

EPILOGUE

MARK BARRON, O.P.

SCENE — *An outer porch in the fortress Antonia*

TIME — *The afternoon of Good Friday*

CHARACTERS—*Pontius Pilate, the Governor*
A delegation from the Sanhedrin

For more than an hour now, the sun has withheld its light—mute tribute to the death of Him Who is the Light of lights. A painful hush has settled upon all nature.

At the right Pilate is seated upon a stone bench, above which hangs a lighted torch. He is covered with a heavy white mantle as if for protection against some awful desolation which threatens to grip his very frame. In his right hand he holds a parchment which he has just finished reading—for the hundredth time during that fatal day.

Slowly raising his head, the Governor once more allows his eyes to rest upon the awful spectacle in the distance. Alight with the fires of the Roman soldiers, Mount Calvary is thronged with figures which seem incessantly to move and sway around three crosses. The whole scene is like some eerie Dance of Death.

From the left there enters, slowly and silently, a group of the chief priests of the Jews. With numerous bows of faintly concealed contempt they approach the Governor.

CHIEF PRIEST (*nodding toward Calvary*). Write not, the King of the Jews; but that He said, I am the King of the Jews.¹

Stroking their beards and nodding their approval, the priests await Pilate's answer.

With a sudden move the Governor turns, the parchment falls to the floor. Rising and straightening himself haughtily, he looks with mingled contempt and desperation upon the group before him.

PILATE. What I have written, I have written.²

Without looking in either direction the Governor strides from the presence of the chief priests who smile and bow in mock resignation to the will of their victim.

The restless eyes of one of their number have perceived the parchment upon the floor. He picks it up. Glancing around furtively, he motions to the others, opens the roll and reads.

CHIEF PRIEST. Have thou nothing to do with that just man; For I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.³

Smiling ironically to each other, the chief priests nod and wag their heads. Dropping the parchment to the floor, they retire slowly, stroking their beards the while.

¹ John, xix, 21

² John, xix, 22.

³ Matth., xxvii, 19.