

Sorrowful Mysteries

A sequence of dramas and meditations drawn from the Catholic Rosary
and The Five Sorrowful Mysteries of the Passion of Christ.

by
Les & Julie Ellison

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The Religious Drama Society of Great Britain

e-mail: sales@radiusdrama.org.uk web: www.radiusdrama.org.uk



Sorrowful Mysteries

Cast List

Gabriel – *a messenger of God*

Mary – *the mother of Jesus*

Judas – *the disciple who betrayed Jesus*

Barabbas – *the terrorist released in Jesus's stead*

Mother of Barabbas

Pilate – *the governor and judge*

Claudia – *the wife of Pilate*

Simon of Cyrene – *a foreigner, traveller and visitor*

Alexander (or Alexandra) - *Simon's teenage son (or daughter)*

Rachel – *Alexander/Alexandra's travelling governess*

Reader(s) – *to read the meditations*

Scene 1: Sunday, following the crucifixion, just before dawn

Mary, Gabriel

Scene 2: The First Sorrowful Mystery

The Agony in the Garden (*God's Will be Done*)

Judas

Scene 3: The Second Sorrowful Mystery

The Scourging - (*The Mortifying of the Senses*)

Barabbas, his mother

Scene 4: The Third Sorrowful Mystery

The Crowning with Thorns - (*The Reign of Christ in our Hearts*)

Pilate, Claudia, Secretary

Scene 5: The Fourth Sorrowful Mystery

Carrying The Cross - (*The Patient Bearing of Trials*)

Simon, Alexander, Rachel

Scene 6: The Fifth Sorrowful Mystery

The Crucifixion - (*The Pardoning of Injuries*)

Mary, Gabriel

Sorrowful Mysteries

First Meditation:

God is gracious.

In Loss – the physical weight of sorrow,

God is gracious.

In Pain – emptiness and lonely unreality,

God is gracious.

In Shame – twisted and ripped with 'if-only',

God is gracious.

In Anger – whirled around and spat out,

God is gracious.

In Remorse – storing within its toxic secrets,

God is gracious.

This night we endure by the grace of God alone.

Scene 1: Sunday, following the crucifixion, just before dawn

(Mary enters. Wearing a coat against the cold and with her head covered in mourning, she is on her way to Jesus' tomb to complete his burial. She carries five roses. Gabriel enters.)

Gabriel: Peace be with you, Mary.

Mary: *(makes no reply)*

Gabriel: God is gracious, and you are greatly blessed.

Mary: Leave me alone.

Gabriel: I carry the message I'm given to carry. That's all I am, the servant of the one who sends me, nothing more.

Mary: And me? What am I now?

Gabriel: What you always were. Most blessed among women.

Mary: "That he should take notice of his lowly servant. That he has done great things for me."

Gabriel: God is gracious.

Mary: He took away my son.

Gabriel: The son he gave to you and you gave up to him.

Mary: Yes, but not for this?

Gabriel: "He will be called the Son of God. And He will be given the kingdom, and his reign will never end."

Mary: Then why?

Gabriel: Your son chose his way. His father's way, you knew he would.

Mary: I held him in my arms. For thirty years I held him (*in her heart*). And yesterday I held his broken body.

Gabriel: "And sorrow like a sword will pierce your heart."

Mary: What can God know of a sorrow like mine?

Gabriel: That it will end.

Mary: Can he give me back my son?

Gabriel: With God all things are possible.

Mary: Then why let this happen?

Gabriel: Because this is where God's way leads.

Mary: If I'd known it would end this way –

Gabriel: I said it leads this way, not ends this way.

Mary: Then let it end. I can give no more.

Gabriel: Nothing more is asked, but that you endure.

Mary: Is that to be my reward? It weighs more like a punishment.

Gabriel: You feel guilt?

Mary: Why should I feel guilt?

Gabriel: *(makes no reply)*

Mary: I played no part.

Gabriel: Then who?

Mary: You know who – God knows who.

Gabriel: Name them.

Mary: Judas – his friend: the one that betrayed him. The judge, Pilate and the one who should have died instead: the murderer, Barabbas. Why end there? Why not the others, all of them, the ones who stood and did nothing, the ones who turned away? Why not the man who carried the cross?

Gabriel: Gracious Mary. Sorrow is a richly painted flower, with many petals of many shades, all equally profound. For you they're coloured grief and loss. For some they're tinted pain, anger and remorse, or even shame.

Mary: Show me their sorrow: Judas, Pilate and the others.

Gabriel: To what purpose?

Mary: To share in their sorrow, and they in mine.

Gabriel: It's not within my power –

Mary: You're a messenger. Is a story not a message? Carry the story of their sorrow to me, that's all I ask, and I will endure. Can you do that?

Gabriel: They will be just stories. You will be able to watch and listen but that's all. You won't be able to speak or touch or comfort them, if that's your intention.

Mary: There is comfort in simply speaking one's sorrow.

Gabriel: I can show you them as they are now. Judas, Pilate, Barabbas – and Simon, the man who carried the cross. But remember, you can say nothing. You can only listen, if that is what you want to hear.

Mary: Yes. But what then?

Gabriel: You will have endured. And that's all that's asked of you, for now. (*Mary and Gabriel move to where they can observe what follows.*)

Scene 2: The First Sorrowful Mystery: The Agony in the Garden (*God's Will be Done*)

(*Judas enters. He is agitated and angry*)

Judas: You shouldn't have let that happen. You never told me you were going to let that happen. That was your doing, not mine, and you're not pinning it on me. It wasn't what I wanted. I didn't even want the money. I just took it. 'Not my will! Not my will!' You said that. In the garden, I heard you, and before, at the meal, you looked at me and you said – you said, 'Do what *you* have to do.' What you *have* to do. Me! And I did. I did what you said I had to do.

What was I doing? For three years. I had a knife, a sword. I was strong. I would have fought for you. I would have died. But that wasn't your will either, was it? So I went. I did what I had to do. I didn't even bargain; I just took the money.

And you, you made it so easy. You didn't fight, you didn't hide, you didn't run. I kissed you and you let me