

Jonah And The Whale

2 The Run Away.

Cast: Jonah.
Mum
Captain of the Ship.
Sailor 1

Scene. Large sign saying "Joppa" and something that suggests a Quay side. – lifebelt sign? Sailor is fiddling with some rope on one side

Sound effects: Seagulls and Lapping of water.

(Jonah runs on breathlessly with his mum trailing behind and puts on his sunglasses. His mother puts his hat on his head.)

Mum There! Now not even your mother would recognize you. Are you sure you've got all you need? Now Jonah you really must be careful. Are you sure you got that message right? I mean is it really necessary for you to run away? Can't you just go back and check. Surely God didn't mean you to go to Nineveh.

Jonah Of course I got it right. He made it very clear that it was Nineveh he wanted me to go to. Look are you sure you wouldn't recognize me?

Mum No. It's a great disguise! *(to the audience)* But I don't think it will fool God.

Jonah OK Then I'd better get going. Off you go mum, someone might recognize me with you around.

Mum Oh Jonah at least tell me where you're going. And send me a postcard when you get there. I need to know that you have arrived safely. And don't forget to put on your sun cream and....

Jonah Mum! Stop fussing and Go!

Mum *(leaves. Waving at Jonah! Muttering about sons who don't tell their mums anything)*

(Jonah walks quickly across the stage and grabs the arm of the sailor who is holding a rope, nearly pushing him in the water)

Sailor Hang on! Hang on! Watch it matey or you'll have me in the briny you know.

Jonah I'm sorry! I'm sorry! But I need a boat, I need a boat and I need it now!

Sailor Wow! Slow down, slow down. What do you need a boat for?

Jonah Err .. errr... I, I, I need a holiday! Yes that's it, I need a holiday. I've been overdoing it recently and I really, really, really need a holiday. I need to get away from it all.

Captain (entering) Come on Jim me lad, look lively with that rope. We need to set sail before the tide turns again.

Sailor Eye eye Cap'n.

Jonah (to Captain) Set sail? Now? Right now? Where are you going?

Captain We're headed for Tarshish lad.

Jonah Tarshish. Tarshish? Is that anywhere near Nineveh?

Captain Nineveh? No laddie, if you want to go to Nineveh you'll need to get on that ship there, three berths down. They're sailing for Nineveh in the morning.

Jonah Err... whereabouts is Tarshish then?

Captain Well now let me see. Its about two hundred miles in that direction.

Jonah So, it's absolutely nowhere near Nineveh?

Captain No I told you! If you want Nineveh you need **that** boat. This is going in completely the opposite direction to Nineveh.

Jonah Good! Good! That's perfect then!

Captain Perfect for what Laddie?

Jonah Err ... err... errr... perfect for my holiday, yes my holiday, just perfect. Would you have room for one extra passenger?

Captain But you said you wanted to go to Nineveh didn't you?

Jonah (full of flannel) Nineveh, Tarshish, what's the difference? To tell the truth I thought that your boat looked like the finest and most well kept on the Quay today, Its not the destination I'm so worried about but the boat that gets me there and I thought to myself as soon as I saw your boat, now there's a boat with a captain who knows what he's doing. There's a boat in which I'll feel safe, completely safe.

Captain (*obviously flattered*) Well we don't normally take passengers, only crew. Everyone on this boat has to do their share of the work you know. No treating it like a luxury cruise.

Jonah No that's fine, absolutely fine. I'll do my bit with everyone else.

Sailor (*to captain*) It all sounds a bit fishy to me Captain. I'm not sure I believe his story you know. Seems to me as if he's running away from something or someone.

Captain (*to Sailor*) aye aye, you're right Jim. He does seem a bit shifty you know. A bit of a flighty sort I think.
(to Jonah) We're not so sure about this laddie. We don't want any trouble you know, especially while we are at sea. You're not in any sort of trouble are you?

Jonah Oh... Oh ... Oh... err No captain, no, no trouble at all.

Captain Your not running away from anything are you? The police maybe?

Jonah Err err... no. No not the police.

Captain Maybe you owe someone some money? Is that what it is, you owe someone some money and you can't pay? eh?

Jonah No, no, errr... no. It's not that either.

Sailor Well I don't know if we should take him or not Capt'n. I think he'll be a whole load of bad luck you know.

Captain I'm not so sure Jim. He might just be running away from some bad sorts that he has fallen in with by accident, and don't forget, he'll pay for the trip and he'll do some of the work! (*gives sailor a nudge*)

Sailor Well I'm not happy! I don't trust him, and I vote we don't take him, but we need to ask the rest of the crew first. *(to audience)* What do you think crew? Shall we take him or not?

Captain All those in favour shout aye aye, (aye aye)

Sailor And all those against shout No No! (No No!)

Captain *(to Jonah)* Well you're in luck laddie, they like you. You're in! Welcome aboard! *(Shakes Jonah by the hand)*

Jonah Oh thank you, thank you, thank you. Right, where do I put my bag. Are we ready to go? Shall I just untie the boat?

Captain Well, not quite yet. We've a few jobs to do before setting sail. We'll try and go out on the evening tide. There's no hurry.

Jonah Oh! OK! Are you sure it'll take that long to get ready?

Sailor You seem in a hurry again mate. *(To captain)* I'm still not sure about him. Not sure about him at all.

Captain Oh cheer up Jim. He's all right. The rest of the crew think so anyway.

Sailor *(sarcastically)* Oh great! I'm sure we're going to have a Whale of a time, an absolute Whale of a time.

(They all go off stage together)