

SHORT CHANGED- THE SCRIPT

CHARACTERS

Samuel & Jacob	The narrators for the story, giving us different perspectives of the story in a conversational style. Funny with good timing, allowing the audience to react. Can be boys or girls with a name change using Ruth & Karen?!
Villager 1	A 20s mobster/gangster, use that accent 'you dirty rat'! Could wear a gangster hat and carry a violin case!
Villager 2	Very posh and well educated. Worried about offending anyone.
Villager 3	Really angry, about everything! Has most of the mean lines! Can rip his shirt in each scene or even be a cockney geezer!
Villager 4	Quite sad and worried, pessimistic in nature. Nothing is ever going to be right again! Should probably wear grey.
Zacchaeus	This person needs to be able show the full transition of the character of Zacchaeus. Greedy, miserable and confused at first; transformed to apologetic, gracious and freed.
Jesus	Jesus needs to create a calm and peaceful atmosphere in all of his scenes, showing patience with Zacchaeus, the angry villagers and all who they interact with. A loving smile and a kind nature should be present at all times!
Miriam	Gets swindled by Zacchaeus showing what a bad guy he is.



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CHOIR

All children who are not part of the on-stage action during a song form the choir. Split the choir into two groups and use them to represent a bigger mob of villagers. Make sure they interact with the story, and laugh at the funny moments to help out the audience! They need to sing out and sell the dance moves!

COSTUMES

These can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. You could do a traditional take on the costumes or even make it a modern retelling of the story. Even a simple item of head gear, or a sash could indicate the different characters. The choir would represent the citizens of Jericho and could therefore wear clothing that would represent different jobs.

SET & PROPS

Use the screen to project the scene rather than having to create all the sets. Feel free to add features. We would suggest:

- Tree:* Cardboard tree that would hide a stepladder which allow people to look like they are climbing the tree. The tree would be on stage at all times and could almost be like one of the characters!
- Miriam's Shop:* A market stall filled with material. Lots of colours.
- Props for song: 'Our Money'* During the chorus have Zacchaeus engage with some of the funny items (eg. Easy chair/fashionable hair/mirror).
- Money:* Cash for Zacchaeus to payback the people of Jericho and even the audience! This could even be a finale moment with the cast throwing money into the air. Printable notes are included in the resource pack.

More details for making props are on the props sheet included in the resource pack.



SHORT CHANGED

ACT 1

(Group of villagers gathered all shouting 'bye' and waving to Jesus as he leaves Jericho. Samuel runs up to Jacob to find out what's been going on. Jacob is about to climb up a tree to see).

Samuel - Hi Jacob... Jacob! **JACOB!** *(Pulling Jacob's shirt)*

Jacob - WHAT! Oh, hi Samuel, help me climb this tree will you?

Samuel - We've never climbed this tree, there's nothing to see. Now that tree that looks over Esther's garden... now that is a view!

Jacob - I want to say bye to Jesus!

Samuel - Who?!

Jacob - Jesus... of Nazareth!

Samuel - Where?!

Jacob - He was here in Jericho.

Samuel - When?!

Jacob - Like 36 seconds ago... he just left!

Samuel - No way! That's just typical! Of all the weekends to have to visit the grandparents, my parents pick this one. What was he like?

Jacob - Samuel, you have no idea!

Samuel - OK... well can you give me an idea?

Jacob - I'll just say this... it was... 'real'!

Samuel - 'Real'! You can do better than that.

Jacob - *(Amazed and thoughtful)* OK... life-changing!

(Crowd saying 'bye' to Jesus leave stage)

Samuel - Whose wife was changed?

Jacob - *(Snaps out of it)* Not wife-changing you pomegranate... LIFE-changing! Nasty Zach will never be the same again!



SHORT CHANGED

Samuel - Zacchaeus! He's the worst! What does he have to do with all of this, apart from trying to spoil everything and make money off it. My Mother says if it wasn't for him, we could use more than two sheets of toilet paper at a time. He's the reason we went to my grandparents, to borrow some more money after that last tax increase.

(Group of villagers enter stage looking angry)

Jacob - The whole of Jericho was up in arms over Zacchaeus's last tax increase. People had had enough and it was all Nasty Zach's fault!

(Samuel & Jacob exit stage)

Villager 1 - Of all the tax collectors in all the world we have to have du worst!

Villager 2 - That Zacchaeus is a complete... rotter! Pardon my language.

Villager 3 - Rotter! He's a complete...

Villager 4 - *(interrupting)* Shall we just settle down before we all get in trouble! We all feel *short-changed!*

Villager 1 - Well he can't tax us anymore, dat's for sure. Zach should be whacked!

Villager 2 - You think?! He'll be asking for the shirt off our backs next. Yet he wears only the finest clothes, they say he has his own tailor!

Villager 3 - Only 'cos he's so short! He can't even wear kids' clothes and look respectable.

(Intro plays for So Mean)

(Zacchaeus comes on stage looking important and mean)

Villager 4 - I've never known it so bad. Zacchaeus is just so mean!

(Villagers re-join the choir)

SONG - SO MEAN

1

Have you heard the news? Have you got the blues?
Our tax rates have been raised... again!
Don't know what to do, I can't pay for food
And the bills keep adding up, it's a pain.

A tax collector should have been a noble job
But they passed it off to a crook.



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But they passed it off to a crook.



SHORT CHANGED

- Miriam -** But you didn't pay last time! How am I to stay in business?! You take all of my best stock!
- Zacchaeus -** If you paid your taxes on time you wouldn't be in debt to me... I mean YOUR government. This should cover you for this month... but I'll be back! Good day!
- Villager 1 -** You're a nasty little money grabber Zacchaeus! (*Putting his hands up like a boxer*) Why I oughta...!

(Zacchaeus leaves the shop delighted with himself. As he walks across the stage the villagers/choir look at him with hate!)

(Intro plays for Our Money)

- Zacchaeus -** I don't care what people say, they're just jealous of my success. They'd all die to have all of the nice things that I have! The more they complain... the more I'll take from them!

SONG - OUR MONEY

(Act out the chorus with help from villagers)

1

(Zacchaeus)

They say I'm short, they think it's funny
And ev'ryone just points and laughs.
They call me names, it isn't funny,
They say I'm not a man, just half.

While they keep laughing and call me a crank
I'll be taking their money and laughing all the way to the bank

(Choir)

Our money pays for his easy chair.

(one or two villagers bring Zacchaeus a comfy chair and footstool - he sits with his feet up)

Our money pays for his fashionable hair.

(Another villager steps forward and starts to comb Zacchaeus' hair)

He takes and he counts and he goes out to spend

(Another villager steps forward to pay Zacchaeus his taxes - in notes - Zacchaeus counts it and slips it into his pocket, smiling)

Because our money is his only friend.



SHORT CHANGED

SONG - OUR MONEY (continued)

2

(Zacchaeus - gets up from his chair and gestures to the villagers)

Look at them beg, d'you think it's funny?

Oh how the tables have turned!

While they work hard but still go hungry,

Their cash is mine if I say the word.

Well I can make them suffer just for a prank.

I'll walk that bit taller, as I'm laughing all the way to the bank.

(Choir)

Our money pays for his rich cuisine.

(A villager steps up and brings Zacchaeus a platter of food -

Zacchaeus turns up his nose and waves it away)

Our money pays for his limousine.

(Two villagers bring forward a large picture of a camel with a saddle on it)

He takes and he counts and he goes out to spend

(Another villager steps forward to pay Zacchaeus his taxes - in notes - Zacchaeus counts it and slips it into his pocket, smiling)

Because our money is his only friend.

Our money pays for his furniture.

(Villagers return the chair, and maybe a small table - Zacchaeus sits)

Our money pays for his haute couture.

(Another villager brings forward a hanger with fancy clothes on it - Zacchaeus nods and feels the fabric)

He takes and he counts and he goes out to spend

Because our money is his only friend.

His only friend.

His only friend.

(Zacchaeus - sadly, aside to the audience)

I wish I had some friends...

Villager 1 - Can you believe that guy?! That Zach should be sleepin with du fishes!

Miriam - I just can't afford to keep doing this. I'm barely making ends meet.

Villager 1 - Dis might cheer ya up... did you hear that de 'goodfella', Jesus of Nazareth is coming to town tomorrow!?



SHORT CHANGED

- Miriam -** The guy who's been doing all the miracles?
- Villager 1 -** Bada Bing! Du very same. He's a straight up guy! They say he's du Godfather... or is it his Father's God?!
- (Villagers gather and talk on stage)*
- Villager 2 -** Jesus is supposed to be the chosen one!
- Villager 3 -** You mean our Messiah?! No way!
- Villager 4 -** I bet he won't heal me of these bunions *(looks at his feet)*.
- Villager 2 -** It is written in the ancient scriptures that he will be the King of all Kings!
- Villager 3 -** Then he can start by chopping off Zacchaeus's head!
- Villager 4 -** He's going to be the man who leads us back to where we belong!
- (Villager 1 joins the group)*
- (Intro plays for He's Gonna Be The Man)*
- Villager 1 -** No more foreign rulers for us. Jesus is the man!
- (Villagers and Miriam re-join the choir)*

SONG - HE'S GONNA BE THE MAN

1

Have you heard about the guy that's coming?
They say that he is gonna change the land.
Have you heard about the revolution?
They say he'll save every woman, child and man.
He's gonna be the man!

Have you heard about the guy who's healing?
They say he gave sight to the blind.
Have you heard how he cured the lepers?
Just a touch of his hand and they were fine.
Oh, what a guy!

*We've heard that you are our Messiah
So come and save the day.
Rid us of these awful rulers,
Come and make it happen right away!
Listen to what I say.*



SHORT CHANGED

SONG - HE'S GONNA BE THE MAN (continued)

2

Have you heard all his crazy stories?
The lost sheep and prodigal son.
He's always got a deeper meaning.
They say he's got a lesson for everyone.
He's gonna be the one!

*We've heard that you are our Messiah
So come and save the day.
Rid us of these awful rulers,
Come and make it happen right away!
Listen to what I say.*

He's gonna be the man!

ACT 3

(Samuel & Jacob enter and stand beside the tree)

Samuel - So did he show up then?

Jacob - Who?

Samuel - Jesus, you dummy!

Jacob - You know he did... you just saw him leave!

Samuel - Oh... you're right! *(excitedly)* So was he epic? Did he arrive on a pure white stallion with an honour guard of Samson-like soldiers?! Did he turn the river into chocolate milk and heal the entire hospital by just smiling at it? Did he clap his hands and vanquish the Roman soldiers from Jericho and beyond?!

Jacob - Not really... it was sort of weird...

Samuel - Weird?

(As Jacob talks they move away from the tree and a crowd made up of all of the rest of the cast replaces them - villagers 1 - 4 at the front)

Jacob - Well everyone, was super excited, and had started to gather in the streets really early. There hasn't been much to be excited about recently, what with nasty Zach spoiling everything, so it felt like a party!



SHORT CHANGED

(The crowd who are gathered in front of the tree look expectantly in the direction Jesus is coming from - villagers 1 - 4 deliver their lines from the front of the crowd)

Villager 1 - I tink I see him comin!

Villager 2 - Jesus! I can't believe it's really Him!

Villager 3 - Can you get that child off your shoulders, I can't see. *(Miming pushing someone aside)*

Villager 4 - It is Jesus... but Jericho is so messy.

(Crowd start shouting welcomes to Jesus. From other side of the stage Zacchaeus enters and moves towards the crowd. For comic effect each of Zacchaeus's lines in this scene could be from a different point in the crowd as he tries to peer over, or pop his head through gaps)

Zacchaeus - *(Jostling people)* Excuse me, move out of the way, I can't see.

Villager 1 - Get lost shorty, you can't tax us for standing in du street, at least not yet!

Zacchaeus - I'm a very important man... stand aside

Villager 2 - You are the last citizen of Jericho who deserves to see Jesus!

Zacchaeus - Jesus will need to see me!

Villager 3 - Why, are you going to tax him for breathing our Jericho air?!

Villager 4 - Why would Jesus want to see you, you're the worst.

(Zacchaeus jostles at the back of the crowd without getting any closer)

Samuel - Why is Zacchaeus important to this?

Jacob - You'll never guess what happened next...

Samuel - Did Jesus turn Zach into gold then chop him up and share him out!

Jacob - No.

Samuel - Then did Jesus make the tree come to life and strangle Zacchaeus with its branches!

Intro plays for In That Tree

Jacob - NO, Zacchaeus started to climb the tree, that sycamore tree right there! *(Points at tree)*



SHORT CHANGED

SONG - IN THAT TREE

1

(Zacchaeus continues to mime pushing through the crowds)

**With all these crowds I'll never see this man,
I know I must see him, I'll do all that I can.
With all these people I'll never get a chance,
Even on tip-toes I couldn't get a glance.**

(Zacchaeus gradually climbs the tree)

**So I take a firm grip and I place my foot
On a sturdy branch on a knotted nook
And I grab the trunk and I heave up high,
Cos I'm going see him when he walks on by.**

(Jesus enters the stage and gestures to Zacchaeus - Zacchaeus is amazed)

But then he said...

*'Who's up in that tree
Is that Zacchaeus I see?
I thought I knew that face.
Well, why don't you come down?
'Cos while I'm here in town
I'm coming to your place.'*

Woah-oh-oh...

2

**I can't believe he knew who I was!
Of everyone in Jericho he chose Zacchaeus.
With all these people, I'll have to move really fast;
Gotta get down from this tree and push my way past.**

(Zacchaeus climbs down from the tree top - the crowds parts to allow Zacchaeus through)

**So I take a firm grip and I place my foot
On a sturdy branch on a knotted nook
And I grab the trunk and I slide down low
'Cos I'm taking Jesus back to my home.**

(Zacchaeus and Jesus embrace and finish the song stood together)

Cos he said

*'Who's up in that tree
Is that Zacchaeus I see?
I thought I knew that face.
Well, why don't you come down?
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SHORT CHANGED

Jesus - So, Zacchaeus, we have a lot to talk about, I'm looking forward to spending some time with you.

Zacchaeus - Erm... are you coming to my house because I'm so important?

Jesus - Not really, but I think you have a lot to offer! Come on, you lead the way.

(Jesus and Zacchaeus exit the stage)

Samuel - That's just not fair! Jesus picked the worst guy in town to hang out with!

Jacob - I know, and folk were not happy....

(Villagers around the tree)

Villager 1 - Nasty Zach! No way, dat Jesus must be crazy!

Villager 2 - I even cleaned the downstairs loo in case Jesus needed a...

Villager 3 - We, we have been snubbed, and all for that terrible tax collector.

Villager 4 - Well, that Jesus just doesn't know what he's doing. I feel *short-changed!*

(The villagers move off stage and Samuel and Jacob move over to the tree)

Samuel - I bet there was an angry mob waiting for Jesus and Zach when they were done. Was there a riot?

Jacob - Here's the crazy part, it turned out Jesus knew exactly what he was doing!

(Jesus and Zacchaeus enter the stage and hug)

Jacob - Before anyone could get angry Jesus raised his hands for quiet, and said this...

(Intro starts for Seek and Save)

Jesus - I came to seek and save the lost!



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ACT 4

- Jacob - So even though Jesus was only here for an afternoon he managed to change everyone's life!
- Samuel - Right, it turns out he picked the best worst person to have dinner with ever!
- Jacob - The best worst person (*laughing*)... you're right! But he's not the worst any more, no more Nasty Zach!
- Zacchaeus - I'm so sorry everyone, and I hope you can forgive me. Jesus, thank you for changing my life, I will never *short-change* anyone ever again.
- Jesus - Today salvation has come to Jericho, remember friends, I come to seek and save the lost!
- (Villagers hug and thank Zacchaeus and then huddle around him saying bye to Jesus as they did at the beginning but with Zacchaeus hidden in the middle)*
- Samuel - So what happened next?
- Jacob - You showed up and started asking all these questions!
- Samuel - What an amazing transformation, little nasty Zach.....he was So Mean, he used to steal Our Money! Jesus the 'man' shows up, they have tea and it all changes!
- Jacob - I wonder if it was really that hard?
- Samuel - What was that hard?
- Jacob - Climbing that tree, last one up is a *short-changed* tax collector!
- (Intro start for Megamix)*
- Samuel - Oi! *(Both laughing!)*

SONG - MEGAMIX

Our story is told, its news getting old
But lets have a recap, in this song.

It started with a tax collector and his greed,
Who ended up in a tree.



SHORT CHANGED

SONG - MEGAMIX (continued)

Zacchaeus, you used to be so mean.
Zacchaeus... Woah!
Zacchaeus, you used to be so mean.
Zacchaeus... Yeah!

Our money paid for his lavish home
But our money won't stop him being alone.
He took and he counted and went out to spend
But our money was his only friend.

Then Jesus said...
'Who's up in that tree
Is that Zacchaeus I see?
I thought I knew that face.
Well why don't you come down?
Cos while I'm here in town
I'm coming to your place.'

(During the 2nd and 3rd choruses the cast throw money into the air - 'make it rain')

He came to seek and save the lost,
To save the lost,
To save the lost.
No matter what, you're worth the cost,
You're worth the cost,
You're worth the cost.
x3

THE END

