

The Resurrection

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

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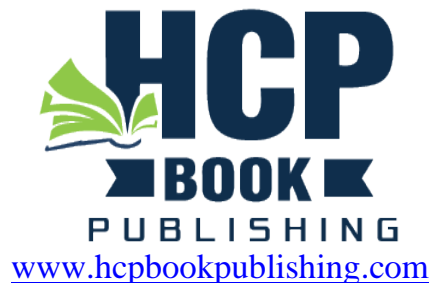


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Characters

Thomas

Bartimeus

King Herod

Mary Magdalene

Mary – Jesus' mother

Disciples – Peter, John, Matthew

Soldier

Chief Priest & Other Priest

(10-20 Characters)

Setting

The entire play takes place outdoors.

There should be at least two doors representing entrances to different homes. One of these doors will have a stone rolled to the side for the scene at the tomb.

The backdrop should also represent the outside of a temple. Having a large stage would be beneficial in exploring set possibilities to make this production a success. If you have a small stage, be very creative. You can do set changes by shifting things around.

The Story

Thomas & Bartimeus are Back!!!!

The Mission....

Our two retired detectives are given an assignment to find the missing body of Jesus. Herod wants to unearth enough evidence to declare that someone stole the body of Jesus, in order to prove that the message He (Jesus) taught was not true.

Motive....

Thomas and Bartimeus travel the country side gathering information on what really happened at the tomb, but what they find is not what they were looking for. Along the way, Bartimeus' faith in God is strengthened and this annoys Thomas, who really has no intention of being entwined in the religious teachings of the man who claimed to be God's Son.

The Truth....

Their journey ultimately leads them down a path neither of them was prepared to face, and once again their lives will be changed when they uncover the truth behind the Resurrection.

Play Details

Length: 60 Minutes

Cast: 4 Males, 2 Females. Plus extras.

Audience: Teens & Adults

Genre: Biblical Mystery Drama

The Script



SCENE I

LIGHTS UP

*Bartimeus and Thomas stand at CS all dressed in long coats and detective hats
And sunglasses as if they are undercover...but their hair is no longer black and
Thomas only has one good foot.*

THOMAS: What time is it?

BARTIMEUS: eh.

Thomas rolls his eyes.

THOMAS: Time?

BARTIMEUS: Mine...what mine?

THOMAS (*shouts*): WHAT TIME IS IT?

BARTIMEUS: Why do you always shout at me?

THOMAS: HOW ELSE CAN YOU HEAR?

BARTIMEUS: Nothing is wrong with my hearing, and please stop shouting.

THOMAS: What time is it?

BARTIMEUS: eh.

Thomas gives up. He grabs Bartimeus' wrist and looks at the time.

BARTIMEUS: Hey.

Bartimeus pulls his hand away.

THOMAS: He's one hour late. We should go, maybe something happened to him. They probably kidnapped him or something.

BARTIMEUS: eh.

THOMAS: You know what, you should be home.

BARTIMEUS: Dome, what dome?

Thomas gives up.

Enter cloaked figure.

HEROD: Psst.

Thomas looks in the direction of the sound; he jumps back a bit when he sees the cloaked figure.

Herod gestures with his finger for Thomas to come closer.

Thomas shakes his head no, visibly afraid.

Herod gestures again even more forcibly.

Thomas shakes his head no again.

HEROD: It's me, you dimwit.

THOMAS: Me who...?

Herod pulls the hood from over his head.

HEROD: Me.

He replaces the hood.

THOMAS: I didn't catch the face. Could you repeat....

HEROD: GET OVER HERE!

Bartimeus whips around to see Herod. He jumps back. Thomas goes over to him and Bartimeus follows.

BARTIMEUS: Who, who's that?

THOMAS: Herod.

BARTIMEUS: Nimrod. I thought he was dead!

THOMAS: I said, HEROD...not Nimrod!

HEROD: Shh!

BARTIMEUS: There you go shouting again.

Thomas shakes his head.

They stand before the cloaked figure.

Herod pulls a file from under his cloak and hands it to Thomas, who passes it On to Bartimeus, who digs in right away.

HEROD: I still can't believe he can see.

THOMAS: Yeah, so...what's this about Chief? (*pats his bad leg*) I can't stand out here all day you know.

HEROD: We are not as young as we used to be, huh.

THOMAS: Well, they say you're as old as you feel.

HEROD: Indeed. Anyway, as you may have read...some very strange events have occurred here over the past few weeks and it is all linked to one Man.

THOMAS: Jesus of Nazareth.

HEROD: Yes. It is said that he has caused quite a stir among the people. It seems his influence may have a lasting effect on this world. I fear, we may never, ever be the way we used to be because of this man.

THOMAS: Yes. He does have a way to cause...change.

HEROD: Well, he's dead.

Thomas is wide eyed. He hits Bartimeus who pulls his head out of the file.

BARTIMEUS: What?

THOMAS: Jesus is dead.

BARTIMEUS: Whose bed?

THOMAS (*shouts*): HE'S DEAD!

BARTIMEUS: Who? What...Dead? You just shouted. Dead, how? Who's dead?

HEROD: He was crucified?

BARTIMEUS: Mummified? Someone was mummified...Here in Jerusalem...and here I thought this only happens in Egypt.

Bartimeus walks away shaking his head in disbelief.

THOMAS: Go on, chief. You still haven't told me why we're here.

HEROD: I'm getting to that. There was talk among his disciples that He was the Son of God...you know that, right?

THOMAS: Yes.

HEROD: Well, He is said to have said that he would die and rise again on the third day.

THOMAS: He said that?

HEROD: Actually, that's what they said he said.

THOMAS: Who said he said?

HEROD: The people said the disciples said that he said that.

Thomas scratches his chin.

THOMAS: Interesting.

HEROD: Your job is simple. It can only be one of two explanations. Either what they said He said is true...or the body was stolen to look like what they said he said was true...

THOMAS: Ummm.

HEROD: This is a hush hush mission, so you have to play it cool and don't worry...you'll be well compensated for this job.

THOMAS: I'm depending on that.

HEROD: Find Jesus' body and arrest the culprits who removed it from the grave. Avoid the media at all cost and tell no one about this.

THOMAS: Hush hush.

HEROD: Exactly. The rest is in that file.

THOMAS: Ok....you can depend on us Chief.

HEROD: I sure hope so.

Herod glances around and quickly exits.

Bartimeus reads something in the file and his mouth drops open. He runs over to Thomas.

BARTIMEUS: Thomas...it says here that Jesus is dead.

Thomas rolls his eyes. He grabs the file from Bartimeus and Exits.

BARTIMEUS: He's dead. I can't believe it...He never seemed like the kind that could...die. Thomas...can you believe it?

He sees that Thomas is gone. He jots offstage behind him.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP

Thomas and Bartimeus are standing outside a door.

BARTIMEUS: I think this is the place.

THOMAS: YOU SURE?

BARTIMEUS: Yeah. You just shouted.

THOMAS: I guess we have to start somewhere.

BARTIMEUS: Don't look like a harlot's house to me.

THOMAS: HOW EXACTLY DOES A HARLOT'S HOUSE LOOK?

BARTIMEUS: I Dunno. I imagine there would be lots of women outside here spinning around that light pole in skimpy clothes looking at us with cat-eyes...maybe a pimp would be over there under his shaggy coat choking on an Italian cigar and over...

THOMAS: ALRIGHT. I GET YOUR POINT.

BARTIMEUS: Shouting...

THOMAS: LET'S JUST DO THIS. *(sighs)* God I'm too old for this job.

Thomas limps to the door and knocks.

Bartimeus also knocks.

Thomas knocks again.

Bartimeus knocks again.

This continues until someone answers the door.

MARY: What...Are you guys trying out for the band or something?

THOMAS: No, we...we were just playing. Yeah, anyway...we're with the HBI...

Mary puts out a hand.

MARY: Say that again.

THOMAS: Ok. No...we...we were just playing. Yeah, anyway...we're with the HBI...

Mary puts out a hand again.

MARY: The HBI.

THOMAS: Yep.

MARY: The Herod's Bureau of Investigations?

THOMAS: Uh, yep. That is correct.

Mary starts laughing hard....Thomas is a little embarrassed. She speaks only after she can stop laughing.

MARY: Shouldn't you guys be in an old age home or something, drinking tea and playing chess?

THOMAS: Your sarcasm is a little bit insulting, ma'am.

MARY: Well anyway, I don't know what you two gentlemen want, but if you need me to help you with something...you're gonna have to show me some ID.

Thomas and Bartimeus look at each other...then pull out two badges and hold them out before Mary. She looks at them and starts laughing again.

MARY: These badges expired thirty-two years ago.

THOMAS: We're still waiting for the renewal.

MARY: Right. Anyway guys, thank you for dropping by. I really did enjoy this visit.

Mary closes the door.

Thomas turns to Bartimeus.

THOMAS: FROM HERE ON WE TELL NO ONE WE WORK FOR THE HBI...OK.

BARTIMEUS: Why not?

THOMAS: JUST DO AS I SAY, BARTY.

Thomas knocks again.

Mary opens the door.

MARY: Yes.

THOMAS: We have a few questions we would like to ask.

Mary shakes her head.

MARY: Fine. But I'm only doing this because I respect elders. You know that?

THOMAS: That's fine for now.

Mary allows them to enter.

MARY: Please have a seat.

Thomas sits. Bartimeus remains standing.

MARY: Sir, you may have a seat.

BARTIMEUS: Whatever for?

MARY: Excuse me?

BARTIMEUS: Why would I need a sheet?

THOMAS: SEAT, Barty.

BARTIMEUS: Ohhhh, yes, thank you, ma'am.

Bartimeus sits.

MARY: He's deaf?

THOMAS: Half deaf.

MARY: Ok, right. Big difference. Need anything to drink...pain relievers maybe.

THOMAS: We're fine. We just need to...

MARY: ...Ask a few questions. Yes, I remember.

Mary sits and waits.

Thomas pulls a notebook and pen from his garment.

THOMAS: You knew Jesus of Nazareth, did you not?

MARY: Yes, I did.

THOMAS: How did you come to know this man?

Pause.

MARY: I don't know if I can say this so you could understand, but Jesus came for sinners and...I was a sinner, so I guess I was bound to cross his path sooner or later.

THOMAS: Ok, what exactly does all that mean?

MARY: I was a ...bad person.

THOMAS: Harlot.

MARY: (*unimpressed*) Yes...I was a harlot.

THOMAS: You're the woman I read about in the Jerusalem Tribune...that woman they almost stoned to death?

MARY: I'm not proud of the things that I've done with the greater part of my life...but Jesus taught me that I could leave my past behind and become 'someone' in Him...in God.

THOMAS: Ok. So, Jesus changed you.

MARY: In more ways than you could imagine....

THOMAS: I guess now that He's deceased...it would undoubtedly have a great impact on those whose life he has changed.

MARY: Yes, it would. (*pause*) It did.

THOMAS: How far are you willing to go to prove that this Messiah was who he said he was?

MARY: What do you mean?

THOMAS: If he made a claim that he would die and rise again on the third day...how far are his followers willing to go to make sure what he said, or they said he said was true.

MARY: You're speculating, sir.

THOMAS: Am I? Are you aware that Jesus' body has been... removed?

MARY: May I caution you, sir...not to tread on these waters unless you're prepared to face yourself as a sinner. (*leans in closer*) Absolutely no one encounters Jesus and remains the same.

THOMAS: Even if this...Jesus is dead?

MARY: That's the whole point, sir. Jesus being dead depends entirely on what you choose to believe.

THOMAS: It almost sounds like you're implying that the possibility exists that this man is alive.

MARY: I think '*Implying*' is a very strong word here.

THOMAS: Ma'am. I've been in this field for years and I learnt to trust the facts. Fact, Jesus was crucified between two thieves, Fact, his body was removed from the cross, after he bled to death...his body was wrapped up and laid in a tomb, Fact, he had no pulse...pronounced dead on the spot by top surgeons in this country...I trust the facts and the facts say Jesus is dead. So it must be a fact that if his body has disappeared, someone must have taken it.

Pause.

MARY: I can't give you what you want, sir.

THOMAS: Then I guess I'll just have to find someone who can.

Thomas finishes scribbling notes and closes his notebook.

He touches Bartimeus and head for the exit.

BARTIMEUS: Hey, Wait a minute. I didn't get to ask my question.

THOMAS: Ask quickly, Barty, we have to go now.

Bartimeus turns to Mary.

BARTIMEUS: Mary, I just want to know if Jesus is really dead.

Mary considers.

MARY: HE WAS!

BARTIMEUS: Wow! I knew it. You hear that Thomas...

THOMAS: You people are out of your minds...but mark my words, Mary Magdalene; if I find that you're involved in any way...I'm coming back for you.

MARY: The next time I see you, sir...you will not be the same person you are now. I guarantee that.

THOMAS: Yeah, whatever you say,

Thomas and Bartimeus exits.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 3

LIGHTS UP

Mary, Jesus' mother is at Center Stage crying uncontrollably.

Thomas and Bartimeus enter.

THOMAS: BARTY, LET ME DO THE TALKING OK.

BARTIMEUS: Will you stop shouting at me.

THOMAS: Okay.

BARTIMEUS: Eh.

Thomas shakes his head. He walks over to Mary.

THOMAS: You must be the mother of Jesus?

MARY: *(drying her tears)* Whose asking?

THOMAS: My name is Thomas, and this is my partner Bartimeus. We're with the ...*(considers for a beat)*.... You owe the government some back taxes.

Pause.

MARY: I'm here...mourning the brutal death of my son and you are telling me about taxes.

THOMAS: Well, I am willing to liquidate your account if you just answer a few questions.

MARY: Who are you people?

Bartimeus extends his hand.

BARTIMEUS: Hi. I'm Bartimeus. I knew your son.

Mary is too busy crying to see Barty's hand.

MARY: How do you know him?

BARTIMEUS: I didn't grow him. You did.

THOMAS: SHE SAID HOW DID YOU KNOW HIM.

BARTIMEUS: Oh, I once was blind but now I see cuz a him.

Mary looks keenly at the two.

MARY: I know you two looked familiar. You are those two detectives. What do you want?

THOMAS: Can you tell us what happened to your son's body.

MARY: I don't know.

THOMAS: You must have some idea.

MARY: Would I be sitting here crying if I did.

THOMAS: Ma'am...

MARY: Listen, sir. I know you both mean well...but if you're looking for answers look somewhere else and just leave me alone. I'm trying to cry in peace.

BARTIMEUS: Can I ask you something?

Mary reluctantly nods.

BARTIMEUS: He said he would be killed and he would rise again on the third day. Do you believe that?

MARY: Any mother would want to.

BARTIMEUS: Do you believe?

Pause.

MARY: Yes sir...I do. I believed everything he said even when no one else did.

BARTIMEUS: Why are you here crying then, Mary?

MARY: Because it still hurts.

Pause.

THOMAS: I think we're done here. BARTY LET'S GO.

Thomas exits.

Mary looks at Bartimeus...his words swimming in her head...her tears slowly drying up.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 4

LIGHTS UP

Thomas and Bartimeus are at the tomb. A huge bolder is rolled to one side.

THOMAS: We need to gather evidence.

BARTIMEUS: I don't see any fence.

THOMAS: JUST LOOK FOR ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS. WE NEED EVIDENCE.

BARTIMEUS: Okay...I so wish you'd stop shouting. It makes my ears ring.

They start searching every crevice and corner.

Bartimeus goes into the tomb.

Later, he reappears with grave clothes stained with blood in his hand.

BARTIMEUS: Looky here, Thomas.

Thomas examines the grave-clothes.

THOMAS: Uhhh...Interesting.

BARTIMEUS: You do know what this means?

THOMAS: Of course. We have a dead, naked body on the loose.

BARTIMEUS: It means the angels who came for Jesus must have brought fresh clothes.

THOMAS: WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

BARTIMEUS: The truth.

THOMAS: I THOUGHT WE BOTH BELIEVED THE SAME THING.

BARTIMEUS: We did...until a baby gave me my sight.

THOMAS: I CAN'T WORK WITH YOU IF YOU CONTINUE TO DEFEND THIS JEWISH RELIGIOUS CRAP.

BARTIMEUS: Thomas, we're here to uncover the truth regardless of what we believe. I believe something, you don't. It just creates equilibrium in this investigation.

THOMAS: WELL, RIGHT NOW I COULD USE A CHANGE OF PARTNER.

BARTIMEUS: I know that. You never really appreciated working with me in the first place.

THOMAS: THAT'S BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS BELIEVE ALL THE RUBBISH YOU HEAR.

BARTIMEUS: WOULDN'T YOU BELIEVE IF YOU COULD SEE AFTER BEING BLIND MOST OF YOUR LIFE.

Pause. He has a point.

THOMAS: Fine. (*Looks at garment in Bartimeus' hand*) That's evidence.

Bartimeus pulls out a very small evidence bag and tries to stuff the garment inside, this is hopeless of course.

Thomas pulls out a dusting kit and starts to dust the bolder for finger prints.

When he's done he examines the bolder and shakes his head.

THOMAS: BARTIMEUS, ROLL THIS BOLDER A LITTLE TO THE LEFT.

BARTIMEUS: Why don't you roll it?

THOMAS: YOU KNOW I HAVE ARTHRITIS, C'MON...PLEASE.

BARTIMEUS: Fine.

Bartimeus puts both hands on the bolder and applies all his strength, but it doesn't budge.

THOMAS: You've got to be kidding me.

They both try, but the bolder doesn't even shake.

Thomas pulls a notebook from his pocket and makes notes.

THOMAS: It must have taken a dozen men to move this thing. No, maybe a dozen would still be inadequate.

A man, dressed as a soldier, appears behind Thomas and Bartimeus. They both

turn simultaneously to see him just as he turns to see them.

The soldier runs off.

Thomas limps after him, Bartimeus follows.

(The soldier can exit through a door somewhere backstage, run around the church and reappear through another door leading inside the church, crosses the stage and exits again)

Moments later Thomas and Bartimeus enter from another exit completely out of breath...Thomas is wheezing. He uses an asthma pump and breathes hard to calm himself.

THOMAS: You sure ...(*gasp*).....that....was a SHORT...CUT.

Bartimeus can only shake his head.

They drag themselves to the stage.

THOMAS: I think (*gasp*) he went...THAT WAY.

BARTIMEUS: Yeah (*gasp*) we can...cut him off....at the next intersection.

THOMAS: Right...(*gasp*) Let's go.

They take one step and collapse on stage.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 5

LIGHTS UP

Thomas and Bartimeus come to.

The soldier is seated a few feet away from them.

THOMAS: There he is. We caught him.

The soldier starts to laugh as Thomas and Bartimeus struggles to get to their feet.

BARTIMEUS: Don't Move.

THOMAS: Don't even think about running off again. We won't be so merciful next time.

The soldier laughs some more.

Thomas and Bartimeus collapse again...their feet unable to hold them up.

SOLDIER: I thought you guys were a threat...I thought maybe Herod had sent you to arrest me...but you old fools couldn't arrest a donkey.

Soldier throws their expired badges at them.

SOLDIER: You're old school....two brash individuals trying to relive the glory days. That's a laugh.

THOMAS: Okay, we admit that we're way out of our leagues...but you are out of line. What were you doing, trying to rob two defenseless old fools?

SOLDIER: No. I was trying to determine who exactly you were.

THOMAS: Okay, so now that you know...mind telling us, who you are.

SOLDIER: Yes, as a matter of fact, I mind very much.

Soldier gets up to exit.

THOMAS: I know who you are, simply by looking into your eyes.

Thomas pulls himself to his feet. Bartimeus is not quite as strong yet.

THOMAS: You hide behind strong well articulate words to hide your true nature.

SOLDIER: What do you know about my true nature, old man?

THOMAS: I know that you're a coward.

Soldier is enraged by this suggestion. He approaches Thomas who doesn't even squint.

SOLDIER: How about I let you swallow your words, old man?

THOMAS: Why are you running, eh...only cowards run, no true roman soldier could deny that.

Soldier stops.

THOMAS: A true soldier should face up to the consequences of his actions. Even if that meant death....a soldier should fear nothing.

Soldier sits on a nearby rock...now close to tears.

SOLDIER: You have no idea what has happened here, do you?

THOMAS: No. But we would like to find out.

Thomas helps Bartimeus to his feet.

Long Pause.

SOLDIER: Three days ago, Herod placed us here to watch over this tomb.

THOMAS: Us?

SOLDIER: Yeah, me and two other roman guards. We were deemed the toughest of the toughest...the ones who would not put up with any crap from nobody. But we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into...

Pause.

THOMAS: Go on.

SOLDIER: Yesterday...we had dosed off for a few minutes, but when we woke...as a matter of fact, a light woke us...

THOMAS: The sun coming up.

SOLDIER: No. It was something brighter...something celestial.

THOMAS: Okay...so this is where this story is gonna get weird.

SOLDIER: It's hard enough for me to tell you all this and the only reason I'm doing so is that I hope you can uncover the truth before Herod's men find me, so I can avoid a very painful and untimely death...so will you leave your snotty comments out until after I finish talking?

THOMAS: O-kay.

Thomas takes notes.

SOLDIER: So we were awoken by this...

THOMAS: Celestial light (*stifles a chuckle*)

Soldier gives him a hard stare and Thomas holds his hand out in retreat.

THOMAS: Sorry.

SOLDIER: We had to shield our eyes and move from here to over there, behind that bushel and that's when we saw it...

Pause.

THOMAS: WHAT?

BARTIMEUS: WHAT?

THOMAS: NOT YOU.

BARTIMEUS: THEN WHO?

Thomas puts a lip to his mouth gesturing for Bartimeus to be quiet. Soldier rolls his eyes at their stupidity.

SOLDIER: Two guys, two big guys. They rolled that stone away and entered the tomb.

THOMAS: Two guys?

SOLDIER: Yeah.

THOMAS: Two big guys?

SOLDIER: Yes.

THOMAS: Are you out of your mind? A dozen men could not move that stone.

SOLDIER: I'm telling you what I saw, okay.

THOMAS: I think I need to see those other guards who were with you...you're definitely a goner.

SOLDIER: Hey, I may be a coward in this case...but I'm not Looney.

THOMAS: Tell that to the judge.

Soldier gets up and starts to back away.

SOLDIER: You're not taking me in.

THOMAS: What about that little speech I gave you about being brave and standing as a true soldier?

SOLDIER: It's all good. But, I'm just not ready to die. And don't waste your time trying to find the other guards...they should be crossing the Mexican border, right about now.

BARTIMEUS: You're running again?

SOLDIER: I have to...it's the only way I'll stay alive.

THOMAS: These two men you spoke about. Could they have been two of Jesus' disciples?

SOLDIER: To tell you the truth, I don't know. But I must tell you this...two men went into that tomb...but two men did not come out.

THOMAS: What?

SOLDIER: If you doubt anything else that I've told you, believe this...I wouldn't believe it if I hadn't seen it for myself but...two men walked into that tomb and three men walked out.

THOMAS: WHAT?

BARTIMEUS: WHAT?

THOMAS: No. Impossible!

BARTIMEUS: What did he just say?

THOMAS: THAT HE SAW A DEAD MAN WALKING!

Bartimeus smiles.

The soldier takes off again.

THOMAS: Hey.

BARTIMEUS: Thomas, I can't run any more.

THOMAS: Me Neither. Definitely too old for this job.

They slowly make their exit.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 6

LIGHTS UP

Thomas and Bartimeus are at a Synagogue.

A priest cuts across the stage and exits.

Another Priest cuts across in the opposite direction and exits.

THOMAS: BARTY, FOLLOW HIM AND SEE WHAT'S GOING ON.

BARTIMEUS: AYE, CAPT'N.

Bartimeus exits after the priest.

A Chief Priest walks out calmly to greet Thomas.

PRIEST: How may I assist you, sir?

THOMAS: I am working with Herod and the HBI trying to gather information on a particular...case.

PRIEST: Aren't you too old to be playing detective?

THOMAS: I've had a healthy dose of insults for today...so I would appreciate it if you could cut me some slack.

PRIEST: I will see what I can do.

Thomas watches as another priest cuts across the stage again.

THOMAS: I didn't know it was usually this busy up here.

PRIEST: Usually, it is not. But some very unusual activity has been occurring since yesterday. We're simple trying to regain some order...

Another Priest enters with a rope cut at one end. He shows it to the Chief Priest.

PRIEST II: That's the fourth one today, Chief.

PRIEST: Uhm...get in touch with his family. Break the news to them gently.

PRIEST II: Yes, sir.

He exits.

THOMAS: The fourth one?

PRIEST: It's traditional that a Priest enters the Holy of Holies to intercede on behalf of our sins...but sometimes, they are smitten with death because they are unclean themselves.

THOMAS: Smitten? What exactly smites them?

PRIEST: How should I know....they just die. We tie a rope around their ankles and after some time has passed, if we pull on the rope and they don't pull back, we usually end up pulling out a dead body.

THOMAS: Have you ever lost four in one day?

PRIEST: Never. Please bear in mind that this information is not for public knowledge.

THOMAS: We're not reporters, sir.

PRIEST: Yes, right.

Thomas makes notes.

THOMAS: You had mentioned unusual activities.

PRIEST: Well, yes. The curtain or veil at the entrance to the sanctuary was torn in two. Ripped straight down the middle.

THOMAS: Who could have done something like that?

PRIEST: Well, we have witnesses that said...no one.

THOMAS: No one?

PRIEST: It just ripped in two.

THOMAS: By who?

PRIEST: No one.

THOMAS: No one ripped the veil in two...it just ripped all by itself?

PRIEST: Yah.

THOMAS: This story just continues to get weirder and weirder.

Pause.

PRIEST: What exactly are you investigating?

THOMAS: Well, you know about Jesus of Nazareth, right?

PRIEST: Yes, He caused quite a rebellion amongst the people. Some believed He was the Son of God...a Messiah come to save mankind from their sin. Absurd, I tell you.

THOMAS: Some people still believe, especially now.

PRIEST: Well, one cannot dispute the Law of Moses, and to say that the law is no longer valid is nothing short of blasphemy.

THOMAS: You believe the law can save man?

PRIEST: Of course. Without the law there would only be chaos and confusion.

THOMAS: And Jesus...

PRIEST: He's dead. Crucified between two thieves. Now, if He was God's Son you would think He could save himself, don't you think? How can you save mankind from themselves if you can't even save yourself?

THOMAS: That's exactly what I think.

PRIEST: Good...but now because of this man Jesus, we have a greater task at hand. We have to figure out a way to redirect the minds of those who have been contaminated by his teachings.

THOMAS: Well, I can't promise you that will be easy, especially now.

PRIEST: Why do you say that?

THOMAS: Jesus said he would be resurrected on the third day, which was yesterday and well...his tomb is now empty.

PRIEST: WHAT? Tell me everything you know.

THOMAS: I don't think that's a good idea. The info I've collected up to now is all very weird and somewhat...inconclusive.

Bartimeus enters.

BARTIMEUS: Thomas, you will never believe what happened in the synagogue yesterday.

THOMAS: I think I know.

BARTIMEUS: Eh.

THOMAS: I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

BARTIMEUS: Oh, okay. Do you also know that many people who were dead and buried have been seen walking around in the city?

THOMAS: ZOMBIES?

BARTIMEUS: No. They are alive and well...memory intact, feelings, intellect...It's as if they hadn't died any at all.

PRIEST: Where did you get that information?

BARTIMEUS: What?

PRIEST: WHERE DID YOU GET THAT INFORMATION?

BARTIMEUS: The temple. The entire priesthood seems extremely nervous and everyone is talking.

The Priest is now sweating.

PRIEST: Excuse me, gentlemen...I have to go.

The Priest quickly exits.

BARTIMEUS: He shouted. Do you think maybe I have a hearing problem?

THOMAS: I've been telling you that for five years.

BARTIMEUS: What?

Thomas scratches his head and looks at the notes he has scribbled.

THOMAS: How on earth will I ever explain all this to Herod? I need to find a more believable theory.

(Mission Impossible Theme – Low Volume)

THOMAS: We need to employ a new strategy... a more...indirect approach.

BARTIMEUS: Can you speak a little more clearly.

THOMAS: C'MON... WE HAVE TO GO.

(Mission Impossible Theme – High Volume)

Thomas exits with Bartimeus close behind.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 7

LIGHTS UP

Peter and Matthew meet at Center Stage.

Thomas and Bartimeus peek out at them from behind a bushel. They duck in time as Peter scans the area.

PETER: Matthew, how are you?

MATTHEW: God has been good.

PETER: We can't be too careful. We have to avoid the media at all cost.

MATTHEW: Yes, I know.

They look around again and Peter starts to relax a little, confident that the area is secure.

PETER: So much has happened over these past few days...words seem inadequate to describe these events.

MATTHEW: And it's not over yet.

PETER: I know. Mary said that she had visitors today. Two retired detectives who appear to have been sent by Herod himself.

MATTHEW: You're kidding.

PETER: The thing is...what they are after is not the truth. Apparently they want to unearth enough evidence to say we stole the body of our Lord to...fulfil his prophecies.

MATTHEW: We can't expect everyone to understand these things, Peter. It is a matter of faith and faith works independently of physical facts.

PETER: I believe that also. If only we could all see and accept that Jesus was no counterfeit... that He was actually sent by God to save us. If only we could open everyone's eyes to that simple truth that we can only be saved through Jesus Christ...If only...

MATTHEW: The task that lies before us will not be an easy one. We must prepare ourselves for the worst. I fear we have entered an era where we may have to surrender our lives for others to believe.

PETER: Yes. I'm not sure we're ready...but you're right. Jesus' death, though he predicted it, still seems untimely. We were just getting to the core of his teachings.

MATTHEW: He would not have left us...unless he knew we were ready.

PETER: My thoughts exactly.

Enter John. He goes straight to Peter and whispers something in his ear.

PETER: Are you sure?

John nods and exits quickly. Peter grabs Matthew's arms.

PETER: Something marvellous has happened. We must go.

They exit together.

Thomas and Bartimeus come out of hiding.

THOMAS: My friend, I THINK WE'RE ON TO SOMETHING.

BARTIMEUS: Uhm.

THOMAS: We must follow them. I don't know why I didn't think of this before.
BARTY, LET'S GO.

Thomas exits with Bartimeus close behind him.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 8

LIGHTS UP

A small crowd is gathered at Center Stage, including Peter and Matthew. Their eyes are glued to the skies in awe and wonder.

Thomas and Bartimeus burst on the scene.

THOMAS: Alright, nobody move. I'm gonna have to put you all under arrest.

No one is paying any attention to them.

Bartimeus waves his hand before their eyes. They barely squint.

BARTIMEUS: What's happening to them?

Bartimeus follows their gaze and his mouth drops open at the sight before his eyes.

Thomas thinks it is some disease and refuses to look.

THOMAS: BARTY, WHAT IS IT?

No response.

THOMAS: Oh, this is way too creepy. Whatever they look at up there seems to put them in some kind of a trance.

BARTIMEUS: No trance. It's Him.

THOMAS: WHO?

BARTIMEUS: No need to shout anymore, Thomas...I can hear your breathing.

THOMAS: But, but...Barty, who do you see up there?

BARTIMEUS: Jesus...Jesus of Nazareth.

THOMAS: What? In the Sky?

Thomas slowly turns to look, and he too freezes.

THOMAS: This...is impossible.

BARTIMEUS: So is a blind man receiving his sight.

They stay that way for a beat, then...

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE 9

LIGHTS UP

Thomas and Bartimeus sit mesmerized at Center Stage.

THOMAS: I can't believe it.

BARTIMEUS: I do. From the very beginning.

THOMAS: He...that man Jesus. He did something to me when he was just a baby. But I didn't like the fact that my thoughts were not my own. I felt like a slave.

BARTIMEUS: We're all slaves to something, Thomas. Only in Jesus is there true freedom. When you know and speak the truth at all times...you have nothing to worry about. What you say ten years from now will agree with what you say now. When you're a slave to lies...you worry because you constantly contradict your own self.

THOMAS: That would make sense.

Pause.

THOMAS: Mary was right when she said I wouldn't be the same the next time we met. And those two men at the tomb...the men the soldiers saw...they were...

BARTIMEUS: Angels.

THOMAS: And Jesus did walk out of that Tomb.

BARTIMEUS: Yes.

THOMAS: And saints who had been buried...

BARTIMEUS: Were also resurrected.

THOMAS: How can I doubt now that I've seen with my own eyes?

BARTIMEUS: More blessed are those who believe, without seeing.

Thomas takes out his notebook and tears it in half.

THOMAS: So, how do we explain this to Herod?

BARTIMEUS: We tell him the truth.

THOMAS: Right...somehow I doubt we're gonna get paid for this job.

BARTIMEUS: Me too, but it was never about the money for me.

A cloaked figure enters. He scans the area and assuming its secure he pulls the hood from over his head.

Thomas and Bartimeus jump to their feet.

THOMAS: King Herod.

HEROD: I assume you have brought me good news, gentlemen.

BARTIMEUS: It's good...but I doubt it will be to your liking.

HEROD: (*surprised*) You heard me just now?

BARTIMEUS: Loud and clear, sir.

HEROD: Oh, I think I'm having a deja-vu moment. Please tell me you found Jesus' body in the possession of his disciples.

THOMAS: Yes, sir we did.

Herod holds his chest in relief.

HEROD: Oh, good. You scared me for a moment there. I thought you were gonna tell me that Jesus is alive.

BARTIMEUS: He is.

HEROD: WHAT?!?

THOMAS: Jesus is alive.

HEROD: You fools! Do you have any idea what are you saying?

THOMAS: His body was not stolen, sir. He practically got up, unwrapped the grave clothes, and walked from that tomb.

HEROD: Naked?

BARTIMEUS: Probably. Anyway, there are over five hundred witnesses who have seen and talked to him.

THOMAS: One disciple even put his hand in his side...and through the holes in his hands.

BARTIMEUS: Jesus is alive, sir.

THOMAS: He's very much alive.

HEROD: ENOUGH! Why on earth did I hire you two? This is the same thing you did the last time.

SOLDIER'S VOICE: They are not lying, sir.

HEROD: Who said that?

Soldier walks out.

HEROD: You! Where have you been? Why haven't you made a formal report to HQ?

SOLDIER: I was afraid of what you would do to me when I told you what happened.

HEROD: Aren't you afraid now?

SOLDIER: Not anymore. An old man said something to me that I just couldn't get out of my mind.

Thomas smiles.

HEROD: Oh, I think I'm gonna have a headache.

SOLDIER: Jesus is alive, sir. I wouldn't believe it if I didn't see it for myself.

Herod is angry. He pulls his sword and approaches the Soldier who doesn't move.

Thomas grabs Herod and pushes him away.

THOMAS: You will have to go through me to get to him.

Bartimeus also comes between Herod and the Soldier.

Herod considers but decides against it. He breaks down before them...falling to his knees.

HEROD: After all this time...after everything I've done to destroy this man Jesus...He still came out on top. He still won.

Herod holds the sword to his chest.

HEROD: There is nothing more for me here.

THOMAS: No.

Herod plunges the sword into his chest...and falls.

Thomas, Bartimeus, and the Soldier go to his side.

The Soldier pulls out the sword.

Herod coughs.

THOMAS: I think he will live.

HEROD: I just...put a sword through my heart. Why aren't I dead?

THOMAS: Your heart is a little more to the left, sir.

HEROD: Oh.

Bartimeus and Soldier laugh. Thomas joins in too.

They carry Herod offstage.

BLACKOUT

From the Author's Desk

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