

## I, Peter

By Jonny White

*Scene: Monologue for Good Friday morning, before the crucifixion.*

**Peter** I stand before you a broken man. I'm empty. Full of despair. Things were going so well, and now this.

What's it all about? It all seems so pointless. So unfair. My future is in ruins. How could it turn out this way?

I'm waiting for them to bring him out, to get one last glimpse of him. Maybe get a chance to say I'm sorry ... but I need to be careful.

Last Sunday was great. We were the centre of attention. Well, when I say we, I do of course mean Jesus. He rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and people were so glad to see him that they threw their robes in front of him as he traveled down that road. They were in a frenzy of excitement, pulling palm branches off the trees, shouting, calling out to him as he passed by. It was great. The pharisees tried to get him to silence the crowd, but he told them that even the stones would cry out if the crowd was silent.

What a day. Fantastic. Jesus was amazing. And we felt so privileged to be close to him. To be called his disciples.

Isn't it amazing how quickly things change? That was last Sunday, and now it's Friday morning. This has got to be the worst day of my life.

Last night ... last night we met all together. That was Jesus and the twelve of us. We met for the passover meal in a small upper room. We had no inkling then of what was going to happen. No idea of the tears that we would weep over the next twelve hours. The fear we would feel. You've got no idea of how scared I am right now.

But last night, as we lay at the table, Jesus said "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me. One of you eating here with me."

We were shocked I can tell you. Three years we've been with Jesus. Three years where we've seen and heard things that you just wouldn't believe. Three years when we've grown to know and love Jesus and realise that he is who he says he is. The Son of God. We all of us cried out at that point. It can't be me can it? Do you mean me? Is it I Lord? We were all indignant. How could he suggest such a thing.

"It is one of the twelve," he said.

Again we protested. Judas looked him in the eye and, I can't believe he actually did this, said "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered "Yes, it is you." Then Judas left us. Conversation turned to different things, then Jesus turned to me and told me that I would betray him three times before the cock crowed this morning.

I nearly laughed. I would have done anything for Jesus. I even told him I would lay down my life. The thought that I would betray Jesus, my best friend was completely bizarre.

And yet ... I hang my head in shame. That was last night.

We went to Gethemane after the meal. Jesus said he wanted to pray, so we went with him, the two sons of Zebedee, you know, James and John, and me, Peter. To our shame, we fell asleep. All three of us. It was a pleasant evening and after all the excitement of the week, we just drifted off.

Jesus woke us and asked us to keep watch, but again we fell asleep. Twice more, he had to wake us. I wish now that I'd stayed awake, praying as he asked us to, but it's too late to change things now.

The third time he woke us, we heard a disturbance coming our way, and there was Judas, the little ...

I'm sorry. I still feel angry about it. Judas arrived with a large crowd, armed with all sorts of weapons. He went to Jesus and kissed him. That was the sign that Judas had told them and they went to grab Jesus. In a fit of temper, I grabbed a sword and struck

out at Malchus, the High Priest's servant, slicing his ear clean off. I was furious. But Jesus told me to put my sword away, and he reached out and healed that man's ear. Completely. Not a trace of the injury. How could Jesus do that? Knowing what they were going to do to him, he showed that much compassion on someone coming to take him to certain death.

And then, they took him away.

They took my Lord away.

It was dark by then, but the Pharisees were on a roll. They set up a mock trial. I was watching the buildings from a distance to see what was going to happen. There were lots of people around, some who were with the mob that took Jesus away. Suddenly this servant girl saw me. She peered at me. I looked away but she pointed at me and cried out "This man was with him". Without thinking, I denied it. I told her I didn't know Jesus. Me. Peter. One of the disciples. I told her I didn't know Jesus. I was scared. Fearful for my own life. While Jesus sat there facing that court, I denied I knew him. And not just once. Three times, just as Jesus had said at that passover meal. Someone else said "You are one of them" and again I denied it. I kicked myself both times, but couldn't help myself. I was feeling pretty miserable I can tell you, but then a third man said "certainly this man was with him for he is a Galilean" as if that makes any difference. And I, to my shame, stood up and told him I didn't know what he was talking about.

And then, the cock crowed.

The cock that reminded me of what Jesus had said earlier.

I ran from that place weeping.

And so now, here I am. Waiting again.

Waiting for them to bring Jesus out of that door over there. That door that only condemned men come through, with their guards. The door from the place where they collect their cross. That foul instrument of torture that only the Romans could have invented.

And Jesus will come through that door carrying a cross.

His cross.

I've seen crucifixions before, but then it was for people who were the scum of the earth.

This isn't right, putting Jesus with those sort of people. He was the only really good person I've ever known. He's never done anything wrong.

What was his crime? I'll tell you what his crime was. It was telling people about God's love for them. What sort of crime is that?

And now, in a few short hours, it will all be over. I don't know what we're going to do then. I guess I'll go back to my fishing. Not a lot else to do really.

But at the moment I don't really feel like doing anything.

I'm scared.

I know compared to what Jesus is going through, that's nothing. But I am scared. And I feel so bad about letting Jesus down. I hope he forgives me. I really do hope that he forgives me.

Here he comes now. Excuse me while I try to get near him

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