

EASTER MORNING

by DAPHNE DYKEMAN

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: Several Roman legionnaires consider the meaning of the crucifixion and resurrection.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: This scene is intended to show audiences the Easter story from a new angle, so keep the characters' portrayals as "real" and believable as possible.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 4

TOPIC: Easter, Crucifixion, Biblical Times

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 27:54, Matthew 62-66

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Easter

SUGGESTED USE: Sermon Starter, Worship Service

CHARACTERS:

LINUS – a Roman soldier who participated in the crucifixion of Christ

JUNIUS – a fellow soldier who did not see the crucifixion

SILANUS – soldier assigned to guard Christ's tomb

AGRIPPA – soldier assigned to guard Christ's tomb

PROPS: Cot with grey wool blanket, bedroll, rough wood chair, dagger and sharpening stone, leather harness and cloth

COSTUMES: Four Roman soldier costumes

SOUND: Wireless mics

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: A Roman barrack, three days after the Crucifixion

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ISSN 1084-5917

Publisher: Regi Stone

Executive Editor: Kimberlee Crisafulli / Assistant Editor: Scott Crain

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Lights up. LINUS is sitting on a chair, sharpening a knife, while JUNIUS is sitting on the edge of the cot, cleaning a leather harness.

LINUS: So, do you think Longinus has finally cracked?

JUNIUS: What's that supposed to mean?

LINUS: Well, you weren't there, so I guess you couldn't know. But when that Jewish teacher died, Longinus seemed to see something that the rest of us couldn't. He just looked up at the cross and said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" Those are the last words anyone has heard from him. He's disappeared from the barracks—no one knows where he is.

JUNIUS: Are you still talking about that rabbi's crucifixion? That was three days ago! Can't you let it rest?

LINUS: But just think about Longinus for a minute. He's one of the steadiest hands I've ever seen at a crucifixion. I was there when he nailed up five Jewish rebels, hardly more than children, and he didn't flinch.

JUNIUS: So what was different about this Jew?

LINUS: I can't say for sure, but there must be more to this Jesus fellow than you would think.

JUNIUS: Well, what's another Jew, more or less. They're all cracked. Talking about God and judgment all the time. None of them sees that the only God is the one that sits on a Roman throne, and the only judgment comes from his soldiers. One day the emperor will find that they've gone too far and he'll have to rein them in.

LINUS: But what about the earthquake? And the sky going black at noon? I swear they were tied to that rabbi somehow!

JUNIUS: I've told you already that earthquakes happen all the time this close to the mountains. And when the earth breaks up, it flings dust into the air and that blocks the sun. It was just a coincidence.

LINUS: All the same, I'm glad I wasn't the one that had to pound the nails. You know he never even screamed? It was eerie, everything was so still—all you could hear was the crowd breathing.

JUNIUS: Now that's something new. I've done more crucifixions that I care to think about, and they always scream.