

## The Necklace of Fingers

*This scene is based on an ancient story from India. ANGULIMALA is a terrifying robber who cuts off his victims' fingers and hangs them on a necklace. He is famous for his terrible deeds, and most people stay far away from him. Today, though, another unsuspecting victim is wandering down Angulimala's road.*

### **ANGULIMALA:**

*(Leaping on to the acting space, he glowers at the audience)*

Ha! Ha! I am Angulimala, a Brigand, and I love causing fear and trouble. In the Kingdom of Kosala, I am known and feared by everyone. I am worse than any catastrophe... like a flood or a plague or a war. It's because I have made a vow to kill one thousand people. To keep count, I cut off a finger of each victim and make it into a necklace. See.

*(Hanging around his neck is a necklace of fingers which he lovingly shows to the audience)*

They are lovely. Are they not? Delightful... and I have only a few more fingers to collect.

*(He goes closer to the audience and makes threatening eye focus where possible)*

I have to work hard and long hours at being nasty and cruel; and I'll not stop until I have a complete necklace. Ha! Ha! It's great fun!

Villages have become empty because of me. People have gone to live in the safety of cities because of me... People will not go out at night because of me...

Did you know, even the King's men have tried to catch me?... but I can run faster than the fastest horse; and I'm so strong.

*(He shows his muscles to the audience)*

Once the King sent out forty men on horseback to get me; but I have brains as well, and I led them a merry dance. By the time they had gone around and around... *(He spins around and around)* they were so dizzy I just knocked them, one by one, off their horses, killed them, and collected their fingers.

Forty. Yes, forty of them. All in one day. That was a good day that was!

*(He looks to his left, away from the acting space)*

Ah! Another traveller, and all on his own, wandering down my road. *(Rubbing his hands together)* He will pass right by my lair. *((Aside)* He obviously has not heard of me.) I must hurry and climb into my hiding place, so that I am ready to pounce on him and get another finger for my necklace. *(He moves down stage right, and crouches down as if in his lair and waits. The traveller draws closer. He then leaps out, holds his upstage hand up and shouts out menacingly)*  
Stop!

*by Jill O'Hare*