

FAMILY BUSINESS

By Rod

Based on the events in the last week of Jesus' life, this portrays the Chief priests and the Pharisees as members of an Italian mafia family being threatened by a newcomer, Jesus.

CAST

*Caiaphas The Godfather. Representing the chief priest, Caiaphas.
Luco The Godfather's chief henchman.
Annas Father-in-law to Caiaphas
Luigi Hot-headed youngster. Out for Jesus' blood.
Nico Represents Nicodemus. Not convinced that Jesus is a threat.*

*Music starts – the theme from The Godfather played by a pianist to the side of stage.
Enter Luco who does a 'security check'.*

Luco All clear, Boss.

Enter Caiaphas who stands centre stage and clicks his fingers; Luco removes his overcoat from his shoulders. Caiaphas sits in chair centre stage. Luco stands alongside. Caiaphas gestures to Luco. Luco bends over as Caiaphas whispers in his ear.

Luco Yes, Boss. *[Luco goes over to musician and 'makes him stop' – e.g. by gently closing the lid and 'squeezing' pianist's hands. Luco returns to centre stage as there is a knock at the door.]*

Caiaphas See who that is, Luco.

Luco Yes, Boss. *[Exit Luco. Caiaphas cleans his nails, etc until Luco returns.]*
It is our brothers, Annas, Nico and Luigi.

Caiaphas Show them in. *[Luco turns and beckons in Annas, Nico and Luigi]*

Luigi *[Going across to Caiaphas and kissing his hand]* Ah, Don Caiaphas, thank you for seeing us.

Caiaphas Don't mention it. I always have time to see members of the family. We Phariseecci's must stick together.

Nico *[Also in turn kissing Caiaphas' hand]* Nevertheless we are grateful that you have made time to see us.

Luco *[Advancing threateningly on Nico]* He said 'Don't mention it'!

Caiaphas *[Gesturing to Luco]* Luco, it's OK.

Luco *[Backing away but still eyeing Nico]* Yes, Boss.

Caiaphas What is it you want to see me about? Is it family business?

Annas We have concerns about a newcomer to the neighbourhood called Jesus.

Caiaphas What family is this Jesus from?

Nico His name is Jesus Nazareni.

Luco Nazareni. I've never heard anything good come from that family.

Annas No, indeed. He is from the North side but we think he is trying to muscle in on our territory on the South side.

Caiaphas What evidence do you have to support your 'concerns'?

Annas Well, you know we run a nice little protection racket in the temple courts?

Caiaphas *[Rubbing his fingers together and smiling]* Yes, it has done very well for us over the years. *[They all nod in agreement]*

Luigi *[Animated]* Yesterday this Jesus Nazareni went in there and smashed the place up. He turned over all the tables of the traders (the one's we protect) and drove the people out with a whip.

Luco If you want my opinion he needs a good whipping himself.

Caiaphas Luco, if I want your opinion I will give it to you.

Luco Yes, Boss. Sorry, Boss.

Luigi And he has also said he will destroy the temple – and then rebuild it in just three days!

Annas He certainly has a high opinion of himself; that's for sure.

Luigi He obviously wants to set up his own business in the temple. He's got to go. Jerusalem isn't big enough for the Phariseecci's and the Nazareni's.

Caiaphas Nico, you are very quiet. What do you think? Have you met this man?

Nico Yes, Don Caiaphas, I have; and I am not sure my brothers, Annas and Luigi are right about this Jesus. I do not think he is a threat to our family. He has many fine qualities.

Caiaphas Such as?

Nico They say he is good to his mother.

Luigi You mean he never goes home! [*Laughs – Annas and Luco join in*]

Nico No, I mean he looks after her now that she is a widow.

Caiaphas It is important for a man to love his mother and take care of her.

Luigi But Nico, isn't it true that he said to you that you needed to be born again; meaning that he wanted you to change allegiance and be 'born again' into his family – to leave the Phariseecci's and join the Nazareni's?

Caiaphas Is this true, Nico?

Nico Yes, but I don't think he meant

Luigi [*Strongly*] I tell you he's got to go.

Caiaphas Annas, you are my father-in-law and my concillieri; I respect your opinion. What do you think about this man Jesus Nazareni?

Annas I agree with Luigi. I am convinced he is a dangerous threat to the family.

Caiaphas What makes you so certain?

Annas Well, Don Caiaphas, you know that we call you 'The Godfather' – out of respect for you and for your position? This Jesus insists that he be called 'The God Son'.

Caiaphas Are you sure?

Annas Yes, Godfather, we asked him directly and he said, "I am God's Son".

Luigi He is gathering a large army of followers. He performs magic tricks, like appearing to walk across a lake, and he bribes the people with free loaves and fish.

Luco I could arrange for him to 'sleep with the fishes'; a pair of 'concrete boots' would make sure he never walked on water again.

Caiaphas No, Luco, there are too many people around at present because of the festival. We need to do things more subtly.

Annas There is a man called Judas who has agreed to help us. He has fallen out with Jesus and says he will help us to find him at a time when noone's around.

Caiaphas Good. Luco, you and Luigi fix a time with Judas and grab this Jesus.

Luco Yes, Boss, it'll be a pleasure.

Caiaphas Meanwhile Annas and I will visit the chief of police, Pontius Pilate; he owes the family a favour or two. We'll tell him that we want him to deal with this Jesus Nazareni.

Annas What if Pilate refuses to cooperate?

Caiaphas Oh, don't worry, he will. We'll make him an offer he can't refuse.

Ciaphas clicks his fingers for Luco to put his coat across his shoulders. EXIT Caiaphas first, in conversation with Annas, followed by Luco and Luigi. Pianist resumes playing of the Godfather theme. Nico moves centre stage, looks pensive and concerned before exiting in the opposite direction to the others.

THE END