

“The Crucifixion Story”
Script 2 in The Easter Story series

by
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What Three scripts—The Maundy Thursday Story, The Crucifixion Story, and The Resurrection Story—retell the last events of Christ’s life and His miraculous resurrection through the eyes of the biblical characters outlined in John’s gospel. These scripts can stand on their own, be performed during three separate services, or be joined together to create a 15-minute Easter production.

In this scene, the crucifixion is retold through the eyes of Mary, the mother of Jesus, the Thief on the cross, and Nicodemus. This script can stand alone as part of a Good Friday service, or can be combined with the other scenes from The Easter Story series.

Themes: Easter, Cross, Truth, Light, Belief

Who Mary
Nicodemus
Thief

When Good Friday, at the cross

Wear Cross

Why John 3, John 19, Luke 23

How This script is written as three different, though coinciding, monologues. The actors should stand on three separate sections of the stage. Each should be addressing the audience as if retelling a story, and they should neither hear nor respond to the other actors. Therefore, while each character speaks, the others should remain in a soft freeze.

Time Approximately 5 minutes

The stage is bare except for a cross center stage.

*The actors are turned upstage with their backs toward the audience. **Mary** (Stage Right), **Nicodemus** (Stage Left). As the characters begin to speak, they should turn to face the audience.*

***Mary** turns to address the audience.*

Mary: It all happened so fast. One minute it was the Passover and the next...the next I was hearing rumors of a trial, a beating, false accusations. They put a crown of thorns on his head and lead him away like a lamb for sacrifice.

Pause.

Mary: I sat there—looking up at him—hanging there, dying. And...I just kept thinking about that little baby in the manger.

***Nicodemus** turns to address the audience.*

Nicodemus: I went to him at night. And he spoke to me about truth not being afraid of the day, not being afraid of the light.

Pause.

Nicodemus: I was afraid. Afraid of what the others would think. I didn't want anyone to see me with him...to think that I was...I didn't know if I was a follower. I had too many questions. He talked about the wind, being born of the spirit. I am a studied man, a well-versed, intellectual. But these teachings were beyond me.

He spoke of two births. But I didn't understand. I wanted to, but I didn't understand.

***Thief** enters from behind the audience. He slowly makes his way down the center aisle.*

Thief: No one hangs on a cross because he wants to. I did what I did. I'm not proud of it. I'm not going to give some excuse. It just happened. And I got caught. The day of my trial, I couldn't eat. Hope will do that to you. The hope of being pardoned, even though I knew I should hang. But there was no mercy for me that day. I went numb when I heard, "crucify". I grew up watching others...*(slight pause)* The fear that gripped me was...indescribable. The fear tries to kill you before the nails do.

Mary: All of them could doubt and second guess. But I didn't have those questions...I knew. I knew. As I saw him hanging there all I could remember was the manger. You see they think they have it wrong.

They think they believed a liar. They think they were tricked, hoping and wanting a Messiah bad enough to conjure up belief, but I knew.

Thief continues down the aisle as he talks. At the end of this next line, he should be at the front of the stage.

Thief: The road was unbearable. Every step gets you closer to unrelenting torture, but there's no way back. The only comfort is that this won't last. *(to himself)* I'll die soon. I'll die soon.

Thief should be at the front of the stage, but he should stay facing upstage, with his back to the audience, until his next line.

Nicodemus: God had to be with him. I told him that. God is with you, or else you would not be able to do these signs and wonders. And they were wonders—eyes opened, the deaf hearing, lame men walking, the dead—Lazarus was dead...and now he wasn't. I had never seen anything like these miracles.

Mary: I was the one that the angel Gabriel came to. I remember it like yesterday, sitting in my room. The majesty and wonder of that moment. The star, the stable, the shepherds, the wise man...the manger. I KNEW he was the Son of God.

Mary moves to the cross.

Mary: And I knew this didn't have to happen...he could have made them stop. *(slight pause)* Why? Why was this happening?

Mary sits at the foot of the cross, slightly stage right of center.

Thief moves to just slightly stage left of the cross. He should not hold his hands out as if on a cross, but standing next to the cross he should address the audience as if recounting a story, referring to the cross next to him as Jesus' cross.

Thief: The man beside me, he was innocent. I knew it. It was in his eyes. He didn't deserve this. And the crowd...the crowd was unlike any I had seen before. The mob hated him. And he didn't even try to defend himself. They jeered and spit and cursed, but all he said was, "Forgive them."

Pause.

Thief: Who hangs on a cross because he wants to?

Mary: He was the Son of God. That baby that I held was the Son of God.

Thief: If he could forgive the men who nailed him to the cross. I knew he could forgive me. *(to the cross, center stage as if Jesus is on it)* Jesus, remember me.

Mary and Thief turn upstage, away from the audience.

Note: Mary should still be seated, and Thief should still be next to the cross

During this next line, Nicodemus should move toward the cross.

Nicodemus: When it was done, I didn't know what to think. My colleagues, my fellow teachers, *(almost ashamed to admit)* my friends...felt that this was necessary. They felt that a great good had been accomplished.

Pause.

Nicodemus: That first night I met him, he spoke to me about truth not being afraid of darkness. Here, at the end, I was ashamed of my fear. I believed that he had spoken truth, and I wanted to honor him. So, Joseph and I poured the spices on his body, and we buried him.

Nicodemus stands looking at the cross.

Lights out.