Twelve mates – they could get on match of the day with that! Yeah, but, well, I bet he makes a right fool of himself ranting and raving

Actor1. Erm, yeah except that he actually seems to make sense *(giving up the act now, as they know they have lost their image of him)*

Actor2. But no one would believe him, no one would go out of their way to listen to a lunatic

Actor1. No, no, no, no, no, well just one or two or .. 5000

Actor2. *(Genuine shock)* 5000?!

Director. CUT!! *(As the director makes his way to the stage the 2 actors argue amongst themselves about how the piece went wrong.)* What are you dribbling on about? He makes sense? 5000 followers? This is meant to be an add against the guy, not for him. *(He eventually calms down)* Look, lets try something a little bit more believable, just a little more serious, just a little more thoughtful, as they say this *the actors quietly draw closer to him, only to be blasted with ..* JUST GET IT RIGHT *Shoves Actor 1 back to their starting point. Produces clapper board, through gritted teeth* TVAD Take 3!

Suitably serious music as actor 1 skulks n to stage like a character from a dodgy spy film, and slides up to Actor2. The acting is now all frowns, scratching heads and stroking temples

Actor1. Have you heard the serious news?

Actor2. What srious news?

Actor1. Concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

Actor2. Who, pray tell?

Actor1. Jesus of Nazareth, he's been claiming he's the son of God.

Actor2. Hmm, a serious business!

Actor1. Indeed, I can only conclude that he is a liar! *(Declares this as if he were on a political platform)*

Actor2. A hypocrite *(Does the same)*

Actor1. Making false claims

Actor2. Deliberate misrepresentations

Actor1. A problem indeed

Both are looking smug by now as they think they have found a suitable add

Actor2. He will be found out eventually, when people look back they will see he preached one thing, and did another.. as hypocrites always do.

Actor1. Well spoken, my friend. *(Begins to falter again)* ..although by all accounts he does live a holy life.

Actor2. But he claims to heal, surely he can't that – Casualty hasn't been invented yet.

Actor1. *Now begins to get excited about the things that he's heard.* But he does heal, without camera trickery, by all accounts!

Actor2. *Catches excitement* Imagine that much power, you could break out of the Roman world and straight in to Hollywood

Actor1. *Whispering* Yes, yes, but he does go around saying that everyone is equal

Actor2. *Shocked* Equal? In the Roman state? He could get killed for saying something like that.. well, that would soon stop you lying. I mean it did, didn't it?

Actor1. *Knows this is incredible.* No.

Actor2. Pardon?

Actor1. He's been excited

Actor2. NO?!

Actor1. Honestly, last Friday!

Actor2. Now that is impressive! (*Trying to salvage the advert*) dying .. for a lie.

Actor1 & Actor2. *Repeat to themselves as it doesn't make sense* Dying for a lie? Dying for a lie?

Director. CUT!! (*Barely holding it together without doing damage to the 2 actors*) This is not working is it? (*Puts arms around them both, they both look fed up*) You're not working are you, darlings? Look, you have one last chance to get it right or you're out.. you will be doing extra work on Jerusalem Jingles for the rest of your short careers. We need, evidence, reality, truth... last chance luvvies. (*Shoves actor 1 off the stage. He is now sulking and slumps back in to the starting position*). TV AD Take 4!

Now the music reflects the feelings of the actors who are at the end of their tethers and totally fed up. So, something languid, as actor 1 slumps on to stage. This time they run through their lines quickly with no emotion because they have given up.

Actor1. Have you heard the news?

Actor2. What news?

Actor1. About Jesus of Nazareth?

Actor2. Who?

Actor1. Jesus of Nazareth? You know, going around preaching he's the son of God

Actor2. That's impressive

Actor1. Now people are saying he's risen from the dead

Actor2. (stops in track with genuine excitement,) Wow, that's impressive.

Actor1. *Realises what they have just said* Yeah it is isn't it? I mean what is it's right, what if he is the son of God, the Messiah, the Lord

Director. (*Going ballistic, remains at the back and shouts from there*) CUT!! What are you doing? Have you lost your minds completely?

Actor1. *In frustration* Well, what else is there to say?