

Passion Play – 2025 Claudia Script (12.26.24)

CAIAPHAS: (*Pausing & turning to GUARD 2*) Let it out that anyone who cooperates in His capture will be rewarded.

ACT I—Scene 3: Pilate Arrives

PILATE: Claudia, it's good to see you here.

CLAUDIA: It's good to see you, too! How was your tour of inspection?

PILATE: It went well? When did you arrive from Caesarea?

CLAUDIA: Only a few hours ago. It went as well as can be expected. It was just long and lonely.

PILATE: In that case, I'll be sure to travel back with you.

(Herod and his entourage is coming down the Via)

CENTURION: Pilate, there are rumors that this holy man of the Jews...Messiah I believe they call him. There are rumors he's coming here.

PILATE: Longinus, it is more than rumor. It's fact. What is more, Herod my old enemy is also here for their Jewish Passover. But enough of this for now, let us go in

ACT I—Scene 4b: Barabbas Insert

Day scene resumes... Barabbas sneaks in from Gate #2 and steals garment:

MERCHANT: (*Scream*; voice of the PROCLAIMER) Stop! He stole my cloak! Thief!
[CLAUDIA enters after scream] [Roman 2 near Marketplace]

[CENTURION]: Arrest him!

[Two Roman guards catch Barabbas in front of Pilate's Porch.]

ROMAN 2: Think you can steal and get away with it?

ROMAN 1: Wait! I know this man (*realizing who is*), this man is Barabbas. He's wanted for rebellion and murder!

ROMAN 2: I'm sure Pilate will be pleased we've caught you at last.

ROMAN 1: Yes! No one can stand against the might of Rome.

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Act III—Scene 4a: Pilate Private Trial

PILATE: You are of the Sanhedrin? I have been expecting you. What of the prisoner?

PRIEST 1: *(From the ground @ porch steps)* One Jesus of Nazareth, a self-proclaimed teacher who subverts the traditions of our nation. He has gained a radical following; you witnessed it five days ago when He came to the festival.

PILATE: If He breaks your traditions, judge Him yourselves, by your Law.

PRIEST 2: It's come to more than that. He has proclaimed Himself our Messiah, our King.

PILATE: Are you the king of the Jews?

JESUS: The words are yours.

PILATE: The words are mine. Yes, indeed they are. *(To Claudia)* What an extraordinary reply. *(Now to priests)* What charge do you bring against him?

PRIEST 1: We believe He's a danger to the peace of Rome as well as our own nation.

PRIEST 2: His followers are encouraged against Rome in matters of taxes and rule.

PRIEST 1: His crimes are worthy of death by our Law and by Rome's.

PILATE: DEATH? You wish to put this man to death over those matters you've accounted?

PRIEST 2: That is our desire, his teaching has caused discontentment among the people all through Judea. It started in Galilee and has spread as far as this city.

PILATE: Is this man then a Galilean?

PRIEST 2: Yes, he is your Excellency *(realizing he has made a mistake)*.

PILATE: Why did you bring him to me then?

PRIEST 2: For trial, your Excellency.

PILATE: For trial? But is he not under Herod's jurisdiction? ...*(They debate among themselves)*... Answer my question!

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PRIEST 2: This man is under Herod's jurisdiction, but...

PILATE: Herod is here in Jerusalem at this very time! Take him to Herod. Don't trouble me further. I (have no time) (don't have time) for such foolishness.

JESUS: I know all who are not deaf to truth listen to my voice. For this was I born, for this did I come into the world.

CLAUDIA: Are you troubled by this?

PILATE: (*Sitting down on judgment seat*) Angry is more like it! I hate being used as a pawn by those I am supposed to rule! They expect me to join with them!

CLAUDIA: You can't! Pilate, please! Surely you don't believe them! Jesus is innocent!

PILATE: I believe the charges are false. Claudia, why are you acting this way? Is there something more? You believe he's innocent; do you believe in Him?

CLAUDIA: I have seen Him in my dreams, quiet and strong... suffering. Can you free Him? You must free Him!

PILATE: I can't judge him guilty; that's... the truth. It's custom to release a prisoner, at the feast. I'll release the Nazarene.

Act III—Scene 6: Pilate Public Trial

PILATE: This man, Jesus, has been brought to me by your own chief priests and charged with rebellion against the authority of Rome. I've questioned Him and found no grounds for the charges against Him certainly nothing worthy of death. As is custom at this feast, I will release Him to you.

PRIEST 1: If you want to release someone, then give us Barabbas!

PILATE: Barabbas? Would you have me release a murderer into your very midst. Centurion, have Barabbas brought forth (*to the Centurion*). Quickly! (*to Claudia*) I shall show them what type of man they would release.

CROWD: (*Cries louder*)

PILATE: (*To Crowd*) Then, if I release Barabbas, who stands condemned, I'll also release Jesus, un-condemned!