

A script from



“At the Cross Collection”

by
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- What** Follow the footsteps of the ones surrounding Jesus on His journey to the cross in this collection of inspiring scripts for Easter.
Themes: Easter, Jesus, Crucifixion
- Who**
- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Mary | Simon of Cyrene |
| Boy Jesus | The Mob- 3 People |
| Actor (Face in the Crowd) | Nicodemus |
| Peter | Saved Thief |
| John | Unsaved Thief |
| Centurion | Joseph of Arimathea |
| Mary Magdalene | Pilate |
- When** During Jesus time on earth
- Wear** Bible costumes are recommended
(Props) Sound F/X- baby's cry, mob shouts
Large wooden cross
Baby blanket
Bible
- Note: Go as large or as simple as you'd like with the sets, i.e. rooms, environments, etc.
- Why** Luke 2:19; Matthew 27; Mark 14:66-72, 15; Luke 23; John 19
- How** Each monologue is designed to stand alone or be used one production.
- Time** Approximately 15-25 minutes depending on how you choose to use the scripts.

Mary and the Baby Jesus

A crowd shouts unseen, but loudly "Crucify him!" "Hail, King of the Jews!" "He saved others, but he can't save himself!" etc. until they are all counting the lashes and chanting together. At the same time as the counting, a baby's cry starts softly and gets very loud.

Crowd: ...thirty four...thirty five...thirty six...thirty seven...thirty eight...thirty-

Mary awakes suddenly sitting straight up in bed. The nightmare is over, but the baby is still crying. She goes to his cradle and picks him up to comfort him. She tries to calm him with "hush" and saying "Jesus" or "Yeshua". She even hums a few lines of "Jesus Loves Me" until he is quiet again. She puts him back in his bed and turns and prays to God.

Mary: God...I didn't sign up for this...did I? It all seems so much like a dream now. Sometimes, more like a nightmare. I look at him, and I wonder what you have planned for him, and when you will reclaim him to your service. And that makes me so happy and so sad. And sometimes so afraid. God, I know I said I would do this...it's just now...now that he's here...I can't imagine ever having to lose him. But that's what I signed up for, isn't it? I can keep a lock of his hair, I can make a picture of his footprints and hands to have, I can save the cloth I wrapped him in the night he was born, I can keep all these things...but I can't keep him, can I? Is this what I signed up for? To love him only to watch him leave? And where will you send him? Far from me? To dangerous places? Will people love him? Will people hate him? Will he still call me mother? Can he call me mother? Lord, help me raise my son...your son...to fulfill your will in this world. Even if that means I cannot keep him. That's what I signed up for. May it be done to me as you have said.

Mary kisses Jesus goodnight and goes back to sleep.

In place of gathering a crowd, consider having Mary sleep while someone reads the crucifixion story. Maybe with a solo instrument playing "That Old Wooden Cross" or "Mary Did You Know", etc.

Mary and the Boy Jesus

Mary enters, stumbling down the aisles, frantically shouting to find her son, Jesus, and talking to the "crowd," aka the congregation, to try and find him.

Mary: Jesus! Jesus! Have you seen my son? He's about this tall, 12 years old, Nazarene? Yeshua! Have you seen my son? We have lost him in our traveling because our caravan was so big. Please, have you seen my son, Jesus? He's a good child, I'm afraid and I need to find him. I thought he traveled with my husband, he thought he was with me and the other children but...Yeshua! Jesus! O God, please, Lord...I have lost him. I have lost him! Please God...I am not ready to lose my son, your son...God please, please...tell me where I can find him. Where would he be if he were still here in Jerusalem? *(Her frantic nature calms as she has a realization. She knows exactly where he will be. She turns toward the temple and there he is, unharmed, happy and "talking" to the elders/scholars/teachers gathered around him.)* Jesus! *(She runs to him and embraces him, she is of course, delighted and relieved to find him)* Son! Why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you!

Jesus: Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?

Mary: Your father's—? *(She stops as she tries to take in the meaning)* Come now.

They start to walk off; as they do, they pass a large empty wooden cross.

Jesus: Mother, what's that?

Mary: It's a Roman cross.

Jesus: What's it for?

Mary: *(Pause)* It doesn't concern you.

Exit.

Mary and the Lord Jesus

Mary...after her the crucifixion. She wanders on stage, quietly. She's holding a white blanket, slightly worn. It can be a modern day baby blanket...boy baby blanket...blue. She runs it through her hands. She feeds it through her fingers. She smells it. She hugs it. She may even wrap it up to look like a baby bundle and rock it. Then she speaks.

Mary: I don't know why, but this time...when we came to Jerusalem for Passover, I brought this with me. *(She holds up the blanket)* Something tugged at my heart as we walked out that day to travel here. Something told me that this little piece of cloth would comfort me. So I ran back inside, and opened the tiny basket I had it hidden away in. And I tucked it under my clothes, close to my heart, so I would not lose it. To you, it's just an old cloth. A rag for cleaning up spills or scouring pots. But to me, it's a reminder. A reminder that my Lord had a plan for my son. His son.

You see, this is the cloth I wrapped him in the night he was born. That night when we stumbled into that stable. That night when a star stopped over where I laid him in a manger. Where the shepherds came and the angels sang. That night my heart fell in love with a baby, and broke at the same time.

Because I always knew I could never keep him. I kept a lock of his hair, a picture of his footprints and hands, I saved this cloth I wrapped him in the night he was born, I kept all these things...but I couldn't keep him. At least, not in the way I wanted to.

My son died today. They killed him on a cross. All these years, I was afraid I would lose him. All these years I was afraid of today. But now I realize, if I had not lost my son today, I would not have been found by my Lord. My son died today. But my Lord was born today. And I miss my son. But I will see him soon.

And I will keep this until then.

Holding up the blanket. Then she exits.

A Face in the Crowd

Actor: Who am I? I'm nobody. I'm somebody. I'm everyone and no one at the same time. And I just happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Or the right place at the right time. Or the wrong place at the right time or the - You get the picture.

You see I don't know who this "Jesus" is, or I don't want to know him, or I know him all too well. And this Jesus... does he really know me? Because I'm just a face in the crowd, a nameless shadow, a passing thought, one of the rabble, one in the mob. One among many. And the "many"...they let me escape being recognized. The "many" let me keep a safe distance. Because if I get too close he might see me.

And yet, something tells me he already does. He's not looking this way, but his eyes pierce me. He's walking away and still I feel he's standing right beside me. The cross is heavy on his shoulders and somehow mine feel light. So who am I? I'm nobody but I'm somebody. *(Start to walk off then turning back to the congregation)* It's like he won't let me go unnamed.

Exit.

Peter or "Quicksand"

Peter: Of course I remember. You'd remember it too. If someone came to you and said, "You! You are no longer called Simon, but Peter." He gave me a new name. Peter. Peter means "rock". And from that point on, I was Peter the Rock. Except when I wasn't. And I wasn't a rock when they arrested him in the garden. With a sword, I cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, Malcus was his name. Jesus rebuked me as he healed the man. And I wasn't a rock when they put him on trial. I denied ever knowing him to spare my own wasted life. And I wasn't a rock when they finally crucified him. You won't find my name listed as one of those who stood at the cross. I am brash and I'm hard-headed. I'm naïve, weak and so afraid. And my friend, he's dead. *(Crying out and up to heaven)* O God, I'm not a rock! *(Quietly, as though to himself)* You should have named me "Quicksand".

Exit.

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The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved

John: *(Opening a Bible and reading to himself)* "The disciple whom Jesus loved". The disciple whom Jesus loved. *(Pause)* Yeah. This is how I wanted to be remembered. I wanted to be remembered like this...if at all. No name, but always pointing to another. Pointing to what I lived for. Pointing to what I died for. Pointing to Jesus. *(Pause)* You see, one time my brother James and I asked Jesus if we could sit in the place of greatest honor when we were all in heaven...on his right and on his left. And Jesus said we weren't supposed to seek glory and greatness like the world did.

Instead, he said whoever wants to become great among us must be a servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave to all. Jesus didn't come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. *(Pause)* So, wherever I went, I went in the name of Jesus...never the name of John. I went in the name of Jesus and risked my life because it was never about me. It never should be and it never will be. So go ahead and remember me simply as "the disciple whom Jesus loved". Or even better, don't remember me at all. I'll get out of the way so you can see Jesus.

Exit.

The Centurion Who Became a Believer

Centurion: It was about the sixth hour. Darkness came over us all. The sun just stopped shining. And I looked up at this man, this man I was ordered to crucify, and I felt... *(long pause)* I felt.

This wasn't new to me... crucifying a man. We Romans crucified lots of people. Murderers, thieves, rebels. And this man, this Jesus, was going to be no different. But he was different. Here I was taking his life as he saved mine. *(Pause)* With his last breath the earth shook, the rocks split... and I became a believer. Surely this was a righteous man.

But I'm a Roman! What would this mean? How could I believe in him and still be a Roman soldier? A soldier that has more crucifixions tomorrow. A soldier who is told I answer to no authority higher than Caesar. Suddenly I'm a soldier who has a Savior not knowing who or how to follow.

Exit.

Mary Magdalene

Mary M: We all have our demons. Lies, sex, addiction, hate, jealousy, laziness, whatever. My demons came like a thief in the night. Like a wolf in sheep's clothing. They tried to latch on to my weaknesses...and I let them. I welcomed them. I was tricked into believing they offered the comfort, joy, and peace I was aching for. Yes, we all have our demons...

...and he, my Jesus saved me from mine. He saved me by offering me a peace that doesn't come from this world, that doesn't come from those demons. He saved me so I followed him. Where he would go, I would go. Where he went, I went. So when he went to Jerusalem I went too. When he went to the cross, I walked with him. And when he went to be with our God...I was there. At the foot of his cross. How could I not be? He saved me. He changed my life. Now my life is his. And I'm still following.

Exit.

Simon of Cyrene

Simon: Hey, I didn't ask to get involved. I didn't want to be involved. But when a Roman soldier points a sword at you and says, "You, help him carry his cross!" You obey or you end up on a cross of your own. *(To himself)* Man, why did I have to be so curious? I could have avoided the whole situation. But no, I wanted to see this "King of the Jews", the one they called the "Christ".

Pause as he remembers...his tone changes to somber and sobering.

And I did see him. Boy oh boy did I see him. He almost didn't look like a man. They had beaten him so bad. He left a trail of bloody footprints. A crown made of thorns looked like it had been smashed onto his head. It's no wonder he collapsed in front of me. He probably had more blood on him than in him. That's when they made me, they forced me to pick up his bloody cross and carry it up the hill.

It was disgusting. I had his blood all over me. And that thing was heavy. *(To himself)* I don't know how he carried it so far. No. I didn't stick around for the crucifixion. I've seen one crucifixion in my life and that's one too many. So cruel. So gruesome. Imagine the worst way in the world to die. Would you want to watch that? Neither did I. Besides, I was still drenched in his blood, so I left to get cleaned up. Hey, I didn't want to be involved and I still don't.

Exit.

The Mob

This short sketch is very intense. It's a lot of shouting and can be done with all men or 2 men, one woman, or one woman and two men. #1 is center stage #2 stage right #3 stage left. The three shout the following phrases at Jesus (straight out into the auditorium) at random and at the same time for about 15 seconds:

"King of the Jews" "Come down, Jesus...then we'll believe!" "He saved others but he can't save himself!" "Liar!" "Blasphemer!" "Save yourself Jesus!" etc. until they are all shouting "CRUCIFY HIM!" in unison.

- 1: Maybe you should have read your scriptures Jesus.
- 2: Yeah, cause then you would know that no prophet comes out of Galilee. Isn't that where you're from, JC?
- 3: Where's your Daddy now, Mr. King of the Jews?
- 2: Oh mighty King of Israel!
- 1: Alright "Christ", come down from the cross so we can see you're telling the truth and then maybe we'll believe you!
- 3: Look! He saved others, but he can't even save himself!
- 2: You lied to us, Jesus!
- 1: You lied to God's people, Yeshua!
- 2: Prove us wrong, your majesty, and come down!
- 3: Then we'll believe you.
- 1: We'll believe every word you said.

They all laugh.

- 3: Are you trying to say something? He's trying to say something.
- 2: You forgive me? You're a joke, Jesus. You can't forgive me.
- 1: You're the one who needs to be forgiven.
- 3: Some savior you are.
- 1: *(Very loud, indignant and angry)* I don't need a savior! *(Pause, then very sternly)* I don't want you to save me! (exit)
- 2: Or me! *(Exit)*

3: *(Spits and exits.)*

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Nicodemus

Nicodemus: I want to be a good Pharisee. One who doesn't take bribes or make shortcuts. But believe me...it's hard to live for God's glory and not my glory.

And just imagine when one day, I heard about this man who healed the sick and raised the dead, ate with sinners and loved outcasts. He lived humbly, walked faithfully. He loved God. When I heard about Jesus, my soul stirred with hope.

Our scriptures said a Messiah would come. But could it be? Would I be the generation that would walk and talk with the Savior God promised? The people wanted a conquering king to help them overthrow the oppressive Roman rulers. I admit it...sometimes, that's what I wanted too. But Jesus wanted to be the Prince of Peace. The Pharisees didn't want to lose their position of power and prestige. They liked being served. But Jesus said he came to serve, not to be served and that we should do the same.

The Pharisees wanted to be wealthy, rich men. But Jesus said you must be willing to give everything away to follow him. I knew he was a teacher from God himself because no one could perform the miraculous signs he did if God was not with him. And if God was with him...I wanted to be with him too.

Even if that meant losing my life...in one way or another.

Exit.

The Two Thieves

U: The thief who doesn't choose God, or the "U"nsaved one.

S: The thief who does, or the "S"aved one.

The two thieves stand, arms wide as though they are stretched out on the cross right beside Jesus. They never move from that position because of that reason. The attitude of the Unsaved Thief, "U", is sort of young and impetuous, self serving, arrogant, even when facing death. He begrudges his cross. On the contrary, the Saved Thief, "S", recognizes Jesus is different and blameless, and he is grateful for what Jesus is doing for him on the cross. He knows he himself deserves his cross. So even though both have similar/identical lines, they speak them VERY differently. One with disdain, the other with admiration and understanding.

U: *(To Jesus, i.e. the cross center stage)* What's the difference between you and me? Huh? What's the difference? Cause I don't see it. We're both strung up here till we die. Criminals on a cross. What did you do wrong, preacher man? Huh? I know who you say you are. You think you're God. You told people you were God himself but you're bleeding to death just like me. If you're God why don't you get down from that cross and take me with you while you're at it? Save yourself! And save me! *(Pause and then quietly to himself)* Save me. My body is breaking. *(To Jesus)* But you know that don't you? Yours is too. You know how this feels. If you were God, you wouldn't be here. Of all places. God wouldn't be here. I'm just a thief on a cross so he wouldn't be here. *(Bows head.)*

S: *(To Jesus)* What's the difference between you and me? We're both strung up here till we die. I'm a criminal on a cross. But what did you do wrong? Nothing. I know you are who you say you are. You're God and you're bleeding to death just like me. Jesus, when you leave here, when he takes you, please...please take me. Save me. *(Pause; to himself)* My body is breaking. *(To Jesus)* But you know that don't you? Yours is too. You know how this feels. You are God. And of all places, you're here with me. I'm a thief on a cross and you chose to be here with me.

U: Save me from this death!

S: Save me from this life!

U: Thanks for nothing. *(Bows head.)*

S: Thank you, Lord. *(Looks up.)*

Joseph of Arimathea

Pilate sits at his desk. Joseph walks towards Pilate, then hesitates, turns to leave, musters himself and moves to Pilate again. He stands there silently, jittery, as though afraid.

Pilate: Yes? *(Long pause)* What do you want, Joseph?

Joseph: I've come...I've come to ask your permission to take the body of Jesus.

Pilate: What?

Joseph: I'm asking you if I can take charge of Jesus' body and give him a proper burial.

Pilate: Yes, I heard you the first time. I'm just wondering why you care what happens to him.

Joseph: I guess I think he deserves...more...that's all.

Pilate: Why? Who is Jesus to you? *(Pause)* Who is this Jesus to you?

Joseph: No one.

Pilate: I'm not sure I believe that. Is he a friend of yours?

Joseph: No. I mean...*(To himself)* I never wanted this to happen. *(Long pause. A lot rests on what he discloses and/or keeps secret)* Yes, I knew him. But Pilate, if they ever found out...if they knew...my fellow council, my family, my friends, I could lose everything. Everything! My wealth, my place. If they knew I followed him, everything would change. My life as I know it would be over.

Pilate: Life as you know it would be over? Hm. I thought that's what he preached. *(Pause)* Take the body and do with it what you will.

Joseph: Thank you. *(He starts to go.)*

Pilate: And Joseph? Don't worry. Your secret is safe with me.

Exit Joseph. Blackout.