

34. The Shearmen's Play: The Road to Calvary

1 SOLDIER:

Peace, lads and gentlemen who in this place stand!

Stir not once in this place, but stand stone-still,

Or, by the lord that I believe in, I shall make your neck bend.

Unless you are silent when I speak, your speech I shall spill

Smartly, and soon.

For I am sent from Sir Pilate, with pride To lead this lad our laws to abide.

He gets no better boon.

Therefore, I command you all, on every side,

On pain of imprisonment, that no man appear

To succor this traitor, by time nor by tide,

[Nor any come forward to amend his cheer]:

Not one of this press!

Nor not once be so hardy for to enquire,

But help me wholly, all who are here,

This captive's care to increase.

Therefore, make room, and rule yourselves right,

That we may with this new-condemned wight

Easily go on our way.

He napped not all last night,

And today his death is in sight.

Let us see who shall dare say nay!

Because tomorrow shall prove

To be our dear Sabbath day,

We wish that no evil be moved,

But mirth, in every way.

We have been busy, all this morn,

To clothe him and also to crown him with thorn,

As befits a carnival king.

But now, I believe, our fellows show scorn;

They said that they would be here this morn

This faker forth to bring.

To nap now is no good-

Hey! How! High may he hang!

2 SOLDIER:

Peace, man, for Mahound's own blood,

Why make you such a crying?

1 SOLDIER:

What? Don't you know as well as I,

This fellow is going to Calvary,

And there to be done on a cross?

2 SOLDIER:

Since judgement is given that he must die,

Let us call to us more company,

Or we'll be too few, to our loss.

1 SOLDIER:

Our gear must all be well-arrayed,

And our fellows assembled soon;

For Sir Pilate had said

He must be dead by noon.

Where is Sir Wymond, do you know ought?

2 SOLDIER:

He went to see that a cross should be wrought

To carry this cursed knave.

1 SOLDIER:

I wish it would be quickly here brought,

For afterwards, other gear must be sought

That we shall need to have.

2 SOLDIER:

We'll need to have ladders and ropes

To yank him until he rave,

And nails, and other japes,

If we ourselves will save.

1 SOLDIER:
To wait too long I an but loth;
Unless Wymond comes, I take an oath
We'll all be blamed, all three.
Hey! How! Sir Wymond Full-of-Sloth!

2 SOLDIER:
Hey! How! Sir Wymond, how!

3 SOLDIER:
I'm here! What say you both?
Why do you shout for me?
I have been to see them make
This cross, as you may see,
From that place over the lake-
They call it the King's Tree.

1 SOLDIER:
Now, certainly, I thought the same,
That piece of wood, none will us blame
To cut it for the "king."

2 SOLDIER:
This fellow's called himself "king" at
home,
And since this tree has such a name
It is a fitting thing
That his back on it may rest,
For scorn and for mocking.

3 SOLDIER:
I thought that it seemed best
For our business, this to bring.

1 SOLDIER:
It is well-knotted, I say to you.
In length and breadth if it be true,
Then this time was well-planned.

3 SOLDIER:
To worry on that there is no need;
I took the measure myself, indeed,
For the foot and the hand.

2 SOLDIER:
And look how it is bored:
Evenly, at every end.
This work will well accord;
There's no need to amend.

3 SOLDIER:
Nay, I have arranged even more;
Yea, these thieves are sent before
That beside him shall hang.
And ladders also are ordered there,
With good stout rungs, as a craftsman's
care
Demands-some short, some long.

1 SOLDIER:
For hammers and nails
Let's see who'll go along.

2 SOLDIER:
Here are spikes that shall not fail;
Of iron and steel strong.

3 SOLDIER:
Then all is as it needs to be.
But which of you shall carry this tree,
Since I have brought it hither?

1 SOLDIER:
By my faith, bear it shall he
That thereupon soon hanged shall be,
And we shall teach him whither.

2 SOLDIER:
Upon his back it shall be laid,
For soon must we come thither.

3 SOLDIER:
Look that our gear be well-arrayed,
And let us all go together.

JOHN:
Alas, for my master who most is of
might!
Whom yesterday evening, with lanterns
alight,
Before the bishop was brought.
Both Peter and I, we saw that sight,
And then we went on our ways, took
flight,
When the Jews their horrors wrought.
In the morning the trial sped;
Falsehoods and lies they sought,
And doomed him to be dead,
That them offended not.

Alas, for sorrow, what shall I say?
My worldly wealth is gone away,
In woe forever shall I wend.
My master, who broke the law in no
way,
Is doomed to be dead today,
Even in his enemy's hands.
Alas, that my master mild,
Who all men's misdeeds may amend,
Should so falsely be defiled,
With no friends him to defend.

Alas for his mother, and others more;
My mother, and her sisters also,
Sit together with sighings sore.
They know nothing of all this woe;
Therefore to warn them will I go,
Since I can do no more.
Since he so soon shall die,
And they unknowing were,
Then worthy of blame were I.
I will go fast, therefore.

But in my heart great dread have I
That his mother for sorrow shall die,
When once that sight she spies..
But still, I must not fail, surely,
To warn that careworn company
Before indeed he dies.

God save you, every sister here!
Dear lady, if your will it were,
I must tell news of pain.

MARY:
Welcome, John, my cousin dear!
How fares my son since you were here?
That would I know, and plain.

JOHN:
Ah, dear lady, by your leave,
From truth I'll not refrain;
Against God's will no man should
grieve.

MARY:
Why John-is my son slain?

JOHN:
No, my lady, I said not so.
But remember that he told us two,
And them that with us were,
How he with pain one day must go,
And afterwards shall come us to
To amend our sighing sore.
There is no use instead
To worry yourself therefore-

MARY MAGD:
Alas this day! For dread,
Good John, name this no more!

Speak to me privately, I you pray,
For I fear that if we too much say
She will but run and rave.

JOHN:
The truth I must indeed now say:
He is doomed to die today;
No sorrow can him save.

MARY JACOBI:
Good John, tell unto us two
What you from her will crave,
And we will gladly go
And ensure that it you have.

JOHN:
Sisters, your mourning may not amend.
But if you wish, before his end,
To speak with my master free,
Then you must arise and with me wend
And greet him when his path does bend
Outside this same city.
If you wish to come that near,
Come fast and follow me!

MARY:
Ah, help me, sisters dear,
That I my son may see.

MARY MAGD:
Lady, lean upon me thus,
And we shall go, our leave to take.

Since your son must go from us,
I shall never you forsake.
Alas, the time and tide;

I know well the day is come
That once was specified
By the prophet Simeon in prophecy:
The sword of sorrow now should run
Throughout your heart, utterly.

MARY JACOBI:

Alas, this is a sorrowful sight:
He that ever was lovely and light
And lord of high and low,
Oh, doleful now is this his plight.
In the world is not so woeful a sight,
So sorrowful to know.
They that he loved the most
In word and also deed
Now have they this great haste
To death him thus to lead.

JESUS:

Daughters of Jerusalem city,
See, and mourn no more for me.
But think about this thing:
For yourselves now mourn must ye,
And for the sons that born shall be
To you, both old and young.
For such a fate must fall,
That you shall give blessing
To barren bodies all,
That no babes forth can bring.

For surely, you shall see such a day
That with sore sighing shall you say
Unto the hills' great height,
"Fall on us, mountains, if you may!
And cover us from that fierce affray
That on us soon shall alight!"
Turn home, the town untill,
Since you have seen this sight.
It is my father's will;
All that is done is right.

MARY SALOME:

Alas, this is a curséd case.
He that all healing in his hand has
Shall, blameless, here be slain.
Ah, Lord, please let me clean your face-
Behold how he has shown his grace;
He shows his might and main!
This sign shall bear witness
Unto all the people plain,
How God's son, here guiltless,
Is put to peerless pain.

1 SOLDIER:

Hey, why do you stand hereabout?
These birds with their whimpering and
their shout
Refuse to keep it down!

2 SOLDIER:

Go home, you bitch, and take your
clout,
Or by this lord you love, this lout,
You'll pay for it full dear.

MARY SALOME:

This sign shall vengeance call
On you, all that are here!

3 SOLDIER:

Go, get you home withal,
Or you'll pay for it here.

JOHN:

Lady, your weeping grieves me sore.

MARY:

John, help me now and evermore.

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35. The Pinners' Play: The Crucifixion

1 SOLDIER:

Sir knights! Take heed, quickly draw
nigh!

We must not delay this deed to do.
You know yourselves, as well as I,
How lords and leaders of our law
Have judged, as one, this fool should
die.

2 SOLDIER:

Sir, their judgement well we know.
Since we have come to Calvary
Let each man help as he should now.

3 SOLDIER:

We all are ready, lo,
This duty to fulfil.

4 SOLDIER:

Let's hear what we must do,
And then go straight theretill.

1 SOLDIER:

It may not help to take too long
If we shall any honour win.

2 SOLDIER:

He must be dead, they said, by noon.

3 SOLDIER:

Well, then, it's time that we begin.

4 SOLDIER:

Let's ding him down, and then have
done,
So he won't vex us with his din.

1 SOLDIER:

He'll hang and learn his lesson soon,
With grief for him and all his kin.

2 SOLDIER:

The foulest death of all
He'll die because of sin.

3 SOLDIER:

That means, "cross" him we shall?

4 SOLDIER:

We will; so let's begin.

1 SOLDIER:

Then to this work we must take heed,
So that our working be not wrong.

2 SOLDIER:

To tell us this there is no need;
But let us haste to make him hang.

3 SOLDIER:

And I have gone for gear, with speed:
Both nails and hammers, large and
strong.

4 SOLDIER:

Then we may boldly do this deed.
Let's kill this traitor, then; come on!

1 SOLDIER:

Good luck to young and old
Who've done in this man's wise!

2 SOLDIER:

We need not to be told
Such liars to chastise.

3 SOLDIER:

Since everything is
well arrayed,
The wiselier now work may we.

4 SOLDIER:

The cross on ground is stoutly made,
And bored just as it ought to be.

1 SOLDIER:

Look the lad on length be laid,
And fastened then upon this tree.

2 SOLDIER:

For all his feats, he shall be flayed;
The proof of that you soon shall see.

3 SOLDIER:

Come forth, thou cursèd knave;
Thy comfort soon shall cool.

4 SOLDIER:

Thy wages thou shalt have.

1 SOLDIER:
Go on! Now work we well!

JESUS:
Almighty God, my Father free,
Let these things be called to mind:
Thou bade I should obedient be,
For Adam's plight for to be pained.
Here, I take death willingly,
So that from sin I save mankind.
I thee beseech, especially,
That with my death, your grace they
find.
From the devil them defend,
So that their souls be safe
In bliss without an end.
I have nought else to crave.

1 SOLDIER:
Well, hark, sir knights, for Mahound's
blood;
Of Adam's kind is all his thought!

2 SOLDIER:
This warlock's wits are warped as wood;
This doleful death dismays him not!

3 SOLDIER:
Remember thou, with mind and mood,
The wicked works that thou hast
wrought!

4 SOLDIER:
He might have done himself some good,
Not to say the things he thought.

1 SOLDIER:
Those sayings shall rue him sore,
For all his yammering, soon.

2 SOLDIER:
Bad luck to them that spare
Till he to death be done!

3 SOLDIER:
Have done at once, boy; on the ground!
Now bend thy back beneath this tree!

4 SOLDIER:

Behold! Himself has laid him down,
In length and breadth as he should be!

1 SOLDIER:
This tainted traitor, make him bound,
Go fast and fetter him, you three.
And since he thinks to wear a crown,
Just like a king here hang shall he.

2 SOLDIER:
I won't waste any time
Before his right hand's fast.

3 SOLDIER:
The left hand, then, is mine;
Let's see who bears him best.

4 SOLDIER:
Well, then, I'll take the traitor's feet;
Down to the hole I'll stretch this "king."

1 SOLDIER:
And to his head will I take heed,
And with my hands I'll help him hang.

2 SOLDIER:
Now since we four must do this deed,
Though there's no profit in the thing,
Let no man spare with utmost speed
An ending to it soon to bring.

3 SOLDIER:
We have no time to spare,
But we are well arrayed.

4 SOLDIER:
This boy here in our care
Will find his deeds repaid!

1 SOLDIER:
Tell me, sir knights, have we done
aught?

2 SOLDIER:
Well, I believe I've got this hand;
Right to the hole I have it brought
Obediently, without a band.

1 SOLDIER:

Then strike on, hard, by him thee
bought!

2 SOLDIER:
This nail, I think, will stoutly stand;
Through bone and flesh it shall be
caught.
My work is good, you understand.

1 SOLDIER:
Sir, what is your report?
The sun has nearly sunk.

3 SOLDIER:
His arm's a foot too short;
The sinews must have shrunk.

4 SOLDIER:
Perhaps the holes were bored too wide.

2 SOLDIER:
Then he'll feel some bitter pain!

3 SOLDIER:
Indeed, the drill was misapplied;
That makes this work a bad bargain.

1 SOLDIER:
Why chatter so? Let's get him tied,
And stretch him; we'll not work in vain.

3 SOLDIER:
You boss us like an overlord;
Come help to haul, you son of Cain.

1 SOLDIER:
Indeed, that shall I do
(As quickly as a snail).

3 SOLDIER:
And I'll attach him to,
With skill and with a nail.

This work will hold; it won't be beat.
His hands are fastened end to end.

4 SOLDIER:
Go we all four, then, to his feet;
Our time efficiently we'll spend.

2 SOLDIER:
Let's see what mirth may make pain
sweet;
For that, my back now I would bend.

4 SOLDIER:
Ah, this work is all unmeet!
This drilling ill we must amend.

1 SOLDIER:
Ah, peace, man, by Mahoun;
Let's waste no time on wonder.
A rope shall tug him down
Though all his sinews go asunder.

2 SOLDIER:
I know well how this cord to knit
To cool the comfort of this sot.

1 SOLDIER:
Well, bind him hard, and get him set;
How much it hurts him, matters not.

2 SOLDIER:
Tug on, you both, a little yet.

3 SOLDIER:
I shall not shirk, no matter what.

4 SOLDIER:
And I'll be ready here, to hit.

2 SOLDIER:
Now pull!

4 SOLDIER:
Whoa! Far enough
we've got!

1 SOLDIER:
All right, drive in that nail,
So no fault may be found.

4 SOLDIER:
This effort would not fail
If four bulls here were bound!

1 SOLDIER:

These cords had much increased his
pains
Before he to the drillings got.

2 SOLDIER:
Yea, burst apart are bones and veins
On every side, as I had thought.

3 SOLDIER:
Well, now his magic nothing gains;
His chattering shall with pain be
bought.

4 SOLDIER:
I'll go and tell our sovereigns
Of all our works and how we've
wrought.

1 SOLDIER:
No, sirs, another thing
Falls first to you and me.
They said we should him hang
On high, that men might see.

2 SOLDIER:
That deed will make us all too sore;
We know that we commanded were--

1 SOLDIER:
No use is it to argue more;
This villain must be hanged right here.

2 SOLDIER:
The mortice is prepared therefore...

3 SOLDIER:
So fasten your fingers on, all here.

4 SOLDIER:
Upon that hill, and just us four?
We'll never raise this in a year!

1 SOLDIER:
Now, man, why say you so?
You only lift things light?

2 SOLDIER:
He means, there must be more
To lift him up on height.

3 SOLDIER:
Now surely, I think we will not need
To call to us more company.
I think we four can do this deed,
And haul him up that hill we see.

1 SOLDIER:
It must be done by us, indeed.
No more; let's do this speedily.
I'll lift this part and take the lead;
On ground he must no longer be.
Therefore to work we bend,
And bear him to that hill.

4 SOLDIER:
Well, I'll bear up this end,
And attend his toes un-till.

2 SOLDIER:
We two shall see to either side,
Or else this work will go all wrong.

3 SOLDIER:
We are ready.

4 SOLDIER:
Sirs, abide,
And let me get a grip that's strong.

2 SOLDIER:
Why spend your time on talk this tide?

1 SOLDIER:
Lift up!

4 SOLDIER:
Let see!

2 SOLDIER:
Oh! Lift along!

3 SOLDIER:
From all this harm he'd surely hide
If he were God.

4 SOLDIER:
The devil him hang!

1 SOLDIER:
My shoulder's out of joint;

My pain is far too great.

2 SOLDIER:
Well, I am nearly spent
With bearing up this weight.

3 SOLDIER:
This cross and I must separate
Or else my back will splinter soon.

4 SOLDIER:
Stop the din; put down the freight.
This deed by us can not be done.

1 SOLDIER:
Let's see if we may now abate
Our work by thinking, everyone.
For sturdy men should honour get,
Not waste the day with jests alone.

2 SOLDIER:
Well, sturdier men than we
I think you will not find.

3 SOLDIER:
This work is not for me;
I have no second wind.

4 SOLDIER:
At such a loss we never were.
I guess this churl some spells has cast.

2 SOLDIER:
My burden made me very sore;
Upon that hill? I shall not last!

1 SOLDIER:
Lift up, and soon we'll get him there.
So, clamp on your fingers, fast.

3 SOLDIER:
And, lift!

1 SOLDIER:
Good, ho!

4 SOLDIER:
A little more.

2 SOLDIER:

And stop!

1 SOLDIER:
And now?

2 SOLDIER:
The worst is past.

3 SOLDIER:
He weighs a wicked weight.

2 SOLDIER:
So did we all four say
Ere he was heaved on height
And raised in this array.

4 SOLDIER:
He made us slow as any stones,
So awkward was he for to bear.

1 SOLDIER:
Let's raise him nimbly, and at once,
And set him in this mortice here,
And let him fall in all at once.
For surely, that pain has no peer!

3 SOLDIER:
Heave up!

4 SOLDIER:
And drop! And all his
bones
Have shattered into pieces here.

1 SOLDIER:
This falling felt more ill
Than all the hurts he had.
Now every man can tell
The least bone in this lad.

3 SOLDIER:
I think this cross will not abide
Nor stand still in this mortice yet.

4 SOLDIER:
The mortice-hole is over-wide;
That makes it wave instead of set.

1 SOLDIER:
It must be fixed on either side

So that it shall no further flit.
Let's take these wedges for this tide
And fix the base; then all is fit.

2 SOLDIER:
Here are wedges arrayed
For that, both great and small.

3 SOLDIER:
Where are our hammers laid
That we should work withal?

4 SOLDIER:
We have them even here, at hand.

2 SOLDIER:
Give me this wedge; I'll hammer it.

4 SOLDIER:
Here is another ready, then.

2 SOLDIER:
Bring it here; I'll make this fit.

1 SOLDIER:
Lay on then, hard.

2
SOLDIER;
 I know that, man!
I'll drive both with one sturdy hit.
Now, this cross will stably stand.
Although he squirm, they will not split.

1 SOLDIER:
Well, sir, how like you now
This work that we have wrought?

4 SOLDIER:
We pray you, tell us how
You feel. Or faint you ought?

JESUS:
All men that walk by path or street,
My sufferings take heed unto.
Behold my head, my hands, my feet,
And fully feel, before you go,
If any mourning may be fit,
Or torment, equal this unto.
My father that all pain may quit,

Forgive these men who these things do.
What they do, know they not.
Therefore, father, I crave
Their sins be punished naught.
But see their souls to save.

1 SOLDIER:
Well, hark! He chatters like a jay.

2 SOLDIER:
I think he patters like a pie.

3 SOLDIER:
Well, he's been doing this all day,
Discussing mercy; who knows why?

4 SOLDIER:
Is this the same that did us say
That he was son of God on high?

1 SOLDIER:
He was; that's why this price he'll pay;
That's why he's ordered thus to die.

2 SOLDIER:
Va, qui destruis templum!

3 SOLDIER:
His words were thus, certain.

4 SOLDIER:
And, sirs, he said to some
He might raise it again.

1 SOLDIER:
To manage that he has no might,
For all the spells that he could cast.
For though he thought his words were
bright,
Despite his cunning, he's nailed fast.
What Pilate judged is done this night,
Therefore I think that we should rest.

2 SOLDIER:
This thing must be reported right
Throughout the world, both east and
west.

3 SOLDIER:
Let him hang there still

And make moues at the moon.

4 SOLDIER:

Then we can go at will.

1 SOLDIER:

No, good sirs, not so soon.

For here's another thing to note:

This garment would I from you crave.

2 SOLDIER:

No, no, sir, we will cast by lot
To see which man this thing shall have.

3 SOLDIER:

Then let's draw straws to win this coat.

Come, gather round--all sides to save.

4 SOLDIER:

The short straw wins, just as it ought,
Whether it fall to knight or knave.

1 SOLDIER:

Fellows, you must not fight;
This mantle here is mine.

2 SOLDIER:

Let's go then, and good night.
This is a waste of time!

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36. The Butchers' Play: The Death of Christ

PILATE:
Cease, citizens; see what I say:
Entirely to my talking attend.
Devoid all this din here today,
Follow me, as is befitting a friend.
Sir Pilate, a prince past compare.
My name now full namely I name.
As doomsman, dependably fair;
Full even with Jews, without blame
Am I.
Who causes oppression,
Does any transgression,
By my discretion,
Shall be deemed duly to die.

To die, I shall deem them to death:
Those rebels that rule them unright.
Those now to yon hill who pay heed,
May see there the truth in their sight:
Their cruel execution this night,
Who like not our laws now to hear.
Lo, thus by my main and my might,
These churls I shall chastise and cheer
By laws.
Each felon false,
So shall hang by the neck;
Transgressors also,
Should know they'll be knit to the
cross.

To know I shall knit them on cross;
I'll wreck them with shame as they hap.
Their lives thus to lose it's no loss,
Such truants with troubles to trap.
Thus loyally the laws I unwrap,
And punish them pitilessly.
Of Jesus it is a mishap,
That hung on that hill should he be,
For guilt.
His blood to spill:
This was your will.
You've had your fill.
To speed him, with spite he was spilt.

CAIAPHAS:
To spill him, we spoke in great speed,
For falsehoods he followed, in faith;
With frauds all our folks he did feed,

And laboured to learn them his lay.

ANNAS:
Sir Pilate, of peace we you pray;
Our laws would have likely been lorn.
He would not save our dear Sabbath
day;
And that - to escape it - was scorn,
By law.

PILATE:
Sirs, before your sight,
With all my might,
I examined him right;
And in him then no cause I saw.

CAIAPHAS:
You know well, the cause in this case:
It touched upon treason untrue.
The tribute, to take or to trace,
He forbade, our bale to brew.

ANNAS:
Of jests always jangled that Jew,
And cursedly called himself King.
To doom him to death was his due;
For treason it touches, that thing.
Indeed!

CAIAPHAS:
Yet principal,
And worst of all,
He would be called,
God's Son. For that, foul may he
speed!

PILATE:
He speeds now to spill in a space,
So wonderfully wrought is your will.
His blood shall your bodies embrace
To this end, you've taken yourselves.

ANNAS:
From now on, we'll happily fulfill
This; to our credit we'll take it full fain.
Yon loser now likes it full ill.
We've turned all his tricks into pain,
I trow

CAIAPHAS:

He was called King.
Ill joy him wring;
Yeah, let him hang,
Full mad at the moon he'll moo now!

ANNAS:

To moo at the moon thus he meant:
To hell with you, traitor, in faith!
Who trusts now your tales to attend?
You saggard, yourself you did say,
The temple you'd cast down today!
By the third day, though every stone
falls,
You'd raise it again, you did say.
Look how it feels to be false.
Foul fall!
For presumption,
Reward you've won.
If you'll come down,
I shall "a comely King" you call.

CAIAPHAS:

I call you a coward again,
That marvels and miracles made;
Who mustered among many men,
But wretch, you spoke there without
heed!
You saved them from sorrows, they
said,
Now save yourself, let us see;
If you're truly God's son, as you said,
Deliver you down from that tree!
Anon!
If you are found
To be God's son
We shall be bound
To follow you truly, each one!

ANNAS:

Sir Pilate, your pleasure we pray;
Attend to our talking this tide,
And wipe yonder writing away;
It's not for the best that it bide.
It's more fitting, you set it aside,
And write what he said in his lies,
When he was imprinted with pride:
"Jews' King am I, recognize"
Full plain.

PILATE:

Quod scripsi, scripsi.
That same wrote I;
I stand thereby.
What gadfly will grouch there against?

JESUS:

Mankind, that of miss here has meant,
To me, all attention now take:
On rood I am ragged and rent,
You sinful souls, for your sake.
For your miss, amends I will make.
My back, now to bend will obey;
This pain, for your trespass, I take.
Who could you more kindness display,
Than I?
Thus, for your good,
I shed my blood.
Man, mend your mood.
Full bitter your bliss I must buy.

MARY:

Alas, for my sweet son, I say,
That doleful, to death is thus done.
Alas, for full lovely he lay,
In my womb, this worthiest one.
Alas, that I should see my son,
My son, once so seemly to see.
Alas, that this bright blossom,
Untruly is tugged to that tree.
Alas!
My lord, my lief,
With full great grief,
Hangs like a thief.
Alas, he did never trespass.

JESUS:

Woman, away with your weeping.
For me, you may nothing amend.
My father's will I am working,
For mankind my body I bend.

MARY:

Alas, that you don't wish to stay,
How can I but weep for my woe?
My comfort, to care, turns today.
Alas, why should we twin thus in two,
Forever?

JESUS:
Woman, instead of me,
John, your son shall be.
John, to your mother see;
For my sake make this your endeavor.

MARY:
Alas son, sorrow and sight;
I wish I were closed in clay.
A sword of sorrow me smites;
To death I have come this day.

JOHN:
Oh mother, such things do not say,

I pray, in this crowd, be at peace.
For with all the might that I may,
Your comfort I'll ever increase.
Indeed,
Your son am I.
On me rely;
From this place by,
I pray that away you will speed.

MARY:
My bidding - to stand or to steer -
How can I, such sorrow to see?
My son that is worthy and dear,
Now so doleful a death here dies he.

JOHN:
Dear mother, let go of this grief;
Your mourning may not this amend.

MARY CLEOPHAS:
Dear mother, have faith now and see;
For succour to you he will send,
This tide.

JOHN:
Fair mother, fast
Away let us cast.

MARY:
Until he has passed,
I shall willingly stay at his side.

JESUS:
With bitterest bale I have bought
Mankind. Thus your misses I mend.

Look on me now and cease not:
How, willing, my body I bend.
No man in this world would have mind,
The sorrow I suffer for your sake.
Be taught now through kindness,
mankind;
True attention to me, now take,
And trust.
For foxes, their dens have they;
Birds have their nests to pay;
But the son of man this day,
Has nowhere his head now to rest.

THIEF ON LEFT:
If you are God's son so free,
Why do you hang on this hill?
Save yourself now, let us see,
And us too, that speed now to spill.

THIEF ON RIGHT:
Man, stop your speaking, be still!
Doubtless, your god you dread not.
Deserving, we've come to this hill,
For wrongs we have unwisely wrought.
But this:
No ill did he,
To die this way.
Remember me,
When you have come into your bliss.

JESUS:
In truth son, to you I say:
Because from your folly you'll fall,
With me you'll dwell this very day,
In paradise, placed principal.
Eloy, eloy,
My God, my God full free,
Lamma sabbacthane?
Why have you forsaken me,
In care?
When I did never ill,
This death to so fulfill;
But be it as you will.
Ah, I thirst sore.

SERVANT:
A drink I'll prepare you, indeed;
A draft that is daintily done.
Full fast I shall spring for to speed,
I hope I shall hold for that one.

CAIAPHAS:

Sir Pilate, that most is in might,
Hark - "Healing" I heard that one cry.
He's going to that worthy wight,
In haste now to help him on high,
In his need.

PILATE:

If he does so,
He shall have woe.

ANNAS:

He is our foe,
Who would dress him to do such a
deed!

SERVANT:

That deed, if he dress him to do,
For certain, he'll rue it full sore;
Nonetheless, if he likes it not - lo -
Pretty soon he'll recover that care.
Now sweet sir, if your will it were,
A draft of a drink I have dressed;
To suffer expense you may spare,
To imbibe it now boldly is best.
But why?
Vinegar and gall,
Are mixed in with all.
Drink it you shall -
Your lips, I can see, are full dry.

JESUS:

Your drink will not harm me up here.
Understand that of this I'll have none.
Now father, who formed all men here,
To your might most, I make moan;
In this place, all your will I have done.
Thus ragged, and rent on this rood,
With cruelty to death I am done.
Forgive them, by grace that is good,
For they do not know what it was.
My father, here are my bones;
Now are all things done.
To you, my spirit soon,
I commend: in manus tuas.

MARY:

Now dear son, Jesus so gentle,
Since my heart is as heavy as lead,

Please say something to me ere you
wend -

Alas, now my dear son is dead!
Full ruefully rent is my head!
Alas, for my darling so dear!

JOHN:

Ah mother, now hold up your head.
Sigh not here with these sorrows
severe,
I pray.

MARY CLEOPHAS:

It gives her pain,
To see his pain.
Lead her away;
This morning, no one comfort may.

CAIAPHAS:

Sir Pilate, perceive, I now pray,
That to keep well our customs you can.
Tomorrow's our dear Sabbath day;
To mirth, now must move every man.
Yon warlocks now all wax full wan,
And must quickly buried all be.
Deliver them dead sir, and then,
We'll issue to said solemnity,
Indeed.

PILATE:

It shall be done,
In words but one.
Sir knights, go yon,
To those harlots, handily take heed:

Kill all those crooks with your knife;
Deliver them when they are dead.

SOLDIER:

My lord, I shall cut off their life,
Those wretches shall never bite bread.

PILATE:

Longinus, step forth in this stead;
This spear, now take hold in your hand.
To Jesus, go forth where you're led;
You'll stray not; but stiffly will stand,
A space.
In Jesus' side,
Shove it this tide.

No longer bide,
But promptly now go to that place.

LONGINUS:

Oh, maker unmade, full of might,
Oh Jesus, so noble and gentle,
You've suddenly sent me my sight!
Lord, loving to thee must be lent!
On rood, you are ragged and rent;
Mankind you now mend of his miss.
Spitefully spilled and now spent;
This blood, lord, will bring us to bliss,
Full free.
Ah, mercy, my succour,
Mercy, my treasure,
Mercy, my Saviour;
Your mercy's remembered in me.

CENTURION:

What wonderful working is this?
The weather is waxing full wan.
I trust, a true token it is,
That mercy's extended to man.
Conceive this full clearly, I can.
No crime in this corpse could they
know;
Yet doleful, they still doomed the man,
To lose thus his life by their law:
Not right.
I say truly,
God's son was he,
This man I see,
Who was done to the death here
tonight.

JOSEPH:

May that loyal lord, ever-lasting in land,
Sir Pilate, full pressed in this place,
Save you, sir, by the sea and by sand,
And these worthy men on this dais.

PILATE:

Joseph the Loyal, no less;
You are welcome to me in this space.
Tell truly, before you decease,
Your worthy will here, what it is?
Anon!

JOSEPH:

I pray to thee:

On high, give me
Jesus' body.
I'd give it a grave all alone.

PILATE:

Sir Joseph, I grant your request;
I will not begrudge him his grave.
Deliver, have done, get him dressed,
And be sure, sir, our Sabbath to save.

JOSEPH:

With heart and both hands that I have,
I thank you in faith, for my friend.
God keep, may you no comfort crave
Now swift on my way I will wend.
On high.
To do that deed,
May he give speed,
Who these arms spread,
So man with his blood he might buy.

NICODEMUS:

Well met sir. In mind I was grieved
For Jesus, who was judged so unjust.
You laboured for licence and leave,
To return his dead body to dust?

JOSEPH:

Full mildly I meant, since I must,
And to do so, I now must address.

NICODEMUS:

I would that together we went;
And nothing at all will stop us.
Here's why:
Our friend was he,
Faithful and free.

JOSEPH:

Therefore, go we
To bury that body on high.

All mankind may mark in their mind,
To see here this sorrowful sight.
No falseness in him could they find,
Who was done to a death so unright.

NICODEMUS:

He was a full worthy wight,

Now blemished and battered with
blood.

JOSEPH:

Yes, and because he had mustered his
might,
Full falsely they felled this fair food.
I've seen -
His back and sides,
Have great wounds wide.
Now forth this tide,
We'll take him down us between.

NICODEMUS:

Between us, we take him down,
And lay him at length on the land.

JOSEPH:

This reverent one, rich in renown;
Let us hold him and wash him by hand.
A grave here, I've recently ordered,
Which never held none; it is new.

NICODEMUS:

To this corpse it's most comely
accorded;
To dress him with all the deeds due
This land.

JOSEPH:

A sudary,
I've brought with me.
Wind him, shall we,
And soon we shall set him in sand.

NICODEMUS:

In sand let us set him and go.
Quickly, let's lay him alone.

Now, saviour of me and of more,
Do keep us in cleanness each one.

JOSEPH:

To your mercy, now I make my moan:
As Saviour, by sea and by sand.
Guide me out of temptation alone,
To lead loyal life in this land,
With ease.

NICODEMUS:

I've ointments - see?
For this body.
I anoint thee,
With the myrrh and with aloe of these.

JOSEPH:

This deed is now done and complete;
Well-wrought is the work of all this.
My King, on my knees here I kneel,
That I might behold you in bliss.

NICODEMUS:

He told me with love to be his,
One night when I came very near.
Have mind Lord, and mend me of miss.
We've done all our deeds now, full dear,
This tide.

JOSEPH:

May this lord good,
Who shed his blood,
Now mend your mood,
And bring me to his bliss to abide.

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