

# THE KISS

By  
JIM PAPPAS  
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Cast 60 persons Can be performed with a cast of 8-10 men and 2-3 women all with multiple parts.

Judas  
Eleazar  
Rabbi 1-4  
Soldier 1-3  
Jesus  
Peter  
Malchus  
Disciple 1-3  
Centurian  
Annas  
Bystander 1-3  
Maid 1-2  
Caiphas  
Counsel  
Witness 1-5  
Judge 1-6  
Mob 1-10  
Crowd  
Herod  
Pilate  
Messenger  
Claudia  
Lictor  
Private  
Person 1-2  
Simon  
Woman 1-3  
Thief 1  
Thief 2  
Time circa 60 minutes

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## SCENE 1

JUDAS

I can picture it all now. Within weeks the armies of Israel will be on the march. The Messiah will be at their head, calling down manna from heaven and striking water from the rocks. Walled cities will fall in a day and wounded soldiers will be healed to fight again tomorrow. Israel will rule the world, and I, Judas Iscariot, will sit at the right hand of her Messiah King.

ELEAZAR

You've persuaded Jesus to accept the throne!

JUDAS

No, He's much too modest to do that. But I have taken steps that will put Him there.

ELEAZAR

A revolution!

JUDAS

No, of course not. That's the last thing He would agree to.

ELEAZAR

Judas. How can you speak of Israel's exaltation if He won't claim the throne and you have no plans for a revolution?

JUDAS

Very simple, my friend. I have devised a plan which will both embarrass the priests and force a revolt in His favor.

ELEAZAR

That's a pretty tall order, Judas.

JUDAS

Not for Judas, son of Iscariot.

ELEAZAR

Well, well, come on, come on.

JUDAS

I've sold Him!

ELEAZAR

Sold Him!

JUDAS

That's right - sold Him.

ELEAZAR

Judas, would you please stop speaking in riddles and explain yourself!

JUDAS

Well, I didn't actually sell Him. I've just accepted a small monetary remuneration for information leading to His capture.

ELEAZAR

Capture

JUDAS

Yes. They'll take Him tonight in the Garden of Gethsemane.

ELEAZAR

You've sold out to the priests. That makes you a traitor.

JUDAS

Nah. Unless He fails to escape and they put Him to death. But the chances of that are one in a million. He has powers at His fingertips that we cannot even conceive of.

ELEAZAR

Indeed?

JUDAS

Yes. Why, I've personally seen Him escape mobs and soldiers time and time again.

ELEAZAR

Hmm.

JUDAS

No, my friend. I have not played the traitor. This small act of mine will merely force Him to demonstrate His powers.

ELEAZAR

Hope you.

JUDAS

Know me. And! For my foresight in forcing Him to the throne I shall be promoted to second in the new kingdom.

ELEAZAR

But suppose He is condemned and crucified as He has been telling us? What happens to you?

JUDAS

Bah! Scare tactics. But, if worse should come to worse, what I have done will change nothing. And either way, I am a richer man. In fact, I hope to purchase a piece of land to leave to my children.

ELEAZAR

Hmm. Still sounds risky to me.

JUDAS

Nah! No matter what happens, Iscariot wins. In one sharp bargain I have gained the world and lost nothing.

ELEAZAR

All I can say is that I'd hate to be in

your place if anything goes wrong.

JUDAS

Nonsense! What could possibly go wrong?  
He is the Messiah and He will  
eventually rule the world. I am merely  
speeding things up a little.

ELEAZAR

Time will tell, I suppose.

JUDAS

Yes, won't it. I wish I could be alive  
to read the history books. Well, it  
grows late. I must deliver a kiss.  
Farewell.

ELEAZAR

A kiss?

## SCENE 2

JUDAS

Well, Rabbi, we're almost to the top.  
Soon you'll have Him safe in your  
hands.

RABBI

(Panting) Does this man always pray at  
the tops of mountains?

JUDAS

Shh! There they are!

RABBI

It is dark. How will we know the right  
man?

JUDAS

The one I greet with a kiss shall be  
He. Just be sure to seize Him  
immediately or He will certainly escape  
you again.

RABBI

Yes, yes, of course. Watch for the  
kiss, soldiers.

SOLDIER

Yes, rabbi.

JESUS

Who are you looking for?

RABBI

Jesus of Nazareth

JESUS

I am he. (There is a bright light - the presence of an angel - the mob falls back in terror)

JESUS

Who are you looking for?

RABBI

(A bit fearfully) Jesus of Nazareth.

JESUS

I have told you that I am he. If I am the One you are looking for, let these men go their way.

JUDAS

(Mock weeping as he delivers the kiss)  
Hail, Master

JESUS

Judas. Why have you come, friend? Do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?

RABBI

He's the man, soldiers. Seize and bind Him!

PETER

Lord! Shall we strike with the sword?  
(Pantomimes swinging sword)

MALCHUS

Ahh! My ear! My ear!

JESUS

No need for this, Peter. Put away your sword. All that take the sword shall perish by the sword. (Jesus heals the severed ear - use mime) Shall I not drink of the cup that my Father has given me? Don't you think I can pray to my Father and receive twelve legions of angels to defend me?

DISCIPLE 1

I don't understand?

DISCIPLE 2

Why doesn't He save Himself?

DISCIPLE 1

And us!

DISCIPLE 3

Something's wrong. He has always escaped before.

JESUS

But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that have said this is how it shall be? Shall I refuse to drink the cup which my Father has given me? (Addressing mob) You come against me with swords and staves as you would against a thief or robber. You could have taken me at any time while I was teaching in the temple, but you did nothing. The night is better suited to your manner of work. This is your hour, and the hour of the power of darkness.

DISCIPLE 3

What does this mean? Why has He let them bind him?

PETER

I don't know. But if He won't let us fight for Him, then there's nothing more we can do here. I say we at least save ourselves. They turn and flee)

CENTURIAN

Go after those men! Don't let them get away!

RABBI

Forget them. We've got to get this man to Annas for preliminary questioning immediately.

**SCENE 3**

JESUS

Why are you asking me all of these needless questions. Your spies have been following me since I first began to teach. Ask them what I have said.

ANNAS

Hmm.

JESUS

I have always taught openly in the temple and synagogues. I have nothing to hide.

ANNAS

Ahem.

JESUS

But you! Against our law you hire a traitor. Against our law you seize me by force at midnight. Against our law you try me by night in an illegal court. These ropes pronounce me guilty before I am accused. Your hired witnesses cannot even agree on their story. Secrecy and deception are your manner of work. Not mine. (Annas is embarrassed & hangs his head. This angers the Centurian)

CENTURIAN

(striking Jesus) Is that how you answer

the high priest!

JESUS

If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?

ANNAS

We are gaining nothing here. Take Him to the high priest. (They begin to exit) And keep Him bound. If He should escape we could all lose our lives.

#### SCENE 4

BYSTANDER 1

Man, its cold.

BYSTANDER 2

I'll say. Get some more wood on that fire.  
(Enter John & Peter. Peter moves to the fire - John moves off to the side)

BYSTANDER 1

Greetings, stranger.

PETER

(Peter grunts - Enter a maid)

BYSTANDER 1

New in town?

PETER

Huh? Oh, uh, yeah. Yeah, just visiting.  
(The maid turns at the sound of Peter's voice)

MAID 1

Say, wait a minute. Aren't you one of this man's disciples?

PETER

(All eyes turn to him. Peter turns away pretending he does not hear)

MAID 1

You were with this Jesus of Nazareth,  
weren't you!

PETER

Woman, I don't know Him. I don't even  
understand what you're saying.

PRIEST

This preliminary trial before the Great  
Sanhedrin will now come to order. His  
Holiness, the High Priest Caiaphas  
presiding.

MAID 1

(At the announcement of the priest  
attention is diverted away from Peter.  
The maid is still suspicious but now is  
not the time to press the issue)Hmmp.  
(She turns away - unconvinced) I still  
say he's one of them.

CAIAPHAS

So! You are the wonder worker, eh? Well  
then, let's see one of your miracles.  
Perhaps a little fire from heaven would  
be appropriate to the occasion? Well?  
It is just as I thought. You are an  
imposter bent upon misleading the  
ignorant. Counsel, you may bring forth  
the witnesses and cross-examine them.

COUNSEL

Yes, Your Holiness. Who will be first  
to stand in witness against this . . .  
this criminal?

WITNESS 1

I, sir.

COUNSEL

Proceed.

WITNESS 1

He is stirring up revolution among the  
people, beginning at Galilee even to

Jerusalem. He is a revolutionary with 12 generals trained in warfare and He plans to overthrow Caesar and be a god.

COUNSEL

You say He has 12 generals.

WITNESS 1

Yes, sir.

COUNSEL

Where were they trained?

WITNESS 1

Trained, sir?

COUNSEL

Yes; where did they learn warfare?

WITNESS 1

I'm not sure exactly, sir.

COUNSEL

You just know that He has 12 famous generals in His army.

WITNESS 1

Yes sir.

COUNSEL

And what did you say His plans were?

WITNESS 1

Oh, uh, Er . . . to plunder and kill and be the head of an outlaw band.

COUNSEL

I see.

WITNESS 1

Do you want me to testify some more, sir?

COUNSEL

No! I mean, no thank you. You've done more than enough already. Is there another?

WITNESS 2

I, sir. He holds secret meetings where  
He instructs His followers in His ways.  
And He Himself works His wonders by the  
power of Beelzebub.

COUNSEL

You say He holds secret meetings?

WITNESS 2

Yes sir.

COUNSEL

Where?

WITNESS 2

Where? Oh, just were ever He can get a  
crowd together. (Bystanders snicker)  
Er, I mean . . . that is . . .  
I'm not really sure, sir. They're  
secret, you see.

COUNSEL

I see . . . (Helpless glance towards  
Caiaphas) You say He works His wonders  
through the power of Beelzebub?

WITNESS 2

Yes sir.

COUNSEL

What does He do through the power of  
Beelzebub?

WITNESS 2

Huh?

COUNSEL

Through the power of Beelzebub. What  
does He do?

WITNESS 2

Oh, uh . . . He cures leprosy and makes  
the blind to see and the deaf to hear  
and the crippled to . . .

CAIAPHAS

Stop! Counsel, you may call the next witness.

COUNSEL

Yes, Holiness.

WITNESS 3

He has forbidden us to pay tribute to Caesar!

WITNESS 4

He has called the priests of the Most High hypocrites and murderers!

WITNESS 5

This fellow said, "I am able to destroy the Temple of God and to rebuild it in three days!"

WITNESS 4

Yes, I've heard Him say that.

WITNESS 3

So have I.

CAIAPHAS

Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?  
(There is a long pause but no answer) I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.

JESUS

You have spoken correctly. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

CAIAPHAS

(Gasps from all) Blasphemy! (He tears his robe) He has uttered blasphemy! We ourselves are witnesses. What is your verdict?

JUDGE 1

He is guilty! Let Him die!

JUDGE 2

Guilty. He deserves death.

JUDGE 3

Guilty. Death.

JUDGE 4

Guilty. Death

JUDGE 5

Let Him die!

JUDGE 6

Guilty

CAIAPHAS

Gentlemen of the jury. The prisoner has been found guilty of blasphemy. By our law such must die. But, by the same law He must be tried by day before a full court. Since the dawn is yet some time away, I suggest that the prisoner be taken to the courtyard where the people may "interview Him".

MOB 1

We'll interview Him all right

MOB 2

Yeah, we'll see if He is the Son of God or not.

MOB 3

Prophesy to us, Prophet. Who curses you?

MOB 4

Prophesy again! Who spits upon you?

MOB 5

So you will come int the clouds of heaven, will you?

MOB 6

We spit upon you and your clouds.

MOB 7

I spit upon you, Prophet.

MOB 8

I strike you, Prophet.

MOB 9

I strike you too!

MOB 10

Take that! Prophet.

BYSTANDER 1

Say now. If that mob gets any nastier there's not gonna be much left to execute.

BYSTANDER 2

Yeah. It don't get much better than this. Heh heh heh. (to Peter) Right Pal?

PETER

(Attempting to conceal his true identity) What?

BYSTANDER 1

I said it don't get . . . Hey. S'matter, friend? Yer lookin' a little green around the gills.

PETER

No, no. It's alright. I'm fine.

MOB 1

Take that, Prophet! Ha ha ha!

BYSTANDER 2

Put that bag over His head & see if He can prophecy who's striking Him!

BYSTANDER 3

Yeah, heh heh heh. Good idea!

PETER

They don't need to beat an innocent man that way! (Enter a 2nd maid who hears Peter's voice and grows suspicious)

BYSTANDER 1

Innocent! Say, who's side are you on, anyhow?

PETER

Nobody's side. I'm on no body's side.

BYSTANDER 1

Well better pick sides pretty soon, pal. Cuz this guy's a blasphemer.

MAID 2

He's not gonna choose sides. He was with Him. One of His disciples.(All eyes to Peter)

PETER

Hey! I don't know the man, all right!

MAID 2

Yeah, you do. You're one of his followers.(Enter Bystander 3)

PETER

I swear by the Holy Temple that I do not know the man! So back off! All right!

MAID 2

I don't believe you. I'm sure . . .

BYSTANDER 2

Hey, woman. Cut the man some slack. He swore by the temple, didn't he?

MAID 2

Hmmph!

SCENE 5

RABBI

This gathering of the Holy men of Israel will now come to order. His Holiness the High Priest Caiaphas presiding.

CAIAPHAS

Are you the Christ? Tell us! Can you indeed work miracles? Answer! Show us that we may see and believe.

JUDAS

He is innocent! Spare Him, O Caiaphas! Here is your blood money. Release Him. He has done nothing worthy of death. He is an innocent man. Spare Him, I beg of you. Free Him!

CAIAPHAS

(Thrusting Judas away) Take your hands off of me!

JUDAS

Free Him. Please free Him. I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.

CAIAPHAS

What is that to us? You see to that.

JUDAS

(Judas crawls to Jesus' feet) Master, forgive me. You are the Son of God. Deliver yourself. Reveal your power and claim your throne. Don't let them destroy you, I beg you.

JESUS

Judas, it is for this hour that I came into the world.

SOLDIER

He is a God. . .

JUDAS

It is vain. It is too late. Too late! I

cannot live to see Him die. I am lost!  
I am damned!!!

CAIAPHAS

(Re arranging his robe) Ahem.  
Gentlemen, please accept my humble  
apologies for this most unfortunate  
interruption. The poor man must have  
been possessed by Beelzebub. But let us  
resume questioning. (To Jesus) Are you  
the Christ? Tell us!  
Can you work wonders? Answer! Show us  
that we may see and believe.

JESUS

If I tell you the truth you will not  
believe me. And if I ask you questions  
in my defense, you will not answer me.  
Neither will you release me if I prove  
my innocence. But I tell you - You will  
one day see the Son of Man sit on the  
right hand of God.

CAIAPHAS

Are you the Son of God then?

JESUS

You speak correctly.

PRIEST 1

Why do we need any further witness?

PRIEST 2

We ourselves have heard the words from  
His own mouth

PRIEST 3

He is guilty!

PRIEST 4

Let Him be put to death.

CAIAPHAS

Holy Men of Israel. It has been at  
great personal sacrifice that we have  
assembled at this early hour.

But we part with the inner glow of peace that comes from having rendered unto God a noble service. This man is a blasphemer and we need only obtain the seal of Pontius Pilate to insure His prompt execution. Guard, return Him to the courtyard while we make arrangements.

MOB 1

Hey! Look see! He comes again.

MOB 2

Welcome, prophet.

MOB 3

Prophecy for us: Who strikes you?

MOB 4

Here. Put this sack over His head.  
We'll see if He can prophecy or not.  
Now prophet, speak. Who strikes you?

PETER

Why can't they show a little mercy?  
This trial's all illegal

BYSTANDER 3

What's it ta you, pal?

PETER

Nothing. Its nothing to me.

BYSTANDER 3

Yeah it is. You're one of His disciples.

PETER

No.

BYSTANDER 3

Didn't I see you at the capture?

PETER

No.

BYSTANDER 3

Weren't you the one with the sword?

PETER

No!

BYSTANDER 3

The one who took off my cousin's ear?

PETER

I don't know what you're talking about!

BYSTANDER 3

Yeah you do. You don't even talk like a normal human being. (To crowd) Anybody hear this man curse at all tonight?

CROWD

Not me.

BYSTANDER 2

Me neither

BYSTANDER 1

Pretty mamby pamby talker if you ask me.

BYSTANDER 3

So it seems to me that a man who cares about a little beating and who don't know how to curse has gotta . . .

PETER

I curse you, You stupid swine. How many times must I tell you that I do not know the man! (A cock crows - Peter turns to see Jesus looking at him with a look of love and pity - he remembers the words of Jesus)

JESUS (V.O.)

Verily, verily I tell you, Peter. Before the cock crows twice you will deny that you know me three times.

PETER (V.O.)

Lord, I will never deny you. I will go to the death for you! (The cock crows again. Peter breaks down and exits weeping)

PETER

No! Oh what have I done! No! No no no!

MOB 5

Who kicks you, prophet?

MOB 6

Who spits in your face, prophet?

MOB 7

Who strikes you?

CENTURIAN

All right. Break it up. Break it up, I said. Rome has not sentenced this man. And even by your own law it is illegal to condemn a man on his own testimony.

MOB 7

Let Him die!

CROWD

Die! Die! Let Him die. (Repeat)

CAIAPHAS

Gentlemen.

MOB 1

Shh! The High Priest speaks.

CAIAPHAS

We are ready. Let us proceed to Pontius Pilate.

**SCENE 6**

PILATE

Who is this man? And why have you brought Him to me?

CAIAPHAS

He is a deceiver called Jesus of Nazareth.

PILATE

What accusation do you bring against Him?

CAIAPHAS

If He were not a criminal, we would not have brought Him before you.

PILATE

If you have judged Him by your law, why have you brought Him to me? Take Him and pass your own sentence upon Him.

CAIAPHAS

We have already passed judgement, sire. We only need your seal to make it legal.

PILATE

What is your sentence?

CAIAPHAS

The death sentence. But it is not lawful for us to put a man to death without your approval. Accept our judgement and give your seal. We assume all responsibility.

PILATE

You still haven't told me what He is accused of.

CAIAPHAS

We have witnesses. Listen to what they have to say.

WITNESS 1

We have found this fellow perverting the nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, claiming that He Himself is Christ, a King.

PILATE

Are you the King of the Jews?

JESUS

You have spoken correctly.

RABBI

You see! He admits the charges against Him. What else can you do but condemn Him to death?

CROWD

Let Him die! (Repeat)

PILATE

Have you no answer to make? Don't you see how many charges they bring against you? Are you the King of the Jews?

JESUS

Are you asking me because you want to know, or just to satisfy the priests?

PILATE

Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you to me. What have you done?

JESUS

My Kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then my followers would fight to save me from the Jews; but my kingdom is not of this world.

PILATE

Are you a king, then?

JESUS

You have said that I am a king, and you are correct. For this purpose I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is seeking truth hears my voice.

PILATE

What is truth? (The increasing tumult without recalls Pilate to the business at hand. He turns to the mob) I find in this man no fault at all! (The mob goes into a frenzy)

RABBI 1

You refuse to condemn an enemy of the nation!

RABBI 2

He has set Himself against Caesar!

RABBI 3

It is known everywhere that He is spreading sedition from Galilee to Jerusalem.

PILATE

This man is from Galilee? Then He is not under my jurisdiction. Take Him to Herod. (The mob roars in protest but Pilate waves them off and turns away)

## SCENE 7

Herod's palace

HEROD

Who is this man? And why have you brought Him to me?

RABBI 1

A blasphemer, your majesty.

RABBI 2

He is guilty of sedition against Caesar.

RABBI 3

You will be doing the nation a great service to sentence Him with all possible haste, your majesty.

HEROD

Silence! Untie this man. You know it is illegal to bind a man until he has been proven guilty. Don't you obey your own laws?

(The priests murmur their protests but answer nothing) . . .

*End of sample*