

WHAT WOULD JUDAS DO? – BAC SCRATCH TUESDAY



Come out. Throw a rope over.

I'm Judas.

This is my story. You already know how it ends. It ends with this.

Give end of rope to a punter.



I just don't want anyone to waste any of the next hour wondering what is going to happen. I'm Judas. I betray Christ. And then I hang myself. So if you're the sort of person who goes to the theatre and spends the evening trying to guess the end, this show isn't for you.

Someone leaves disappointed, and there's a brief discussion.

It's always difficult to know how to start a show like this. There's so many different ways of beginning. Like so...

Take off Judas gear. Walk on like some kind of actor.

- 1) My name is Judas. Judas Iscariot. I'm a revolutionary, a thinker, a man of great resolve and even greater passion. I died in Jerusalem, by my own hand, in the year 29 AD. I was born in... but wait, my friends, we are getting ahead of ourselves. To fully understand a man we must first understand the forces that shape him.

Or this. *Northern accent*

- 2) He said he were messiah. Said he were here to change things, make things better than they had been. He said a lot of things. There weren't much worth believing in back then, as so I chose to believe in him. But turned out he weren't the messiah. He weren't nobody. Turns out, if anyone were messiah, it were me all along. That's right, me. Judas. Judas Christ. Judas fucking Christ. Look at your faces. You don't like the sound of that do you? You look like someone's pissed in your chips. You make me sick.

Or this. *Go to the cross. Donmar Warehouse. Snot and tears.*

- 3) I loved you. I loved you. I loved you. And you said you loved me. Why did you make me betray you? You gave me no choice. You made me betray you, but only because you betrayed me. Why? Why? My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Or this. *Come out. Do some wierd stuff, do up tie, stand still.*

- 4) Do I fascinate you? Indeed. I am fascinating. My name is Judas Iscariot. Judas Iscariot is my name. The call me the deceitful one, they call me the betrayer, they call me the christ killer, they call me Judas. But you know me best as SATAN SATAN SATAN SATAN SATAN SATAN SATAN SATAN.

Judas

Actually... I'm going to begin like this.

I'm assuming, perhaps unreasonably, that everyone here knows how, and why, I died.

Start Jan & explain
Talk to punters. Matthew's Gospel says that, after Jesus' arrest by the Roman authorities (but before his execution), the guilt-ridden Judas returned the bribe to the priests and committed suicide by hanging himself. The priests could not return the money to the treasury so they used it to buy a plot of ground in order to bury strangers. The Acts of the Apostles (1:18) says that Judas used the bribe (or Judas' returned bribe was used) to buy a field, but fell down, and burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. This field is called Akeldama or Field Of Blood.
Vicky Fara

Talk about melodrama of bursting.

How would that look on a post-mortem? Death by bursting. Has anyone here ever burst? No. Nobody ever burst.

Apparently I said to the chief priests, "I have sinned. I have betrayed innocent blood." And then I went off and hung myself. But I hadn't sinned. I had failed. And my long slow walk out to the field of blood was not an admission of guilt, it was an admission of failure. I took drastic action, I made a bold move, and I failed. Looking back, it should have been obvious that things weren't going to work out. We were all under the spell of an unknown quantity. We were in thrall to a very charismatic man, but a man nonetheless, and one who didn't quite know what he was doing. He could have changed the world right then and there, he could have built the kingdom of heaven on earth if only he had seen his revolutionary rhetoric through to its logical endpoint. But instead he chose to talk mainly about wineskins, figs, and lillies. And we let him waste his talents. And I thought I could save the day. I was a fool.

See, in the disciples, we all had different roles. Matthew and John were the writers, the thinkers, for example. Peter could be relied upon for heavy work, rounding up crowds and such like. Me, I always had the bag. I was the bag man. I carried stuff, went on errands, and such like. Don't get me wrong, I played my part in the decision making process, I made suggestions. It's just that I tended to be overlooked, or my good ideas would inevitably get attributed to someone else who would then take the credit for them. And it always seemed like I was the last person to get whatever point Jesus was trying to make, but I think that's because I'm an exacting, rigorous, sort of person. So anyway, I carried the bag. To be honest, I used to think I was being exploited, but in the week before he died, I realised that, all along, Jesus had been preparing me for a position of trust.
bag man
play up

SUNDAY

of the week
It was on the Sunday before good Friday that I really thought things were going to kick off. I thought there was going to be blood in the streets, flags burning, doors kicked off their hinges, and the Romans beaten back out of the city walls. But nothing happened, as usual.

That morning we approached Jerusalem via The Mount of Olives. There was a buzz in the city, there was a groundswell of excitement about the imminent arrival of the philosopher-prophet-revolutionary-mystic-healer... whatever... you couldn't have

bought a better word of mouth. He was all things to all people, and they hadn't even seen or heard him yet. He should have been able to march in there, make a rousing speech, say 'this city is mine' and issue a set of demands. No-one could have stopped him.

But he didn't march in there. He decided to do something else. He told two of us, me and Thomas, to take the bag and go into a village in the shadow of the hill where we would find a donkey tied to a stake which we were to bring to him.

And I said, "Why? What do you want a donkey for? Time is passing. There is a real sense of expectation in the city. You need to get in there and strike while the iron is hot. Now's not the time to suddenly decide you want a donkey."

And he just made that face, that smiling, I'm cleverer than you, oh my poor fool, do you not see, face, and some of the other disciples, you know, the clever ones, the educated ones, they started laughing at me, like there was something I didn't understand, something I was too stupid to get. To be honest, even amongst my immediate comrades there were a few bourgeoisie intellectual types who were going to be first up against the wall come the revolution. Not mentioning any names but... John, Matthew. You, the type. Writers. Thinkers. ~~And the four of them~~ were in a little huddle talking about how clever Jesus was being and I said, "I don't care. I am not going to go and fetch a donkey, at this key moment, unless someone tells me what is going on. Why, at this crucial stage, do we need a donkey?"

And John took me by the elbow and led me away from the group and said, "Clearly, Judas, Jesus is going to enter Jerusalem upon an ass, so as to fulfill the prophesy, clearly". He used to do that, John. He used to say 'clearly' at the beginning of a sentence, and at the end, as if that made it clear, as if that absolved him of the responsibility of actually making what he was saying clear. "What are you talking about? An ass? What prophesy?"

And John said, "Oh Judas, my poor fool, clearly, did not the prophet write, 'Tell ye, the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass,' clearly." And I ... yes.. I had some memory of that, Isaiah, I think, anyone? But the point is, as I believe I said to John, that if you actively set out to fulfil a prophesy... if you know there's a prophesy that says the messiah will arrive on an ass, and so you actively go and get an ass to ride on, so as everyone will say 'he is the messiah', then that isn't really fulfilling a prophesy is it.

And John said. "What do you mean?" And I said, "Well if it happened by accident, if Jesus had accidentally fulfilled the prophesy then maybe it would mean something, but..." And then John interrupted me and he said, "Well, he isn't going to accidentally fulfil the prophesy is he? Under what circumstances is Jesus going to accidentally enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey? Oh, I missed my footing on the road, and I slipped, and I landed on the back of this donkey, and it bolted, and the next thing I knew I was entering the city walls riding it? It isn't going to happen."

And I said no, and that's my point. Deliberately setting out to fulfill a prophesy doesn't count as fulfilling a prophesy. And he said, just go and get the donkey and stop quibbling.

more John later

Am I being stupid here? Is it just me? What do you think? What would you have done?

So I went to get the donkey, with Thomas. And on the way I tried to explain my position to him and he said he had doubts too. When we got to the village the donkey was exactly where Jesus said it would be, so we got it and took it to him, and he rode it into town, like some kind of idiot child, and the people went nuts. They loved it. And everyone was singing his praises, waving palms at him, throwing stuff. And all the other disciples were dancing alongside, laughing and singing. "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the lord. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the lord, hosannah in the highest! Blessed be the king!" And I suppose, if pushed, I would admit that yes, it was a spectacular entrance. But it wasn't what I'd had in mind. He could have turned it around. The pharisees noticed what was happening and tried to confront him. They said he should rebuke the disciples for their inflammatory words. And I thought, eh up, here we go, it's going to kick off, it's going to kick off. But Jesus just said, "If these should hold their peace, then even the stones would cry out." Which is ok, but it's neither one thing or the other. It doesn't go far enough. And he was on a donkey.

It wasn't the arrival of a revolutionary, or a rebel. It was more like the arrival of a clown. Everybody knew something had happened. But nobody knew what it was. I'll be quite honest with you. It irked me. I feel it was a missed opportunity.

Subsequently, a lot of people have said to me, what happened to the donkey? There's all this fuss about you going and getting it and then after the clown-ride into town it's not mentioned again. Well, I have no idea what happened to the donkey. It melted into the crowd. I hope it died, really, I hope it died. Is that wrong?

Discuss the donkey's role. What would you do? Would you have looked for it?

MONDAY

Next day, Monday, I thought we were back on track after the donkey fiasco. Donkey-boy went to the temple, and, utterly uncharacteristically, he totally lost his rag. There are all these stalls, people doing business, sacrifices for sale, doves and such like. And he starts tearing around shouting "My house... my house, like he's God... my house shall be called the house of prayer and you have made it a den of thieves." This was the kind of stuff I liked. The bold absolutes, not the vague stuff. Things like 'give away everything you own, now, not some of it, at some point in the future, all of it, now.' Not 'consider the lilly' and that kind of jazz. What did it mean?

And then the usual parade of freaks started rolling in, blind people, deaf people, lepers, cripples, and he's healing them right left and centre, "I can see, I can hear, I can walk"... I swear there were healthy people hobbling in on stolen crutches just so they could be a part of it. "Heal me! Heal me! I can walk!" You could walk anyway. Stop mucking about. It used to take hours, and it made it difficult to get anywhere, impossible to get anything done. I actually suggested to him a few weeks prior that he might want to consider only speaking and appearing and doing miracles in inaccessible places, mountaintops or rooves, where the blind, deaf and lame would find

why I lined it up he wanted the hills over...

it difficult to get in. But he wouldn't have any of it. I mean sure, it was great healing people, but what was the actual point? Was he going to go and heal everyone in the world, one by one? No. It would have been better to have spent the time laying the actual factual groundwork for a better tomorrow, but he always seemed to get caught up in this pointless circus.

What do you think? What would you have done? What does it achieve, in real terms?

Either way, there's leaps dancing, tables over turned, escaped doves flying around, shitting on priests. People going bananas. They thought they were in at the start of something, they thought this was the dawning of a new era. Now, obviously the pharisees couldn't stand by and let this happen. They were pissed off. And at this point, despite everything, I was with him again, and I tell you if it had come to it I would have waded in and lamped someone. Everybody would have done. The people loved the table stunt. They were ready to blow up. But it all went mushy again, just like it always did with Jesus.

TUESDAY

Next day, Tuesday, he could have built on what he'd done, but he dropped the ball as usual. He's in the temple again, talking, healing, the usual, and the pharisees try to argue the toss with him, trying to catch him out. See, they've got a good thing going. Maybe it wouldn't have been so bad if Jesus had said outright, that he was here to kick out the romans, but the Pharisees thought he was going to bring down the whole edifice, and they had a cushy number on the go... the occupying army let them go about their business, and they had power and freedom to run the show, in a limited fashion. And he knows they're onto him, and he was talking it up, in the most inflammatory way possible. It was superb.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion

and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

The place is at fever pitch. It was masterful. I thought the crowd we're going to turn and tear the whole temple down. So one of the Pharisees, thinking fast, sends over some kid who says to Jesus, in a transparently flattering way...

"Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?"

And Jesus, to be fair, was ready for it, and he told them to show him a coin, so they brought him one, and he said, "Whose is this image?" and they said 'Caesar's' and he said "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." And then he went.

What? He was there. He had them, there, and then he retreated back into all this vagueness. And it was at that point that I finally realised that something I had suspected all along, from pretty much the moment he had assembled us. Jesus didn't actually know what he was doing. He didn't have a plan. He was great on the build ups, but he didn't have an end in sight. He was going nowhere. And I met his eye as he crossed the courtyard and he could see that I knew that he didn't know what he was going to do next. He'd painted himself into a corner and he didn't have an exit strategy.

I remember, before any of us were officially disciples, watching the sermon on the mount. And it was brilliant... "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when me shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." It's wise, it's funny, it's concise, it's revolutionary, it's a call to arms, it was, above all, a fluke. He was on a roll. The crowd were behind him. The acoustics were good. Everything flowed together perfectly. And I remember, now, looking back, as he walked down the hill, he looked like he didn't quite know what he'd done, or how he'd done it. Like he knew he'd set the bar too high, and peaked too early, and he'd gaurunteed himself a following but he didn't have anything to hand to follow that one fantastic splurge of superb ideas up with. And he spent the rest of his life wandering around saying vague things about wineskins, and seeds, and talents.

Same with the miracles. Now, I wasn't there when he did his first one, I don't even know what it was. Ask one of the writers?

Does anyone know what it was?

It was in Galilee, just after he'd got Simon and Andrew and James and John, the fishermen, before I joined the gang. A guy came up to him in the synagogue, apparently, possessed by devils... I don't believe in devils myself I tend to think it would just have been some kind of mental illness. And Jesus told the evil spirit to leave him. And it did. And everyone said it was a miracle. And I asked Andrew about this once, and he said Jesus seemed a little stunned by what had happened, and within a week they started coming to him. Even when he went out into the desert, everyone came, clamouring. And he must have been afraid, and wondered if he'd be able to do the same thing again. I mean, I saw miracles, the fish, the loaves, the walking on the water, or at least I think I did.

What I'm saying is... how was he going to top them? Maybe he wanted to focus people on what he was saying, and felt they were distracted by the fireworks. But when you did listen to what he was saying well... it didn't seem as clear as it had done before. Like I said, he'd painted himself into a corner. Where was the big finish?

And when he crossed the temple forecourt and made eye contact with me, I think I knew what he wanted me to do. I had to find a way to bring his story to an appropriately dramatic end. All those times he'd ignored my advice, given me stupid tasks to do, or attributed my good ideas to other people... they didn't matter anymore. I had a purpose.

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, Jesus was in Bethany, at the house of Simon, a leper whom he had cured. At least he said he was a leper. You can never be certain. He looked alright to me. We were all sitting around talking. As usual Matthew and John were monopolising the conversation, but I didn't mind today. I still didn't know exactly what I was going to do but I knew I was supposed to do something. And then Mary Magdalene arrived.

Let's not beat around the bush. The woman was a whore and there's an end on't. Now I don't have any problem with prostitutes. I never use them, I've never paid for it. I would like to see it totally above board, bring them into the workforce officially, and give them economic and political power which they can then use against the state and the ruling classes who have reduced them to their current state of disgusting, filthy degradation. At the moment, prostitutes are a potential ally in the struggle which we are entirely failing to exploit, other than sexually.

Anyway, she came in, Jesus' special friend, and they went and sat in the corner together, and she got out this alabaster box full of oil, and started to anoint his head with it. Now, bear in mind, that at this point, we'd been living in the wilderness for years eating mainly nuts and berries and locust, and any money we did accrue we always gave away to the poor, which was as it should be. And when she started actually washing his feet with this expensive oil, and wiping them with her hair, everyone, not just me, raised an eyebrow. And Simon actually said... "Lord, to what

2
ask
out
Jesus
3
purpose is this waste? This oil might have been sold for much and the money given to the poor." And Jesus paused for a moment, while the woman massaged in the oil with her hair, and he looked at us, with insolence, to be honest, and said... "Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

What does this mean?

superb by sentence...
Superb. You could have cut the atmosphere... everyone looked quietly furious, but I just had to pretend to be annoyed, because inside I was laughing. Normally I'd have argued the point with Jesus. But I knew what he was doing and I knew that he knew that I knew, because of the little look we'd shared in the temple. The other disciples didn't understand, but I did see. He was trying to provoke us, definitely. What he'd just said was insulting, contradictory, illogical, and it was a secret signal, to me. He had no more answers and I was to do what needed to be done.

Get 4
Jesus had to die. He hadn't written the 3rd act. I would have to provide one. Suppose he lived. Supposed he lived, turned forty, and everyone realised that what he was saying was just hot air, wise words with no real action to back them up. And he'd be off in some corner of the Roman Empire, shackled up with the prostitute, growing old gracelessly, a joke, a sad shadow of his former self. But if he died, we had a fighting chance. We could seize control of his legacy, dictate the way in which he was remembered, draw out the meanings in his words as we saw fit, to shape society in the way Jesus would probably have wanted it to be shaped, but without his relentless ambiguities to compromise it. I knew this was what he wanted me to do. I knew I could save the day and his reputation.

go back
back
to
Pharisees
So I made my excuse and left and went across town to the Pharisees, and said I'd keep them in the loop as regards Jesus movements over the next few days and where best they might seize him. I told them I would make Jesus known to them at an appropriate time. They offered me 30 pieces of silver, which I accepted, but the irony was I'd have done it for nothing. John says I spent the money on land. I didn't. I wanted to keep the money for the struggle ahead. When Jesus was dead we could make the hero of him that he always should have been and we'd need money for arms and supplies, when we took the fight to the streets. The Pharisees asked how they would know which of us was Jesus, and I said, I'll give him a kiss.

What would you have done?

I don't know why I said that. I'm not a very physical person. I don't really like human contact. When Jesus made us all do a group hug I usually tried to sneak away. But a kiss it was.

righteous.
I don't believe in the devil.
Luke's gospel says the devil entered into me. The devil. Idiot. I didn't need persuading by the devil. I was doing God's work.

Do you see why I was doing God's work? What would you have done?

THURSDAY

I woke up on Thursday morning, the first day of the fest of unleavened bread, excited about my important work. Jesus had chosen me to make good his promise. He knew he couldn't tie up all the loose ends, so I was going to do it for him. I was going to relieve him of the responsibility of his flesh and allow the best of his ideas to take flight and catch fire, unencumbered by the doubts and fears of the man himself.

Start setting up table and chairs

Jesus sent me and Thomas off again to sort out the arrangements for the meal. I used to think he used me as a dogsbody, sending me off to do all these dull tasks, but now I realise he had been grooming me all along, for the special task he had planned for me. I wasn't that I was undervalued amongst the disciples, it was in fact the opposite.

He told us to go into the city and when we saw a man with a pitcher of water, we were to follow him into a house, and there would be the room where we should prepare the Passover. Thomas and I saw the man through a crowd of people in the market and we did as we had been told. Sure enough, everything was as Jesus had described. I got my bag and went off to the market to buy food, bread and wine for the meal with money Jesus had given me.

At night we met at the house in the upper room. You probably imagine we sat along a long trestle table, but it wasn't a trestle table, it was a round table. This was a meal not a group of men posing for a portrait. Let me show you how it was arranged.

The first, Simon, who is called Peter.

And Andrew his brother;

James the son of Zebedee,

and John his brother;

Philip,

and Bartholomew;

Thomas,

and Matthew the publican;

James the son of Alphaeus,

and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

Simon the Cananaean,

and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

I dished out the food.

Do this...describe the room etc

Use other seats until

Everyone was making small talk. And then out of nowhere, Jesus said

"Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me..."

But what you have to remember is it wasn't a grand dramatic statement, it was just throw away in conversation, so that not everyone immediately heard it.

Show this

age's not me is it,
clearly - John *

And then, as it sank in, what he'd said, they were all going 'who is it?', 'not I Lord?' and making a fuss. And he said 'It is one of the twelve of you that eats here with me.' And I was going 'Who is it?' too, because what you had to understand is I didn't think of myself as betraying him. I thought I was doing what he wanted me to. I thought I was helping the cause. And then I thought, oh I see.... Is that the story he wants to tell? That he was betrayed by one of his own? Why? And I became irritated. I was going to do this great works, I was going to immenise the revolution, bring forward the date of the establishment of the kingdom of heaven and earth and my reward was going to be to be remembered as the betrayer? I said 'Master is it I?' and he wouldn't say no, and everyone was looking at me.

What do you think? You agree? You come here and you eat my bread and you drink my wine, fuck you. TAKE IT BACK OFF THEM.

And then in the middle of all this he started breaking bread and blessing it, and passing it round one by one. And he said, "Take, eat, this is my body." And then he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they drank it, and he said, "This is my blood, of the new covenant, that is shed for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

And at this point I'd had enough of being run ragged from pillar to post by his shit and I said, "Don't you think you should clarify exactly what you mean here?" And he said "What?", and looked at me, and everyone laughed. And I said, having had enough, "I just think this is going to lead to problems. Are you saying this bread and wine literally becomes your body and blood or are you saying this is just symbolic, because one day you won't be here and I gauruntee you, I assure you, things like this, the way you never make it quite clear what you mean, are going to be the source of no end of trouble."

What do you think it means? Why did he leave it so vague?

What annoyed me was, even on the verge of getting me to end it all, to bring all this confusion to a close, he was still intent on making even more of a mess of things. And then he stood up, and he put my bag into my hand, and he said, "Go Judas, and whatever you have to do, do it quickly."

What do you think that meant? What would you have done?

fit down

Now the others thought he was just trying to calm the situation, or send me off on some other menial errand, but I knew what he meant. So I went. I went

across town to the Pharisees and told them to be ready, and then I waited outside the house until the meal was over. Upstairs I could hear them singing a hymn, without me, and no-one asked where I was, and then they came down and went up to the mount of olives, and no-one said they should wait for me, or leave a note saying where they'd gone, and I followed them.

And when they got up into the garden the rest of them went to sleep in a clearing and Jesus went off alone to pray and I crouched and hid and listened to him and you know what I heard him say, "Take this cup from me." Take this cup from me. Like he knew I was there.

What do you think of that?

And any doubts about my course of action evaporated. I ran down to the bottom of the hill where the Pharisees and loads of hired thugs were waiting with swords and sticks and I said, "Remember, whomsoever I shall kiss, that's him. Take him and lead him away,"

Well, you know what happened. I led the mob up the hill, and when I saw Jesus and the disciples I tried to act as if it were a happy coincidence, and I went straight up to Jesus and kissed him, but it was eggy you know, because I don't kiss people as a rule. My heart wasn't in it.

~~Kiss a man, show us.~~

And Jesus said, "Judas, would you betray me with a kiss," but the way that phrase has come down to you... the syntax is wrong. It wasn't angry, or despairing, it was funny, he was laughing at me for the stupidity of me choosing as a sign to the Pharisees something I was so uncomfortable about. It was "Judas, would you betray me with a kiss" And he laughed, and I laughed, and then they snatched him, and there was a scuffle, someone's ear got cut off, and me, I ran away. Tomorrow I'd meet up with the disciples and work out how best we could capitalise on whatever happened, and figure out how, in death, we could make Jesus into the man he never could have been in life.

FRIDAY

But the wheels of justice moved uncommonly quickly on Friday. And even though we'd got Jesus arrested, and sentenced, just like he obviously wanted, he still managed to mess it up. I heard he was to be executed and went down to see, now I don't know exactly what he did to annoy them, but I was expecting a bit of ceremony, an execution fit for an enemy of the state, a warning of what happened if you threatened the status quo.

But there he was, on the hill of skulls, hung on a cross, crucified, next to two thieves. Crucifixions were ten a penny. There was hardly a crowd. There were no officials present. He had just been processed like any other offender, and was now being put to death like any common criminal. I thought he'd become a cause celebre, a rallying point, but the very people whose lives we could have used Jesus' memory to turn around were standing about jeering at him.

flight

The King of the Jews. The twelve had split, gone into hiding, Peter had even denied ever knowing Jesus, and he was always the most demonstrative, going on and on about how much he loved him.

SUN SET

I stood as the sun set and watched Jesus twitch to death, and there was nothing heroic about it, let me tell you. All that stuff about centurions saying he was the son of God, and wine flowing from his wounds, it was nonsense, embellishments years later. Jesus was *just* a little man dying, slowly. I was sick into my hat, not just with revulsion, but with a growing, nauseating sense of terrible failure as I realised this wasn't going to be the kind of death you could hang a revolution on.

little distance

So, me and Jesus, our plan hadn't worked. I fulfilled my part of the bargain. But I should have checked the small print. I should have said to the Pharisees... if I hand him over to you can you guarantee me he has a hero's death, the sort of thing that will turn the people against you, and against the romans, and bring about the collapse of the state and the start of a glorious new tomorrow. Of course they wouldn't agree to that. They saw me coming. They played me. And so, perhaps, did Jesus.

I went to market. I bought a rope. I put it in my bag. I walked out to the field of blood, made a noose and slung it over a tree. And that was that.

~~Now you, on the count of three, you pull the rope tight, and you kick away the chair.~~