

**The olive branch...**

John 19:17-20:23; Luke 23:50-24:12

*There are two skits going on in parallel. Skit One skit tells the resurrection story through a gardener, who saw the women at the tombstone and their reaction. Skit Two uses as many women, girls and others (ie men and boys) to act out the Crucifixion and Resurrection – there needs to be two men in white, Jesus, Peter, Mary and one or two other women.*

*The two skits are performed at the same time with Skit Two used to give depth to the more light-hearted banter of the two gardeners. The two skits also “intertwine” in places. The two gardeners end up by wanting to dig a little further to find the truth about this Jesus they had heard about.*

	<u>Skit 1</u>	<u>Skit 2</u>
	<p><i>Two gardeners, with a suitable strine accent, stop for morning tea. One of the gardeners has just come back from leave and catches up on the news.</i></p> <p><i>A thermos, mug and snack in a small esky would be appropriate for each, as well as a spade for one and rake for the other. Eating and drinking would be appropriate, especially for G2 who ends up listening to a fair bit...</i></p>	<p><i>Skit two begins when the gardeners talk about the “orthorities”.</i></p>
G1	Time for a break, mate.	
G2	Streuth, about time...hard yakka after a month off!	
G1	Yeah, it was a fair time ya had [ <i>pausing, unsure whether to mention it</i> ] I heard a rumour – it wasn’t true was it?	
G2	Ya mean the bit about pruning the head gardener’s favourite olive tree?	
G1	That’s the one – I heard it was more than just a prune. It was more like total anihalation, what with cutting it off at the dirt line!	
G2	Yeah, well, I had smudged the bloomin’ “prune” at the top of the Papryus! And further down on the list, I thought he wrote “get it down today” when he actually had “get it done today”!	
G1	No wonder he was a bit snakey with ya! You were lucky he finally held out the olive branch and offered you some gardening leave!	
G2	Well it meant both of us could cool down. Mind you, it was hotter than a tin roof in the midday sun at the beach.	
G1	Well, while you were floatin’ on the Dead Sea, there was a right goin’ on ‘ere.	
G2	Like what?	<i>Jesus enters with crown of thorns on head, carrying the cross (either real or mimed).</i>
G1	Well, you know that fella Jesus with his mob of disciples...	<i>A small band of disciples follow Jesus at a distance</i>

G2	Yeah...	<i>Jesus hangs from the cross.</i>
G1	Well...the uthorities busted them...came down real hard.	<i>The disciples gather together at some distant point to watch and wait.</i>
G2	Wadda ya mean?	
G1	[ <i>Secretly</i> ] Well...it was a bit over the top – they crucified him, sayin’ he was the “King of the Jews”. [ <i>More secretly</i> ] A bit much I reckon.	<i>Most disciples come and kneel at the foot of the cross, weeping.</i>
G2	Gee, bet it caused a right stir...	
G1	Yeah – and right before the Sabbath. They had to get special “dispensation” from Pilate to get him down.	<i>The remaining disciples hurry over and indicate he must be taken down</i>
G2	But where did they put him?	
G1	Right here – they used that new tomb that Arimathean got us to dig.	<i>The disciples carry Jesus to the garden, led by Joseph of Arimathea. The crown of thorns is left.</i>
G2	Oh, you mean Big Joey?	
G1	Yeah, Big Joey. Well, him and another fellow even started the spices ‘n’ stuff.	
G2	What? Just before the start of the Sabbath?.	<i>They lay Jesus down and cover him with two white sheets. They then roll a stone in front of him and leave.</i>
G1	Yeah, that’s right. ...[ <i>Pausing and then continuing in a thoughtful manner</i> ] ...Well, I had the Sabbath off – well, don’t we all? But I was on the early shift at the start of the week and that next day at sunrise...	<i>After they exit off-stage, Jesus rises and wraps himself in one sheet. The other he folds and leaves where he has lain. He walks off.</i>
G2	What – there’s more?	
G1	Well, that’s the funny thing. Here I was, up to my ankles in night soil, raking it out like usual, and his woman folk run up to the tomb carrying some more spices.	<i>The women folk come quietly in carrying the spices. There is little talking.</i>
G2	Bet they smelt better than ya muck	
G1	[ <i>Continuing impervious to the interruption</i> ] Now I hadn’t noticed, but when they cried out “the tombstone’s been moved” I look and what do you think?	<i>They come to the tomb and find the stone rolled away. They are frightened that Jesus’ body has been stolen.</i>
G2	Someone’s stolen the body?	
G1	Well, that’s what it looked like. But they had guards placed on the tomb. And you won’t believe this but... [ <i>he pauses</i> ]	<i>They stand talking and gesticulating and not knowing what to do next.</i>
G2	Yeah, but...	
G1	You just won’t believe it, and I know there was a bit of confusion with his mates running this way and that, but...	<i>Some women start leaving.</i>
G2	[ <i>encouragingly</i> ] so try me...	

G1	Well, there were two guys – bright and shining they were...	<i>Then two men “appear” – dressed in white.</i>
G2	What are you saying?	
G1	Its not what I’m saying but what they said – they reckoned “Why are ya lookin’ where the corpses are. He’s not ‘ere. He’s risen!”	<i>The two men talk to the women.</i>
G2	Well what was that suppose to mean?	<i>The two men disappear (Turn their back on audience and freeze – then walk off)</i>
G1	Well, I didn’t rightly know, but his followers seemed to make some sense of it. Anyways, the women folk run-off except for one.	<i>The women are amazed, shocked, etc and talk about what they had heard. They quickly run-off leaving Mary.</i>
G2	What was she doin’?	<i>Mary weeps and is confused by what she has heard –</i>
G1	Well crying mostly. I was ‘bout to go up and lend a hand but then this fella suddenly appeared	<i>she came to minister to her Lord’s body to find it not there and then confronted by the news he has risen –</i>
G2	What do ya mean?	<i>what did it mean?</i>
G1	Well, it was a bit funny because she thought he was me [he stands and spreads his arms showing his mate himself] ... but he was Jesus. She didn’t seem to realise it at first...	<i>Mary looks to G1. Jesus appears as G1 spreads his arms</i>
G2	That’s a bit hard to take!	<i>Mary reacts to Jesus (eg hands over face, etc)</i>
G1	Well, remember, she was crying heaps – and when she did recognise him, she cried “Teacher”.	<i>Then she looks again at him and mime crying “Teacher”.</i>
G2	And that’s all after he comes back from the dead?	
G1	Well, she tried to grab him and he said something about not to because he hadn’t returned to his Dad, and go tell the others.	<i>Mary tries to hug Jesus who steps away and hold out hand to stop Mary.</i>
G2	And did she?	<i>Jesus points in direction of other disciples.</i>
G1	Well, it seemed like it – she ran of yellin’ “I’ve seen the Lord”.	<i>Mary runs off, miming crying out “I’ve seen the Lord!”</i>
G2	Was it really him?	
G1	Well, he seemed pretty spectacular standing there – and then when I looked again he was gone.	<i>Jesus disappears (Turns back on audience and freezes – then walks off)</i>
G2	Gee, there some right’s goin ons ya had!	
G1	But there’s more – a little later this Peter fellow runs up and takes a look-see into the tomb.	<i>Peter runs in to look in the tomb</i>
G2	Didn’t he trust the women then?	

G1	Looked that way. I went and had a bo-peep over his shoulder, [G1 gets up and mimes this] and sure enough, nothin' there and the linen all nicely folded.	<i>Peter picks up the folded linen</i>
G2	Well I never...	
G1	But that's not the end of it...I followed this Peter chap because now my curiosity was up. [G1 gets up and mimes this and then sits again] And you will never guess what happened!	<i>Peter exits</i>
G2	So I won't guess – get goin' with the story...	
G1	He went to their meeting room and they were all busy talkin' about what they had seen.	<i>Peter and the other disciples come back on stage</i>
G2	Or not seen as the case may be.	
G1	Yeah, that too...[He joins with mime in skit 2] anyway, there I was minglin' and no-one seemed to mind, and, well lunch came and went, then dinner, and suddenly it was evenin', [A little guiltily as he was obviously suppose to be at work] and you'll never guess what!	<i>They (including G1) mime having lunch and dinner with a lot of discussion – sometimes subdued sometimes a little more lively.</i>
G2	Look, we've been through that – get on with the story!	
G1	Jesus came and stood among us and said “Peace be with you”.	<i>Jesus comes and stands in middle of disciples.</i>
G2	Nah, I just can't come at that...	
G1	Well, I tells ya that's what he said and I saw his scars on his hands and his sides.	<i>Jesus shows his scars.</i>
G2	So you really think it was him?	
G1	Yeah, I do. And he also said “As the Father's sent me, so I'm sending you” and with that he kind of breathed on us	<i>Jesus points to heaven, then to the disciples and then outward to the audience in a sweeping motion.</i>
G2	What on earth for?	
G1	Well, it was more than just breath – he said to receive the holy spirit and to forgive people.	<i>Jesus breathes on the disciples and crosses his hands on his chest (ie to indicate contriteness)</i>
G2	A nice sentiment but sometimes pretty hard to do, especially with the boss.	<i>Jesus freezes (Turns back on audience and freezes – then walks off)</i>
G1	Well you know, that's the funny thing – the more I try the easier it's becoming. [starts packing the rubbish into his esky] Look, we're meeting again tonight – I'll take ya if ya like – ya might even start learnin' how to forgive the boss!	<i>The disciples are in awe and astonished. They freeze (Turn their backs on the audience and freeze – then walk off)</i>
G2	[They pick up their things and start to exit] Look I'll check with the missus – but do I really have to forgive the boss?	