**From Our Own Correspondent**

*Cast: Clive Myrie, presenter of the World at One news show, based in the studio in London; Lyse Doucet, foreign affairs correspondent on the streets of Jerusalem; Jesus, always off-stage.*

*Props needed: whip, robust table that is light enough to be overturned, large pile of coins. Because this is all about the words rather than the pictures, you will need to think about how you present it engagingly. In many contexts, it will be best to present the four scenes separately.*

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|  | **Sunday** |
| Clive | Good morning and welcome to The World at One. This week, we will be on the streets of Jerusalem watching events unfold during Passover week. The excitement is building as the Jewish people prepare to celebrate the old story of their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. Every year, Jerusalem is a religious hothouse, with rumours flying about the coming of Messiah, the promised saviour, who, it is believed, will free the people of God from foreign occupation and set up a lasting Jewish kingdom. This year, the rumours centre on Jesus of Nazareth, the miracle-worker from Galilee, who has drawn large crowds with his miracles and homely teaching. But he has offended the religious authorities by refusing to support their traditions. Let’s go over to Lyse Doucet, who is on the streets mingling with the crowds. Lyse, what is going on down there? |
| Lyse | Thank you, Clive. The sensational news is that Jesus is just entering the city from Bethany, riding on a donkey. The crowds are going absolutely wild as he climbs the hill towards the castle and the temple. They’re tearing down branches from the trees that line his path to show their support, and they obviously believe he’s about to overthrow the Romans, even though he doesn’t exactly look like a revolutionary and is completely unarmed. Listen to the crowds. |
| Clive | They seem to be saying, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!” What does that mean? |
| Lyse | They’re proclaiming him their King! He’s almost reached the top of the hill now, and he’s about to turn right to lead the crowds into the castle. They’re right behind him. We’re watching history unfold before our eyes, and any moment he will come face to face with the soldiers. No-one can predict what will happen next……. He’s stepping down off the donkey now….. Hey! What’s going on? He’s turned left into the temple! He must have lost his nerve! The crowd are looking around at one another, wondering what’s going on. You can almost hear the disappointment. They really did think he was going to take on the Roman army! I wonder what the priests in the temple will make of him? I’m going to follow him in…….. |
|  | *(This scene all happens off-stage. Because the audience do not have any visual clues, the sounds need to be repeated or continued for longer than feels natural so that they work out what is going on. Props needed are a whip, a robust table and a large pile of coins. It is recommended to have two separate piles of coins – about £3 of coppers each, being tipped out of a basket onto something they tinkle off. A microphone is needed and should be carefully positioned to get the quieter sounds across, in particular the tinkling of coin and the banging of the table. Jesus speaks at great volume. Lyse listens from her position on stage and looks towards where the sounds are coming from.)* |
| Jesus | *(Sound of whip hitting table repeated throughout)* Out! Get out! All of you! Now! Out! Out! Out! *(Sound of the table being thrown to the ground and the coins being knocked over)* It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer”, but you have made it a den of thieves. Get out! |
| Lyse | In all my years of reporting, I have never heard anything like it. He’s really thrown down the gauntlet. The religious authorities will have to respond or lose all control of the situation. |
| Clive | Thank you, Lyse. I am sure we will talk to you again soon when you can updated us on developments. |
|  | **Thursday** |
| Clive | Events in Jerusalem are moving towards a climax, as millions of Jews prepare to celebrate the Passover feast tonight. Tensions are running high as Jesus of Nazareth continues to take on the religious authorities, calling them hypocrites and warning them of God’s judgment. Lyse, is he getting the upper hand in this stand-off? |
| Lyse | Well, it’s very difficult to tell, Clive. He certainly knows how to offend - he described them yesterday as white-washed graves which look lovely but stink inside. The crowds loved that one. |
| Clive | What is the mood among the crowds, Lyse? Surely that must determine the outcome? |
| Lyse | I think they could swing either way. They like Jesus, but he baffles them. Just when he gets in a position to take charge, he seems to back down. They are afraid of the Roman soldiers and nervous of being thrown out by the priests. |
| Clive | And what are the authorities doing about it? |
| Lyse | The Romans are on the streets in case of serious trouble, but they are staying out of it. I think they are only too happy to let the Jews fight it out among themselves. The religious authorities are absolutely livid, and all week their leaders have been going in and out of the High Priest’s office with faces like thunder. They have been trying to corner Jesus with clever tricks, but so far he has not just side-stepped the traps but turned it back on them, making them look stupid. Everyone is wondering how much longer this can last. |
| Clive | Thank you, Lyse, and we’ll have more of that story as it unfolds. |
|  | **Friday** |
| Clive | Good morning. The dramatic news today is that the unrest in Jerusalem has been crushed. Following a tip-off, Jesus of Nazareth was arrested by the religious authorities late last night, and his supporters have fled, abandoning him to his fate. After an extraordinary series of night-time trials, when he apparently claimed to be God, he has been condemned to death. Lyse, what more can you tell us? |
| Lyse | Well, Clive, Jesus has just staggered past us, all battered and bruised, carrying his cross on the way to the place of execution, along with two other criminals, through the jeers of the crowd. The decisive moment came at breakfast time, when Pilate, the Roman governor, told the people to choose between Jesus and Barabbas, a notorious terrorist. Some loud-mouthed thugs swung the crowd against Jesus, and they turned on him, venting their anger and their frustration. The authorities have won convincingly and are now back in control. |
| Clive | So what happens next? |
| Lyse | I am with the crowds heading up the hill to watch the fun. A public execution always seems to bring out the worst in us – some have brought eggs and tomatoes to throw at them. I can see them now, holding him down while they nail him to the cross. |
| Jesus | *(Offstage)* Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing. |
| Lyse | That’s amazing! How can he say that when he’s in such agony? They’re taunting him to prove he is God by climbing down from the cross – they’d get quite a shock if he did! ….. It’s getting very dark now, as if the skies are angry at what they see. He’s slipping away ….. |
| Jesus | *(Offstage - loud)* It is finished. |
|  | **Sunday** |
| Clive | Good morning. After the drama of Jesus’s sudden execution on Friday, Jerusalem is awash with rumours. Lyse, what more can you tell us? |
| Lyse | Good morning, Clive. The city is alive with whispering. On every street corner, you see small groups of people with their heads together, afraid of being heard but desperate to hear the latest news. |
| Clive | And what are they saying? |
| Lyse | They are saying – and the BBC has not been able to fact-check this – and I can only say it because of the protection of being foreign press – people are only prepared to talk on condition of anonymity – they are saying that Jesus has been seen in the city alive and well! |
| Clive | No! They don’t believe that, do they? |
| Lyse | It’s difficult to know what they believe. Indeed, I don’t think they know themselves – the idea is so ridiculous to anyone who saw him die on Friday. But there have been some very strange happenings this morning. |
| Clive | Such as what? |
| Lyse | It all started when there was a minor earthquake just as the sun was rising. Then a group of Roman soldiers were seen running from the graveyard where Jesus was buried, white as a sheet and screaming that they had seen a ghost. They ran to their barracks, where they were arrested for deserting their posts guarding the grave. The Governor sent a delegation to investigate, and they found the stone rolled away from the grave entrance and the tomb was empty. |
| Clive | What are the authorities saying about it? |
| Lyse | They have confirmed that the body is missing, and they have accused Jesus’s followers of stealing it. But that feels far too convenient. |
| Clive | What do you mean? |
| Lyse | Well, his followers fled before his execution and have been holed up in a safe house, too afraid to step out, let alone carry out a daring heist. And they could hardly have staged an earthquake. The authorities are desperate to find the body, but they don’t appear to have any leads at all. And the rumours are spreading. |
| Clive | What sort of rumours? |
| Lyse | A hysterical young woman was seen running from the scene, claiming that she had seen him alive and that he had spoken to her – he had even known her name. One of the guards apparently claimed that he had seen a ghost roll the heavy stone away as if it was no heavier than a balloon. And one man told me that Jesus had told his followers that he would rise again on the third day – which is today. People are also connecting the hours of mid-afternoon darkness on Friday with the earthquake this morning, and suggesting that these are signs that God is angry with the city and is planning to destroy it, as Jesus had predicted. |
| Clive | So what happens next? |
| Lyse | No one knows. The authorities have warned that anyone spreading false rumours will be arrested. The festival is now over, so the crowds are starting to disperse, and the authorities are hoping that things will quieten down as they do so.But unless they find the body or there is a credible sighting, it is difficult to see how this can get resolved quickly. |
| Clive | Well, that’s all from Lyse in Jerusalem for now. We’ll let you know when there are further developments. |