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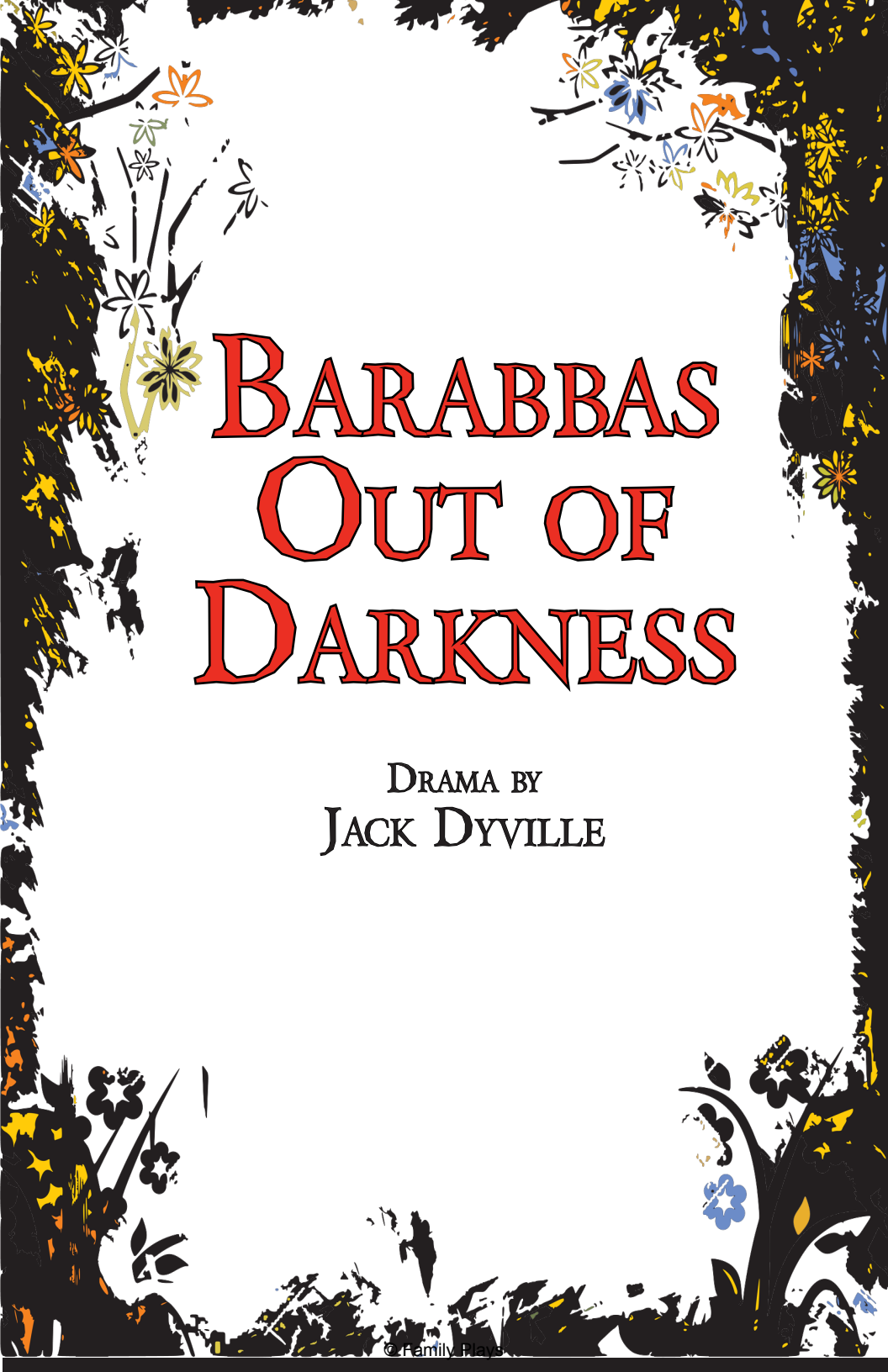
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Family Plays



BARABBAS OUT OF DARKNESS

DRAMA BY
JACK DYVILLE

BARABBAS OUT OF DARKNESS

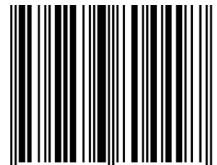
Drama. By Jack Dyville. Cast: 5m., 7w., flexible. Five performers serve as choral readers, using a choir and contemporary Christian music as desired. Here's a different look at the Easter story as seen through the eyes of Barabbas, the thief who had his life exchanged for the life of Jesus of Nazareth just before the crucifixion. What happened after that? Did Barabbas continue his life of crime? This play suggests an answer. Though he was not responsible, Barabbas feels great guilt as he is shunned by the believers who resent his living existence while their Lord is dead. Curious but scared, Barabbas hides in bushes near the tomb and witnesses the resurrection, erasing his lingering doubts and causing him to join the followers, because like them, he cared. Easy to stage. Although designed for presentation during the Easter season, it is appropriate and intriguing any time of year. Place: around Golgotha and Jerusalem. Time: crucifixion day and afterward. Approximate running time: 30 to 35 minutes. Code: BH7.

Family Plays

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Barabbas ... Out of
Darkness

BARABBAS... OUT OF DARKNESS

**A Different Look at the Easter Story
As seen through the Eyes of Barabbas,
The man whose life was exchanged
For that of Jesus of Nazareth.**

Told in a One-Act Drama, with Choir Music of your choice

By **JACK DYVILLE**

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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JACK DYVILLE

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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“Produced by special arrangement with
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*Originally produced by New Hope Wesleyan Church, Williston,
ND, with the following cast:*

Jim Ryen Reader 1
Mavis Routledge Reader 1
Ty Stewart Reader 1
Vicki Finders Reader 1
Jack Dyville Reader 1
Larry Sneider Barabb
Vivian Kalmik Proprietress of the Roadside I
Gene Quitmeyer 1st Thi
Tad Stewart 2nd Thi
Mark Anderson, Eric Koeser Men at the Roadside I
Theresa Rosendahl 1st Wom
Janet Quitmeyer 2nd Wom
Jessie Woodhams, Jamie Peterson Dancers at the I
Glenn Wiens 1st Follower of Jes
Jeff Vickers 2nd Follower of Jes
Erv Flaten 3rd Follower of Jes
Sherry Gorveatte Mary Magdale
Jon Erlandsen Jes
E. Ward Koeser 1st Ang
Mark Anderson 2nd Ang
Darlene Jung Mary, Jesus' Moth
Eric Koeser, John Pasternak Roman Soldie
Donna Flaten, Jenny Sergent Mourne
Cyrena Weeks
Allayna Kalmik, Chris Jung Urchi
Carly Kruse

BARABBAS...OUT OF DARKNESS

by JACK DYVILLE

Cast of Characters

Speaking Roles

The Readers (I, II, III, IV, V) narrate throughout as choral readers
Barabbas, thirty years old, powerfully built with a beard and long hair
and a prominent scar from his eye to his cheek

Proprietress of the Roadside Inn. (She is fond of Barabbas)

Two Thieves, Old friends and partners of Barabbas

Two Women, Barmaids at the Roadside Inn

Customers at the inn, as desired

Three Followers of Jesus

Mary Magdalene

Jesus

Two Angels

Mary, Mother of Jesus

The Choir

The Followers in prayer

Pantomime Characters:

Simon

Roman Soldiers

Urchins

Women Mourners

Two Men with Linen Cloth

Time: On the day of Jesus' Crucifixion and the days to follow.

Place: In and around Golgotha and Jerusalem.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Properties

Readers' Book—Readers

Wine bottle & glasses—Barmaids

Food on tray—Proprietress

Lights

Suggestions and cues for lighting are given in the stage directions.

Music

The choir may sing appropriate songs, some of which are suggested in the stage directions. Background music would also be appropriate.

Costumes

Appropriate Biblical costumes are recommended. Barabbas would probably be poorly—perhaps even shabbily—dressed.

The Set

The set is primarily a bare stage, with platforms that can be arranged and rearranged for Jesus' tomb and the mound from which Barabbas watches. The Roadside Inn may be represented by several stools and a table moved on as needed. The stone for sealing the tomb may be a round piece of plywood appropriately painted. The object is to keep everything simple.

My sincere thanks to Pastor Mark Gorveatte, New Hope Wesleyan Church, Williston, ND, for his encouragement and theological advice.

—Jack Dyville

**Dedicated to the memory of my friend
VICKI FINDERS
who was a member of the Original Cast
—Jack Dyville**

ABOUT THE PLAY

Here is a different look at the Easter story. When Pontius Pilate asked the crowd which prisoner they wanted released—Jesus or Barabbas, the crowd shouted, “Free Barabbas—crucify Jesus.”

What happened to Barabbas after that? This intriguing play suggests an answer.

Although designed for presentation during the Easter season, it is appropriate for any time of year. It allows 5 very strong performers to serve as choral readers. And, you may use a choir and add as many hymns or contemporary Christian songs as desired.

Playing time is 30-35 minutes.



Jack Dyville, the author, has two other plays listed in the I. E. Clark catalog: He composed the music for **A COUNTRY CHRISTMAS CAROL**, a musical in which Scrooge has moved to the American West and runs a saloon. He is the author of the book for **THOSE MAGICAL RED SNEAKS**, a musical based on “The Red Shoes,” Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tale about a ballerina who can’t stop dancing when she wears the magical shoes. Jack Dyville is the president of Williston, North Dakota’s Youth Education on Stage.

BARABBAS...OUT OF DARKNESS

Scene 1. *[A hill overlooking the site of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and the tomb where Jesus' body was placed and then arose. As LIGHTS come up, we hear the CHOIR singing "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," or any other appropriate hymn. The READERS, who will narrate throughout the production, reading their passages from a Readers' Book, enter. (They will be listed here by their numbers as to who and how many read each passage.) On stage are the PANTOMIME CHARACTERS, including several women, Roman soldiers, urchins, Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Simon. All look forward directly at the audience. At far Stage Right on a high mound is BARABBAS. (These characters act out what is stated by the Readers.)]*

READERS:

I thru V. We saw them hang on the crosses that day.

II. But who were those gathered 'round?

III. Mary, His mother, watching in silence, wiping her brow,

I thru V. Not making a sound.

IV. In the crowd were mostly women—

V. The prostitute, Mary Magdalene, who started to cry;

I. Simon of Cyrene, who carried the cross.

II. And urchins who came to watch someone die.

III. Roman Soldiers stood guard o'er the proceedings,
gambling for the death-sentenced Man's cloak.

IV. Waiting for death proved to be tedious

V. So they played their game...and never spoke.

I. Further down the hillside

 Stood a man just out of prison,

 His eyes riveted in disbelief

I thru V. For on the cross hangs a man named Jesus,

I. Proxy for a common thief.

II. Now, this man was dazed by the sunlight,

 Having been in prison locked away;

 Yet when released, he followed the crowd

I thru V. To watch a man be crucified that day.

BARABBAS. *[Speaking out loud to himself]* I can't move, I can't take
my eyes off this Jesus.

He has such power over me.

Why have I stood here hour after hour

To watch Him suffer in agony?

This morning I was shackled nearby him,
 But the crowds shouted, "Barabbas is free!"
 I don't understand, my life spared for this Man,
 Who's nailed on that cross where I should be.

READERS:

III. They were at liberty to choose who they liked;
 And it just turned out that way.

II. So go along, back to Jerusalem and back to life,

III. To the start of a brand new day.

BARABBAS. But I also had been sentenced to die,
 Condemned like the other two.
 Why was I not suffering the pain
 That this Jesus was going through?

He looked helpless, this Man hanging on the cross,
 While the other two men still looked strong.
 He suffered more; could scarcely hold up His head
 While those scoundrels seemed to last so long.

It was clear this poor Man would suffer no more
 As His life soon would come to an end.
 The minute He dies, I must hurry away
 And never, ever think of Him again...

[Thunder & Lightning. All goes dark except for a purple & green colored LIGHT across the crowd]

READERS:

IV. All of a sudden the sky became dark
 As if light had gone out of the sun.

V. The voice of Jesus pierced each heart;

JESUS. *[Whispered voice may be recorded or Jesus may speak from offstage]* "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

IV. We all then knew the deed was done.

V. All were frightened and many whispered.
 Some of the women started to cry.

Why had the sun disappeared in an instant

I thru V. Marking the moment that Jesus must die?

[A bright golden LIGHT begins to appear and all the lighting is restored]

I. Daylight spread 'cross the hill as if dawning.

II. Birds that were silent returned to their song.

III. They took the Man from the cross very carefully—

IV. This broken body had suffered so long.

BARABBAS. Now I can go wherever I like—

There's no reason for me to stay.

It's done, it's finished, the death of this Man.

READERS:

I thru V. Wrapped in clean linen they took Jesus away.

[The Characters all proceed to the tomb Stage Left]

V. His mother stood there with eyes dry

I. As mourners welcomed the new light of day.

II. One woman ran to her side to be with her.

BARABBAS. Then, she whispered and pointed my way.

I never meant to follow the procession.

His power, even in death, put me to the test.

So from a short distance I watched most intently

As they brought the body to its final place to rest.

[ROMAN SOLDIERS seal the tomb with a stone]

READERS:

III. The people kneeled in prayer by the tomb.

IV. Once it was sealed, they went away.

I thru V. They noticed this Barabbas on his knees,

V. But he didn't come near them; he had nothing to say.

[All others leave. BARABBAS is alone. He walks over to the tomb]

BARABBAS. How can I pray, I'm an evil-doer.

My voice would never be heard.

What could I say, I didn't know Him—

I'd be lost for even one word.

READERS:

I. Still he stood there alone and in silence,

II. Confused as to why he was spared.

III. But, the crowd shouted...

I thru V. *[In a quiet shouted whisper]* "Crucify Jesus!"—

IV. Saving Barabbas...

V. *[A slight laugh]* As if they cared.

[LIGHTS fade]

Scene 2. *[In Jerusalem at a Roadside Inn]*

READER:

I. Barabbas went directly back to Jerusalem,
Still dazed and somewhat in shock.

He was welcomed by friends at a roadside inn,
A common place for his type to flock.

[As the LIGHTS come up, we hear MUSIC and a couple of ladies in the Inn are dancing. As READER I comes forward to speak, we also hear laughter and the PROPRIETRESS is greeting BARABBAS and the others in the Inn—the BARMAIDS and THIEVES]

PROPRIETRESS. *[Laughing loudly]* Oh my, now, would you look who's here; who has rejoined the living! It's Barabbas!

1ST THIEF. Can you fancy that...he's back from the dead!

1ST WOMAN. He's looking pretty healthy to me. Welcome home, Barabbas.

PROPRIETRESS. *[Pushing two of the other men aside at the table]* Move over...let him have a seat. *[To 2nd Woman]* Get him something to drink!

2ND WOMAN. Coming right up. *[She pours from a wine bottle]*

1ST THIEF. You are one lucky man, Barabbas. About to hang on the cross and then all of a sudden...you're the people's choice!

PROPRIETRESS. He's always been my choice. *[She laughs loudly, then snuggles up to him and pours him more wine]* Drink! Goodness, let us have a look at you.

1ST THIEF. Man, why so quiet?

2ND THIEF. *[Making fun]* Aren't you as happy to see us?

BARABBAS. Sure.

1ST THIEF. Then come on, show it.

2ND THIEF. How did it feel to have everyone shouting out your name?

1ST THIEF. Aren't you grateful that those folk set you free?

2ND THIEF. Speak up.

[BARABBAS just takes another drink and makes a slight moan]

PROPRIETRESS. It's no wonder he's so quiet...after all, he's been chained up in a dungeon for so long now; very nearly dead... *[She puts her arms around his neck]*

1ST THIEF. Oh, is that so? *[Laughing at her]*

PROPRIETRESS. And, if a man is sentenced to death and let out...he's going to still feel dead!

2ND THIEF. *[To Proprietress, laughing, making fun of her]* Oh, a lady of wisdom!

1ST THIEF. A LADY??? *[Laughing out of control]*

PROPRIETRESS. *[Losing her temper]* Enough from you two! Do you want me to throw you out of here?... Then show a little respect for our friend. He's been through a lot today.

1ST WOMAN. That One that died; they say He went about prophesying and teaching from the Scriptures.

1ST THIEF. What harm is there in that?

2ND THIEF. He must have done something else to have been crucified.

2ND WOMAN. I saw Him once, though only as He was walking by.

PROPRIETRESS. *[Laughing, making fun]* I never saw Him, but I heard that He said the temple would collapse and Jerusalem would be destroyed by an earthquake and then both heaven and earth would be consumed by fire.

2ND THIEF. Well, if He said something like that, I'm not surprised He was the one chosen to be crucified.

2ND WOMAN. They say He mixed mostly with the poor and used to promise them that they would enter the kingdom of God. *[Laughs]*

1ST WOMAN. He promised that even to women like ourselves. *[All the WOMEN & THIEVES laugh uncontrollably]*

2ND WOMAN. Would be nice!

1ST WOMAN. If it were true!!! *[Laughs again. BARABBAS listens to this conversation, not seeming so far away as before because any talk of Jesus interests him]*

PROPRIETRESS. I don't care who that other Man was... He was crucified; not Barabbas. Barabbas is alive... and probably starving; those dirty scoundrels don't feed their prisoners. *[Rounding up some food]* Here, have some bread and mutton.

1ST THIEF. What did He preach about?

1ST WOMAN. I don't really know. Just about the kingdom of God.

1ST THIEF. Well, what sort of miracles did He perform?

1ST WOMAN. They say He could heal the sick or drive out evil spirits from a person.

2ND THIEF. Too bad you never met this Man, Barabbas. Drive a few evil spirits out of you; could've saved you many a night's suffering.

1ST WOMAN. They say that when He was younger, his family was at a wedding or something and they ran out of wine for all the guests and He changed the water into wine.

PROPRIETRESS. Wish I'd met that Man! *[They all laugh]*

2ND WOMAN. He must have been one of those that thought Himself to be the Messiah.

BARABBAS. *[Mumbling to himself, quietly]* The Messiah???

1ST THIEF. No, He couldn't be. They never would have crucified Him.

2ND THIEF. No, He would have come down from the cross and slain the lot of them.

1ST THIEF. *[Laughing]* A messiah who lets himself be crucified! Not likely.

BARABBAS. *[Mumbling]* The Messiah!!!

1ST THIEF. Oh, drink up, Barabbas, and stop your mumbling. *[2ND WOMAN pours him more wine]*

2ND THIEF. Cheer up. Aren't you glad to be with your friends instead of hanging on that cross rotting?

1ST THIEF. Aren't you having a good time?

1ST WOMAN. You're alive.

PROPRIETRESS. Yes, you're alive, Barabbas!

BARABBAS. Yes, yes, of course. *[And suddenly, he seems to have joined their conversation]*

1ST THIEF. Finally, he's speaking.

BARABBAS. It all seems so strange. *[Trying not to think of the day—trying to rejoin his friends]* Hey, any more of this mutton?

PROPRIETRESS. There's plenty. *[She gets more and fills his plate]*

BARABBAS. Thank you. You know, one minute you're sentenced to die and then for no reason you're set free. It's all too strange.

PROPRIETRESS. You're the better man!

BARABBAS. No. *[Pause]* There are just so many questions; like the darkness for instance.

1ST THIEF. Darkness?

2ND THIEF. What darkness?

PROPRIETRESS. It hasn't been dark!

1ST WOMAN. When?

BARABBAS. About the sixth hour.

1ST THIEF. That's foolish!