

THE GREAT DECEPTION

Written by

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Based on
The New Testament
of the Holy Bible

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FADE IN:

1 INT. BEDROOM - DAY 1

TITLE AND CREDITS roll while we watch a man (late 30s) and woman (late 20s) in bed, making long, tender, slow and sweet love with each other - a very poignant and touching love scene.

Other than the man's Roman haircut, the scene does not give away the time or place. Just as they finish and lie back in bed:

SUPER: "Sunday, March 29, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. BEDROOM - DAY 2

MARCELLUS VALERIAN MARCUS (MARCUS), Commander of the Palace Guard for Pontius Pilate, is standing naked at an open second-story window overlooking ancient Jerusalem.

There is noise coming from the street below, the sounds of people celebrating. CLAUDIA PROCULA, wife of Pontius Pilate, is still in bed.

CLAUDIA
Marcus, what's all the noise about?

When Marcus doesn't answer, she asks again.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
What's going on out there, Marcus?

MARCUS
(finally hearing Claudia)
He's riding through the streets on
an ass.

CLAUDIA
Who?

MARCUS
Jesus. At least I assume that's
him.

CLAUDIA
(excitedly)
He's here?

MARCUS
 (troubled by the sight)
 Yes, and they're throwing palm
 branches down in front of him, as
 if he were a king.

Claudia jumps up, wraps a sheet around herself and joins him
 at the window.

CLAUDIA
 I want to find some way of seeing
 him in person.

Marcus looks at her and shakes his head.

MARCUS
 Claudia, you need to stay far away
 from that man. Your husband has
 ordered me to get rid of him.

CLAUDIA
 But you have to promise me one
 thing.
 (She turns to look Marcus
 straight in the eye.)
 You have to promise not to hurt
 him.

Marcus turns away and doesn't answer.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
 (turning his head to look
 at her)
 Marcus, promise me he will come to
 no harm.

MARCUS
 Claudia, you know as well as I do
 that the law says to kill anyone
 who poses a serious threat to Rome
 and its leaders. And it's even more
 specific than that. It says to
 crucify them.

CLAUDIA
 Marcus, you can not let that happen
 to him.

Claudia gets down on her on knees in front of Marcus and
 repeats:

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
I beg of you, do not kill him.
Please, please protect him and let
him live, no matter what you have
to do.

Marcus seems somewhat surprised at her passion. He looks away.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
Marcus, answer me.

MARCUS
(bringing his attention
back)
I don't know that I can promise
that, Claudia.

Marcus lifts Claudia off her knees and they both sit on the bed.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
It may well depend on what he does
tomorrow and in the coming days. If
he behaves himself and doesn't stir
up any trouble this week, we might
just be able to ignore him and go
back home to Caesarea where we
belong without having to deal with
him.

Suddenly Claudia SLAPS Marcus very hard on the face.

CLAUDIA
I'm finished begging, Marcus. Now
I'm giving you a direct order as
the wife of your boss and your
Governor, Pontius Pilate. You make
sure this man lives or I swear, you
will never see this bed again. And
you can forget about ever seeing
our daughter again as well. I'll
have Pontius make sure of that.

Marcus, still rubbing his cheek, gets up and goes back to the window.

MARCUS
Okay, Claudia, I get it.
(pause)
But why is this man so important to
you?

CLAUDIA

My maidservants have been reporting to me the things he has been saying, and I like what I hear. I think he's a good man - an innocent man for sure. But what does that matter? Did you hear what I said just now?

MARCUS

Yes. All right. I'll do what I can to make sure he lives - for you.

CLAUDIA

And for our daughter, Caecelia. Do you promise?

MARCUS

Yes, I promise.

CLAUDIA

Good. Now come back to bed.

Claudia motions seductively for him to join her, and as they start making love again:

DISSOLVE TO:

3

BLACK SCREEN

3

SUPER: "Christianity is based on the belief that Jesus died on the cross during his crucifixion and was then resurrected three days later.

"The four gospels of the Holy Bible (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) tell the story of Jesus' life."

MARCUS (V.O.)

Christianity is based on the belief that Jesus died on the cross during his crucifixion and was then resurrected three days later. The four gospels of the Holy Bible (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) tell the story of Jesus' life.

DISSOLVE TO:

4

BLACK SCREEN

4

SUPER: "But if read with an open mind, without preconceived beliefs, Jesus himself clearly says in these Gospels that he physically survived his crucifixion, and therefore there was no resurrection.

"This is the story of what actually happened, to the best of my recollection.

- Marcellus Valerian Marcus

Commander of the Palace Guard

for Pontius Pilate"

MARCUS (V.O.)

But if read with an open mind, without preconceived beliefs, Jesus himself clearly says in these Gospels that he physically survived his crucifixion, and therefore there was no resurrection. This is the story of what actually happened, to the best of my recollection. My name is Marcellus Valerian Marcus, and I was there.

DISSOLVE TO:

5

INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

5

FLORENTINA

No, my lady, no one gave me any trouble. I was warmly welcomed by everyone, especially Jesus's wife, Mary Magdalene, and Mary's sister, Martha.

Marcus walks in to hear the report. Florentina bows as he enters. Marcus motions for her to continue.

FLORENTINA (CONT'D)

And their brother, Lazarus, was there as well, whom Jesus had brought back from the dead not too long ago. And Joseph of Arimathea, too, but surprisingly, not very many of the men who follow Jesus. Apparently they're still in Galilee and not expected to arrive here until later in the week--

CLAUDIA

--Please, Florentina, get on with the important stuff.

Florentina bows to Claudia and Marcus.

FLORENTINA

Sorry, my lady ... sir. Well, it was a relatively quiet dinner at the conclusion of Shabbat.

A series of flashback scenes begin as Florentina recounts the events of the previous night.

6

FLASHBACK - INT. HOUSE IN BETHANY - NIGHT

6

JESUS, 33, dark skin, long hair, is eating dinner and talking with a group of people as Florentina describes the scene. As the meal ends, Jesus gets up and goes outside to the veranda to lie down.

FLORENTINA (V.O.)

Jesus was seated between Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, and talked mainly to them, as well as to Simon, our host, and Amos, and a few others. So I didn't get to hear much of what they said. In fact, I was a little disappointed when the meal was over and Jesus went to lay down on the veranda.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

7

INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

7

FLORENTINA

I thought maybe there wasn't going to be anything exciting to tell you-

CLAUDIA

--Florentina, please get to the point.

FLORENTINA

Oh, yes, my lady. I'm trying to.

Her voice fades out for a minute, trying to collect her thoughts.

8 FLASHBACK - EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

8

A young couple hands Mary (Magdalene), 28, a box. In muted tones, Florentina asks Mary what it is. Mary explains.

FLORENTINA (V.O)

Anyway, I saw Mary, Jesus' wife, talking with a young couple who had just handed her an alabaster box, so after they left I went and asked Mary what that was all about. She said the couple was on their way to get married, but they had brought their special wedding oil to give to Jesus as a present, asking Mary to use it on his head and feet.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

9 INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

9

FLORENTINA

I saw that it was a very expensive oil, and I was impressed with the young couple's sacrifice.

Florentina pauses, looks at Claudia and Marcus to see if she was now complying with their wishes.

MARCUS

You're doing fine, Florentina.
Please continue.

FLORENTINA

(nodding)
So Mary went ...

10 FLASHBACK - EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

10

Mary rubs the oil on Jesus's head and feet, and cries, using her long hair to wipe his feet. In muted tones, JUDAS, 35, dark skin, short hair, starts complaining, someone else joins in.

FLORENTINA (V.O.)

... and anointed Jesus's head with the oil, as promised, and as she did, she began to cry, I think because of the strong love she feels for him.

(MORE)

FLORENTINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Her tears fell on Jesus's feet, too, so she used her beautiful long hair to wipe his feet, and then kissed them and put the oil on them as well. Well, I've got to tell you that this created quite a stir. First, Judas started complaining that the oil should have been kept and sold, and the money it brought should have been given to the poor. I heard one person - don't know who he was - said it would have brought three-hundred pence. And then someone else said, 'What a waste.'

FLASHBACK ENDS.

11 INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

11

FLORENTINA

And pretty soon people were blaming Mary for squandering the oil on Jesus.

MARCUS

So there might be dissension within his own ranks?

FLORENTINA

Well, Jesus told them all to shut-up, basically, and to leave Mary alone, that she had done a good thing that would be remembered for a long time. Why he said it that way I don't understand, but I'm just here to report his words.

CLAUDIA

That's fine, Florentina. And that's exactly what I want you to do. So then what happened?

FLORENTINA

Well, then someone I didn't recognize spoke up.

12 FLASHBACK - EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

12

An older, bearded man talks to Jesus.

FLORENTINA (V.O.)
 I later found out he was a Pharisee
 who was there to check Jesus out.
 Anyway, he said that if Jesus were
 really a prophet, he would not have
 let Mary touch him, because,
 according to the Pharisaic
 tradition, her very touch would
 have rendered him unclean.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

13 INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

13

MARCUS
 (explaining to Claudia)
 The Pharisees forbid women to stand
 nearer to them than four cubits.

FLORENTINA
 Yes, and apparently this Pharisee
 knew what kind of a woman Mary had
 been before she married Jesus,
 which made the whole thing even
 worse. So then Jesus tells one of
 his stories--

Claudia sits up, suddenly more interested.

CLAUDIA
 Did Jesus tell a parable?

FLORENTINA
 Yes.

CLAUDIA
 So what did he say?

FLORENTINA
 Jesus said ...

14 FLASHBACK - EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

14

Jesus is talking to the older, bearded PHARISEE while others
 around him listen.

JESUS
 There was a lender who had two
 people who owed him money. One of
 them owed him five hundred
 shillings and the other fifty
 shillings.
 (MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

But neither of them could pay back the lender, and the lender forgave them both.

(to the Pharisee)

Now, which one would love the lender the most?

FLASHBACK ENDS.

15 INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 15

CLAUDIA

The one who owed him the most money, of course.

Claudia is proud of herself for figuring out the parable so quickly and easily.

FLORENTINA

Right. And that's what Jesus said - the one to whom he forgave the most. And then he said ...

16 FLASHBACK - EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT 16

Jesus is still talking to the same group.

JESUS

You may think that Mary's sins have been many, but she has been forgiven, and her love is great; while you believe your sins are few, and I say to you, your love for God is equally small.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

17 INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 17

MARCUS

(clearly upset)

Goddamn it! I wish he wouldn't piss off the Pharisees like that. I'm going to have a hard enough time keeping him alive without having to fight his own people at the same time.

CLAUDIA

Please go on, Florentina.

FLORENTINA

And then Jesus called over two men I didn't recognize. I think they both live there in Bethany and were friends of Lazarus. I heard him tell them ...

18 FLASHBACK - EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

18

JESUS

Tomorrow morning, go into the next village and there you will find an ass tied up, with a colt beside her that no man has ever ridden. Bring the ass and the colt back to me. If anybody stops you, simply to say that they are for the Lord and that he will return them soon.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

19 INT. CLAUDIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

19

Florentina looks confused.

CLAUDIA

Is there anything more to that?

FLORENTINA

Well, if this is another parable, I don't understand it this time.

MARCUS

This is no parable. In fact, it's already happened. I'm told this is an ancient prophecy of the Jews. It says that the Messiah, the King of the Jews, will come riding into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt. Obviously, Jesus knows exactly what he's doing and showed up today as if he were fulfilling the prophecy. Pilate is not going to be very happy at all about that.

(beat)

Is there anything else?

FLORENTINA

Not that I thought was very important.

MARCUS

Then if you will excuse me, Madam

...

(bowing to Claudia)

... apparently I have a lot of work to do.

CLAUDIA

(running after him)

Wait, Marcus. I still have your promise, right?

MARCUS

(nodding)

But it's not going to be easy as long as Jesus keeps acting like that. Why don't you send him a message through Florentina, or another one of your maidservants, to tone it down a little, for his own sake?

CLAUDIA

I doubt he'll listen to me, but I'll try. I'm also going to do everything I can to persuade Pontius to leave him alone. Between you and me, we should be able to save his life, don't you think?

Marcus shakes his head, shrugs, turns and walks out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

20

BLACK SCREEN

20

SUPER: "Everyone in Jerusalem, celebrate and shout!... He comes on the colt of a donkey."

- Zechariah 9:9 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Everyone in Jerusalem, celebrate and shout! He comes on the colt of a donkey.

DISSOLVE TO:

21 BLACK SCREEN

21

SUPER: "Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. The crowds going ahead of him, and those who followed, were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David.'"

- Matthew 21:8-9 (NASB)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. The crowds going ahead of him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David."

DISSOLVE TO:

22 EXT. IN THE STREETS OF JERUSALEM - DAY

22

Marcus is sitting on his horse with his lieutenant, LUCIUS, 30, on horseback beside him. They are watching as Jesus rides down the street on the ass and people cheer him.

MARCUS

(turning to Lucius)

What's so special about this one? If he really wanted to overthrow the Roman government, why ride into town on a donkey's colt? Not much of a show of military strength, to say the least.

LUCIUS

I agree, sir.

People are heard shouting "Hosanna!"

MARCUS

'Hosanna' means 'save us.' From what? From who?

LUCIUS

Don't know. Maybe from Pilate, sir?

MARCUS

Then we better get to Pilate before the news does.

They both turn and gallop off on their horses.

23 INT. PILATE'S PALACE - DAY 23

The palace guard all salute Marcus as he briskly walks past them, raising their right arm bent at the elbow and banging the breast plate armor on top of their heart. He makes his way down a hall and opens the door to Pilate's private quarters.

24 INT. PILATE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY 24

As Marcus enters, he salutes PONTIUS PILATE, 38, balding, with a beer belly, who is pacing up and down, and Marcus knows from the sound of Pilate's voice that he is already too late.

PILATE

Marcus, where the hell have you been?

Marcus doesn't answer, knowing the question was rhetorical and Pilate just wants to rant.

PILATE (CONT'D)

Did you see him? Did you see what he did? Who the hell does he think he is, riding into my city like he was a king. And what is this with the palm branches, and the crowds singing 'Hosanna'? Who do they think they are? And who do they think *he* is?

Marcus still doesn't answer, sensing that Pilate's rant is not over. Instead he walks over to a table, pours himself a drink, and sits down to wait.

PILATE (CONT'D)

I can't believe the gall of that man. Well, he's picked on the wrong guy this time. I'm not going to put up with this any longer. I want you to arrest him and crucify him right away.

Marcus knows there hasn't been enough time for Claudia to talk to Pilate, so he tries to buy a little time.

MARCUS

Sir--

PILATE

(interrupting)

--I'm not finished yet.
(MORE)

PILATE (CONT'D)

Not only do I want him crucified, I want it to be very public. I want these people to see what happens when they challenge my authority. We've done everything legally that we're supposed to do. We've had notices posted throughout the countryside for over a month. In fact, I can't believe he'd show up here today. He's got to know that he's just asking for trouble. So give him what he wants. Arrest him today, we can have a trial tomorrow, and he'll be dead by tomorrow night. And good riddance.

Marcus tries again ...

MARCUS

But, sir--

PILATE

(interrupting again)

--I can't believe that after a dozen other unsuccessful uprisings in this godforsaken place in the last hundred years, these people haven't gotten the message. Well, it's not going to happen on my shift either. I want this so-called Messiah handled quickly and forcefully so that Rome knows I'm in total control over here. Got it, Marcus?

MARCUS

Yes, sir. I understand.

(beat)

But may I suggest something, sir?

PILATE

(angrily)

I'm in no mood to negotiate, Marcus.

MARCUS

Well, sir, this time seems to be different for some reason. The people seem to really like this one - think he's their "savior." If you have him crucified, it might cause even more trouble, and Rome wouldn't like that.

PILATE
Definitely not. So ...

MARCUS
So let's make it look like his own people took him down. Then they can't be mad at you, and Rome will be happy.

Pilate finally stops pacing and sits down.

PILATE
I'm listening ...

MARCUS
I have my spies out there following this man, and I know for a fact that the Jewish leadership - especially the Pharisees - are also put out with him. I mean, he seems to be an even bigger threat to them that he is to us. For example, his men weren't anywhere to be seen today; it was just a bunch of women by his side. So I don't think he's planning on taking over the government, at least not in the next couple of days. It looks more like he wants to take over their religion.

PILATE
Damn fool ...

MARCUS
My sources tell me that he upset one of the key Pharisees at a banquet in Bethany last night. I think that if you give him a couple days here in town - in the middle of the Jewish hierarchy - he'll make them all so mad they'll be banging down your door asking you to help them get rid of him. That way, it will be clear that you didn't unilaterally crucify a Messiah at all, which might make the people even more angry and aggressive, but that even his own priests rejected him and wanted him gone.

PILATE

You think the Jews don't like him either? I'm talking about the ones that matter ...

MARCUS

I am convinced, sir, that the Jewish leadership knows that if Jesus continues this way, he might just win over the common people, which would bring those legions of soldiers from Rome that no one wants, and the end result would be worse for everyone concerned. They don't want him rocking the boat any more than we do.

Marcus finally shuts up and Pilate sits there thinking for a while.

PILATE

You might be right, Marcus. Do we know what this ...
 (sarcastically)
 ... *savior* plans to do in the next few days?

MARCUS

Not exactly, sir, but I can find out. And I also want to meet with Joseph of Arimathea and enlist his help in putting a stop to this.

PILATE

Yes, good choice. Joseph's a reasonable man, and maybe he can talk some sense into this ...
 (sarcastically)
 ... *Messiah*. Or he can at least get the Sanhedrin involved.

Marcus stands up when Pilate does.

PILATE (CONT'D)

Go do it.

Marcus salutes Pilate and leaves.

Jesus arrives in front of a temple, gets off the ass, and sits on the front steps.

He is immediately surrounded by a crowd made up mostly of the sick and lame who have come to be healed. The people continue to shout and sing "Hosanna to the Son of David." Soon the CHIEF PRIEST, 50s, and his staff come out of the temple to confront him.

CHIEF PRIEST

Do you hear what the people are saying about you?

JESUS

Yes. Is there a problem with that?

CHIEF PRIEST

Yes. There's a big problem with that. Who are you to be called the Son of David?

JESUS

I am from the lineage of David.

CHIEF PRIEST

Well, if you allow this to continue, we'll soon have Roman soldiers moving back into our homes and our temples for fear of another rebellion. You need to stop now and get out of here.

Jesus doesn't move. He closes his eyes.

CHIEF PRIEST (CONT'D)

I said Go! Now!

Jesus opens his eyes and looks at the Chief Priest.

JESUS

All right, all right. But I'm coming back. Today is just not the right day.

He gets up, gets back on the ass and rides off. The crowd follows him.

CUT TO:

MESSENGER

Sir, the man Jesus has just angered the Chief Priest at the temple, who made him leave. It appears he may be leaving the city soon as well.

PILATE

Very good.
(to himself)
Very good decision indeed.

DISSOLVE TO:

27 BLACK SCREEN 27

SUPER: "Monday, March 30, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

28 BLACK SCREEN 28

SUPER: "There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God's kingdom to come."

- Luke 23:50 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God's kingdom to come.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 EXT. THE HOME OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA - AFTERNOON 29

Marcus rides up on his horse and dismounts in front of the very posh hilltop home of Joseph of Arimathea. JOSEPH, late 40s, well-dressed, is sitting on the veranda.

JOSEPH

Welcome, Marcus.
(to the servant standing nearby)
Bring us some more drinks and glasses.

Joseph gets up as Marcus arrives on the veranda and they shake hands.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

You've been to my house many times,
but not usually in the afternoon.

The servant hands Marcus a drink. JOSEPH waves his hands
around at the perfect weather and the beautiful scenery.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

This always reminds me of why it's
called the Promised Land. Come, sit
down and enjoy it with me.

They both admire the view for a minute.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

So, what does Pilate want from me
today?

MARCUS

He is concerned about this man
Jesus.

JOSEPH

Why? What about him?

MARCUS

Several things. He, of course, is
not very pleased that Jesus allows
the people to call him the Son of
David and treat him like a king.
That constitutes a direct threat to
the security of the Roman
government, as you can well
imagine, especially if more and
more people take up the crusade.

JOSEPH

I understand that, but from what
I'm told, Jesus is doing nothing to
provoke or encourage this kind of
talk. It seems to be coming from
the people themselves.

MARCUS

While that may be true, Joseph, you
must admit that Jesus is going out
of his way to fulfill some of the
ancient prophecies concerning the
Messiah, which certainly fuels the
fires of unrest, wouldn't you say?

JOSEPH

Perhaps. What else is Pilate
worried about?

MARCUS

Frankly, he believes, from all the reports he gets, that Jesus is making enemies in his own Temple. And Pilate would like to avoid the situation where your Sanhedrin come to him asking for Jesus's head. That might pose a serious problem if Jesus has built up any kind of following. The last thing Pilate wants is for Tiberius to send several legions of troops into Jerusalem to put down an uprising, and it should be the last thing you and the Sanhedrin want as well.

JOSEPH

True, that *is* the last thing we want. But Marcus, you have to understand that Jesus has become a thorn in the side of the old-school, hard-line Pharisees. He has consistently defeated them in public debates, and actually called them some not-so-very-nice names. While I might enjoy their humiliation once in a while and agree with Jesus about their viewpoints on various religious topics, I don't agree with the tactics he is using, for the very reason you are sitting here with me today: it can lead to some pretty dire consequences.

Marcus relaxes a little with this friendly reception and takes a drink, sensing that Joseph is not finished.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

There are some basic economic reasons why the Pharisees don't like Jesus, either. He's pretty well put a major dent in many temples' income by driving out the dealers and the animals being sold for sacrifice, and turning over the tables of the money changers. If you really want to make people mad at you, just go straight for their pocketbook. And that's what Jesus has done, no doubt.

MARCUS

Then it would seem to me, in the interest of peace, it would behoove both the Sanhedrin as well as the government of Rome to have Jesus stop what he's doing.

Joseph starts laughing and doesn't stop for a long time.

JOSEPH

Just the thought of telling Jesus what to do, and him actually doing it, is the best joke I've heard in months!

He laughs again just thinking about it.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

There's one thing I can tell you today with all certainty, Marcus, and that is that I cannot control what Jesus does, and I won't even try. Nobody tells that man what to do - no one except God himself, apparently.

MARCUS

Well, there has to be something someone can do, or Jesus is going to lose his life.

JOSEPH

(sobering up very quickly)
You believe he's in that much danger?

MARCUS

Yes, I know it. Pilate is already calling for his crucifixion, the proper and legal method of dealing with people like Jesus under the Dissident Act. And I don't think it's going to be very much longer until the Pharisees start calling for his death as well, as a blasphemer and false prophet.

JOSEPH

(now visibly worried)
But he has never done anything to threaten the rule of Rome, or, for that matter, to claim he was a Messiah. Other people have said that about him, but not he himself.

MARCUS

You know as well as I do, Joseph, that doesn't really matter. It's what he is perceived to be much more than what he really is.

JOSEPH

So what are you suggesting?

MARCUS

If you would just talk to him, tell him the things we've discussed today, make sure he's aware of what he's doing and the ramifications of his actions. He needs to ease up a little with the rhetoric, and perhaps even stay out of Jerusalem entirely for a while - maybe until the end of the Passover Feast.

This time Joseph didn't laugh. But he was suspicious.

JOSEPH

Why are you so concerned about Jesus' safety, Marcus?

MARCUS

Let's just say that I want to see him come out of this alive, for reasons of my own.

Joseph studies Marcus' face, unsuccessfully trying to get a "read."

JOSEPH

All right. I'll try. I'll speak to him tonight. I believe that when he's finished in Jerusalem this afternoon, he's going back to Bethany for the night, and he will probably stop by here on his way. If not, I'll make a special trip there to see him myself first thing tomorrow morning.

When Marcus looks pleased, Joseph adds a disclaimer.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I'm not guaranteeing anything. I'm simply saying that I'll try. By tomorrow night we should know whether I was successful or not.

MARCUS

Thank you.

Marcus gets up, shakes hands with Joseph, and mounts his horse to ride off.

30

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

30

Marcus finishes undressing and falls into bed next to Claudia.

MARCUS

How'd it go for you with Pilate today?

CLAUDIA

Fine.

MARCUS

Well, can you be a little more specific? After all, he was getting out the cross for Jesus to hang on when I last saw him.

CLAUDIA

He put it away again.

MARCUS

(sounding excited)
For good?

CLAUDIA

For now.

MARCUS

(disappointed)
Oh. Well, that's something. How'd you do it?

CLAUDIA

Men are so easy. All I had to do was threaten him with no more sex and he caved in a minute.

MARCUS

Like you did with me.
(beat)
But you don't sleep with him that much now, do you?

CLAUDIA

(enjoying the moment and
Marcus' jealousy)
(MORE)

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

No, but that doesn't seem to matter to you men. As long as there is hope, and the occasional opportunity, you're okay. But to think about losing any possibility makes you nuts.

Marcus frowns and she pulls herself up on one elbow.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I don't understand it either, but it's true. And it works. But this is no secret. Even the women of ancient Greece knew they could stop a war if they just got together and withheld sex from their men. I just don't know why more women don't use this power over men to create a more peaceful world.

MARCUS

So Pilate knows that if Jesus dies, he's cut off?

CLAUDIA

(hesitantly)

Well ... not exactly. He made a good point. If the Pharisees put him in a position where he has no choice, he'll have to agree to kill him. I couldn't argue with that, and I'm counting on you to see that that never happens. But he won't actively pursue a crucifixion on his own. That's our agreement.

Pause. They start to kiss.

MARCUS

(pulling back)

Did Pilate want to know why you cared so much about Jesus?

CLAUDIA

I just told him that my own maidservants had assured me that Jesus was no threat to him politically, that he was much more of a lover than a warrior, and that if Pontius crucified him, it could ruin all the hard work he had done over the past few years to establish a peaceful and working relationship with the Jews, and it would bring Rome breathing down our necks once again. I made it really clear I was more concerned about Pontius than I was about Jesus.

MARCUS

And he bought that?

CLAUDIA

Yes, completely. You can always win over a man if you appeal to his arrogance.

(beat)

And what about you?

MARCUS

I met with Joseph of Arimathea this afternoon and got his agreement to talk to Jesus and ask him to be a little more reasonable, stop saying things that would upset Pilate or the Pharisees, and not come back into Jerusalem for the rest of the week. That shouldn't be too much to ask.

CLAUDIA

And what was Joseph's reaction?

MARCUS

He said he'd try, but that there was no guarantee. Apparently Jesus doesn't take advice very easily - unless it's from *God*.

CLAUDIA

Well, at least we have three of the most powerful men in the city - including my husband - all convinced to do everything they can to keep Jesus alive. That's a start.

Claudia lies back down and turns away from Marcus, inching back in the bed until she's curled up inside his arms in the spoon position. This obviously excites him and he starts kissing her neck. She responds with a moan.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I certainly hope you keep your end of the bargain, Marcus, because I would hate to never be able to do this again.

DISSOLVE TO:

31 BLACK SCREEN 31

SUPER: "Tuesday, March 31, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

32 BLACK SCREEN 32

SUPER: "Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there.... He taught them, saying, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

- Mark 11:15, 17 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there.... He taught them, saying, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

DISSOLVE TO:

33 BLACK SCREEN 33

SUPER: "The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching."

- Mark 11:18 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

DISSOLVE TO:

34

INT. PALACE THRONE ROOM - DAY

34

Pilate is seated on his throne giving audience to various of his constituents. A MESSENGER arrives and Pilate motions to the Messenger to come forward and speak.

MESSENGER

I have news about Jesus in the Temple.

PILATE

(surprised and angry)
He's back in the Temple again?

Pilate interrupts the messenger and motions for him to come forward and whisper the message in Pilate's ear, which he does. When he is finished, Pilate yells out.

PILATE (CONT'D)

MARCUS!

Pilate pushes the messenger away from his ear so hard that the messenger falls down.

PILATE (CONT'D)

MARCUS! Where the hell is he? GET
IN HERE, MARCUS!

When Marcus finally bursts into the throne room, Pilate grabs his arm and drags him into his adjoining private quarters. We follow.

35

INT. PILATE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

35

PILATE

(very angrily)
I thought you were going to have Joseph of Arimathea get Jesus to back off.

MARCUS

I did, sir.

PILATE

Then tell me why Jesus is back in the Temple again today, causing even more trouble!

Pilate sits in his chair. Marcus remains standing, very surprised.

MARCUS

I don't know, sir. He was certainly told to calm down, and I'm equally sure Joseph suggested he not even come back into Jerusalem at all this week.

PILATE

Well, either Joseph didn't do what you asked, or that fool Jesus didn't listen. Do you know what's he's doing over there?

When Marcus doesn't answer, Pilate continues.

PILATE (CONT'D)

He's running around with whips made out of rope, chasing all the cattle and sheep and birds and other animals out of the Temple. And he's completely upset all the tables of the money changers, scattering coins everywhere, which is money out of my pocket.

Marcus just stands there in astonishment.

PILATE (CONT'D)

Several of the Pharisees got really pissed off and sent a messenger to tell me.

MARCUS

I'll get right over there with some men and we'll put a stop to this.

Marcus turns to leave.

PILATE

No, wait. It's too late. The damage is done, and the messenger said he was preparing to leave anyway and go back to Bethany again.

Marcus turns back around and sees Pilate soften.

PILATE (CONT'D)
 Come to think of it, this is perfect. Our plan is working. He's alienating his own people and taking the heat off of me. So let's give him some more rope to hang himself.

(beat)
 By the way, that was a figure of speech. I've changed my mind. I don't want him killed.

Marcus has to hold back a smile.

MARCUS
 (feigning confusion)
 I don't understand, sir. I am making preparations to crucify him, as you requested yesterday.

PILATE
 Then stop. Don't.

Marcus doesn't say anything, happy to see Pilate squirming with discomfort.

PILATE (CONT'D)
 (finally confessing)
 My wife has requested that I let Jesus live, and I intend to do everything I can to honor that request.

Marcus pretends to be surprised by this announcement, and then sits next to Pilate.

PILATE (CONT'D)
 (seeing Marcus' feigned surprise)
 Oh, come on, Marcus. You, of all people, know how persuasive Claudia can be.
 (beat)
 Instead, I want you to ensure me that you will get rid of this man forever. I never want to see him in my jurisdiction again. Get him out of here, but don't kill him in the process.

Marcus sees this is the right time to take advantage of the situation.

MARCUS

Sir, that's not going to be easy, by any means. He is gathering quite a following among the common man and aggravating the Jewish leaders at the same time. And after today's stunt, I would imagine that you will start getting requests from them to kill him.

PILATE

I already have. So you figure out a way around this, Marcus.

MARCUS

(pauses for a minute,
deciding whether or not
to take the chance now)

Sir, what you're asking me to do is above and beyond my call of duty. If I can pull it off, I'd like something in return.

PILATE

(slightly surprised)
What do you want, Marcus?

MARCUS

(obviously having thought
about this for a long
time)

I want you to release my daughter - give Caecelia her freedom.

Pilate slams his fist into the arm of the chair, stands up quickly and turns his back.

PILATE

You know perfectly well why she's locked away down there.
(whipping around again)
Now you want to flaunt your affair with my wife in front of everybody?

MARCUS

No, sir. I would never do that. I just want my daughter free to come and go as she wants. She's six years old and needs to be able to go outside and play with the other children.

PILATE

(stops pacing for a
minute)

Oh, what the hell. I guess it's not
been a very well-kept secret.
Everyone knows who she is by now
anyway.

(beat)

All right. But only if you get
Jesus completely out of Judea
alive.

MARCUS

(standing)

I have your word on that?

PILATE

You have my word.

Marcus finally takes a breath.

MARCUS

Thank you, sir. I will go visit
Joseph again right now and make all
the necessary preparations.

Marcus exits, beaming.

36

EXT. THE HOME OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA - DAY

36

Joseph is sitting on the veranda as Marcus arrives on
horseback. They shake hands.

JOSEPH

To what do I owe the pleasure of a
second visit in two days?

MARCUS

(taking a seat)

So you haven't heard?

JOSEPH

Heard what?

MARCUS

What Jesus did today in the Temple
in Jerusalem.

JOSEPH

(sitting up very straight
and getting serious)

No. What?

MARCUS

He let all the animals for sacrifice loose, and turned over the money changers' tables.

JOSEPH

Oh, no. Again?

MARCUS

And then he started preaching about the Temple being for all people, and accusing the priests of being thieves.

JOSEPH

Oh, Jesus!

MARCUS

I went past the Temple on my way here, and it's true. The place was a mess, in total chaos. Animals running loose everywhere, people scurrying around on hands and knees trying to pick up loose coins.

Joseph utters a deep sign.

JOSEPH

I had a feeling he wouldn't listen. He told me as much when I talked to him this morning in Bethany. 'I take my orders from God,' he said, 'and I don't yet know what they are for today. But if He tells me to go to Jerusalem, then I'm going to Jerusalem.' I tried to explain to him the risks, but he wouldn't hear it. 'God has protected me from a lot worse in the last couple of years,' he said. And he truly didn't seem to be afraid for his life.

MARCUS

And I have more news about that ...

JOSEPH

(suddenly more concerned)
What?

MARCUS

Pilate has now ordered me to keep Jesus alive as long as I get him out of Judea.

JOSEPH
 (elated, but confused)
 Why would he do that?

MARCUS
 Let's just say it was for personal reasons.

JOSEPH
 (pausing, then smiling)
 Ah, yes. Claudia can be very persuasive when she wants something.
 (beat)
 But how do you plan to pull that off, Marcus?

MARCUS
 I don't know yet. But I must make it happen, and I may need your help.

JOSEPH
 I'll be happy to do whatever I can, anything that will keep Jesus safe. But as you have already seen, my power seems to be limited in this case.

MARCUS
 So who will Jesus listen to, other than God?

JOSEPH
 (not hesitating)
 Mary.

MARCUS
 Mary Magdalene?

JOSEPH
 Yes. His wife. She told him yesterday that she was pregnant with their child, and it seemed to affect him deeply. I think he will pay attention to her if she speaks.

Marcus thinks for a minute.

MARCUS
 Joseph, I want to meet with you and Jesus and Mary Magdalene, and it needs to be today.
 (MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

But it has to be completely secret.
No one else can know. Can you
arrange that?

JOSEPH

(thinking)

Yes, I think I can.

(beat)

There's a grotto in the southeast
corner of the Garden of Gethsemane
... very private ... off the beaten
path. But we must meet after dark.
Here are the directions.

DISSOLVE TO:

37 EXT. THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE - NIGHT

37

Marcus ties his horse to an olive tree branch and sets out on foot, looking for the grotto. He finds the landmark Joseph gave him, turns right and makes his way through some heavy brush and behind a few boulders. He finally sees the entrance to the cave and moves through it into the darkness. Within a few yards he can see the dim glow of a fire.

38 INT. GROTTTO - NIGHT

38

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Over here, Marcus.

Marcus recognizes Joseph's voice and heads in that direction. In the dim light he is surprised to see Joseph and a woman, but no Jesus.

JOSEPH

Marcus, this is Mary Magdalene,
Jesus's wife.

MARCUS

But where is Jesus?

MARY

He would not come.

MARCUS

(upset)

And why not?

JOSEPH

He said that he was not concerned,
and that God would lead him through
any challenge.

(MORE)

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

In other words, he didn't need or want us to interfere.

MARCUS

(sitting down hard)

He's making this so difficult!

(to Mary)

Please tell him how difficult he is making it for us to save his life.

MARY

You really think it's that serious?

MARCUS

(to Joseph)

You haven't told her everything we've talked about?

When Joseph doesn't answer, Marcus addresses Mary again.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Let me put it this way. Your biggest worry is not Pilate. He actually is committed to keeping Jesus alive, as long as he leaves the country. But Jesus continues to attack the Jewish leaders, especially the Pharisees. They have had enough and are beginning to pressure Pilate into arresting Jesus and ultimately they want his crucifixion. And if we don't do something, they're going to get it, because Pilate will have no choice but to turn his back while it happens.

JOSEPH

Marcus is right, Mary. This is very serious. It's a matter of life and death for Jesus, and you could easily lose a husband ...

(he touches Mary's belly,
only slightly showing)

... and your child could lose its father.

Mary sits quietly for a minute.

MARY

What do you suggest?

MARCUS

Jesus needs to stop coming to Jerusalem, and stay away from the Temple. Let him preach all he wants in Bethany, but tell him to lay off the Pharisees. I can probably control things if he says something treasonous against Pilate, but we'll all be back in Caesarea in a week or so, and besides, I really don't think Jesus is interested in overthrowing the Roman government, is he?

MARY

No, he's not. Not by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, he's upset that his disciples don't get that point. This is not the political revolution they think he is leading. It's a spiritual one instead.

MARCUS

That's what I thought. But unfortunately, I have no control over the Pharisees, or the Sadducees, or the Sanhedrin.

Marcus looks at Joseph for support.

JOSEPH

Well, the Sadducees are badly outnumbered in the Senate, so you can basically ignore them. But the Pharisees are a different matter. Jesus has directly attacked their authority, threatened their biggest sources of money, and challenged their religious interpretation of the law. And he did all of that in the Temple again today. That doesn't go over well.

Mary looks sad, and frightened.

MARY

I don't know that I can do anything. Jesus is dedicated to the job he believes he was sent here to do, and I have very little influence over that. He's even said that he came not to bring peace, but the sword.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Besides, the issue would boil down to what is God's will, not mine, and not his. So I would have to believe that I was privy to God's will that Jesus stop what he's doing and limit his actions. First, I don't yet believe that myself, and secondly, I doubt he would, either.

JOSEPH

Answer me this, Mary. Do you believe that Jesus is in mortal danger?

MARY

Yes, I think you've convinced me of that tonight.

JOSEPH

And do you believe that Marcus and I are trying to keep Jesus alive?

MARY

Yes, I believe that you, Joseph, have Jesus's best interest at heart. After all, he considers you to be a disciple and a friend. And I trust that if Marcus is your friend and you agreed for him to be here tonight, and would feel safe enough to invite me into his presence, that he must be a good man as well.

MARCUS

Then please take this message to Jesus. Please tell him this is a matter of life and death - *his* life and death; that we need him to help us save his life - we need his cooperation; and that he's going to have to leave Judea for good, no matter what.

MARY

(surprised)

Why?

JOSEPH

It's true, Mary. Even if we can save his life, he will have to leave the country.

(MORE)

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Pilate cannot let this insurrection continue or there will soon be more Roman troops on our soil than there are in Rome, and our lives will be changed forever. We will lose all the freedoms we still have, and then some. Nobody wants that, Mary. Nobody.

MARY

That's going to be difficult, very difficult.

MARCUS

Then let us tell him ourselves. Get him to meet us here tomorrow night, same time, and we'll do all the talking for you. Can you at least do that? Can you ask him to stay out of Jerusalem at least tomorrow and not make any more waves, and then meet us here tomorrow night?

MARY

I can tell him, but I don't know that he will listen.

MARCUS

Well, then tell him his wife's and his baby's lives are in danger as well.

Joseph and Mary look at Marcus to see if he's serious.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Yes, I'm quite serious. Especially if Jesus won't leave on his own. Someone, and I'm not saying who at the moment, but someone will discover that you're pregnant and use you and the baby to blackmail Jesus into giving up. The only question will be, does he give up his life for you later, or just give up his country now?

JOSEPH

Bring him here tomorrow night, Mary. By then we'll have a plan how to save everyone's lives.

DISSOLVE TO:

39 BLACK SCREEN 39

SUPER: "Wednesday, April 1, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

40 INT. BEDROOM - DAY 40

Claudia wakes up and sees Marcus standing by the window again.

CLAUDIA
No sleep all night?

MARCUS
(deep in thought)
Uh ... no.

CLAUDIA
Did you come up with a plan?

Marcus turns to face her.

MARCUS
Not one that I'm very confident in,
no. There are too many variables,
too many unknowns. I'm going to
need Joseph's input on certain
details.

CLAUDIA
Well, by all means. Just make sure
the two of you come up with
something, because you know what's
riding on it.

MARCUS
I'm fully aware - perhaps even more
than you.

CLAUDIA
What does that mean?

MARCUS
Nothing. Forget it. Did you see
Caecelia yesterday?

CLAUDIA
No. I didn't have time.

MARCUS
I'll go see her this morning.

CLAUDIA
 She loves it when her father
 visits. Give her a kiss for me and
 tell her I'll be there this
 afternoon.

Marcus nods and goes back to staring out the window.

41

INT. PILATE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

41

Marcus enters.

MARCUS
 You wanted to see me, sir?

PILATE
 Yes. I want an update on our
 Messiah problem.

MARCUS
 I'm working on it.

PILATE
 Well, you better come up with
 something fast, because I'm going
 to have to arrest him soon -
 tomorrow at the latest. There's
 just too much pressure coming from
 the Pharisees.

MARCUS
 I understand. But give me as much
 time as you can. If it's tomorrow,
 make it tomorrow night so I have
 the whole day to arrange things.

PILATE
 You've got all day today!

MARCUS
 But I need tomorrow as well. This
 one is not easy ... he says he lets
 God direct his every move.

PILATE
 He may think that, but right now
 the Pharisees seem to be calling
 the shots.
 (beat)
 Okay. I'll delay the arrest as long
 as I can.

Marcus salutes and starts to leave.

PILATE (CONT'D)
 But he will be arrested some time
 tomorrow, Marcus. I can't get
 around that.

42 INT. UNDERGROUND HALL IN THE PALACE - DAY 42

Guards salute Marcus as he walks by. He speaks to Lucius, one of his trusted lieutenants.

MARCUS
 Good morning, Lucius. How is she
 today?

LUCIUS
 Seems to be well, Commander.

Lucius unlocks a door as he answers. We follow Marcus through the door into:

43 INT. A GIRL'S BEDROOM - DAY 43

Marcus walks into a room decorated appropriately for the 6-year-old girl, CAECELIA, sitting on her bed playing with a doll. She brightens up when she sees Marcus.

MARCUS
 Good morning, sweetheart.

CAECELIA
 Good morning, daddy.
 (holding up her doll)
 Come have breakfast with Aurelia
 and me.

Marcus kisses Caecelia on the forehead and sits on the bed. Caecelia hands him a fork.

MARCUS
 I just ate breakfast with your
 mommy.
 (spotting the teapot)
 But I can have some tea while you
 and Aurelia eat. Do you have any
 tea?

CAECELIA
 I can make some very fast.

She picks up the teapot and puts it on her play stove.

CAECELIA (CONT'D)
There, it's ready.

Caecelia pretends to pour tea into a cup and hands it to Marcus who pretends to take a sip.

MARCUS
Very good tea.

CAECELIA
(holding up her doll)
Aurelia taught me to make it.
(beat)
I missed you yesterday, daddy.

MARCUS
Yes, I'm very sorry about that, sweetheart. But daddy is working on a secret plan so that we can see each other any time we want. Would you like that?

CAECELIA
(excited)
Oh, yes!

MARCUS
Well, then daddy might be very busy for the next day or two to try to make that happen, so if I don't come to see you tomorrow or the next day, you'll know why. Is that okay?

CAECELIA
I suppose so. But Aurelia will miss you.

MARCUS
And I will miss Aurelia, too. It's just that what I have to do is very important.

CAECELIA
I understand, daddy. It's okay.

Marcus leans over and kisses Caecelia on the forehead again.

MARCUS
Thank you. And thank you for my tea.
(standing up to leave)
Oh, and your mommy says she'll come see you this afternoon, too.

CAECELIA

Good. Maybe she can have dinner
with Aurelia and me.

MARCUS

May be.

CAECELIA

Bye, daddy.

MARCUS

Bye, sweetheart. I love you.

CAECELIA

Love you, too.

Marcus leaves with a tear in his eye.

44 EXT. THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE - NIGHT

44

Marcus ties up his horse and finds his way to the grotto more
easily this time.

45 INT. GROTTA - NIGHT

45

Joseph is already there, seated next to the fire by himself.
Marcus joins him.

MARCUS

So, do you think they will show?

JOSEPH

I certainly hope so, for all our
sakes.

MARCUS

Well, at least he stayed out of
Jerusalem today. I'm going to take
that as a good sign that maybe he's
willing to listen to reason. Have
you had any more thoughts about the
plan we went over this afternoon?

JOSEPH

I don't see any other way. It's
going to be tricky, but it might
just work.

MARCUS

All we have to do now is convince
him.

Mary appears in the grotto, with Jesus walking behind. Joseph and Marcus both stand, and then they all take seats around the fire.

JOSEPH

Thank you for joining us, Jesus.

Jesus sits very still and appears quite calm. His voice is a strange blend of gentleness and power.

JESUS

I spent the day in prayer and meditation before deciding to come. I am here to listen, but my presence should not be construed to mean I am in agreement with anything you have to say - although I deeply appreciate your concern for me, and especially for my wife and child.

MARCUS

I'll get right to the point, Jesus. You've created a lot of enemies out there. And what you said and did the last three days in the Temple has pretty well sealed your fate. The Pharisees want your head, and they are putting a lot of pressure on both the Sanhedrin and on Pilate to have you arrested.

Mary looks upset with the news, but Jesus doesn't flinch.

JESUS

I did what I was called to do by God, and I do not regret a moment.

MARCUS

Be that as it may, I think it's safe to say that the arrest will happen sometime in the next day or two, and you'll be brought before the Sanhedrin for a trial. I also think we have to assume they're going to find you guilty and ask for your crucifixion. For that, they then have to take you in front of Pilate and get his agreement.

Mary looks quite worried now.

MARY

What do you think Pilate will do?

MARCUS

I know exactly what he will do. First he'll try to dismiss the charges against you, claiming that you're no threat to Rome and he doesn't see any reason for such a stiff sentence. But if the Pharisees put a lot of pressure on him, Pilate will eventually give in, as he always does, and grant their request. But he'll do it in a way that takes him off the hook.

MARY

(looking at Joseph)
Can't we stop this? Can't we do something?

JOSEPH

I'm afraid not. The Pharisees are so incensed by the insults and humiliation they have suffered from Jesus's verbal attacks, and they are so concerned about the following that is building around him, they see no alternative themselves but to completely get rid of him. You know, of course, that the previous assassination attempts on Jesus's life were done by the Pharisees and not by Pilate. Tuesday's tirade by Jesus was just the final straw. I have it from a very reliable source that quite a few of the Sanhedrin met together today and the votes are already there to convict him and sentence him to death.

MARY

Is there no way to compromise with them, to get around the arrest, or get a lighter sentence?

MARCUS

It's too late for that, unless Jesus would agree to leave the country tomorrow and never come back. And I have people standing by ready to help him disappear.

JESUS
(quietly)
That's not an option - not up for
discussion.

MARCUS
I'm really sorry to hear that.

MARY
So what can we do?

MARCUS
If Jesus won't leave, I'm afraid
there is no other way except to go
through with the crucifixion.

MARY
(shocked)
What?
(looking at Joseph)
I thought you were committed to
keeping Jesus alive?

MARCUS
We are. But I think the only way to
do it is to fake his crucifixion so
that everyone thinks he's dead and
will leave him - and you - alone.

MARY
(confused)
What do you mean 'fake' his
crucifixion?

JOSEPH
Marcus means that we should not
waste our time and effort trying to
stop the Sanhedrin, or count on
Pilate to save Jesus, and plan
instead on having Jesus put on a
cross for a short time and then get
him down from there before he dies.
After all, a crucifixion is a very
slow death, and we'll have quite a
few hours to save him without much
physical damage at all.

MARY
(quite skeptical)
And exactly how do you plan on
doing that?

JOSEPH

First, we need to make sure he gets crucified in a place where no one can get very close, where we can keep people from seeing what's happening to him on the cross.

MARCUS

Golgotha. It's set back off the road, on a hill, and there's only one road leading up to it that I can keep closed with my soldiers. And it's too far for anyone to think seriously about stoning him. I have three or four men who I can trust with my life that will help us. The others who will police the area don't have to know what's going on.

MARY

But I still don't see how we--

JOSEPH

--We'll get Pilate to set the time of crucifixion for Friday morning, and since it's just before the Sabbath and the day of Preparation for the Passover, Jewish law will not tolerate his staying on the cross that night. We should be able to get him down after maybe three or four hours - six hours tops.

MARY

But you're talking about having nails driven through Jesus's wrists, and his legs will be broken.

MARCUS

I can make sure his legs don't get broken and his feet don't get nailed, so he can still walk. He'll have a support at the base to rest his feet on. And I can also arrange it so that the nails are put through his hands instead of his arms, which is much less painful and less damaging. And no one will be able to tell the difference from a distance.

MARY
(shuddering)
But the pain ...

JOSEPH
My good friend in the Sanhedrin,
Nicodemus, who is also a disciple
of Jesus and a very good physician
and surgeon, will make an
anesthetic that will be given to
Jesus to drink to numb the pain and
basically put him to sleep.

MARY
(still not convinced)
Is there no other way?

MARCUS
Not that I can see, and it will be
a small price to pay for getting
out of this alive.

JOSEPH
Once we get him down off the cross,
we'll take him to the tomb I have
already prepared for myself, in a
nearby garden, close to the
Damascus Gate. Nicodemus will come
at night to take care of any wounds
Jesus has and help him regain his
strength.

MARY
How long will he have to stay
there?

JOSEPH
It depends, but maybe 2 or 3 days.

MARY
And then what?

MARCUS
Then Jesus must leave Judea. It's
important that he gets out of the
land ruled by the Roman empire as
fast as he can.

JOSEPH
(looking at Jesus)
I can arrange for you to go to the
Gulf of Eilat and take a boat to
India, if you want.
(MORE)

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I'm sure you still have friends there who would take you in.

MARY

But I thought Eilat is still in Roman territory.

JOSEPH

He won't be there long. And no one is going to be looking for him - they will all think he's dead. Besides, we're going to shave his beard and cut his hair and he won't be recognizable, even to his close friends - who will also think he's dead.

Jesus has been listening silently the whole time. Finally he speaks.

JESUS

And what about Mary, and the child?

JOSEPH

We have made arrangements for them to go to Tel Shikmona and from there sail to Egypt. After the child is born, we'll see. It might be wise for them to go on to the south of France. I have friends there as well who will take care of them. But we will see to all of that. We'll make sure no harm comes to them, believe me.

Mary looks horrified.

MARY

I can't go with Jesus?

MARCUS

It simply isn't safe. If something should happen to Jesus that we can't control or predict, we have to make sure that at least you and his child - his bloodline - are protected.

MARY

Jesus?

(when Jesus doesn't respond)

Joseph, please!

JOSEPH

I have to agree with Marcus on this. You just don't know how people are going to react if they find out Jesus is still alive. You have to think of the child.

MARCUS

Jesus, do you understand the severity of the situation?

JESUS

I understand that you think I'm in danger, but I have faith in my Father and will follow His plan as he unveils it to me.

MARCUS

(slightly frustrated)
Isn't it possible that God is using Joseph and me to unveil it to you right now?

JESUS

(faced with pure logic, he smiles)
I won't deny that possibility.

JOSEPH

Then you'll think about what we said?

JESUS

I will consider it.

Jesus and Mary stand up, followed by Joseph and Marcus.

MARCUS

I sincerely hope so, because your arrest is probably going to happen tomorrow, so we have to move quickly.

JESUS

Thank you again for your concern

...

(putting his arm around
Mary and his hand on her
belly.)

... for all of us.

Jesus and Mary leave the grotto.

MARCUS

Well, I guess that went as well as it could. Do you think he will go along with it?

JOSEPH

I think he thinks God will keep him safe.

MARCUS

Well, you know, it really doesn't matter, because that's the way it's going to happen, regardless. I'm in charge now, not Jesus or his god. I just hope Mary sees the wisdom of getting on that boat to Egypt, which I can't force her to do.

JOSEPH

Once the crucifixion is over, I'll make sure she sees the light.

They shake hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

46 BLACK SCREEN 46

SUPER: "Thursday, April 2, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

47 BLACK SCREEN 47

SUPER: "I have very much wanted to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer."

- Luke 22:15 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

I have very much wanted to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer.

DISSOLVE TO:

48 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT 48

Jesus and his 12 disciples are gathered around a table for the last supper. Jesus picks up a pitcher of wine and raises it to the sky.

JESUS

We give thanks to the Lord God.
 (to his disciples)
 Take this and divide it among you.
 For I tell you I will not drink
 again from the fruit of the vine
 until the kingdom of God comes.

As they pass the wine around, Jesus picks up a loaf of bread and raises it to the sky.

JESUS (CONT'D)

We give thanks to the Lord God.

He lowers the bread and breaks it, and then to his disciples:

JESUS (CONT'D)

This is my body given for you. Do
 this in remembrance of me.

(beat)

The Son of Man will go as it has
 been decreed.

The disciples looked surprised and exchange glances.

JESUS (CONT'D)

My betrayer is with me; his hand is
 on this table.

The disciples start arguing about who that could be. Jesus finally looks directly at PETER, 30, with a beard.

JESUS (CONT'D)

(to Peter)

Peter, Satan has asked to sift all
 of you as wheat. But I have prayed
 for you, Peter, that your faith may
 not fail. And when you have turned
 back, strengthen your brothers.

PETER

Lord, I am ready to go with you to
 prison and to death.

JESUS

But I tell you, Peter, before the
 rooster crows today, you will deny
 three times that you know me.

Peter starts to protest, but Jesus holds up his hands to quiet him and looks around the table.

JESUS (CONT'D)

When I sent you without wallet, bag
or sandals, did you lack anything?

All the disciples shake their head and answer.

DISCIPLES

Nothing.

JESUS

But now if you have a wallet, take
it, and also a bag; and if you
don't have a sword, sell your cloak
and buy one. I tell you that this
scripture must be fulfilled in
relation to me: 'And he was counted
among criminals.' Indeed, what's
written about me is nearing
completion.

DISSOLVE TO:

49

BLACK SCREEN

49

SUPER: "Friday, April 3, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

50

BLACK SCREEN

50

SUPER: "Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the
elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put
him to death; and they bound him, and led him away and
delivered Him to Pilate the governor."

- Mark 15:1 (NAS)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Now when morning came, all the
chief priests and the elders of the
people conferred together against
Jesus to put him to death; and they
bound him, and led him away and
delivered Him to Pilate the
governor.

DISSOLVE TO:

Pilate emerges from a door in the palace, shading his eyes from the sunlight, followed by Marcus and other palace guard. There is a group of Pharisees and a large group of SPECTATORS gathered. Jesus is bound at the wrists in the midst of the Pharisees.

PILATE

Why do you disturb me at this ungodly hour of the morning?

PHARISEE 1

We bring you Jesus for a trial, and time is of the essence. Our Passover starts tonight.

PILATE

(looking at Jesus
curiously)

And what accusations do you bring against this man?

PHARISEE 1

He has been leading our people astray by telling them not to pay their taxes to the Roman government and by claiming he is the Messiah, a king. He is causing riots by his teachings wherever he goes - all over Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem!

PILATE

Is he a Galilean?

PHARISEE 1

Yes.

PILATE

Then take him to Herod. Galilee is Herod's jurisdiction.

Pilate starts to walk back into the palace.

PHARISEE 2

We've already been to Herod. He sent us to you.

Pilate stops and turns around.

PILATE

Then take him yourselves and pass judgment on him according to your own law!

PHARISEE 1

We have already tried him and found him guilty, and by our law he ought to die, because he calls himself the Son of God. But Rome has taken away our legal right to put anyone to death.

Pilate can see he's not going to get away from this.

PILATE

(motioning to Marcus)

Then bring him inside.

Pilate turns around and re-enters the Palace. Marcus and several soldiers follow with Jesus in tow.

52

INT. PALACE THRONE ROOM - DAY

52

Pilate sits on his throne with Jesus in front of him.

PILATE

So, are you the king of the Jews?

JESUS

I have never said that. Other people may have said that about me, but I have never said it.

PILATE

So what have you said?

JESUS

My kingdom is not from this world.

PILATE

So you are a king!

JESUS

You say that I am a king. I have been born and have come into the world for this reason - to testify to the truth. Everyone who longs for the truth listens to my voice.

PILATE

Your own people and your chief priests have handed you over to me.
(MORE)

PILATE (CONT'D)

Did you not hear how many things
they accuse you of?

Jesus remains silent.

PILATE (CONT'D)

What do you say to all these
accusations?

Jesus still remains silent.

PILATE (CONT'D)

Why won't you talk to me?

Pilate gets up angrily and paces around Jesus.

PILATE (CONT'D)

How can I help you if you don't
talk to me? Don't you know that I
have the power to crucify you or to
let you go?

JESUS

You have no power at all over me,
unless it was given to you by God.

PILATE

(angrily)

Oh, really? Well, we'll just see
about that!

Pilate motions to Marcus to bring Jesus back outside. On the way they pass Claudia standing in the doorway, watching. She gives Pilate a look of expectation. He just shakes his head.

53

EXT. OUTSIDE THE PALACE - CONTINUOUS

53

PILATE

(to the group of
Pharisees)

You brought this man to me,
accusing him of leading a revolt. I
have examined him thoroughly on
this point and find him to be
innocent. Herod apparently came to
the same conclusion. Nothing this
man has done calls for the death
penalty.

(beat)

As is the custom this time of the
year, I can release one prisoner.

(MORE)

PILATE (CONT'D)

Who do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or this "King of the Jews"?

PHARISEE 1

(pointing to the spectators)

Why not ask the people that question?

PILATE

(to the spectators)

Which of the two do you want me to release to you?

The spectators in unison answer, "Barabbas."

PILATE (CONT'D)

Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?

PHARISEE 2

We have no king but Caesar.

The spectators in unison yelled, "Let him be crucified!"

PILATE

Why? What crime has he committed??

The spectator start chanting, "Crucify him!"

PHARISEE 1

There is the answer to your question, my lord. The people want you to crucify him.

PILATE

Yes, I can see that you have done a good job of working this crowd into a frenzy while I was inside. But I have found no reason to sentence him to death.

Pilate goes to a bowl of water nearby. The people are still yelling, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

PILATE (CONT'D)

(holding up his hands for quiet)

I wash the blood of this innocent man off my hands. But I will not stand in your way, if that's what you want. Marcus, take him away ...

A cheer goes up from the spectators. Pilate waves to Marcus to take Jesus away to be crucified.

PILATE (CONT'D)
... and let Barabbas go.

As Pilate re-enters the Palace, Claudia is standing in the doorway still, obviously upset.

PILATE (CONT'D)
(defensively)
You saw what happened out there. I had no choice. The Pharisees want him dead, and we were on the verge of a full-scale rebellion that would certainly have gotten Rome's attention. We can't have that.

He looks at Claudia for acknowledgment, but gets none.

PILATE (CONT'D)
You heard me say I thought he was innocent, but I swear I had no choice except give the people what they wanted.

Claudia still doesn't say anything. She just looks at Pilate.

PILATE (CONT'D)
(desperately)
Look, we knew this was a possibility. We talked about it. You can't blame me for this ... you can't hold this against me. I tried my best. You saw--

Claudia runs away in tears, trying to find Marcus.

CLAUDIA
MARCUS!

Marcus is standing and talking with Mary Magdalene and other women. In the background we can see 3 crosses on top of a hill some distance away. Jesus' cross is in the middle, and he's already on it.

MARY
Is he alright?

MARCUS

(Concerned)

Yes, but why did he refuse the drugs we offered him earlier to ease the pain of the nails?

MARY

He told me he wanted to go through this fully conscious and aware. As you have probably already seen, he likes to be in control. The drugs would interfere with that. If he wants something later, he'll ask for water.

MARCUS

I just wish he wouldn't try to be some kind of martyr. He really shouldn't have to suffer that much. We tied his arms to the cross so his whole body weight wasn't hanging by the nails, and put the nails through his hands instead of his wrists.

MARY

(interrupting, starting to cry)

Please stop, Marcus. I know you're doing everything you can, but spare me all the gory details. I do wish I could be close enough to talk to him.

MARCUS

Sorry, but I have to keep everyone away so that no one can get close enough to throw stones at him, like they usually do in these cases. I also need them far enough away to think he's dead at some point.

MARY

I just hope that time comes quickly. He's already been up there almost three hours.

MARCUS

I had hoped we could have taken him down from there by now, but I can't do that until he looks dead. And since he refused the anesthetic ...

Behind Marcus and Mary a crowd is gathering and starting to mock Jesus.

MAN #1

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

WOMAN #1

Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!

MAN #2

He saved others, but he cannot save himself.

WOMAN #2

He trusts in God, so let God deliver him now.

MAN #3

Let this Christ, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe!

Lucius rides up to where Marcus and Mary are standing.

LUCIUS

Sir, there is a big dust storm approaching. You can see it from the top of the hill.

MARCUS

How bad is it?

LUCIUS

Bad enough to block out the sun and make things very dark around here.

MARCUS

(smiling)

Perhaps "God" is on our side after all. Nobody will be able to see anything for a while.

LUCIUS

It also looks like high winds that could cause some real damage in town.

MARCUS

That's good for us, too. Most people will go home to protect themselves.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(to Mary)

Mary, I will come get you soon - after the dust storm has fully arrived - and take you closer to Jesus. I think it will be safe then.

Mary can see rocks being thrown at Jesus from the crowd. She looks at Marcus in desperation.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(to Mary)

I thought we would be far enough away.

(to Lucius)

Lucius, ride down to that crowd and get them to stop throwing rocks. Tell them that if they hit one of my soldiers, even by mistake, I will make sure they spend the rest of their lives in prison.

LUCIUS

Yes, sir.

Lucius rides off in the direction of the crowd, while Marcus gets on his horse and rides up the hill toward Jesus. We can see the edge of the dust storm approaching.

55

BLACK SCREEN

55

SUPER: "Jesus cried out with a loud voice and said: Eli, Eli lemana shabakthan! (My God, My God, for this I was spared?)"

- Matthew 27:46 (Lamsa)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Jesus cried out with a loud voice and said: Eli, Eli lemana shabakthan! (My God, My God, for this I was spared?)

DISSOLVE TO:

56

EXT. GOLGOTHA - JESUS' CROSS - 3 HOURS LATER

56

The dust storm is still in full swing, buffeting the cross and darkening the skies. It is difficult to see Jesus, but he is obviously in pain.

JESUS
 My God, My God, for this I was
 spared?

One of the soldiers soaks a sponge in the water with the
 drugs and holds it to Jesus' mouth on the end of his sword,
 but he refuses it again. A minute later he sees Marcus
 walking with Mary Magdalene, his mother MARY, and his brother
 James, close to the foot of the cross. Jesus squints through
 the dust, trying to see who it is.

JESUS (CONT'D)
 (to his mother)
 Mother, take care of your son.

Jesus uses his head to point to James.

JESUS (CONT'D)
 (to JAMES)
 Take care of your mother.

The women are weeping. But the dust storm is too strong to
 stay on the hill any longer. As they start walking away, they
 hear Jesus say:

JESUS (CONT'D)
 (looking at Mary
 Magdalene)
 I am thirsty.

and Mary Magdalene looks relieved to know he is taking the
 drugs as a soldier brings Jesus another sponge on his sword.

MARY
 Oh, thank God.

MARCUS
 He'll be okay now.

The dust storm starts to let up, and Jesus watches as Marcus
 and Mary walk back down the hill. Then the drugs seem to kick
 in.

JESUS
 It is finished.

His eyes close and his head drops onto his chest. A minute
 later he raises his head again to the sky and says:

JESUS (CONT'D)
 Father, into your hands I commit
 myself.

His head drops onto his chest again and stays there.

As Marcus and the women arrive back down the hill, the crowd starts to form again as the dust storm dissipates. This time there are other women who were friends with Jesus who are weeping also and trying to comfort Mary. They can see Jesus hanging on the cross with his head down.

MARY

(very worried)

Marcus, he's not dead, is he?

MARCUS

(leaning over to Mary and
whispering so none of the
other women can hear)

No, no. He's just passed out from the drugs. He should be feeling no pain by now. This is what was supposed to happen a lot earlier. It will look to everyone else like he is dead, which is what we want. We can get him down in a little while and Nicodemus can start caring for his wounds.

MARY

But what about all the blood dripping from his head?

MARCUS

Probably very superficial scratches from that crown of thorns.

Lucius rides up on his horse, very upset.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(finishing his
conversation with Mary)

Nothing to worry about.

LUCIUS

Commander, come quickly!

Lucius jumps down off his horse and pulls Marcus away from the women, not wanting them to hear the story.

MARCUS

Why? What's the problem?

LUCIUS

(whispering)

Pilate sent a centurion - someone not on our team - to break the legs of all 3 men on the crosses so they would die faster. I was able to stop him when he got to Jesus, saying that he was already dead. But then he came back to Jesus, reached up and pierced his side with his sword, claiming he just wanted to check and make sure he was dead. Jesus didn't move, but now he's bleeding a lot through that wound.

MARCUS

(very concerned)

We have to get him down from there right now.

(mounting his horse)

Lucius, go find Joseph of Arimathea and get him to go to Pilate and ask for Jesus' body. You go with him

...

(he starts to ride off)

... and Lucius, you know what to say to Pilate.

LUCIUS

Yes, sir.

Lucius rides off in one direction while Marcus rides back up the hill toward Jesus.

58

EXT. GOLGOTHA, AT JESUS' CROSS - DAY

58

Marcus arrives under Jesus' cross on top of Golgotha. He sees the soldier who he knew had to have pierced Jesus' side.

MARCUS

(angrily)

You did this to him?

CENTURION

Yes, sir. On orders from our governor.

MARCUS

I believe Pilate's orders were to break his legs.

CENTURION

Yes, Commander. But your lieutenant said he was already dead, so there was no point.

MARCUS

Doesn't he look dead to you?

CENTURION

Yes, sir he does.

MARCUS

Then why did you stick your sword in him?

CENTURION

(now very defensive)

So I could assure the governor he was dead.

MARCUS

And is he?

CENTURION

He appears to be. He didn't move when I stuck him. I just thought--

MARCUS

(interrupting, irate)

You're not paid to think, soldier.

(regaining his composure,
realizing that he can use
this to his advantage)

Now go back to Pilate - as fast as you can - and tell him that Jesus is dead, but you broke the legs of the other two, as he ordered.

CENTURION

(saluting)

Yes, sir.

MARCUS

Hurry!

The centurion rides off. Another soldier has been sitting on his horse nearby, watching and listening to this exchange.

SOLDIER

Shall I get Jesus down, sir?

MARCUS

No, we can't do that yet. It would put everything else in jeopardy.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

We have to wait until Joseph gets Pilate's permission to take the body. But if he wakes up, give him another sponge.

DISSOLVE TO:

59 BLACK SCREEN

59

SUPER: "Joseph of Arimathea went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead."

- Mark 15:43-44 (NRS)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Joseph of Arimathea went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

60 INT. PALACE THRONE ROOM - AFTERNOON

60

Pilate is on his throne, and Joseph and Lucius are asking him for permission to take Jesus' body.

JOSEPH

Sir, the Sabbath will be here in just a couple hours. We need to bury the body of Jesus before then.

PILATE

(very surprised)
He is dead? Already? It's only been, what, not even 7 hours? That doesn't sound right.

JOSEPH

I can tell you he is dead.

PILATE

(to Lucius)
Do you agree? This man is actually dead?

LUCIUS

I do agree, sir.

PILATE

(to Joseph)

I'm just a little skeptical. Can you explain how it happened so fast? Was he that weak and puny of a human being?

JOSEPH

I'm not a physician, sir. I wouldn't begin to try to offer an explanation.

PILATE

Where is the centurion I sent to break their legs?

Palace guards rush out of the throne room looking for the Centurion. One of them returns with the Centurion in tow.

GUARD

I found him. Here he is, sir.

PILATE

So, tell me, centurion, did you break the legs of all those crucified today, as I commanded?

CENTURION

I did, sir.

PILATE

All of them?

CENTURION

Well, no sir. Not the man in the middle, named Jesus.

PILATE

Why not?

CENTURION

He was already dead, sir.

PILATE

How do you know?

CENTURION

I pierced his side with my sword, and although he bled, he did not flinch or show any signs of life or feeling.

PILATE

All right. Thank you, centurion.

The Centurion leaves.

PILATE (CONT'D)

(to Joseph)

Although I don't understand how he could die so quickly, especially without having his legs broken, I will believe my centurion that he is dead, since he has no reason to lie to me. You may take the body and bury it. If anyone asks what you're doing, tell them you have my permission.

JOSEPH

(bowing)

Thank you, sir.

Joseph and Lucius leave the throne room.

61

EXT. THE PALACE - DAY

61

Lucius is mounting his horse when Joseph brings him a package.

JOSEPH

Take this linen shroud to Marcus, get Jesus down from the cross and put him in it. I will go get Nicodemus and meet you there, and together we'll take him to my burial tomb where Nicodemus can start working on him.

(He starts to mount his own horse.)

Oh, and good work in there, Lucius. For a minute I wasn't sure we were going to succeed. But a little lie is sometimes necessary in the bigger scheme of things. So thank you, and--

(looking toward the heavens)

--thank God.

Lucius pounds his chest with a salute to Joseph and rides off toward Golgotha. Joseph rides off in another direction.

DISSOLVE TO:

62 BLACK SCREEN

62

SUPER: "Nicodemus, who earlier had come to Jesus at night, went with Joseph. He brought about seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes. These two men took Jesus' body."

- John, 19:39-40 (NCV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Nicodemus, who earlier had come to Jesus at night, went with Joseph. He brought about seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes. These two men took Jesus' body.

DISSOLVE TO:

63 BLACK SCREEN

63

SUPER: "In the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden. In the garden was a new tomb that had never been used before. The men laid Jesus in that tomb."

- John, 19:41-42 (NCV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

In the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden. In the garden was a new tomb that had never been used before. The men laid Jesus in that tomb.

DISSOLVE TO:

64 INT. JESUS' TOMB - DAY

64

Lucius and some other soldiers are carrying Jesus in the linen shroud into the empty tomb. Joseph and NICODEMUS, 50s, are there, with Marcus behind.

NICODEMUS

(pointing to a rock bench
in the tomb.)

Put him there.

JOSEPH

Can you save him?

NICODEMUS

He's lost a fair amount of blood,
but I think so.

(to Lucius)

(MORE)

NICODEMUS (CONT'D)

Bring me my bag from my horse.
Careful. It's heavy.

Lucius disappears and then returns with a bag. Nicodemus takes out some medical supplies and starts working on the wound in Jesus' side. Lucius leaves again.

NICODEMUS (CONT'D)

Let's get this bleeding stopped and then I'll work on his hands and head.

Jesus moans and moves a little.

NICODEMUS (CONT'D)

Joseph, give him some more anesthetic. I need to sew up this wound and there's no point in him waking up yet.

JOSEPH

(putting a sponge to
Jesus's mouth)

Jesus, drink this.

Jesus does, and passes out again.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

He's going to need constant care for a little while, no?

NICODEMUS

Yes. At least for 24-36 hours.

MARCUS

Well, we can't have people coming and going from this tomb. Someone is going to wonder why a dead man needs so much attention. The word's bound to get back to Pilate.

JOSEPH

Fortunately, our Sabbath starts in a few minutes, so there won't be that much foot traffic in this area.

NICODEMUS

When I'm finished here tonight, I won't have to come back until tomorrow night, as long as someone stays with him.

MARCUS

I'm sure Lucius will be happy to stay, and I'll post some of my most trusted men with Lucius to guard the tomb and make sure no one bothers it. They can roll the stone in front when we leave so it looks like a tomb for a dead man.

JOSEPH

I know Mary will want to see him.

MARCUS

Yes, right. But let's not have a crowd. Make sure all the Jews observe the Sabbath so no one can get suspicious.

JOSEPH

(to NICODEMUS)

Do you have everything you need?

NICODEMUS

(looking at his medical bag)

I think so. This wound in his side is not as deep as I had feared. It will heal quickly with just a couple stitches. I'll stay with him until he wakes up, which might not be long. Otherwise, I brought plenty of aloe to dress all the wounds. And if he's in pain, I have some myrrh gum and vinegar to give him.

MARCUS

(to Joseph)

Then let's leave and let Nicodemus do his job.

JOSEPH

What about you, Nicodemus, and observing your Sabbath?

NICODEMUS

I think God will forgive me. This man's life seems to take precedence, don't you think?

JOSEPH

I totally agree. And thank you, Nicodemus.

MARCUS

That goes for me, too. All right.
The women are waiting outside.
Let's give Mary Magdalene a quick
look, and then I'll send them home.

65

EXT. JESUS' TOMB - NIGHT

65

Marcus and Joseph exit the tomb. THREE WOMEN are waiting
outside with Lucius. It is very dark.

JOSEPH

(to the WOMEN)

Mary, you and the others can come
in, for just a minute.

Joseph and the women go into the tomb, leaving Marcus and
Lucius outside.

MARCUS

(surprised)

It's very dark, Lucius. What
happened to the moon?

LUCIUS

Seems to be a lunar eclipse, sir.
It started at moonrise.

MARCUS

(smiling)

Looks like we're in luck again.

DISSOLVE TO:

66

BLACK SCREEN

66

SUPER: "Now the women who had come with him out of Galilee
followed, and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then
they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the
Sabbath they rested according to the commandment."

- Luke 23:55-56 (NAS)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Now the women who had come with him
out of Galilee followed, and saw
the tomb and how his body was laid.
Then they returned and prepared
spices and perfumes.

(MORE)

MARCUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And on the Sabbath they rested
 according to the commandment.

DISSOLVE TO:

67 BLACK SCREEN 67

SUPER: "The night of Saturday, April 4, 33 A.D."

DISSOLVE TO:

68 EXT. JESUS' TOMB - NIGHT 68

Two women, including Mary Magdalene, approach the tomb.
 Lucius is standing guard.

LUCIUS
 Halt. Who goes there?

MARY
 It is I, Lucius. Mary Magdalene,
 with Mary his mother.

LUCIUS
 Did anyone see you coming here?

MARY
 We passed a few people on the way.
 But our Sabbath is over, so it is
 not unusual for us to be out
 walking.

LUCIUS
 But did they ask why you are
 bringing ointments to a dead man?

MARY
 I don't think they could see what
 we are carrying.

LUCIUS
 Okay. Good.

Lucius motions to another soldier to help him roll the stone
 away from the opening to the tomb.

MARY
 How is he tonight?

LUCIUS
 He is awake and feeling better. He
 was even sitting up for a while.

MARY

Well, we also brought him some food.

LUCIUS

(laughing)

I'm glad no one saw you bringing food to a dead man, either. That would have been even harder to explain.

The stone is rolled away.

LUCIUS (CONT'D)

You can go in now, but Nicodemus said please do not stay long. He needs his rest.

The two Marys disappear into the tomb just as Marcus rides up on his horse. Lucius salutes him in greeting.

MARCUS

Good evening, Lucius. Have things been quiet?

Marcus notices the stone is rolled away.

LUCIUS

Not a problem, sir. His wife and mother are in there with him now.

MARCUS

Well, I think we do have a problem.

LUCIUS

What's wrong?

MARCUS

Some Pharisees went to Pilate this evening after the Sabbath ended and expressed concern about the security of this tomb.

LUCIUS

Why?

MARCUS

They are afraid that Jesus' disciples might steal the body to make it appear like he was resurrected, fulfilling the ancient prophecies and solidifying his claim to be the Messiah.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

So they asked to have extra guards placed here.

LUCIUS

Did Pilate agree?

MARCUS

Yes, he gave in, as usual. But unfortunately he wouldn't give them Roman soldiers, whom I could have picked and controlled. Instead he told them they should use some of their own Temple guard, starting tomorrow morning.

LUCIUS

That's not going to work for us, sir.

MARCUS

Maybe I should have told Pilate that Jesus was alive. He would have been fine with that, as long as I get him out of the country. But it has given me another idea.

(beat)

You're right, though. We're going to have to get Jesus out of here sometime late tonight or very early in the morning. Can he walk?

LUCIUS

I don't know. I don't think he's tried to yet.

MARCUS

Well, Nicodemus will be here soon to look at his wounds and change his dressings. Let's see what he says.

LUCIUS

Do you want me to tell Mary Magdalene when they come out?

MARCUS

No. Definitely not. She'll just get too worried and be one more thing we have to handle. I'll tell her tomorrow when it's done and we know where Jesus is going to be next.

(MORE)

Peter and Simon get up quickly, dress, and start running toward the tomb.

72 EXT. JESUS' TOMB - DAY 72

Peter and Simon arrive at the tomb out of breath. Peter looks inside the tomb but doesn't go in.

PETER
He's not there!

Simon, looking shocked, enters the tomb.

73 INT. JESUS' TOMB - DAY 73

SIMON
This is very strange. Peter, come take a look.

Peter joins Simon inside the tomb.

SIMON (CONT'D)
The face cloth is neatly rolled up and placed away from the shroud. That doesn't make sense. If someone stole his body, why would they take the linen off his head, roll it neatly and leave it separate from the shroud?

PETER
What if he actually ascended into heaven, as the scriptures prophesied?

SIMON
Then the face cloth on his head should still be lying in a pile where his head was.
(beat)
It looks more like he took the face cloth off his own head intentionally, rolled it up neatly, put it over here on the rock bench, and then disappeared.

PETER
No, it makes no sense at all. All we know is that he's gone.

Peter and Simon exit the tomb, shaking their heads, with puzzled looks on their faces.

Mary Magdalene arrives back outside the tomb as SIMON and PETER are leaving. Two men dressed in white robes with white hoods appear from behind the tomb.

MAN #1

Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus. But why do you look for the living among the dead?

MAN #2

He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.'

Mary Magdalene begins to cry.

MAN #1

Why are you crying?

MARY

(angrily)

I don't know what you have done with my husband!

A third man appears also dressed in a white robe with a white hood. It is Jesus, but his beard is gone and his hair is cut short.

JESUS

Who is it you are looking for?

MARY

Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go to him.

JESUS

(pulling back his hood)

Mary.

MARY

(finally recognizing him)

My husband!

Mary runs up to Jesus and looks at his hands wrapped in bandages, then reaches out to touch his head wounds. He grabs her hand and stops her.

JESUS

Please do not touch me yet.

(beat)

Marcus thinks I am not safe here any more, and that I must leave now with his soldiers--

(pointing to the two men
in white robes)

You must go quickly to my brothers and tell them to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.

DISSOLVE TO:

75

BLACK SCREEN

75

SUPER: "She went and reported to those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. When they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it."

- Mark 16:10-11 (NAS)

MARCUS (V.O.)

She went and reported to those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. When they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it.

DISSOLVE TO:

76

BLACK SCREEN

76

SUPER: "That same day two of Jesus' disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. As they were talking and thinking about what had happened, Jesus came near and started walking along beside them. But they did not know who he was."

- Luke 24:14-16 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

That same day two of Jesus' disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.

(MORE)

MARCUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

As they were talking and thinking about what had happened, Jesus came near and started walking along beside them. But they did not know who he was.

DISSOLVE TO:

77

EXT. ON A ROAD - DAY

77

Cleopas and another disciple are walking along the road, when they are joined by Jesus, still in his white robe and hood.

JESUS

Where are you going?

CLEOPAS

Emmaus, on the Sea of Galilee.

JESUS

May I walk with you?

DISCIPLE

Please do ...

JESUS

And what were you talking about when I came up?

CLEOPAS

Same thing everyone is talking about in Jerusalem.

JESUS

Which is?

DISCIPLE

(laughing)

You might be the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in the last few days!

JESUS

What things?

CLEOPAS

There was this man, Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.

(MORE)

CLEOPAS (CONT'D)

But the chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him three days ago.

DISCIPLE

Some women of our company were at the tomb early this morning, and did not find his body. They came back saying that they had even seen men in white, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.

JESUS

How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

DISSOLVE TO:

78

BLACK SCREEN

78

SUPER: "Jesus then explained everything written about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets."

- Luke 24:27 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Jesus then explained everything written about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets.

DISSOLVE TO:

79

EXT. ON A ROAD - LATER THAT DAY

79

The three reach a fork in the road. Jesus starts taking the right fork.

CLEOPAS

Wait. Come have dinner with us. And tell us more. The day is almost over.

Jesus nods and follows them down the left fork.

80

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

80

Jesus is sitting down at a table with Cleopas and the other disciple. Jesus takes off the hood of his robe, exposing his clean-shaven face and short hair. Cleopas and the other disciple do a double-take and look at each other, thinking they recognize him. Jesus then takes some bread and breaks it. As he does so, he exposes the bandages on his hands.

JESUS

This is my body given for you.

Cleopas and the other disciple look at him in shock, finally sure of who he is.

DISCIPLE

You?

CLEOPAS

You are alive?!

JESUS

Yes. Go back to Jerusalem and tell the other disciples. Have them go to Galilee where I will meet them. Now I must leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

81

BLACK SCREEN

81

SUPER: "So they got right up and returned to Jerusalem. The two disciples found the eleven apostles and the others gathered together. And they learned from the group that the Lord was really alive and had appeared to Peter. Then the disciples from Emmaus told what happened on the road and how they knew he was the Lord when he broke the bread."

- Luke 24:33-35 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

So they got right up and returned to Jerusalem. The two disciples found the eleven apostles and the others gathered together. And they learned from the group that the Lord was really alive and had appeared to Peter.

(MORE)

MARCUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Then the disciples from Emmaus told what happened on the road and how they knew he was the Lord when he broke the bread.

DISSOLVE TO:

82

BLACK SCREEN

82

SUPER: "Jesus appeared and greeted them. They were frightened and terrified because they thought they were seeing a ghost. But Jesus said, 'Why are you so frightened? Why do you doubt? Look at my hands and my feet and see who I am! Touch me and find out for yourselves. Ghosts don't have flesh and bones as you see I have.'"

- Luke 24:36-39 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Jesus appeared and greeted them. They were frightened and terrified because they thought they were seeing a ghost. But Jesus said, 'Why are you so frightened? Why do you doubt? Look at my hands and my feet and see who I am! Touch me and find out for yourselves. Ghosts don't have flesh and bones as you see I have.'

DISSOLVE TO:

83

EXT. A MOUNTAIN IN GALILEE - NIGHT

83

Ten disciples are sitting around a campfire eating. Jesus walks up to them.

JESUS

Peace be with you.

The disciples are startled and frightened, thinking they are seeing a ghost.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.

Jesus walks around and shows his hands to each disciple in turn. When he is finished, he says:

JESUS (CONT'D)
Do you have anything here to eat?

One of the disciples gives him some fish.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Thank you. I'm hungry.

Jesus takes and eats the fish. The disciples all stare at him.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Yes, I can eat, just like you. I'm no ghost. This was all part of the plan, and this is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.
(beat)
By the way, where's Thomas?

84

EXT. A MOUNTAIN IN GALILEE - NIGHT

84

The disciples are all lounging around the campfire talking as THOMAS walks up. Jesus is not there any more.

SIMON
Thomas, we have seen the Lord!

THOMAS
(very doubtfully)
Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.

PETER
Oh, the nails marks are there, trust us.

THOMAS
No, I do not trust you. I will have to see it for myself.

DISSOLVE TO:

85

BLACK SCREEN

85

SUPER: "Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side."

- John 20:27 (NLT)

MARCUS (V.O.)

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side.

DISSOLVE TO:

86

INT. HOUSE IN BETHANY - DAY

86

The disciples are milling around. Jesus appears in the house.

JESUS

Peace be with you.

All the disciples, say "And with you." All except THOMAS, who simply stares in disbelief.

JESUS (CONT'D)

(to THOMAS)

Thomas, I missed you last week in Galilee. But I heard your doubts. So, now put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.

THOMAS

My Lord and my God! It IS you!

JESUS

Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

DISSOLVE TO:

87

BLACK SCREEN

87

SUPER: "After his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive."

- Acts 1:3 (NLT)

MARCUS (V.O.)
 After his crucifixion, he appeared
 to the apostles from time to time,
 and he proved to them in many ways
 that he was actually alive.

DISSOLVE TO:

88 EXT. BY THE SEA OF GALILEE - EVENING 88

There is a group of disciples on the shore, including Peter,
 Simon, Thomas, James and John.

PETER
 I'm going out to fish.

THOMAS
 We'll go with you.

DISSOLVE TO:

89 BLACK SCREEN 89

SUPER: "So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing
 all night. At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but the
 disciples couldn't see who he was."

- John 21:3-4 (NLT)

MARCUS (V.O.)
 So they went out in the boat, but
 they caught nothing all night. At
 dawn Jesus was standing on the
 beach, but the disciples couldn't
 see who he was.

DISSOLVE TO:

90 EXT. BY THE SEA OF GALILEE - MORNING 90

Jesus is standing on the shore. The disciples are in a boat
 about 100 yards off shore. They don't recognize Jesus from
 that distance.

JESUS
 (yelling to the boat)
 Didn't catch any fish?

PETER
 No.

MARCUS (V.O.)
 This was the third time Jesus had
 appeared to his disciples.

DISSOLVE TO:

94

INT. PILATE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - MORNING

94

Pilate and Marcus are seated having a discussion.

PILATE
 Very well. Is there anything else,
 Marcus?

MARCUS
 Well, sir, It's been a month since
 the crucifixion, and all appears to
 be quiet now.

Pilate gets up and starts pacing angrily.

PILATE
 That man was a damn nuisance. We
 should have been back in Caesarea
 by now and away from this
 godforsaken place.
 (beat, looking at Marcus)
 What about all the rumors that the
 tomb was empty and his body was
 gone - just what the Pharisees were
 worried about. Are people saying he
 was resurrected from the dead and
 that he really was the Messiah?

MARCUS
 Those rumors are still going
 around, but the people are losing
 interest now that their leader is
 gone. There doesn't seem to be any
 threat of a rebellion any more.

PILATE
 (starts pacing again)
 At least not against me, or Rome.
 If they want to rebel, it should be
 against the Pharisees. That's who
 really wanted him dead.

MARCUS
 I think the people know that, sir.
 You played your cards very well.

Pilate stop pacing and sits back down, leaning towards Marcus.

PILATE

But tell me the truth, Marcus. Did he die on that cross, as my centurion and Joseph of Arimathea said, or did you save his life as I asked you to?

MARCUS

(pausing)

I saved his life, as you requested. But no one knows that. Everyone believes he's dead - including some of his closest followers. And I'd like to keep it that way. Unless you need to tell Claudia ...

PILATE

No, no. Let's keep this between us. Claudia doesn't need to know. No one does. I fulfilled my promise to Claudia by not seeking his crucifixion. She knows I had no choice. So she's fine - as fine as Claudia ever is to me.

MARCUS

Good, because Jesus is on his way to India and out of your hair, and that's all that really matters.

PILATE

But there were rumors he was spotted near the Sea of Galilee.

MARCUS

He wanted to see his disciples one last time before he left. That's all. He's gone now.

PILATE

We need to go, too.

Pilate gets up and starts toward the door.

PILATE (CONT'D)

Let's get the hell out of this place and get back to Caesarea. This was not what I call a vacation.

MARCUS
I'd like to talk about that, sir.

PILATE
(He stops and turns
around)
Yes? What is it?

MARCUS
I think it's time for me to retire
my post.

PILATE
(sitting back down again)
But why, Marcus? You have a lot of
good years left, and you're a good
Commander of my palace guard,
despite all the other ... what do
we want to call them ...
complications.

MARCUS
Thank you sir. But there are others
who will do just as good a job for
you ... without all the ...
complications. In fact, I'd like to
recommend Lucius to take over for
me.

PILATE
(gets up again and starts
pacing)
Lucius? Seems to be a good man.
Yes, I will give that some thought.
(beat)
Are you coming back to Caesarea
with us?

MARCUS
No, I think I will stay here. Well,
not here in Jerusalem, but probably
up the coast, in Sycaminum.

PILATE
Nice place. But I'm getting tired
of this whole damn country, and the
people. I'll probably only last a
couple more years myself.

MARCUS
So ... sir, we had a deal.

PILATE
 (stops pacing and turns)
 Uh ... what?

MARCUS
 The deal was I get rid of Jesus and
 you would let my daughter go free.

PILATE
 (pacing again)
 Oh, right. What is it? Do you want
 to take her to Sycaminum with you?

MARCUS
 I'm going to leave that up to her.
 But yes, I would like that very
 much. Can I unlock her doors and
 send the guards home now?

PILATE
 (stops pacing and thinks
 for a minute)
 Oh, why not. Like I said before,
 she's no secret any more anyway.

MARCUS
 If she chooses to go back to
 Caesarea with you and Claudia, will
 you guarantee me she will stay
 free?

PILATE
 (facing Marcus)
 Yes, yes. You have my word.

MARCUS
 Thank you, sir.

PILATE
 I'm surprised you're leaving
 Claudia. Does she know you're not
 going back to Caesarea with us?

MARCUS
 No, not yet.

PILATE
 (chuckling)
 You might be in for quite a ride.
 That woman likes to get what she
 wants.

MARCUS
 Yes, sir.

Marcus salutes and leaves the room.

95

INT. UNDERGROUND HALL IN THE PALACE - LATER

95

As Marcus walks down the hall, he stops at the first guard as he salutes him.

MARCUS

Thank you for your service and for keeping such a good watch for my daughter. It will no longer be necessary. You are dismissed.

Marcus repeats the same thing to the other 2 guards. He salutes them back and they leave. He finally arrives at Lucius.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Lucius, my friend. You have served me well, and I put in a good word with Pilate for you to replace me.

LUCIUS

Replace you, sir?

MARCUS

Yes, I will not be going back to Caesarea with you. I'm retiring.

LUCIUS

(surprised)

Where will you go?

MARCUS

I think I will go to Sycaminum.

LUCIUS

Will your daughter be going with you, sir?

MARCUS

I don't know. I'm going to find out now. Goodbye and good luck, Lucius.

Lucius salutes Marcus and leaves.

96

INT. A GIRL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

96

Marcus enters and Caecelia is on her bed playing with her dolls.

CAECELIA

Hi, daddy!

Marcus kisses her on the forehead.

MARCUS

Hi, sweetheart. How are you doing?

CAECELIA

(holding up Aurelia)

I'm fine. But Aurelia has a stomach ache.

MARCUS

How come?

CAECELIA

She ate too much cake and candy yesterday.

MARCUS

Why so much?

CAECELIA

(holding up another doll)

It was Cornelia's birthday, and we had a big party.

MARCUS

Sounds like fun.

CAECELIA

Oh, it was. Mommy was here, too.

MARCUS

Sorry I missed it.

CAECELIA

We missed you, too, daddy.

MARCUS

(pause)

Sweetheart, I have a surprise for you.

CAECELIA

(looking very excited)

What is it, daddy?

MARCUS

Would you like to go outside and play?

CAECELIA

You mean--
(pointing to the window)
-- out there?

MARCUS

Yes, that's what I mean.

CAECELIA

But ... but I didn't think I was
allowed to go out there.

MARCUS

Well, from now on, you can, any
time you want.

CAECELIA

(very excited, she jumps
off the bed)
Oh, yes, daddy. Let's go right now!

MARCUS

We can, and we will, in just a
minute. I want to talk to you
first, okay?

CAECELIA

(she sits back down on the
bed)
Okay.

MARCUS

I have decided to not be the
Commander of the Palace Guard any
more.

CAECELIA

So what will you do?

MARCUS

I'm going to retire and not work.

CAECELIA

That sounds like fun!

MARCUS

And I want to go live in Sycaminum,
by the Sea.

CAECELIA

Is that a nice place?

MARCUS

I think it is very nice, and I'd like you to go with me.

CAECELIA

Will mommy be coming, too?

MARCUS

No, I'm afraid not. She will be going back to Caesarea with the governor.

CAECELIA

So it would just be you and me in Sycaminum?

MARCUS

Yes, and we could play outside all the time and swim in the Sea.

CAECELIA

But Caesarea is on the Sea, too. Isn't it?

MARCUS

Yes, it is.

CAECELIA

And I will be allowed to be outside and swim in Caesarea?

MARCUS

Yes, you will.

CAECELIA

(thinks for a minute)

Then I think I want to stay with mommy.

MARCUS

(tearing up)

Okay, sweetheart.

(beat)

Maybe I can come visit you from time to time.

CAECELIA

I would like that, daddy.

(beat)

Can we go outside now?

MARCUS

Yes, sweetheart. Let's go.

Marcus takes CAECELIA's hand and they walk out of the room and disappear down the hall.

DISSOLVE TO:

97 BLACK SCREEN 97

SUPER: "According to some biblical scholars, Jesus did go to India where he lived and preached another 40 years or more in Kashmir."

MARCUS (V.O.)
According to some biblical
scholars, Jesus did go to India
where he lived and preached another
40 years or more in Kashmir.

DISSOLVE TO:

98 BLACK SCREEN 98

SUPER: "Mary Magdalene went first to Egypt, where she had her child, and then to the south of France where she eventually died and was buried."

MARCUS (V.O.)
Mary Magdalene went first to Egypt,
where she had her child, and then
to the south of France where she
eventually died and was buried.

DISSOLVE TO:

99 BLACK SCREEN 99

SUPER: "In the 2000 years since, millions of people have believed the lie that Jesus died on the cross - that 'he died for our sins'; and during that time, millions of lives have been lost in religious wars based on that lie, and countless millions of others led down a wrong spiritual path.

MARCUS (V.O.)
In the 2000 years since, millions
of people have believed the lie
that Jesus died on the cross - that
"he died for our sins";
(MORE)

MARCUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 and during that time, millions of
 lives have been lost in religious
 wars based on that lie, and
 countless millions of others led
 down a wrong spiritual path.

DISSOLVE TO:

100 BLACK SCREEN 100

SUPER: "I helped create that lie, and for that I am truly
 sorry. It has overshadowed and perverted the real message
 that Jesus came to bring:"

MARCUS (V.O.)
 I helped create that lie, and for
 that I am truly sorry. It has
 overshadowed and perverted the real
 message that Jesus came to bring:

DISSOLVE TO:

101 BLACK SCREEN 101

SUPER: "Love others as much as you love yourself."

- Matthew 22:39 and Mark 12:31 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)
 Love others as much as you love
 yourself.

DISSOLVE TO:

102 BLACK SCREEN 102

SUPER: "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not
 condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will
 be forgiven."

- Luke 6:37 (NIV)

"Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye,
 but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"

- Matthew 7:1,3 (NAS)

MARCUS (V.O.)
 Do not judge, and you will not be
 judged. Do not condemn, and you
 will not be condemned.
 (MORE)

MARCUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
 Why do you look at the speck that
 is in your brother's eye, but do
 not notice the log that is in your
 own eye?

DISSOLVE TO:

103 BLACK SCREEN

103

SUPER: "He who is without sin among you, let him throw the first stone."

- John 8:7 (WEB)

MARCUS (V.O.)
 He who is without sin among you,
 let him throw the first stone.

DISSOLVE TO:

104 BLACK SCREEN

104

SUPER: "You have heard people say, 'Love your neighbors and hate your enemies.' But I tell you to love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you."

- Matthew 5:43-44 (CEV)

MARCUS (V.O.)
 You have heard people say, 'Love
 your neighbors and hate your
 enemies.' But I tell you to love
 your enemies and pray for anyone
 who mistreats you.

DISSOLVE TO:

105 ENDING CREDITS

105

As ending credits roll, we watch video clips of interviews with biblical experts expressing their beliefs that Jesus survived the crucifixion, such as:

Michael Baigent, co-author of Holy Blood, Holy Grail

Peter James Stanford, British journalist

James D. Tabor, Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte:
"This might be the fictional confession of Marcus, but I'm convinced Jesus knew exactly what he was doing. He knew the scriptures backwards and forwards - better than anyone - and he knew what prophecies he had to fulfill to be called the "Messiah." He was so brilliant to be able to get everyone else around him to play their part. But the most brilliant thing is that he was able to get it all done and live through it."

John Dominic Crossan, Professor of Religious Studies, DePaul University, Chicago

Elaine Pagels, Professor of Religion, Princeton University

Abdullah Assiz Kashmiri, University of Srinagar

Abubakr Ben Ishmael Salahuddin, author of Saving the Savior - Did Christ Survive the Crucifixion?

Graham Simmans, author of Jesus after the Crucifixion

Holger Kersten, author of Jesus Lived in India

FADE OUT.

THE END