

FINALIST:

Santa Barbara International Screenplay Competition, Summer 2022

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE:

Accolade Global Film Competition, Summer 2022

WINNER, "Best Screenplay"

Toronto Film Magazine Fest, Summer 2022

WINNER, "Best Feature Script"

8 & Halfilm Awards/Rome, Summer 2022

WINNER, "Best Feature Script"

L.A. Indies, Summer 2022

WINNER, "Best Feature Script"

International Manhattan Film Awards, Summer 2022

WINNER, "Best Original Story"

New York Neorealism Film Awards, Summer 2022

GODFORSAKEN:
A STORY OF THREE MARYS

Screenplay by

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(as of OCTOBER, 2022)

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EXT. JUDEAN GARDEN AND BURIAL SITE - PRE-DAWN

Threatening CLOUDS roll.

A RED SKY eerily lights a hillside while shifting FOG obscures trees and rocky environs.

SUPER: **Judea, 33 A.D.**

SUPER: **After the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, three women named Mary were forced from their homes and cast adrift into a boat with no paddle, sail, or rudder.**

LIGHT from a small, fading FIRE illuminates MARY OF MAGDALA (called MAGDALENE), 32, as she bends to the ground, weeping.

Suddenly, A BRIGHT LIGHT floods the scene and

WHITE OUT

The WHITE OUT fades, revealing

MAGDALENE'S HANDS drop from her face with TEARS streaming through her fingers:

MAGDALENE
(Aramaic)
Rabbouni!

The FAINT SHADOW of a MAN passes over her.

In SHOCK, she CHOKES as she tries to contain herself:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
Teacher!

She HEARS a voice that we do not hear:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
Yes. As you say, I will, yes, but
why me -- why me, of all people?

Excitedly, as if she has FOUND GOLD and cannot believe it, MAGDALENE raises her head to reveal soft, comely features beaming with JOY.

She uprights herself, takes in a deep BREATH, and runs off.

EXT. JUDEAN HILLSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

MAGDALENE'S panicked FOOTFALLS and excited BREATHS echo as

MARY of NAZARETH (called MOTHER MARY), 48, trembles. She cradles an alabaster JAR:

MARY OF NAZARETH
(Aramaic)
Someone comes.

SUPER: Of many versions, the women were Mary of Nazareth, mother of the rabbi, also called Mother Mary --

MARY of BETHANY (called BETHANY), 34, somewhat frumpy caregiver, protectively nuzzles MARY OF NAZARETH as

DAWN breaks:

MARY OF BETHANY
(Aramaic)
Who is there?

SUPER: -- Mary of Bethany, called Bethany

BETHANY'S EYES look about to

an OX, attached to a CART, grazes in background.

MARY MAGDALENE (O.S.)
(Aramaic)
Shh, Mary Bethany, Mother Mary.
It's me.

BETHANY'S FACE flushes as she looks up to see

MAGDALENE'S SHADOW eclipses the new SUN.

SUPER: And Mary of Magdala, called Magdalene, a follower of the rabbi then known as Eashoa.

MAGDALENE is radiant. Her reddish-brown HAIR drapes her face as she bends down to them:

MARY OF BETHANY
Magdalene, what's come over you?
You sweat.

EXT. JUDEAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAWN

A SHEPHERD, 14, leads a FLOCK of SHEEP down a hill where GOATS plaintively BLEAT.

Just beyond, THREE ROMAN CROSSES stand empty.

SUPER: This is the story of their ordeal.

EXT. JUDEAN HILLSIDE BURIAL SITE

MARY OF NAZARETH studies MAGDALENE:

MARY OF NAZARETH
I see no sweat. I see tears.

MAGDALENE grabs hold of MARY OF NAZARETH'S HANDS:

MAGDALENE
(to Mary of Nazareth)
I saw your son.

MARY OF NAZARETH gasps.

BETHANY
When?

MAGDALENE
Just now.

MARY OF NAZARETH'S HANDS TREMBLE as she reaches out to
MAGDALENE.

BETHANY
Another seizure.

MARY OF NAZARETH
It will pass.

BETHANY
Magdalene, has not his death --

MARY OF NAZARETH
Where was he?

MAGDALENE
I stayed vigil with you, but I
could not sleep. I walked closer
and there, I saw a man. I thought
he was a caretaker, but the voice --

BETHANY
Likely as not a caretaker or guard!

MAGDALENE
It was him.

BETHANY
If it was, why you? Why not come to
all of us, to his own mother?

MAGDALENE

I asked that when I heard his voice! He called me "Mary," the way he always did: reassuring; even sweet. Then, he said, "Many have done well, but you tower over all."

BETHANY

This to you, the troubled one?

MAGDALENE

He said, "Peace be upon you Mary Magdalene and your house." It was as if he freed me.

BETHANY

From what?

MAGDALENE

From my past and all of the sorrows with it. Then, he said, "Go tell the others."

BETHANY

He knows that no one would believe a woman, especially you. Do you think you are Ruth or have the influence of Esther over a king?

MAGDALENE

I reached out to him, but he said, "Touch me not. I am between two worlds and I want no harm to you."

MARY OF NAZARETH grabs hold of MAGDALENE'S HANDS:

MARY OF NAZARETH

I want to believe you, Mary.

MAGDALENE

He said, "Be my apostle to my apostles. -- See for yourselves.

MAGDALENE points O.S.

EXT. TOMB - FOG DISSIPATES AROUND AN OPEN TOMB

A gigantic STONE once covering the TOMB sits to the side.

TWO ROMAN SPEARS and TWO SHIELDS lie abandoned on the ground.

EXT. JUDEAN HILLSIDE BURIAL SITE

MARY OF NAZARETH leans on a crude CANE:

MARY OF NAZARETH
O, my son!

The alabaster JAR she holds slips and breaks into PIECES,
spilling MYRRH OIL.

BETHANY
Tell Lazarus. See what he --

MAGDALENE
Lazarus goes his own way.

BETHANY
Magdalene, if you spread this word
without his advice or our bond, you
will get us killed. What proof have
you?

MAGDALENE
I said: "Rabbi, give me a sign or
no one will believe me." He said,
"You are my sign." He charged me
then to tell you and the others.

BETHANY
Those cowards? They scattered like
pigeons at the arrest. One ran away
naked.

MAGDALENE sighs:

MAGDALENE
Believe what you will.

MAGDALENE runs off.

MARY OF NAZARETH
Bethany, think: my son brought
change and died for it. After all
that has happened, should we sit
here, wring our hands and weep?

BETHANY
Yes.

BETHANY stands and yells after MAGDALENE:

BETHANY (CONT'D)
No one will believe you!

MARY OF NAZARETH
He put faith in her and so must we.

MARY OF NAZARETH yanks on Bethany's garment and BETHANY plops to the ground:

MARY OF NAZARETH (CONT'D)
In his life, to whom did my son
always speak?

BETHANY
The unexpected.

MARY OF NAZARETH
What more proof (do we need)?

MARY OF NAZARETH strong-arms BETHANY and, after a moment:

BETHANY
For you, then, I will believe.

INT. APOSTLES' ROOM - MORNING

A BURNING CANDLE is the only light source in a compact room as TEN MALE APOSTLES (plus one) of the deceased rabbi loll about, cower, or hold their heads in their hands.

JOHN, 24, is rolled up on the floor next to PETER, 33, who has the look of a kenneled dog. The others, all contemporaries, are ANDREW (Peter's brother), JAMES (YOUNGER), MATTHEW, JAMES (ELDER), PHILIP, JUDE, SIMON THE ZEALOT, and BARTHOLOMEW, stir.

Everyone is quiet until MARK, 17, who is not an apostle but a curious rebel, anxious and pushy, turns on them:

MARK
How long do we sit here?

ANDREW
Shut your mouth, Mark. Stop shadowing. You are not one of us.

MARK
Maybe not, but I was with him at the arrest just like you. I deserve to be. We should act.

JOHN
Against who?

MARK
You want a list, John?

JOHN
Take up your own cross, boy.

MARK
I'm no "boy" after what I've seen.

ANDREW SPITS:

ANDREW
He means "after what we've seen."

JOHN
How brave you were: running naked
from the arrest.

MARK
It wasn't my fault. Romans tore my
linen. You didn't tell Mother Mary?

JOHN
She knows you?

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET

MAGDALENE bounds up a deserted STREET. She stops at a
dilapidated DOOR.

She jiggles it, but it's locked, so she rattles it.

INT. APOSTLES' ROOM

ALL cower at the SOUND of crumbling wood.

MAGDALENE (O.S.)
Open up, it's me.

MAGDALENE pushes the DOOR open.

WIND blows the CANDLE, but the FLAME survives.

PETER knocks his head on a rafter.

DUST settles as

MAGDALENE'S EYES traverse the room:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
Simon Peter!

PETER
Magdalene?

MAGDALENE

Why do you sit in the dark like criminals?

PETER

We are criminals.

MARK

What do you want?

MAGDALENE scrutinizes MARK, then glowers with sarcasm:

MAGDALENE

I see you found your garment.

ANDREW

Speak.

MAGDALENE TREMBLES as if she knows she does not belong:

MAGDALENE

I have seen Eashoa.

JOHN

What?

PETER bristles.

MATTHEW

Dreamer!

MAGDALENE

Don't bark at me, tax man. He said "Those who have ears, let them hear."

ANDREW

If he is alive, he would be here with us. Where is he?

JOHN

You, of all people.

MAGDALENE

He said he will meet us in Galilee. Brothers, why do you resent me?

MATTHEW

Mad woman. Was it you who cried, "Stars swirl in the night sky?"

ANDREW

And "The sun sets on my house while," what?

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

"Rivers of blood run under my feet?" Deny those were your words.

MAGDALENE

It was him! He made me an apostle and that I will be.

ANDREW

We saw him die. Lazarus will jog that memory.

MAGDALENE

He was not there nor you, Andrew! Go to the tomb, see for yourself.

PETER towers over Magdalene:

PETER

Out of my sight, woman. You cannot ruin the ruined. You are not one of us and never will be. -- And to think that for him I gave up my boat, my nets, my family!

MAGDALENE

That is all you can say? You worry about your boat?

PETER

Eat without it!

MAGDALENE is caught as she regards EVERYONE, then exits as:

ANDREW

Harlot.

Peter breaks from his tirade:

PETER

Andrew! She is not that and you know it! People confuse her with the others. Nevertheless --

PETER smashes a JUG of WINE.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET - DAY

LAZARUS OF BETHANY, 33, (brother of Mary of Bethany), handsome and rich, and overweight APOSTLE THOMAS, 31, stagger out from an INN. Weary, slurring, spiritless, and out-of-his-mind drunk, Lazarus shares a WINE SACK with Thomas just as:

BETHANY drives the OXCART up the street with MARY OF NAZARETH next to her.

BETHANY yanks on the REINS as she sees Lazarus and Thomas,

BETHANY
Lazarus, brother? Have you been at
the inn all night?

LAZARUS
Where else, o wise sister?
Magdalene and I fought so I slept
here, the High Priests chase me for
questioning and Pharisees ransack
the house. But, away for two
nights, how could you know? Where
is Martha?

BETHANY
Our sister fled to Damascus, thanks
to you. But being at the inn, how
could you know?

THOMAS notices MARY OF NAZARETH'S shaking:

THOMAS
Mother Mary, are you all right?

BETHANY
Another spell after all that has
happened.

MARY OF NAZARETH tries to speak, but is interrupted as:

JOHN and MARK race past, followed by PETER.

JOHN skids to a stop at the cart:

JOHN
Mother Mary, thank God (we found
you)! Wait here.

JOHN, MARKS, and PETER charge off as MAGDALENE runs up:

MAGDALENE
Thomas! Lazarus, wait!

THOMAS
You!

MAGDALENE
I have seen Eashoa. He has risen
like he said.

LAZARUS pulls MAGDALENE aside:

LAZARUS

How can you say that after all of this? Do you want to get us killed? Think of Mother Mary.

MARY OF NAZARETH

A bruised reed he will not break.

MAGDALENE

I told Mother Mary. The prophecy was "On the third day, he will rise again" and he has. He made me an apostle.

THOMAS

When?

MAGDALENE

An hour less. He said, "Those who have eyes, let them see." We go to the square.

BETHANY

Brave Thomas, why did you leave us?

THOMAS

I had enough of Peter's grudges: mad at the Romans, mad at the judges, mad at himself. He's even mad at his mother-in-law.

LAZARUS

Mother Mary, you need a blanket.

BETHANY

Lazarus, a sword has pierced her heart.

THOMAS removes his outer coat and wraps it around MARY OF NAZARETH:

THOMAS

I'm no physician, but I come from a family who proves things before they run their mouths. I will believe Eashoa when I see Eashoa. Find me in my bed.

THOMAS flounces away.

MAGDALENE strokes MARY OF NAZARETH'S HANDS:

MAGDALENE
Come with us.

MARY OF NAZARETH nods in agreement.

LAZARUS
Who are you, Mary Magdalene? I know
you not.

MAGDALENE steps up onto the oxcart.

BETHANY
Lazarus, why do you stall? Eashoa
wept for you.

MAGDALENE
You owe your life to him and we
need protection.

Unwillingly, LAZARUS takes the REINS.

EXT. BURIAL SITE - MOMENTS LATER

The fog from earlier has dispersed as JOHN and MARK sprint to
the tomb.

MARK trips over a Roman SHIELD.

PETER runs up and SEES:

The ROLLED-BACK STONE and EMPTY TOMB.

MARK stands back to allow Peter and John to enter first.

Awestruck, PETER enters the tomb.

MARK strains to peek inside the tomb as JOHN enters.

INT. TOMB

BLOOD IS SPLATTERED THROUGHOUT.

PETER takes hold of CLEAN burial LINENS folded neatly on the
funeral SLAB, then runs his fingers across the DRIED BLOOD

PETER
What has happened here?

JOHN
Who could move the stone? It was
too heavy for ten of us.

PETER
From this moment, trust no one,
even our own, especially her.

JOHN
What if what she said is true?

PETER
What if *what* is true?

JOHN'S single TEAR drips onto the slab.

JOHN
We should have stayed with him. The
women did. How will that make us
look?

PETER is baffled.

EXT. JERUSALEM MARKET SQUARE - DAY

MERCHANTS AND CUSTOMERS crush against each other.

LAZARUS splits the CROWD to make room for the OXCART.

MAGDALENE waves to:

ARTEMAS, a garment vendor, familiar to her, offers a COLORFUL
SILK VEIL:

ARTEMAS
(Greek)
Good morning, Magdalene. Look what
I have for you.

MAGDALENE jumps from the cart and embraces ARTEMAS like an
old friend:

MAGDALENE
(Greek)
Good morning, Artemas.

ARTEMAS drapes the VEIL over her head and shoulders, then
admires it:

ARTEMAS
New silk from Athens.

A subtle GLOW comes over MAGDALENE as if she is illuminated
from within.

MAGDALENE
Artemas, I bring news.

ARTEMAS
Better than this? Look, Manos,
Magdalene is more beautiful than
ever.

MANOS, a jewelry merchant holding a box of GOODS, interrupts:

MANOS
She is indeed. Magdalene, what has
happened?

MAGDALENE
I have seen Eashoa, the Nazarene
Pilate crucified.

ARTEMAS and MANOS eye each other doubtfully.

ARTEMAS
Magdalene, for your own safety --

MANOS
Say nothing, Mary. Pilate's ears --

Almost trancelike, MAGDALENE reaches out to 15 STRANGERS of
various ages.

Opening her arms, she diverts STRANGERS from their shopping,
and beckons them. She speaks gently and quietly, so that they
have to lean in to hear:

MAGDALENE
"Those who have ears, let them
hear. Those with eyes, let them
see." Eashoa, the crucified rabbi,
lives today.

SHOPPERS and VENDORS are slack jawed:

ARTEMAS
This is not the Magdalene we know.

ARTEMAS strokes his other SILKS as if this VEIL has somehow
transformed her.

MANOS
It is not in the silks.

MAGDALENE
Pilate may have crucified him three
days ago, but his message lives.

ARTEMAS
The message and the man are not the
same, Magdalene.
(MORE)

ARTEMAS (CONT'D)

We know you were one of his companions, but do you know what you say?

MANOS

We remember what happened with your "visions."

ARTEMAS

We must see him. We cannot take a woman's word.

STRANGERS continue to grow around her as she draws them in.

MAGDALENE moves towards the TEMPLE STEPS.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET

Assorted MERCHANTS and CUSTOMERS of various ages, and a HIGH PRIEST swarm Mary of Nazareth and Bethany in the oxcart.

MAGDALENE takes command of the crowd as if she has become a rabbi:

MAGDALENE

You may not believe that he rose from the dead today, but tomorrow you will know that his word is alive and lives within us.

ARTEMAS

This is trouble.

A HIGH PRIEST accosts Bethany at the oxcart:

HIGH PRIEST

Who is she?

BETHANY

Mary.

HIGH PRIEST

And you?

BETHANY

Mary.

HIGH PRIEST

(to Mary of Nazareth)

And you?

BETHANY

Also Mary.

HIGH PRIEST
Three women named Mary?

EXT. JERUSALEM TEMPLE STEPS

With keen eye, the HIGH PRIEST turns to MAGDALENE:

HIGH PRIEST
We cannot hear. Tell us. Let us see
a woman rabbi.

MAGDALENE
Fear not. Walk forth. He has
conquered death. His power has
overcome Pilate, Herod, and Rome
itself. There is nothing more to be
added to this.

She points to THREE STREET BEGGARS:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
He vowed he would rise again to
help the stranger, dispossessed,
hungry, and afflicted.

MAGDALENE regards MARY OF NAZARETH.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET

LAZARUS cannot shake a sense of foreboding as he SEES:

THE CROWD turns to see:

EXT. JERUSALEM MARKET SQUARE

PETER, JOHN, AND MARK CHARGE into the square.

PETER leaps up the STEPS above Magdalene:

PETER
You Israelites, why do you wonder?
Why do you stare? Your God of
Abraham and his ancestors glorified
Eashoa and what did you do?

Magdalene's SPELL over the CROWD is suddenly broken. Her GLOW
dissipates.

THE CROWD is collectively repelled by Peter's furor.

PETER (CONT'D)
You rejected him and handed him
over to the villain, Pilate!

JOHN
Simon Peter is right. He is the
rock and I say you will die from a
pox of ignorance unless you listen
to him. He is your witness.

BETHANY stands up in the cart:

BETHANY
She is the witness, John.

MARK
She is a woman.

BETHANY
And your mother, boy.

MARK stutters.

PETER
You have killed the author of life
and you will pay.

FIRST THUG pitches a ROCK at Peter.

HIGH PRIEST
She is possessed by demons.

ARTEMAS
I believe her.

MANOS
And I.

SECOND THUG knocks Artemas in the head with a ROCK.

ARTEMAS collapses, SCARVES in hand.

MAGDALENE
Artemas!

MAGDALENE struggles to assist Artemas.

LAZARUS SEES that Magdalene is in trouble, but he cannot
abandon Bethany and Mary of Nazareth as

THE CROWD rocks the OXCART.

HIGH PRIEST shakes his fist:

HIGH PRIEST
Madwoman! Madmen!

JOHN and MARK dodge flying DEBRIS as
a RIOT breaks.

PETER
You reviled and crucified him who
loved you, but God has raised him.

BETHANY grabs a LOAF of BREAD from a passing BAKER and
clobbers PEOPLE indiscriminately with it.

EXT. NEARBY JERUSALEM STREET

MARCUS LUCIUS TULLIUS, 30, a giant of a Roman Tribune,
gallops on horseback followed by SEVERUS, his Optio (Aide),
and his COMPANY of 20 mounted ROMAN CENTURIONS through the
street.

TULLIUS halts his men to hear the source of the panic.

EXT. JERUSALEM TEMPLE STEPS

TENTS AND VENDOR TABLES are overturned by the mob as CHAOS
claims the market.

PETER
Cry not to Heaven for Heaven is
deaf to you!

HIGH PRIEST
You are drunk.

PETER
It is morning and we are not drunk.
This is what was spoken by the
prophet Joel: "In the last days --"

MAGDALENE shoves her way through the crowd, clutching:

MAGDALENE
Simon Peter, stop.

PETER
Get away from me, witch. You are a
curse. It was you, all along. You
let it happen. Now look what I have
to do.

MAGDALENE

Do you think this is my imagination
or that I invented this vision?

PETER jerks away.

PETER

His body was stolen!

PETER TURNS then faces the crowd:

PETER (CONT'D)

Moses said, "The Lord your God will
raise up for you from your own
people, a prophet like me."

BETHANY tries to calm MARY OF NAZARETH who trembles:

MARY OF NAZARETH

His anger shrouds my son's purpose.

MAGDALENE

Peter, no one stole his body. We
stayed vigil two nights. We would
have seen it and we can't win them
over with threats.

PETER

Murderers.

MAGDALENE

They are not murderers and you are
not a judge. If you scream at them,
you'll only drive them away.

PETER

I am Peter, the rock! He chose me
and I am as mad as the High
Priest's fist. They are all
irredeemable.

MAGDALENE

Simon Kephala, no one is
irredeemable.

PETER shoves Magdalene to the ground:

PETER

And Pilate?

LAZARUS rushes to her side as

PETER dives into the rioting crowd:

PETER (CONT'D)
Repent, O Israel!

Breaking away from Lazarus' grasp,

MAGDALENE hurries to Artemas as Manos tries to revive him.

MAGDALENE
Artemas, in Eashoa's name --

ARTEMAS dies.

TULLIUS and his 20 mounted ROMAN CENTURIONS enter the temple square. They whip to disperse the crowd.

TULLIUS blocks the High Priest:

TULLIUS
You there, who started this?

HIGH PRIEST
Three women named "Mary!"

TULLIUS halts his HORSE and the horse rears up, then stumbles:

TULLIUS
Joke with your conqueror and I will have your head!

HIGH PRIEST
No joke, Roman! Also, the man named Lazarus of Bethany, and them.

HIGH PRIEST points O.S.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET

PETER, JOHN, AND MARK ESCAPE INTO the melee.

EXT. JERUSALEM TEMPLE STEPS

TULLIUS WATCHES AS

LAZARUS lifts MARY OF NAZARETH from the cart and carries her away.

MAGDALENE and BETHANY hurry behind and disappear down an alley.

TULLIUS turns to SEVERUS:

TULLIUS
Tear the town apart.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET - ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY
PROTESTERS chase PETER, JOHN, and MARK.

INT. STABLE

LAZARUS and STABLE BOY, 16, harness TWO HORSES to a FOUR-
WHEELED WAGON.

MAGDALENE and BETHANY assist MARY OF NAZARETH into the wagon.

LAZARUS
Where do you go, Magdalene? The
Blacksmith wants to know where his
wagon and livestock are off to.

MAGDALENE
I know only Haifa. Then, maybe
Alexandria.

BETHANY
Jerusalem was meant to hear his
word first.

MARY OF NAZARETH
Does it matter where we speak it?

MAGDALENE takes LAZARUS aside:

MAGDALENE
Come with us.

LAZARUS
Go with God, not with me.

MAGDALENE
First, to my house for oils, then --

LAZARUS
Your house? Exactly where the
Romans will look. Do you want to be
the first female on a cross?

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET

TULLIUS, SEVERUS, and CENTURION FELIX, CENTURION #3,
CENTURION #4, CENTURION #5, bust down DOORS.

They force themselves into a HOUSE.

INT. STABLE - LAZARUS AND STABLE BOY

LAZARUS and STABLE BOY finish rigging HORSES and WAGON,
MAGDALENE climbs aboard and takes the reins.

MAGDALENE
Lazarus, his path is not ours. Does
it matter where it leads?

BETHANY climbs aboard as STABLE BOY opens the STABLE DOORS.

LAZARUS
Vrago is in Alexandria, my
colleague on the silk road. I will
send word.

BETHANY
To that pig? You failed to trust
him with trade. Now you want to
trust him with us?

LAZARUS
Past is past.

MARY OF NAZARETH
Alexandria will be our new
Jerusalem.

LAZARUS
Mother Mary should go home to
Nazareth.

MARY OF NAZARETH
Will I be safer in Nazareth? You
know how neighbors treated my son.

STABLE BOY opens the STABLE DOORS.

MAGDALENE
She cannot be alone. She needs us.

BETHANY
She needs me! You need us! Hurry!

MAGDALENE offers the reins to Lazarus.

With huge reluctance, LAZARUS' gives in, steps aboard, and
takes the REINS from MAGDALENE.

LAZARUS
Wrong day, wrong driver.

LAZARUS flips a GOLD COIN to the Stable Boy.

STABLE BOY grabs the COIN in midair.

LAZARUS releases the wagon BRAKE and NODS to the STABLE BOY.

STABLE BOY NODS to Lazarus, then slaps the horses away.

The WAGON exits.

BETHANY secures MARY OF NAZARETH.

EXT. PONTIUS PILATE'S CAESAREA GARRISON - DAY

ROMANS and SERVANTS, all ages, come and go in and out of the
WALLED GARRISON BUILDINGS.

TULLIUS, SEVERUS, and mounted CENTURIONS gallop through the
GARRISON GATE pulling a WAGON holding

PETER, MARK, and JOHN with HANDS BOUND.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET & JOPPA GATE

LAZARUS whips HORSES through a street.

MAGDALENE covers her VEIL.

LAZARUS SEES the INN ENTRANCE behind him.

EXT. JERUSALEM INN

CENTURIONS #4, #5 drag out THREE BLOODIED, DEAD BODIES.

LAZARUS' GOLD COIN bounces into the street.

The bloodied STABLE BOY drops next to the COIN.

EXT. PONTIUS PILATE'S CAESAREA GARRISON

CENTURIONS, SERVANTS, and SLAVES come and go, they pause as
they HEAR Pilate's VOICE echo:

PILATE (O.S)
No!

INT. PONTIUS PILATE'S CAESAREA GARRISON

PONTIUS PILATE, 40, screams at TULLIUS as
SEVERUS marches in with

CLAUDIA PROCULA, 39, Pilate's wife.

CLAUDIA is stoic, mysterious, and troubled after hearing the
scream:

CLAUDIA
Tullius?

Guzzling WINE, PILATE broods behind a DESK.

TULLIUS
Daughter of Caesar, Claudia
Procula: the mob claims three women
named Mary --

PILATE
Women.

TULLIUS
-- one "Magdalene" says: "He who
was dead has risen."

CLAUDIA betrays some inner joy which Pilate notes.

PILATE turns on TULLIUS:

PILATE
Find them. Chain them. Then, find
the deserters who fled the tomb and
crucify them.

TULLIUS
They shed armor and left with no
trace. But, we have three of the
rabbi's friends.

CENTURION #2 and CENTURION FELIX enter holding PETER, JOHN,
and MARK in CHAINS.

PILATE
Let me think: do I know you?

MARK
Your wife does.

PILATE hurls the GOBLET at Mark, splashing him with WINE,
then goes for his THROAT.

PILATE
Shut your mouth, boy.

PETER
Stop, Roman! He's a child.

PILATE regards Peter:

PILATE
Replace him then.

PETER struggles against CHAINS.

CLAUDIA
Husband!

PILATE releases MARK.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
I know them from the Nazarene's
sermon on the plain. Remember, you
sent me to listen. The big one is
Simon, called Peter. The middle one
is John, the rabbi's brother, and
this boy --

MARK
I'm no boy.

PILATE
Then you can be crucified with the
adults.

CLAUDIA
Simon Peter, is it true three women
named Mary started the riot by
saying your rabbi lives?

PETER
Yes.

CLAUDIA
And was Magdalene one of them?

PETER
Yes.

CLAUDIA
I want to speak to her.

PETER
Speak to me.

CLAUDIA is amused by disguised jealousy.

CLAUDIA
Where is she?

PETER
If I knew, I would say so you could
arrest her.

CLAUDIA sidles up to PILATE:

CLAUDIA
I wouldn't crucify anyone yet.
Question these faithful first.

TULLIUS
What do we do with them?

PILATE
Confine them. Minimum water, no
food, no High Priests, and not a
word to Herod!

EXT. MAGDALENE'S JERUSALEM HOUSE - NIGHT

LAZARUS jerks the horses to a stop in front of a partially
burned-out HOUSE.

LAZARUS
The harbor is a day away. Waste no
time. Buy supplies there.

MAGDALENE and BETHANY jump out, then hurry inside.

LAZARUS steps down, grabs FEED BAGS for the horses, and
places them around their heads.

INT. MAGDALENE'S JERUSALEM HOUSE

Frenzied, MAGDALENE and BETHANY enter. BETHANY grabs FRUITS
and VEGETABLES as MAGDALENE goes for TWO OINTMENT JARS.

MAGDALENE
We could be gone for weeks. What do
we eat? What do we wear?

BETHANY
Is life not more than food and
clothing?

MAGDALENE
Preach, Mary. Preach to me!

BETHANY nudges MAGDALENE as in "snap out of it."

BETHANY

You still resent my brother.

MAGDALENE

I loved him once. He loved wine and money more. I loved this house and now, I cannot wait to leave it. -- O Mary, forgive me, I am not ready for this.

BETHANY

You were fearless at the Temple. You even impressed me.

MAGDALENE

When my words cause such chaos? Now, they drag Lazarus into this?

BETHANY

You trusted those words or you would not have spoken them.

MAGDALENE SEES: TWO BURNED-OUT CHILDREN'S BEDS in a corner.

BETHANY (CONT'D)

Grief comes alone, Mary. After the Rabbi died, Lazarus met his, his way. Be glad he is with us now.

EXT. MAGDALENE'S HOUSE IN JERUSALEM

As LAZARUS climbs back onto the wagon, MARY OF NAZARETH reaches out to him:

LAZARUS

What do I do, Mother Mary? I loved her when she was shy, quiet, and damaged. I stood by her when they called her mad. Yet, no matter what, her mind is not (on me) --

MARY OF NAZARETH

My son's death plays tricks. Give her time. She is with you more than you know.

LAZARUS

If I could believe that, I would be a happy man.

MARY OF NAZARETH

Who is happy, son? The one who takes, or the one who earns?

LAZARUS is moved by her calling him "son."

LAZARUS
The one satisfied.

MAGDALENE and BETHANY carry out clothes, food, and two JARS of oil.

LAZARUS jumps down to help load the wagon as

BETHANY climbs on board.

MAGDALENE goes to him and places a hand on his shoulder:

MAGDALENE
I know no other man more devoted to
his woman.

LAZARUS
Are you my woman?

MAGDALENE demurs, then steps aboard.

LAZARUS jumps onto the wagon and grabs the REINS:

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
What do you want of me?

MAGDALENE
We will hire a boat in Haifa, sail
for Alexandria, and be done with
this godforsaken place.

BETHANY holds tight onto MARY OF NAZARETH as

LAZARUS whips the horses away.

INT. CAESAREA DUNGEON CELL - NIGHT

PETER, JOHN, and MARK sit on piles of STRAW:

PETER
She is a plotter.

JOHN
You think she had the stone rolled
back and the body taken?

MARK
How could she do that?

PETER
Some would do anything to fulfill a
prophecy.

MARK
While Mother Mary and Bethany stand
by and watch?

PETER
They slept through it.

JOHN shoulders PETER:

JOHN
You denied the rabbi three times.
Make it a solid fourth. You are no
better than Judas!

MARK
Stop.

JOHN
Instead of a plot, Simon called
Peter, think that the rabbi might,
just might --

PETER hangs his head:

PETER
I am not ready.

ADRIANUS, Praefectus Castrorum, (Third-in-Command of a
Legion), 53, unlocks the CELL DOOR, then

ADRIANUS unlocks their CHAINS:

ADRIANUS
Your way is cleared.

PETER, JOHN, and MARK skulk past him:

PETER
Why do you do this?

ADRIANUS
Spirit moved me.

As PETER, JOHN, and MARK run out,

ADRIANUS exits and LOCKS the CELL DOOR, then runs up STAIRS.

INT. CAESAREA DUNGEON - STEPS - SAME

ADRIANUS SEES:

A FIGURE emerges from SHADOW.

Quietly, he hands keys to

CLAUDIA PROCULA hides the keys under her cloak.

INT. PILATE'S CAESAREA PALACE - NEXT DAY

TULLIUS and SEVERUS enter and salute Pilate:

TULLIUS
Procurator, the women have fled to
Alexandria.

SEVERUS
A stable boy spoke before we slit
his throat.

PILATE
On my order, go! Take those who
want Roman citizenship: Auxiliary,
enough gold to pay and disguise
them, then infiltrate --

TULLIUS
Disguise?

PILATE
"Disguise and mingle" as we did at
the riots. Find the women quietly,
and deliver them back alive.

TULLIUS
Why not rid them as soon as --

PILATE
Severus goes first with one other.
Tullius, you follow with the Sixth
Cohort.

TULLIUS
A cohort for three women?

PILATE
It is more than three women. Their
poison is a danger to the empire,
to Caesar and to me.

TULLIUS eyes SEVERUS.

PILATE (CONT'D)
 Make arrangements for troops with
 the legate in Alexandria. Then
 discretion, Tullius, especially at
 Roman barracks there. You are on a
 routine mission from the emperor.
 Anything else, I will sell tickets
 to your public suicide.

PILATE begins to exit, but hesitates:

PILATE (CONT'D)
 And Tullius, we know of your link
 to that rabbi. You will be watched.

PILATE exits.

SEVERUS
 Who do I take?

TULLIUS
 Those who want citizenship and who
 cannot be bribed.

INT. CAESAREA DUNGEON

ADRIANUS screams in pain as PILATE shoves a LIT TORCH against
 his chained ARMS.

CENTURION FELIX holds ADRIANUS as:

CLAUDIA PROCULA enters:

CLAUDIA
 Pilate!

PILATE turns to SEE her,

PILATE hurls the TORCH at her feet.

CLAUDIA staggers:

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
 How dare you.

CENTURION FELIX retrieves the TORCH:

PILATE
 Daughter of Caesar, indeed! You are
 also Julia's daughter and cannot be
 trusted any more than she. Why did
 you order Adrianus to allow my
 prisoners to escape?

CLAUDIA
The zealots? What are they to you?

PILATE
My destiny! You know better! No
zealots, prophets and their hens,
"King" Herod, not even you will
keep me from it.

CLAUDIA
Before you grab someone else's
manhood, I suggest you crush
everybody on that list before
Vitellius gets my father's ear.
There is talk of Marcellus
replacing you.

PILATE
I washed my hands of them.

CLAUDIA
No soap is so potent. Why did you
come down here?

PILATE
To talk to Simon called Peter, but
you ruined that.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HARBOR - DAY

The spectacular VISTA of ALEXANDRIA: Egyptian port city on
the Mediterranean Sea.

A SMALL SAILBOAT docks.

SUPER: **ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT**

EXT. ALEXANDRIA DOCK

LAZARUS assists MAGDALENE, BETHANY, and MARY OF NAZARETH onto
the dock while

DOCK HANDS unload BAGGAGE.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA STREET AND MARKETPLACE - DAY

LAZARUS whips TWO HORSES pulling an OPEN CARRIAGE. He turns
to the women:

LAZARUS
Keep out of sight.

EXT. CARRIAGE

MAGDALENE, BETHANY, and MARY OF NAZARETH hover against baggage and supplies.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE FACADE

LAZARUS stops the carriage in front of an UNFINISHED HOUSE.

SCAFFOLDING is propped up against the façade.

LAZARUS steps down to greet

VRAGO, 40, Egyptian merchant whose CLOTHES indicate he is wealthy, but he shoos FLIES from his BEARD.

LAZARUS
(*Arabic*)
Peace be upon you, Vrago.

VRAGO kisses LAZARUS once, each cheek, then offers a WINE SACK:

VRAGO
(*Hebrew*)
Peace be upon you, Lazarus.

LAZARUS drinks:

LAZARUS
You still have flies in your beard.

Laughing, VRAGO swats a FLY:

VRAGO
Old friends, easy kill.

LAZARUS
Good to see you, "old friend."

VRAGO
Your message came days ago.

LAZARUS
Headwinds slowed us. This is Magdalene, and you remember my sister, Mary Bethany?

BETHANY nods as she assists MARY OF NAZARETH.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
And this is Mary of Nazareth.

VRAGO

Nazareth? Even Egypt knows a bad place. Little wonder you bring them. Their beauty is a gift to my home.

LAZARUS

We have known Vrago many years. He is a merchant on --

MAGDALENE

The silk road as you said.

BETHANY

Is it a home or a warehouse?

VRAGO

It will be your home while in Alexandria. Slightly unfinished, but my slaves, I only get so much out of them.

LAZARUS admires the city.

LAZARUS

I have here stayed many times. Five bedrooms --

EXT. ALEXANDRIA CITYSCAPE

LAZARUS (O.S.)

-- Beautiful. Good to be back. I plan to show them the library.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE FACADE - VRAGO

VRAGO nudges LAZARUS aside:

VRAGO

Library? No, no. No women allowed in the library.

LAZARUS

Since when?

VRAGO

Women are curious, superstitious and their hands, oily from cooking, therefore, bad for scrolls.

LAZARUS

Things have changed. Egypt once had women as pharaohs.

VRAGO

Ha! The last woman to rule Egypt declared herself a god and Rome burned the library out of spite!

LAZARUS

That was an accident.

VRAGO

Nevertheless, Alexandrians are open-minded but for women and their infernal olive oil.

VRAGO claps his hands and

TWO MALE SLAVES, ANDERGOS, 25, a Gaul, and MURID, 20, an Ethiopian run in.

VRAGO (CONT'D)

Andergos and Murid. My slaves, your slaves, included.

SARAH E KILI ("Sarah The Black"), 25, a stunning Ethiopian, sulks in.

VRAGO (CONT'D)

Sarah E Kili, slave cook and housekeeper, also included. Sarah, straighten up!

SARAH bows meekly.

VRAGO (CONT'D)

Watch her. You don't have to be nice. She behaved so badly as a child, her parents threw her overboard from the boat they were rescued in.

LAZARUS

Why keep her, then?

VRAGO

For me to know, eh?

LAZARUS

As long as we can trust them.

VRAGO

O, you can trust them! They know that if they steal from me, or do anything not to my liking, I sell them to Bruno, the stable keeper, and he is a stinker.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE FACADE - DAY

TIME LAPSE: the FACADE of the building CHANGES as SCAFFOLDING is removed by WORKERS.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE

BETHANY knits a VEIL as

MARY OF NAZARETH meditates by a WINDOW.

ANDERGOS and MURID organize FURNITURE.

MAGDALENE and SARAH chop VEGETABLES at a KITCHEN TABLE.

MAGDALENE

Where is your home, Andergos?

ANDERGOS

May I speak?

MAGDALENE

Of course.

ANDERGOS

Roman Gaul. Then, Egypt, but south. Murid, I met here after he --

SARAH

Saved you from you.

SARAH reaches and holds up:

ANDERGOS' SCARRED WRISTS.

MAGDALENE, BETHANY, and MARY OF NAZARETH startle:

MAGDALENE

We are sorry for you. How -- ?

MURID

The slavers saw us as a team. We were sold together like horses.

ANDERGOS

Not horses. I would kill anyone who separates us.

MAGDALENE

Why did you leave Gaul to be a slave in Egypt?

ANDERGOS

I was hated for who I am and like a slave, they tried to change me.

MAGDALENE

But, you are a slave here.

ANDERGOS

Slave, yes. But, freedom I found in my love for him in the city of Alexander. An ugly freedom, but freedom.

MARY OF NAZARETH

God smiles on those who love.

ANDERGOS

If God smiles on slaves anywhere, he is a jester and jesters do not laugh at their own jokes.

BETHANY

God smiles not on abomination.

ANDERGOS towers over BETHANY:

ANDERGOS

Thank your bigot god, madam, he has kept you alive this far to spread his lies.

BETHANY cowers.

MURID

Andergos, remember Vrago.

SARAH

Spies everywhere.

MAGDALENE

No spies here, Andergos.

BETHANY

Forgive me.

ANDERGOS calms.

MAGDALENE

Do you pray?

MURID

Not to Roman super-gods, if that's what you mean. We pray Egyptian: Amun-Ra, Sarah and I.

SARAH

Ancient Ra, the sun-god we can see, and Amun, god of the hidden: two as one.

MURID

Prayer is forbidden, so we make prayers in minutes of our daily lives.

MAGDALENE

We too believe in one God of body and spirit, and that God lives within us.

ANDERGOS drops into SHADOW.

EXT. VRAGO'S HOUSE - DAY

THE HOUSE is adorned by a CENTRAL FOUNTAIN and PALM TREES.

Noisy PROTESTS are HEARD from inside:

VRAGO (O.S.)

Yes, yes, old friends. I hear your complaints.

INT. VRAGO'S HOUSE

FOUR MERCHANTS, 40s: BALTO, NIBAL, BANDAR, and ABBAAD, rich and dressed like it, surround VRAGO.

FOUR FEMALE SLAVES, 20's, tend to them offering FRUIT and DRINK.

BANDAR

We gambled fortunes on Lazarus and look what he brings us --

ABBAAD

Debt?

NIBAL

And Jewish women! We are in no mood
for challah and jest.

VRAGO

Gentlemen, this is business. I do
not blame Lazarus for losses as I
do not blame you. Ebb and flow. We
gain, we lose. It is the market.

NIBAL

Camel dung!

BALTO

Who are they? If they were his
wives, there would be no issue.

VRAGO

Yes, I would not have provided the
lease had I known about them.

BALTO

They must be slaves.

VRAGO

I included slaves in his rent.

NIBAL

I want my money back.

ABBAAD

So if they are neither wives nor
slaves, who are they?

VRAGO

One is his sister.

BANDAR chokes on a PLUM.

BANDAR

Sister? A hazard.

BALTO

Bah! Kill them and bury them with
the pharaohs.

ABAAAD

It's bad luck to kill women. My
uncle killed his first wife and
stepped into quicksand with his
second.

BANDAR

Superstitious Abaad, like a woman.

VRAGO
We are merchants, not holy men.

BALTO
All the more reason to guard
property. We know of the chaos in
Jerusalem. We heard it from the
caravans. What if it follows them?
What then?

VRAGO
As his former colleague, I say bury
no one yet, until we get his money.

VRAGO grins.

AZHAR
You, Vrago, are an infidel.

BANDAR/BALTO/ABBAAD
Infidel. Infidel!

VRAGO
Perhaps for a short time?

AZHAR
Worse than infidel: diplomat.

BANDAR/BALTO/ABBAAD
Diplomat. Diplomat!

NIBAL
And there it is.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE - DAY

BETHANY organizes FOOD on a TABLE.

The SUBTLE LUMINESCENCE imbues MAGDALENE while BETHANY,
MURID, ANDERGOS, SARAH, and MARY OF NAZARETH listen:

MAGDALENE
My friend gave only two laws: "Love
your neighbor as yourself," and --

LAZARUS carries in TWO SCROLLS, but no one notices him.

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
-- "Love your creator no matter the
name, for the power to give breath
is beyond the power to take it."

LAZARUS
What is this?

MAGDALENE'S GLOW fades.

LAZARUS shoves MURID and ANDERGOS:

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
Back to work.

LAZARUS takes MAGDALENE by the arm and leads her to:

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE - KITCHEN

LAZARUS turns on MAGDALENE:

LAZARUS
We agreed, no talk to anyone!

MAGDALENE
My job is to talk! To anyone!

LAZARUS
While Vrago helps us, we behave as
his guests.

MAGDALENE
We will move.

LAZARUS
Who would have us?

MAGDALENE
I have a duty to the rabbi.

LAZARUS
Let him go.

MAGDALENE
You let him go!

MAGDALENE scrutinizes LAZARUS:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
You do not believe it, do you?

LAZARUS
Believe?

BETHANY listens.

MAGDALENE

You do not believe he raised you
from the dead.

LAZARUS

I know nothing.

MAGDALENE

But, you do. What is dead, Lazarus?
Tell us. If not for you, *he* would
be alive.

LAZARUS

You say such a thing?

BETHANY

Do you think Pharisees, judges,
Sadducees, Romans, even Pilate's
mob would be so threatened that
they would kill a man for magic
tricks?

MURID and ANDERGOS listen from the open door.

BETHANY (CONT'D)

The lame walk, the blind see and
they think: "staged actors,"
nothing more. Tales of miracles and
walking on water from his friends.

MAGDALENE

"Friends' stories!" That is all.
People believed in him because he
gave hope for a better life. It was
only after you went sick, *his*
friend, *his* benefactor --

BETHANY

-- we saw your color, feared your
fever and smelled your stink after
death and then, after we buried
you, he came to us four days late
and we watched as he wept for you.
He knew what he was doing, being
late. That was the day, brother,
when he bid you, "Lazarus, come
forth!"

LAZARUS shudders.

BETHANY (CONT'D)

And you came forth. You were dead:
four days dead. A skunk crushed by
a chariot smells no worse.

MAGDALENE

When he raised you, his fate was sealed.

LAZARUS

You blame me?

BETHANY

That day he put the fear of God in all of us. You are why they put him to death.

LAZARUS

Brutal sister, even to Martha!

BETHANY

Brutal like nails.

LAZARUS drinks WINE.

LAZARUS

I leave tomorrow. The depository is not far and I need money for Vrago.

MAGDALENE

And other things.

LAZARUS

You want us dead too.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE FACADE - NEXT DAY

15 STRANGERS of all ages, shapes, sizes, and colors congregate outside the house.

STRANGERS take seats wherever they can fit, indicating that Magdalene's word has spread.

Some wait at the entrance as Magdalene speaks:

MAGDALENE (O.S.)

Welcome, everyone.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS

MAGDALENE laughs and drinks with them as

MURID passes WINE GOBLETS and BREAD around the room.

ANDERGOS watches from the kitchen as

MAGDALENE'S subtle glow returns:

MAGDALENE

When foreigners come to our homes,
we welcome them and love them as we
love ourselves, as the Rabbi said --

FACES in the group listen as

OPTIO SEVERUS and CENTURION FELIX disguised as "believers"
sit with them:

A YOUNG MAN obscured by a HOOD raises his HAND.

YOUNG MAN

Tell us what he said.

BETHANY and MARY OF NAZARETH take notice.

MAGDALENE

"Walk forth, you who mourn, for you
shall be comforted. Walk forth the
meek, for you shall inherit the
earth. Walk forth those who hunger
and thirst for justice, for they
shall be -- "

YOUNG MAN

That's not what he said. Eashoa
said, "Blessed are the mourners.
Blessed are the meek!" Not "Walk
forth." What does that mean?

MAGDALENE

He calls us to work, not sit.

YOUNG MAN

Who are you to change his words?

MAGDALENE

"Blessed are" is passive: as if you
let the world change you. "Walk
forth" means go, change the world.

YOUNG MAN

And if you are powerless like us?

MAGDALENE

You may not be able to change the
world, but you are not allowed to
stop trying.

INT. VRAGO'S HOUSE - DAY

VRAGO and LAZARUS recline on cushions with WINE and a TRAY of DATES and FRUIT.

TWO small BAGS of GOLD COINS are visible, clearly Lazarus' rent payment.

TWO of Vrago's (many) WIVES, 20's, busy as Lazarus sets down his CUP and stands:

LAZARUS
Your hospitality is welcomed!

LAZARUS takes ONE BAG of COINS, but leaves the other.

VRAGO
(stands)
What are friends for?

VRAGO takes the SECOND BAG of COINS.

LAZARUS
No grudge?

VRAGO
Nothing! And you have lifted a great weight from my shoulders. I see now your women are with you for secret reasons which I respect.

LAZARUS
If I could say more --

VRAGO
I worry for you: you care for them but have no wife of your own. A man with a well but no water gets thirsty. Take one of mine.

LAZARUS
Occupied.

VRAGO
What of this Magdalene? Why do you care so much for her if she is not your wife? Another man?

LAZARUS
She had twins once, a boy and girl. But, the husband found out about an indiscretion and he attacked her one night. A neighbor heard screams and came running.

(MORE)

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

A fight broke, the husband killed the neighbor and then in a great rage, stabbed the twins to death. Then, he set fire to the house.

VRAGO

Tsk, tsk.

LAZARUS

She got out, but when people discovered the husband, children, and neighbor all dead, she was cause, not victim, and they drove her away.

VRAGO

How does this involve you?

LAZARUS

The twins were mine.

VRAGO and LAZARUS walk to:

EXT. VRAGO'S HOUSE - COURTYARD

LAZARUS

She was out of her mind and in deep depression until she met the rabbi.

A HORSE stands ready. Lazarus' MONEY BAG hangs from the saddle.

VRAGO

She is fortunate to have you. Here, we deal differently with that kind of woman.

LAZARUS

The rabbi was her healer. Not me.

VRAGO

Bah! Miracles are for women.

LAZARUS straddles the horse:

LAZARUS

(*in Arabic*)

Good luck, old friend.

LAZARUS spurs the HORSE away.

VRAGO

Old friend.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE

MARK removes his HOOD.

MARK
You had better shut your mouth,
woman!

MAGDALENE
Mark!

SEVERUS and CENTURION FELIX recognize him.

BETHANY
How did you find us?

MARK
Everyone knows you are here with
Magdalene, Mother Mary, and
Lazarus. Simon Peter says you are
in danger.

MAGDALENE'S GLOW fades.

MAGDALENE
Is he still the angry bully he was?
Or have any of Eashoa's teachings
rubbed off?

Mark chokes and stumbles:

MARK
Magdalene, I came to tell you --

From outside, SCREAMING and POUNDING shake the WALLS.

BETHANY and MARY OF NAZARETH startle and MAGDALENE and MARK
run to a window:

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE

MAGDALENE ushers PEOPLE out just as:

MAGDALENE`
Go quickly. Come in two days.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE

MAGDALENE'S FOLLOWERS are beaten by 20 THUGS, all 20s.

CENTURION FELIX and SEVERUS slip away.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE

SARAH runs in and slams the door. She is filthy, disheveled, and her clothes are shredded.

SARAH
You are not safe.

BETHANY
But, she has said nothing --

SARAH
She is a woman and they hate women
with opinions, especially about
things holy. When I tried to stop
them, they beat me with a ram's
horn.

MAGDALENE goes OUT the front door:

MARY OF NAZARETH
With care, Mary.

SARAH
Is she insane?

MARK follows MAGDALENE.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE FACADE

As MAGDALENE steps into the street,

RIOTERS pummel the house with EGGS, ROTTEN FRUIT, and bloody
ANIMAL PARTS.

RIOTER #1
Get out! Go home!

MAGDALENE approaches RIOTERS with no fear as
she is hit by more DEBRIS.

RIOTER #2
Go back where you came from and
take your god with you!

BETHANY rushes outside.

ANDERGOS, MURID, and SARAH hasten to protect Magdalene.

MARK offers to wipe MAGDALENE'S FACE with a cloth, but
she refuses:

MAGDALENE

They must see I am not afraid.

MARK jumps in front of the crowd:

MARK

People of Alexandria: I am Rabbi
Eashoa's follower, Mark. I come
from Jerusalem. I bring news from
Simon Peter, the rock!

Drenched in the GARBAGE, animal BLOOD, and all kinds of vile
LIQUIDS,

MAGDALENE pushes Mark away:

MAGDALENE

Mark, stop.

MARK recovers, then turns back to the RIOTERS:

MARK

"Stars will fall from the sky and
the powers of heaven will be --!"

MARK is hit by a ROCK.

RIOTERS collectively look up into the sky as

BETHANY attempts to hold MAGDALENE back as RIOTERS grouse
towards them.

MAGDALENE breaks free of BETHANY and raises her arms to the
RIOTERS:

MAGDALENE

Peace be upon you, Egypt!

MAGDALENE is magically illuminated.

RIOTERS turn mysteriously silent.

BLOOD drips from MARK'S brow as:

CENTURION FELIX and SEVERUS watch from the street.

RIOTERS murmur.

MAGDALENE'S glow enthralls everyone.

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)

And your houses!

RIOTERS back away.

ANDERGOS, MURID, and MARK hurry SARAH, BETHANY, and MAGDALENE away and

The DOOR slams shut.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS

Sarah watches from a WINDOW:

SARAH
They are gone!

MARK bleeds at a TABLE. He is shaken, and filthy.

MARY OF NAZARETH dabs his head with a WET CLOTH.

MARK
They'll be back. We must leave.

LAZARUS bursts in. While in a drunken rage, he carries a MONEY BAG.

LAZARUS
It looks like a war zone outside.
What happened?

LAZARUS sees MARK:

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

ANDERGOS offers Lazarus WATER.

LAZARUS knocks the water away.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
Out of my way, deviate! What is this?

MARY OF NAZARETH
He misspoke.

BETHANY
Misspoke? He shot off his mouth again! Did you not see what happened to Magdalene?

MARK
I saw. They wanted to kill her.

BETHANY
And they almost got you.

MARK
Them and the Romans.

LAZARUS
Romans?

MARK
They were here! In this room
listening, spying on us! And I put
us in danger thinking my words
would be good coming from a man.

MARY OF NAZARETH wipes blood from Mark's head.

MARY OF NAZARETH
Get him cleaned.

As ANDERGOS and MURID help Mark upstairs, he addresses
MAGDALENE:

MARK
I found you, Magdalene, I found you
to tell you Eashoa came to Peter
and the rest. You were right. He
lives.

MARY OF NAZARETH covers her mouth, stunned.

Blistering, LAZARUS yanks MAGDALENE aside:

LAZARUS
So, now we go home, is that it?
Ride into Jerusalem, cactus flowers
and palm fronds hailing from
windows, blessings from Pilate,
High priests, Herod, and --

MAGDALENE
Lazarus!

LAZARUS
You are a curse! I grant the wish
you hint at daily: tomorrow I take
my sister and Mother Mary while you
tell the world what you want, but
you will not bring the world to
this doorstep.

MARY OF NAZARETH rises and shakes the bloodied RAG in
LAZARUS' face:

MARY OF NAZARETH

Lazarus, Magdalene met the world on
 this doorstep today at my son's
 bidding. She spreads his word as he
 would in this room, at this table.
 If you stand in her way, you stand
 in his. Believe what you want, go
 where you will, but dead or alive,
 he is the reason you stand at all.

LAZARUS yanks the bloodied RAG from MARY OF NAZARETH and
 pitches it.

The BLOODIED RAG splashes to the floor.

MARY OF NAZARETH hands drip with Mark's BLOOD.

SARAH slips out the front door.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA STREET

SARAH walks a nameless Street, then

SARAH stops at Vrago's front door.

She knocks.

The DOOR opens.

INT. VRAGO'S HOUSE

SARAH steps into the house and SEES:

VRAGO sits eating as THREE WIVES, 20's, recline either side
 of him picking CRUMBS from his beard.

An UNSHEATHED ROMAN SWORD closes the DOOR.

OPTIO SEVERUS and CENTURION FELIX eye SARAH.

VRAGO

Gentlemen, you know our Sarah. Sit,
 sit. Bargain.

SEVERUS

Our orders are to return the women
 to Jerusalem alive, not to give
 them over to you.

VRAGO
Please! I, my friends and my
family, are permanent residents of
Alexandria whereas you are here a
short time only.

CENTURION FELIX
We take the women as ordered.

VRAGO shakes his fist:

VRAGO
Roman, think. If we leave the women
alive to spread this "word" like
Emperor Scorpions spread venom, who
comes in their place? More
scorpions. And who but we peaceful
residents of Alexandria and
citizens of Rome, will be left with
the pestilence?

VRAGO stands, then roughly grabs TWO WIVES.

VRAGO shoves the WIVES to the floor at their feet.

VRAGO (CONT'D)
Is Rome blind?

VRAGO offers them a BAG of Lazarus' GOLD COINS.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA PORT

FIVE ROMAN GALLEY SHIPS dock and anchor.

The SIXTH COHORT (480 ROMAN SOLDIERS) on FIVE GALLEY SHIPS
stand at attention as they wait to disembark.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA PORT - FIRST SHIP

Dressed in full military armor, TULLIUS stands at the BOW of
the lead ship as WEAPONS are distributed among them.

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

A FIRE SPARKS under the FRONT DOOR.

FIRE snakes into the room.

Together in the same bed, ANDERGOS and MURID wake to SEE:

FIRE erupts.

MARK wakes in a panic:

MARK
Lazarus, Magdalene, Mother Mary!
For God's sake, hurry! Fire!

ANDERGOS grabs an AXE, then

whacks through burning, falling DEBRIS as he struggles to the front door.

MURID grabs a BLANKET and tries to put it out, but the fire spreads instantly.

Within seconds, the ROOM is ABLAZE.

LAZARUS carries MARY OF NAZARETH downstairs, followed by BETHANY, SARAH, and MAGDALENE.

SARAH SEES and KNOWS what she has done.

In a panic, SARAH packs up BREAD and VEGETABLES into supply BAGS, then throws the bags over her shoulder while

ANDERGOS fights back FIRE at the door allowing LAZARUS and MARY OF NAZARETH a path out.

MARK'S cloak catches FIRE:

MARK (CONT'D)
Murid, help!

MURID snuffs MARK'S cloak.

MAGDALENE
Hurry, everyone out.

SARAH shoves supply bags into BETHANY'S arms:

SARAH
Take them. Go while you can.

BETHANY takes the BAGS, but then pushes SARAH out the door:

BETHANY
There's no time.

SMOKE wafts as MARK flees.

ANDERGOS beckons MURID as:

MURID SEES:

An unsteady RAFTER is about to collapse.

ANDERGOS
Murid, go. Get out.

MURID reaches to steady the rafter allowing ANDERGOS to lead MAGDALENE out.

ANDERGOS pulls MAGDALENE outside as

EXT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE FACADE

ANDERGOS turns to SEE:

The RAFTER crashes down onto MURID, killing him.

ANDERGOS
Murid!

MAGDALENE and MARK restrain ANDERGOS:

MAGDALENE
No, Andergos! Stop!

ANDERGOS jerks away from her as the fire consumes the building:

ANDERGOS
Get away from me!

MAGDALENE
It's no use.

LAZARUS assists MAGDALENE and MARK in restraining him:

ANDERGOS
You cannot stop me!

But, their grip is too strong and

ANDERGOS relents, eyes aflame:

ANDERGOS (CONT'D)
On faith, I spit --

He SPITS.

ANDERGOS (CONT'D)
-- on yours, on his, on everyone's.
Except for faith, Murid would be
alive.

MAGDALENE

Andergos, Murid believed in something bigger than himself. He believed in you. That's what faith is. Would you erase his very love for you?

ANDERGOS

So holy you are. You believe in a crucified ghost. If he is so great that he conquered death, make him give Murid back to me.

ANDERGOS sobs hysterically as:

MAGDALENE, LAZARUS, and MARK release him.

ANDERGOS (CONT'D)

He was everything to me. I die with him.

ANDERGOS stumbles into shadow.

VRAGO whips two HORSES drawing the OPEN CARRIAGE around a corner and halts in front of his burning building.

LAZARUS

Vrago!

LAZARUS hands MARY OF NAZARETH over to Mark.

VRAGO jumps from the carriage and pushes the reins to Lazarus:

VRAGO

A mob has risen against you! Hurry, get out now!

MARK assists MARY OF NAZARETH into the carriage.

As LAZARUS and MAGDALENE climb in, she turns to Mark:

MAGDALENE

Come with us.

MARK shakes his head "no:"

MARK

My job is here.

VRAGO grabs hold of SARAH:

VRAGO

She stays.

BETHANY jerks SARAH away from VRAGO:

BETHANY
She goes.

As BETHANY heaves SARAH and the SUPPLIES into the carriage,
A BAG rips open.
VEGETABLES spill out.

VRAGO
She is my property.

BETHANY grabs a GOURD SQUASH and smashes Vrago.

BETHANY
This is property.

The SQUASH breaks over VRAGO'S HEAD.
VRAGO goes for BETHANY'S throat, but
LAZARUS restrains VRAGO and spins him around:

LAZARUS
My money! We cannot leave without
it.

VRAGO
Go. We send once you are safe.

VRAGO eyes BETHANY murderously.
BETHANY seats herself as
LAZARUS whips the horses away.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA ESCAPE ROUTE

SEVEN MOUNTED, HOODED, TORCH-WEILDING MERCENARIES CHASE
LAZARUS' CARRIAGE.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA DOCK

LAZARUS drives the CARRIAGE to water's edge as
THREE ADDITIONAL HOODED MERCENARIES wielding TORCHES approach
on foot.
A BOAT with NO SAIL, RUDDER, or PADDLE rocks in the water.

FIRST MERCENARY pushes LAZARUS forward.

LAZARUS
No sail, paddle, or rudder? Do you
expect us to drift?

MAGDALENE and BETHANY assist MARY OF NAZARETH into the boat
as

SECOND and THIRD MERCENARIES steady it.

SEVEN MOUNTED MERCENARIES gallop onto the dock.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
Who are you?

FOURTH MERCENARY dismounts, then doffs his HOOD showing he is
VRAGO.

VRAGO takes out a SWORD.

VARGO
For the ruin of our business.

VRAGO clobbers LAZARUS with the HILT.

BETHANY screams.

LAZARUS falls backwards into the boat and

LAZARUS drops into Magdalene's arms.

THIRD MERCENARY slices the ROPES as

FIRST and SECOND MERCENARIES shove the boat away.

Lifting their HOODS:

AZHARA is FIFTH MERCENARY, NIBAL is SIXTH MERCENARY, BANDAR
is SEVENTH MERCENARY, BALTO is EIGHTH MERCENARY, ABAAD is
NINTH MERCENARY, and CENTURION FELIX is TENTH MERCENARY.

SEVERUS creeps up behind Vrago.

VRAGO turns to SEE SEVERUS:

SEVERUS
Rome thanks you.

VRAGO
Old friends, easy kill.

SEVERUS
When you compromised, we weren't
sure you were not one of them.

VRAGO
A holy man? I am no holy man. I am
a landlord.

EXT. BOAT - MEDITERRANEAN SEA

MAGDALENE cradles LAZARUS as the boat drifts away.

MARY OF NAZARETH looks on:

MARY OF NAZARETH
Is he all right?

MAGDALENE nods.

BETHANY
Sarah, why did you hesitate back
there?

SARAH
I am untrustworthy. I spied.
Because of me, Vrago burned his own
building to rid you. He warned
Lazarus against me. I sinned. I ran
from my owner, Murid is dead, I
caused you pain, and now look where
we are.

BETHANY
You took a path to freedom. That is
no sin.

SARAH
Who are you to judge?

INT. ALEXANDRIA HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

SMOKE BILLOWS as FOUR SLAVES, 20s, splash burning EMBERS with
WATER BUCKETS while

VRAGO, ABAAD, BALTO, NIBAL, BANDAR, SEVERUS, and CENTURION
FELIX rummage through ASHES:

VRAGO
His money is here.

VRAGO discovers three MONEY BAGS as:

TULLIUS' SHADOW crosses the door jamb, SWORD drawn.

TULLIUS
Where are the women?

SEVERUS
Commander.

As VRAGO realizes,

VRAGO hides the MONEY BAGS.

VRAGO
Marcus Tullius?

TULLIUS
Where are they?

VRAGO
Tribune Tullius. We were not
expecting you so soon. Did you have
a pleasant trip?

VRAGO steps in front of the MONEY BAGS which sit in a PILE of
ASHES on the floor.

TULLIUS
My back is turned and rats feed.
Severus, you were ordered to find
living bodies.

Out of VRAGO'S range, CENTURION FELIX whispers:

CENTURION FELIX
They are alive.

SEVERUS
But, cast adrift. Vrago wanted to
kill them. He had many. We were
two. With no help from the
praefect, we had to compromise.

CENTURION FELIX
We let them go to find them later.

TULLIUS SEES

MONEY BAGS.

TULLIUS
Keep his money, landlord, for your
"warehouse." -- You two, my
quarters.

VRAGO clutches the money bags.

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN SEA - DAY

THE BOAT drifts in a calm Mediterranean.

MAGDALENE notices LAZARUS stirring.

MAGDALENE
Lazarus, come forth.

LAZARUS opens his EYES.

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
You were right. I am a curse. First
Artemas, those who fell during the
riots, Murid, Andergos, now you --

LAZARUS
Where are we?

MAGDALENE
Adrift.

LAZARUS
Food?

MAGDALENE
Sarah managed to grab a few days'
worth.

LAZARUS struggles to sit up:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
You are absolved of bread-winning.
You have me. Always have, always
will. I am with you like a garment.
There is nothing more to be added
to this.

LAZARUS
What does that mean?

MAGDALENE
It means look no further. Truth is
in your lap.

LAZARUS relaxes into MAGDALENE'S LAP.

INT. ROMAN ENCAMPMENT - DAY

TULLIUS surveys a MAP of the MEDITERRANEAN SEA:

TULLIUS
How long will this take?

SEVERUS
Chase vessels await, fully crewed.

TULLIUS
While Pilate sweats.

SEVERUS
The currents, Tribune. 10, 15 days.

TULLIUS
Get word to him. Be generous with
the estimate.

SEVERUS
Tribune, we --

TULLIUS
What?

CENTURION FELIX
We could not do it.

SEVERUS
He means that when we acted as
spies and listened to the women, we
heard nothing seditious. There was
no reason for Vrago to kill them or
for us to start that riot, which we
did.

CENTURION FELIX
What they said --

SEVERUS
We thought of our own families,
also *not* citizens.

TULLIUS
Did you take anything from him?
Money? Anything?

SEVERUS hangs his head.

SEVERUS
Nothing.

CENTURION FELIX shakes his head "no."

SEVERUS (CONT'D)

With respect, the army expects us to obey orders when we have them and act on initiative when we do not. On orders, I can command fifty men to run into a cave in search of barbarians, but when on scene we see that cave is a leper colony --

TULLIUS

Pilate is off to Capri to see the emperor. Intercept him before he sails. He will want this "good news."

TULLIUS rolls up the MAP and walks out.

CENTURION FELIX

Will he report us?

SEVERUS

He will not report us. He will not report anybody.

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN STORM AT SEA - DAY

CLOUDS of DOOM, WIND, LIGHTNING, and WAVES toss the boat.

MAGDALENE and LAZARUS steady each other as BETHANY and SARAH struggle to hold MARY OF NAZARETH securely.

WATER CRASHES over them as

SUPPLY BAGS wash overboard.

BETHANY

The food!

As SARAH reaches for the bags,

MAGDALENE

Sarah!

SARAH plunges into the sea.

BETHANY

No!

MARY OF NAZARETH removes her VEIL, rolls it and as she holds tightly to one END of the VEIL, MARY OF NAZARETH tosses the other end to Sarah.

MAGDALENE and LAZARUS race to assist.

Nearly submerged, SARAH manages to grab hold of MARY OF NAZARETH'S ripped, disintegrating FABRIC.

SUPPLY BAGS sink.

MAGDALENE, LAZARUS, and BETHANY pull SARAH back on board.

SARAH catches her breath as

BETHANY and MAGDALENE slap SARAH'S back:

MAGDALENE
Cough up, cough!

SARAH COUGHS UP and recovers:

SARAH
You have saved me twice.

MAGDALENE
If you count the time we agreed to
have "slaves" in the first place,
it's three.

EXT. CAESAREA MARITIMA - DAY

PILATE'S GALLEY SHIP is prepped and loaded with SUPPLIES, CRATES, TRUNKS, etc.

CENTURION #6 rides up on horseback and interrupts as

PILATE escorts CLAUDIA aboard.

CENTURION #6 salutes, then offers PILATE a SCROLL:

CENTURION #6
Procurator! A dispatch from Tribune
Tullius.

PILATE reads:

PILATE
Marseille?

CENTURION #6
The women vanished in a boat cast
adrift from Alexandria. Tribune
Tullius has chase ships --

CLAUDIA
And the woman Magdalene?

Pilate fumes at the mention of her.

CENTURION #6
-- to subdue and bring them to
Marseilles.

PILATE
Tell the tribune we will divert
from Capri and meet him there.

CENTURION 6, salutes, then rides off as

PILATE turns on CLAUDIA:

PILATE (CONT'D)
Why this obsession with Magdalene?
Are you in love with her?

CLAUDIA
Are you? You chase her as if you
are.

PILATE
Because of her, we lost favor with
Rome.

CLAUDIA
You lost favor with Rome because
you lost favor with Herod's mob.

PILATE
The mob is the mob.

CLAUDIA
And Rome is Rome, Pilate. You are
ambushed by history. Choose a side
or let it swallow you.

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN SEA - NIGHT

MOONLIGHT reflects off MAGDALENE's face as the SEA calms.
Their BOAT drifts while LAZARUS, BETHANY, SARAH, and MARY OF
NAZARETH half-doze:

MAGDALENE
Rabbi, I could ask you rescue us,
but you have. I could pray for
deliverance, but you have delivered
us. I know now you have placed our
lives in our own hands and, in
doing so, shown us what we are. Now
"show us what we may be."

SARAH stirs:

SARAH
Mother Mary?

MARY OF NAZARETH
Yes, Sarah?

SARAH
What was your son like, the rabbi
as a boy? I have heard stories
about him as a man, but --?

MARY OF NAZARETH
Would it change how you think of
him?

SARAH
I am not sure.

MARY OF NAZARETH
He was every mother's son. In his
eyes, the universe would glisten
and in his smile, redemption. His
love, for me at least, was beyond
love. What mother would say less?

SARAH
Some might.

MARY OF NAZARETH
What have you heard? That he was
mischievous and clever, or that he
played tricks?

SARAH
I heard a story of a boy who
bullied him and dropped dead.

MARY OF NAZARETH shakes her head "no."

SARAH (CONT'D)
There was a robe-dyer named Salem?
I heard that your son played a
trick and while Salem was out, he
put Salem's newly dyed robes into a
cauldron of indigo.

MAGDALENE listens.

SARAH (CONT'D)

When Salem returned to find all of his robes blackish blue, Salem ran crying into the street: "I am ruined." But, when he brought neighbors to witness, your son stood with each robe dyed not indigo, but with Salem's prepared colors.

MARY OF NAZARETH

Annas, his tutor, told me this, but Annas liked his wine.

SARAH

Was he a show-off?

MARY OF NAZARETH

My teenage son exploited no divine powers for fun. We would have been run out of town.

SARAH

I am sorry for you.

MARY OF NAZARETH

He was quiet, affectionate, reserved, not a sportsman, sought few friends, but when they came, his arms opened. He listened, he studied, and the rest, like most mothers, is locked up here.

She taps her chest.

SARAH

Why did he have to die?

MARY OF NAZARETH

He ripped the mask off power to expose only a vacuum.

EXT. GAUL SHORELINE - MORNING

An empty, rocky SHORELINE (now SOUTH OF FRANCE).

SUPER: GAUL, FIFTEEN DAYS LATER

The BOAT clonks onto the shore.

MAGDALENE wakes, looks around, then nudges MARY OF NAZARETH.

BETHANY and SARAH sit up.

MAGDALENE, BETHANY, and SARAH help MARY OF NAZARETH from the boat.

INT. CAVE GROTTO

MAGDALENE, BETHANY, SARAH, and MARY OF NAZARETH marvel at the cave grotto's immensity and natural SPRING.

EXT. GAUL SHORELINE - THE BOAT

LAZARUS wakes and sits up.

INT. CAVE GROTTO

MAGDALENE drinks WATER from the SPRING, then LOOKS UP with thanks:

MAGDALENE
Somebody may be watching.

INT. ANOTHER PART OF THE CAVE

A FIRST PAIR of EYES peek out from behind a rock like DIAMONDS IN DARKNESS, but no one notices just as

LAZARUS stumbles in.

MAGDALENE
Lazarus, we are home.

LAZARUS
We should look around before we
call any place home.

BETHANY
I say we find food, eat, rest, eat,
rest again, eat again, then carve
up a tree and paddle out of here. I
have seen geese.

MARY OF NAZARETH
You were in charge of the squash.

BETHANY
What tools do we have but bare
hands?

LAZARUS retrieves a small KNIFE from his boot.

LAZARUS hands the KNIFE to BETHANY:

LAZARUS
Brave sister: for your dinner and
protection while we are gone.

MAGDALENE takes LAZARUS' hand.

MAGDALENE
We will look around together.

MAGDALENE goes to MARY OF NAZARETH:

MAGDALENE (CONT'D)
If it was not for your son, you
would be home in Nazareth, I would
be insane or dead, Lazarus would be
in his tomb, and imagine Jerusalem
settled.

MARY OF NAZARETH
The city you called "godforsaken?"

MAGDALENE
I was wrong.

INT. ANOTHER PART OF THE CAVE

A SECOND PAIR of EYES peek out as:

DISTANT DRUMS beat and echo inside the cave.

INT. CAVE GROTTO

MAGDALENE
What is that sound?

LAZARUS
Nothing good.

MAGDALENE
Bethany, Sarah, if we are not back
in three days, find as much food as
you can, bind branches out of
leaves, bushes, whatever you can,
fashion a paddle, take Mother Mary
and go.

BETHANY nods.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS - BARBARIAN FESTIVAL

DRUMS beat as

A FESTIVAL is celebrated by 400 TORCH-WEILDING BARBARIAN MONKS, REBELS, and FOLLOWERS.

MONKS encircle an ALTAR where a GOAT is sacrificed.

Goat's BLOOD splatters.

BARBARIAN GUARD #1, BARBARIAN GUARD #2, and a HOODED GUARD called "THE PROTECTOR," carry their leader, GASPAROF, 45, out on a LITTER.

GASPAROF'S RIGHT LEG is grotesquely swollen.

20 WORKERS prepare a FIRE in front of a 30' WICKER MAN.

50 ADULT PRISONERS of all ages are bound, gagged, and stuffed into crude JAIL CELLS as

ROARS of approval are HEARD.

BARBARIAN GUARDS #1, #2, and The PROTECTOR lift their leader, GASPAROF, up onto his feet.

As GASPAROF spreads his arms, the DRUMS subside and CROWD quiets:

GASPAROF
Priests of our god, Dis Pater, hear
me: Dis Pater has given us crops,
food, and tools to rule ourselves!

The crowd CHANTS and SALUTES.

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
Now, new enemies appear on the
horizon! Dis Pater has said: You
have made your world desirable and
now you must protect it. When
strangers infiltrate -- and they
will -- these invaders who are
different in skin, dress, and
language, will overrun your tents,
bring famine, death, and disease.
When rats feast on your carrion and
earwigs drive you mad, these days
will be the beginning of your end
because you let them in.

The CROWD is awestruck. Many look to each other for comfort.

DRUMS pound again.

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
 Dis Pater has warned: These are
 devils disguised to bind us, like
 those you see here in the jails.
 In our sleep, they would cut out
 your tongues and steal your breath.

EXT. HILLSIDE

LAZARUS and MAGDALENE climb to the top of a high, brushy hill
 above the RUINS in order to see:

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS

GASPAROF motions to the bloody GOAT CARCASS:

The CROWD SHOUTS and SCREAMS in CELEBRATION.

GASPAROF
 Fear them! Find them! Fight them by
 the sword, by fist, and by your
 god, Dis Pater, kill them!

EXT. HILLSIDE

MAGDALENE and LAZARUS climb higher to SEE:

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS - FESTIVAL

BARBARIANS hurl DEBRIS and ROCKS at the bound PRISONERS.

GASPAROF
 Burn your forests, poison your
 crops, destroy the towns. Make
 barren your land so that nothing is
 left for any of them to find!

CROWD ROARS.

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
 Sacrifice the old, the deviates,
 freaks, and theists who believe in
 gods foreign to us.

FACES NOD as:

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
 Abandon the sick and blind, the
 lame, homeless and hopeless!
 (MORE)

GASPAROF (CONT'D)

Capture the children and bring them
to serve me as our future, to carry
on tradition, for I am your savior,
Dis Pater incarnate! Worship me!

The CROWD screams approval in frenzy.

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE

MAGDALENE

Capture children? Lazarus, I am
frightened.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS - FESTIVAL

GASPAROF

When the land is laid waste, we
will wait in the hills to witness
the foreign devils meet their death
and when they do, we will ride a
wave of victory over them, over
Gaul, and Rome itself!

The CROWD STOMPS.

The DRUMS crescendo.

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE

MAGDALENE turns to SEE:

A ROMAN SWORD hovers over her.

EXT. MARSEILLE HARBOR - DAY

PILATE'S GALLEY docks as:

The harbor is bustling with ROMAN SAILORS, GALLIC MERCHANTS,
SLAVES, and BEGGARS of all ages.

SUPER: MARSEILLE, ROMAN GAUL

A GANG PLANK is secured as various ATTENDANTS prepare to
unload Pilate's LUGGAGE and CRATES.

From the top of the gang plank, PILATE and CLAUDIA SEE:

SLEZAK, Prince of Marseille, 45, and THREE GALLIC
POLITICIANS, all 40s, at its base, each elaborately dressed,
bow in greeting.

PILATE leads CLAUDIA to meet them:

SLEZAK

Procurator Pilate, emissary of
immortal Caesar and his wife,
exquisite daughter of the gods,
Claudia Procula: the city of
Marseille, majestic beauty of Roman
Gaul, commercial trophy of the
empire and its humble citizenry
welcome you.

PILATE

Which part of a horse might you be?

SLEZAK

I am not a horse, sir, I am a man.

PILATE

I see an ass.

CLAUDIA

Pilate!

SLEZAK

I am Slezak, Prince of Marseille.
Rome has come none too soon. We are
in great danger.

PILATE

Where is your Roman commander?

SLEZAK

Tribune Marcus Lucius Tullius, has
taken one cohort into our hills to
seek out barbarians.

PILATE

What barbarians? Celts? Franks?

SLEZAK

Druids from the north. At night,
they raid our towns, kill as they
go, burn homes, businesses, and
imperial gods help us, steal
children.

PILATE

Where is your praefect?

SLEZAK

Assassinated, your Greatness, seven
nights ago.

(MORE)

SLEZAK (CONT'D)

He and a small band were
outmaneuvered at every turn.
Tribune Tullius was next in rank.

PILATE

At last report, you had two
legions.

SLEZAK

One less now, either slaughtered or
scattered. We had Auxilia, but
inexperienced. And the Numeri --
the mercenaries -- make more money
stealing and bargaining in the
town.

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE

TULLIUS, SEVERUS, and CENTURION FELIX tower over MAGDALENE
and LAZARUS.

TULLIUS

Who are you?

LAZARUS

Lost.

TULLIUS

You are not Gallic. How did you
come here?

LAZARUS

By boat from Alexandria.

TULLIUS

You are not Egyptian. Where is your
camp?

MAGDALENE

We have no camp. We know not where
we are and have been wandering
without --

Distant DRUMS begin again.

TULLIUS

Felix, get to Marseille. Assemble
what you can as fast as you can.

CENTURION FELIX salutes.

TULLIUS indicates the HORDE below:

TULLIUS (CONT'D)
You are not part of that?

MAGDALENE
(shivers)
No.

TULLIUS
Take us to where you landed. I want
to see for myself if you have made
a camp.

EXT. BARBARIAN ENCAMPMENT

GASPAROF cries out in agony as he is restrained by BARBARIAN
GUARDS #6, #7, and a THE PROTECTOR.

A PHYSICIAN presses a TORCH to his LEG.

GASPAROF screams and kicks the PHYSICIAN away.

THE PROTECTOR retrieves the torch:

GASPAROF
Fool of a doctor, fool for a son! I
permitted your return, now prove
yourself!

THE PROTECTOR squeezes the HILT of his SWORD:

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
These hills are honeycombed with
tunnels and caves. Each is to be
emptied and any breathing trash you
find brought here to me for burnt
offering.

EXT. CAVE GROTTO - LATER

MAGDALENE and LAZARUS lead TULLIUS and SEVERUS to the Cave.

Instantly, BETHANY sees them.

She runs to MAGDALENE:

BETHANY
Magdalene! What kept you?

MAGDALENE
You were supposed to --

A WOMAN'S SCREAM is HEARD FROM INSIDE.

BETHANY
Mother Mary!

INT. CAVE GROTTO - CONTINUOUS

BETHANY leads MAGDALENE and LAZARUS who SEE:

MARY OF NAZARETH holds down GIORGIO, 8, who has an epileptic SEIZURE.

As GIORGIO grinds his teeth on a TREE BRANCH,

MARY OF NAZARETH tries to calm him. She barely sees MAGDALENE, LAZARUS, TULLIUS, and SEVERUS.

TULLIUS notices:

SARAH cooks a GOOSE on a SPIT.

She recognizes SEVERUS from Alexandria, so covers her head as

10 CHILDREN scatter: CLETUS wears a GOLD SILK BURNOOSE, DEMETRIO grabs his twin sisters PAULA and VESTA, half-blind FEDERICO holds onto his brother ANDRE, MATEUS, chubby ARGENT, PIETRO, and autistic GIORGIO struggles against MOTHER MARY.

TULLIUS
Who are these?

As GIORGIO relaxes, MARY OF NAZARETH takes him into her ARMS and cradles him.

MARY OF NAZARETH
Orphans. We care for them.

MAGDALENE
Where did you find them?

MARY OF NAZARETH
They found us. They are sick and need help. Their parents hid them from their tribe somewhere in these caves. When they smelled cooking --

MAGDALENE
How bad off (are they) -- ?

BETHANY
Mateus has the falling sickness, Pietro speaks with impediment, the twin girls can hardly walk, and the little dumb one is Giorgio.

CLETUS
He is not dumb. He is my brother
and just slow.

BETHANY
That's Cletus, the leader and best
friends with Demetrio.

CLETUS and DEMETRIO mockingly bow.

CLETUS shows off his GOLD HEADGEAR:

TULLIUS
Where did you get a gold burnoose,
fancy boy?

CLETUS
From my uncle, a merchant on the
silk road until he got beheaded by
a Roman.

TULLIUS
And the women?

MAGDALENE
Mary of Nazareth and Mary of
Bethany.

TULLIUS
And you?

MAGDALENE
Mary of Magdala.

SEVERUS
Pilate's runaways.

TULLIUS
Pity to think: an empire brought to
its knees by nurses.

SEVERUS indicated SARAH:

SEVERUS
And the slave?

BETHANY
She is free.

SEVERUS grabs SARAH's veil and uncovers her face:

SEVERUS
You were never to be trusted.

MAGDALENE

Tell us who you are before we
answer any more questions.

TULLIUS

Leave her, Severus. I am Marcus
Lucius Tullius. Tribune and Gallic
agent of the Senate and the people
of Rome. This is Optio Severus. How
did you --?

MAGDALENE

We have told you all we know.

TULLIUS

Liar. You said you have no camp,
yet here you are in the middle of
an orphanage!

TULLIUS turns to MARY OF NAZARETH:

TULLIUS (CONT'D)

Get me something to eat, old woman.

LAZARUS

Stop, Tribune.

TULLIUS

Shut your mouth, Jew.

LAZARUS

This is the mother of the rabbi you
crucified.

TULLIUS

We crucify Judean rabbis every day.
Which one?

LAZARUS

A Nazarene.

TULLIUS regrets.

TULLIUS

I crucified no one. I met one once.
-- Did you hear me, old woman?

MARY OF NAZARETH lays GIORGIO down gently, then

She takes a piece of MEAT cooking on a SPIT, wraps it in her
ragged sleeve, and offers it up.

On seeing her DIRTY SLEEVE, TULLIUS knocks the MEAT away.

The MEAT drops into the fire.

TULLIUS (CONT'D)
Not with those filthy rags.

MAGDALENE restrains LAZARUS.

MARY OF NAZARETH
(to Tullius)
It is the best we have.

SEVERUS watches as:

TULLIUS steps to the fire, bends down, picks up the piece of MEAT he has just tossed, and woefully takes a bite.

TULLIUS
You are his mother?

MARY OF NAZARETH
I am.

TULLIUS
I lost two good men guarding his tomb. I'm not ignorant. God help me.

BETHANY
Which god?

Unnoticed, CLETUS RUNS OFF down a passageway.

DEMETRIO FOLLOWS CLETUS as

MARY OF NAZARETH invites TULLIUS:

MARY OF NAZARETH
Share our table.

TULLIUS
Feed us, Mother, and we will bring help and clothes to replace the rags.

EXT. CAVE GROTTTO

CLETUS emerges from the cave and sees:

TULLIUS' TWO HORSES and CHARIOT. He takes hold of the REINS.

CLETUS
Whoa, steady.

CLETUS climbs onto the chariot as the HORSES clomp and prance.

DEMETRIO (O.S.)

Wait!

CLETUS turns to SEE:

DEMETRIO jumps on the CHARIOT:

CLETUS

Get off!

DEMETRIO

I am the Greek! I know chariots
better than you!

CLETUS struggles for the reins.

CLETUS

We are the army. Bethany said so.
We will save them and rescue our
families.

CLETUS kicks DEMETRIO away.

DEMETRIO

Stop. We made a pact to stick
together.

CLETUS grins and relents.

DEMETRIO HUGS CLETUS, then, together

CLETUS and DEMETRIO lash the horses away.

TULLIUS and LAZARUS run from the CAVE in time to SEE:

CLETUS and DEMETRIO whisk the chariot up into the hillside.

TULLIUS slams his HELMET to the ground:

TULLIUS

Vagrants!

INT. CAVE GROTTA

MARY OF NAZARETH offers a piece of MEAT to SEVERUS:

MARY OF NAZARETH

Did the Tribune know my son?

SEVERUS

Once on a hot afternoon in a wild crowd. Tullius asked your son to heal his slave who was dying at the barracks. Your son offered to go see him, but Tullius said "The barracks is no place for you. Just speak your words and I know he will heal." Tullius said when he got back, the slave was well. I do not believe it. I would like to believe it. I think Tullius does.

TULLIUS runs back into the CAVE:

TULLIUS

Severus!

SEVERUS drops the food into MARY OF NAZARETH'S hands.

MAGDALENE strokes MARY OF NAZARETH.

EXT. GAUL LANDSCAPE

THE PROTECTOR leads 20 BARBARIAN HORSEMEN through a CREEK.

He halts to survey the area, then spurs his horse into the wooded hillside.

EXT. MARSEILLE GARRISON WATCHTOWER

CENTURION #9 looks to TWO GATEKEEPERS:

CENTURION #9

Open!

The GARRISON GATE opens.

CENTURION FELIX and CENTURION #9 ride through the GATE.

EXT. MARSEILLE GARRISON MAIN YARD

PILATE SEES:

CENTURION FELIX dismounts.

INT. MARSEILLE GARRISON BALCONY

CLAUDIA SEES:

PILATE approach them:

CENTURION FELIX
Hail, Procurator. With respect,
Tribune Tullius asks for
reinforcements against barbarians.
We are in hills 125 kilometers
northeast and he has also located
suspected foreigners from Egypt.

PILATE
Wait for me and my troops to
follow.

PILATE struts off.

CLAUDIA dashes to CENTURION FELIX:

CLAUDIA
Where is this woman from Egypt?

CENTURION FELIX
Last seen in the hills --

CLAUDIA
Take me to her.

CENTURION FELIX
With Procula's permission, we will
arrange to guide you and your
entourage --

CLAUDIA
Give me a horse.

At a nod from CENTURION FELIX, CENTURION #6 dismounts.

CLAUDIA takes hold of her DRESS, yanks it up her MIDDLE,
grabs hold of the REINS, and mounts up.

CENTURION FELIX steadies her HORSE as it rears up and
prances:

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
I am the wife of an Equestrian
Class Praefect. I rode with him
before you were born. Show the way.

CLAUDIA lashes the horse and gallops out of the garrison.

CENTURION FELIX turns to CENTURION #6:

CENTURION FELIX
Follow with Pilate, supplies, and
fresh horses!

EXT. PILATE'S QUARTERS

PILATE SEES:

CLAUDIA rides off with CENTURION FELIX.

EXT. GAUL WOODS

As STORM CLOUDS gather, BETHANY RUNS through WOODS calling out:

BETHANY
Cletus, Demetrio? Where are you?

EXT. GAUL LANDSCAPE

THE PROTECTOR STARTLES AS HE HEARS:

BETHANY'S CALL. He and his 20 men respond.

EXT. HILLSIDE OPPOSITE AMPHITHEATRE

TULLIUS, SEVERUS, and LAZARUS cross to the top of a hill.

TULLIUS halts as he SEES:

The WRECKED CHARIOT: wheels busted, harnesses snapped with no sign of horses.

TULLIUS
Hold.

They peer over a HILL to SEE:

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS

800 BARBARIAN REBELS fill the Amphitheatre RUINS.

40 HOODED DRUMMERS beat primitive DRUMS.

FIRES are set near the WICKER MAN.

INT. CAVE GROTTO - STORM CLOUDS

MAGDALENE gathers the CHILDREN around MARY OF NAZARETH and SARAH:

MAGDALENE
Something is wrong. I must go.
Bethany has been gone too long.

SARAH
It is dangerous.

MARY OF NAZARETH
What of the children?

MAGDALENE
They have you.

MAGDALENE covers her head, then with a dour glance of doubt, she exits.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - DRUID ENCAMPMENT

DRUIDS chant as if in a collective trance singing CANTICLES.

The FUNERAL PYRE blazes at the foot of the WICKER MAN.

FLAMES lick at the effigy.

PRISONERS scream.

Bound and gagged, BETHANY is held at sword's point by BARBARIAN GUARD #9.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR - STORM CLOUDS

THE PROTECTOR offers up terrified DEMETRIO to the horde's ROARS of approval.

INT. HILLSIDE ABOVE THE AMPHITHEATRE

CLETUS SEES:

Chained DEMETRIO is hauled toward GASPAROF.

CLETUS springs to his feet from SHRUBS:

CLETUS
Demetrio!

SEVERUS muzzles CLETUS as TULLIUS and LAZARUS run up:

TULLIUS
Shut your mouth!

TULLIUS yanks CLETUS away from SEVERUS, swings him around,
and drops him so that they are face to face:

TULLIUS (CONT'D)
Explain yourself.

CLETUS
They wrecked us, the priests. I
fell out, but they took Demetrio.
It happened so fast and they have
Bethany now.

LAZARUS
Why is she here?

CLETUS
Looking for us, stupid woman.

TULLIUS
(to Lazarus; then Cletus)
I must get back. Stay here with the
boy and, fancy boy, leave rescuing
to Rome.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS - BARBARIAN FESTIVAL

FIRE spreads from torch to torch as

DRUMS, HOOTS, and JEERS echo through the amphitheatre.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

GASPAROF holds tightly onto Demetrio as THE PROTECTOR and
TWO PRIESTS prop him up:

GASPAROF
Patrons! Welcome the day of the
blood feast. Hail the spectacle to
Dis Pater.

CROWD cheers.

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
Today, celebrate future!

BETHANY struggles against her gag.

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS

MAGDALENE hurries through rough terrain.

Suddenly, she hears:

HORSES gallop.

She turns to SEE:

CLAUDIA rides up alongside CENTURION FELIX:

CLAUDIA
Magdalene!

MAGDALENE drops to her knees:

MAGDALENE
Claudia Procula?

CLAUDIA dismounts, runs to MAGDALENE, and raises her up:

CLAUDIA
Mary Magdalene bows to no one.

MAGDALENE
You know me?

CLAUDIA
I have watched you at his
gatherings, with his mother, and at
the foot of a cross on his last
day. You know me, too.

MAGDALENE
Everyone knows Daughter of Caesar.
We know Rome hunts us, but I never
dreamed it would be you.

CLAUDIA
Hunt you? I came to rescue you.
Forgive me for taking so long!

MAGDALENE
But you are --

CLAUDIA
I am nothing. Barbarians plan a
death squad and Pilate's on his
way. If you are caught in the
middle --

MAGDALENE
I am not afraid to die.

CLAUDIA

Do not give up so easily! I knew
when I saw you at the rabbi's
sermon that you carry his word. I
tried to tell my husband, but
Pilate is not only deaf, he is
irredeemable.

MAGDALENE marks the word "irredeemable."

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

Come.

EXT. HILLSIDE ABOVE THE AMPHITHEATRE

CLETUS struggles against LAZARUS:

CLETUS

Let me go! I have to rescue
Demetrio and protect Bethany and
Magdalini.

LAZARUS

"Magdalini?" Why call her that, as
if she belongs to you.

CLETUS

I know from Bethany and Mother
Mary: Magdalini is special.

LAZARUS

She is mine to rescue.

CLETUS

You are a drunk.

LAZARUS grabs CLETUS by the shoulders.

LAZARUS

Listen to me, olive pit. Hate is
alive in this world: real, palpable
hate.

CLETUS

Let me go!

LAZARUS

You insult me, a stranger you
hardly know, and that is no
different than the hate from the
madman's mouth down there for
anyone with different beliefs. Who
told you I am a drunk?

CLETUS

Bethany! Your own sister! Even the women are smarter and braver than you and you call me an olive pit.

LAZARUS

Forget about rescuing her. Magdalene commits to no one. Not you, not me, not now, not ever.

THUNDER cracks.

CLETUS jumps into LAZARUS' arms.

INT. CAVE GROTTO - APPROACHING STORM - AFTERNOON

LIGHTNING flashes.

THUNDER.

SARAH watches as:

MARY OF NAZARETH is transfixed by their small FIRE.

SARAH

Mother Mary? Do you "see" into the fire? Do you "divine" it?

MARY OF NAZARETH is not distracted.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Once, I was accused of being a witch for divination. I tried to convince the judges that magic is human. Just because I have it does not mean I am a devil. Now, they are all dead and I survived to tell you.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS GUARDPOST

MAGDLANE, CLAUDIA, and CENTURION FELIX are surrounded by BARBARIAN GUARDS #7, #8, #9, #10 as

DRUMS BEAT.

BARBARIAN GUARD #7

Death to invaders!

BARBARIAN GUARDS #7 and #8 violently jerk CLAUDIA and MAGDALENE from CLAUDIA'S HORSE.

CENTURION FELIX dismounts and draws his SWORD:

CENTURION FELIX
Stop!

CLAUDIA
Let us speak.

BARBARIAN GUARD raises his SWORD over their HEADS:

BARBARIAN GUARD #7
Talk or die!

MAGDALENE
We have heard of your greatness.

CLAUDIA
We want to join your fight against
Rome.

BARBARIAN GUARD #7
You wish to fight Rome with a
Roman?

BARBARIAN GUARD #8
Roman, disarm!

CLAUDIA motions to CENTURION FELIX to stand down.

CENTURION FELIX drops his SWORD.

MAGDALENE
The Centurion is a farmer and man
of the soil, like you.

CLAUDIA
He wants the end of the empire just
like you.

MAGDALENE
She and I are mere women. Please
let us in.

BARBARIAN GUARDS confer, then:

BARBARIAN GUARDS #7, #8 shove MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA ahead
while

BARBARIAN GUARD #9 points CENTURION FELIX'S own SWORD against
his back.

BARBARIAN GUARD #10 takes the HORSES' REINS.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

THE PROTECTOR startles as he SEES:

BARBARIAN GUARDS #7, #8 shove MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA towards GASPAROF.

Bound and gagged, sitting by the jails, BETHANY SEES them.

GASPAROF
People of Gaul, today is our day!
The revolution begins!

Straining against GASPAROF'S grip, DEMETRIO recognizes MAGDALENE.

PROTECTOR
Who is this?

BARBARIAN GUARD #7
Strangers asking to come in.

BARBARIAN GUARD #8
They say they want to join.

GASPAROF
Join? Two women and a Roman? Is
there room for new voices?

DEMETRIO wrestles GASPAROF.

BARBARIAN GUARD #7 nods to THE PROTECTOR.

THE PROTECTOR whispers into GASPAROF'S EAR. Intrigued,
GASPAROF shrugs.

PROTECTOR
Approach.

BARBARIAN GUARDS #7, #8 shove MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA to the altar.

CENTURION FELIX stands by.

The BARBARIAN MOB protests as

GASPAROF raises an ARM to quiet them.

The MOB quiets and

GASPAROF grins:

GASPAROF
Speak!

DEMETRIO frees himself from GASPAROF and runs to:

MAGDALENE embraces him.

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
He knows you?

MAGDALENE
He knows that we have come in
search of your glory.

GASPAROF turns to his MOB:

GASPAROF
You see? Rome crumbles before our
eyes! Our fame travels!

ROARS of APPROVAL.

GASPAROF (CONT'D)
What is your name, child?

MAGDALENE
Mary.

GASPAROF
And the woman?

MAGDALENE
A widow of Rome. We are now poor
and have little, but --

MAGDALENE notices

GASPAROF'S SWOLLEN LEG.

EXT. HILLSIDE OPPOSITE THE AMPHITHEATRE

TULLIUS, SEVERUS, and 480 ROMAN TROOPS stand by.

WIND blows and DRUMS continue as

TULLIUS watches with SEVERUS, LAZARUS, and CLETUS.

CLETUS jostles TULLIUS:

CLETUS
Attack now.

TULLIUS
Shh.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

MAGDALENE SEES BETHANY, then indicates DEMETRIO:

MAGDALENE
We have offerings like that boy to
show our good faith. Give us
assurance that we may join.

BETHANY'S eyes troll the MOB as
THE MOB RIDICULES.

INT. CAVE GROTTO - STORM CLOUDS

MARY OF NAZARETH places her trembling hands into the FIRE
summoning

CLOUDS of WHITE MIST which emanate from the FIRE, then out of
the CAVE as:

She ENVISIONS via Divination:

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

MAGDALENE approaches GASPAROF:

MAGDALENE
Let me help you.

GASPAROF
Stay back. Guards!

BARBARIAN GUARDS #7, #8 make a move to stop her, but
THE PROTECTOR commands them:

THE PROTECTOR
Stand down!

MAGDALENE reaches for GASPAROF'S swollen LEG:

GASPAROF
You bring medicine?

EXT. CAVE GROTTO

FOG SWIRLS and cling to the ground, then creep into trees,
and into the hillside.

INT. CAVE GROTTTO

MARY OF NAZARETH and SARAH are transfixed as she SEES:

EXT. HILLSIDE OPPOSITE THE AMPHITHEATRE

CLETUS tugs at TULLLIUS:

CLETUS
Attack now!

LAZARUS muffles CLETUS.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - RAIN

GASPAROF
Spies!

THE PROTECTOR draws his SWORD.

THE PROTECTOR rips off his hood to show he is

REVEAL ANDERGOS:

MAGDALENE
Andergos!

BETHANY startles.

GASPAROF
You know this woman, freak of
nature?

MAGDALENE
O Andergos, you are his?

ANDERGOS
(to Gasparof)
She knew my master in Egypt. She is
the so-called miracle worker.

GASPAROF
Turn against me, boy?

ANDERGOS
(to Magdalene)
My nature wounded him. He tried to
kill me and in my escape, I wounded
his leg. Neither will heal.

GASPAROF
Kill the woman!

ANDERGOS
Kill her yourself, old man, if you
can get to her.

ANDERGOS strikes Gasparof's GUARDS

The GUARDS retreat.

ANDERGOS rushes to BETHANY, then

ANDERGOS frees BETHANY from the GAG and binding ROPES, then
uprights her:

ANDERGOS (CONT'D)
Go quickly.

BETHANY
O, Andergos! Forgive me! I am
stubborn, foolish --

ANDERGOS
Quiet, as I save you!

EXT. HILLSIDE ABOVE THE AMPHITHEATRE

TULLIUS orders TROOPS:

TULLIUS
Attack!

TULLIUS and SEVERUS lead ROMAN troops descent down the
hillside followed by

LAZARUS and CLETUS.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

GASPAROF writhes in PAIN as

ANDERGOS goes to MAGDALENE:

ANDERGOS
Remove the bandages. See our god.

MAGDALENE unwraps GASPAROF'S LEG

INFECTED WOUND and CANCEROUS SORES.

COLLECTIVE PANIC echoes throughout the amphitheatre as:

MAGDALENE
Be still.

GASPAROF
Who are you?

ANDERGOS braces GASPAROF:

MAGDALENE
Today, I am your nurse.

HORSES thunder into the amphitheatre as

TULLIUS and TROOPS ride in.

TULLIUS and TROOPS draw WEAPONS.

MOB PROTESTS, SCREAMS as

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE

REBEL PRIESTS and BARBARIAN GUARDS reach for SWORDS, KNIVES,
and AXES.

As ANDERGOS turns his BACK from GASPAROF.

GASPAROF raises a KNIFE and

With a swift and painful arching:

GASPAROF
Traitor!

GASPAROF STABS Andergos.

MAGDALENE SCREAMS then retreats as

ANDERGOS COLLAPSES at the base of the ALTAR.

CLAUDIA intercepts TULLIUS and SEVERUS:

CLAUDIA
Stop, Tullius!

TULLIUS SEES:

CLAUDIA spreads her arms in a desperate attempt to stop them.

TULLIUS halts the TROOPS.

TROOPS HALT.

LAZARUS and CLETUS dismount.

CLETUS runs to DEMETRIO'S side: they embrace.

CENTURION FELIX retrieves his SWORD as:

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

GASPAROF
Seize her!

BARBARIAN GUARDS surround MAGDALENE.

BARBARIAN PRIESTS raise up GASPAROF.

BLOOD gushes from his LEG, then

BLOOD gushes onto ANDERGOS' body.

Wild-eyed, GASPAROF faces his MOB, flailing his arms as:

The CROWD ROARS.

SUN breaks through CLOUDS.

BLUE SKY mixed with CLOUD MIST and FOG descend as

SUN peeks through CLOUDS creating a BROCKEN SPECTRE (a natural RAINBOW PHENOMENON) around MAGDALENE.

Once again, MAGDALENE displays LUMINESCENCE which terrifies GASPAROF, his MOB, TROOPS, and ALL.

CLAUDIA is awestruck.

BARBARIANS drop to KNEES.

WOMEN IN THE MOB shriek in FEAR as MAGDALENE moves like a panther around and behind GASPAROF faster than he can be turned:

MAGDALENE
All that is born and created, all
elements of nature are interwoven
and united. "Those who have eyes,
let them see."

GASPAROF
Foreigner!

MAGDALENE
"There is no sin except what you
make. This is why good comes into
your midst."

GASPAROF
Invader.

MAGDALENE

"That is why you suffer and die in the world: you are the result of your own deeds." Allow no false voice to say, 'Here he is' or 'there he is,' for the voice of good is within you.

GASPAROF

I am their god.

MAGDALENE

It is with you like a garment, but you do not recognize it.

GASPAROF

I am Dis Pater, god of the Underworld!

GASPAROF grabs a LANCE from GUARD #7, then

GASPAROF aims the LANCE at MAGDALENE when from out of the FOG and SHADOWS,

CLAUDIA appears behind Gasparof and

CLAUDIA SLITS GASPAROF'S THROAT.

BLOOD SPEWS.

BARBARIANS clamor and SCREAM in HORROR.

CLAUDIA disappears into FOG and SHADOW.

With a DEATH RATTLE, GASPAROF collapses onto ANDERGOS' body.

Awed by MAGDALENE'S RAINBOW, SEVERUS joins TULLIUS:

SEVERUS

Have you seen such a thing?

TULLIUS

She may or may not be a miracle worker, but she is a lucky one!

A TORCH dropped by a BARBARIAN ignites the WICKER MAN.

The WICKER MAN explodes in FLAMES.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR - RAINSTORM

LAZARUS, BETHANY, CLETUS, and DEMETRIO race to MAGDALENE'S SIDE as

EXT. HILLSIDE OPPOSITE THE AMPHITHEATRE - CLOUD MIST

CLOUDS and MIST climb down into the amphitheatre closing in on ALL as

Action becomes obscured.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

TULLIUS, SEVERUS, and ALL become disoriented.

TULLIUS
Stay back!

The ROMAN TROOPS stall, but urge horses forward.

INT. CAVE GROTTO

SARAH adds LOGS to the fire as

MARY OF NAZARETH peers into the FLAMES.

SHE SEES:

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE ALTAR

MAGDALENE'S RAINBOW SPECTRE FADES as

SEVERUS and CENTURION FELIX clear a path.

CLAUDIA reaches out to MAGDALENE:

CLAUDIA
Come with me!

MAGDALENE
You killed him!

CLAUDIA
I am called Daughter of Caesar for
a reason!

MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA mount up onto Claudia's HORSE as

EXT. GALLIC WOODS

PILATE commands 5000 ROMAN EQUESTIAN TROOPS:

PILATE
Attack!

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE

FOG OBSCURES the battlefield and ruins.

BARBARIAN ARROWS fly.

ROMAN SWORDS clash with BARBARIAN PICK-AXES as

THE WICKER MAN burns in the background.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE JAIL CELLS

TULLIUS and SEVERUS free Prisoners, but are distracted by the SOUNDS of:

PILATE'S TROOPS storm the amphitheatre.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - RAINSTORM

PILATE SEES:

EXT. HILLSIDE - RAINSTORM

MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA ESCAPE on HORSEBACK.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - RAINSTORM

PILATE ABANDONS his TROOPS.

CLAUDIA SEES:

PILATE rides after her.

CLAUDIA and MAGDALENE halt the HORSE.

They dismount:

CLAUDIA
Meet my husband.

PILATE vaults from his HORSE and draws his SWORD:

PILATE
Do you think Rome would allow a
woman, even you, to bargain with
enemies of the empire?

CLAUDIA
With Rome or with you?

PILATE raises his SWORD over her:

PILATE
I am Rome!

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE

TULLIUS mounts up:

SEVERUS
Where to now?

TULLIUS draws his SWORD:

TULLIUS
Stay close!

EXT. HILLSIDE

As SCREAMS and panicked YELLING are heard from the
BATTLEFIELD,

PILATE cries out to Claudia:

PILATE
I put the world at your feet.

CLAUDIA
My father had the world at my feet.

PILATE
You and that woman --

Pilate raises his SWORD over Magdalene.

PILATE (CONT'D)
-- tread in fear and ignorance like
the rest of them. The difference
with you is: while looking up for
some false hope of salvation, you
choke on lies.

MAGDALENE reaches out to PILATE. Her SUBTLE GLOW returns,
enough to draw his attention:

MAGDALENE
Peace be upon you, Pontius Pilate,
and your house, for then, for now,
for all history.

Claudia reaches out to stop her:

CLAUDIA
Magdalene --

Magdalene ignores her:

MAGDALENE
Peace be upon you, son of Rome.

PILATE
Peace from what?

PILATE guffaws:

PILATE (CONT'D)
From him who brought everything *but*
peace!

MAGDALENE
From him.

PILATE
He who cratered the empire, the
people, and you? You and that dead
Nazarene cleave my future, poison
my mob, grin while my commission
incinerates, and now even dead, he
divides me from my wife.

Lost in the fog, memories, and his own failures as a leader,
a Roman, and a husband, PILATE slams his SWORD against a
rock.

CLAUDIA
Pilate!

PILATE rolls his EYES as he SEES:

TULLIUS and SEVERUS ride up, dismount, and draw SWORDS.

PILATE sighs:

PILATE
Tribune Traitor and his dog. Did I
not tell you, Severus, watch him
and kill him at the first sign of
treachery?

TULLIUS turns to SEVERUS in disbelief:

TULLIUS
You?

SEVERUS
I had no reason to report you.

Suddenly, PILATE SWINGS HIS SWORD and in a FLASH,
PILATE cuts SEVERUS' THROAT.

SEVERUS FALLS.

MAGDALENE screams as

SEVERUS DIES.

PILATE
I disagree.

TULLIUS confronts PILATE:

TULLIUS
That will be your last innocent
death. Why did you hand over the
rabbi to that mob?

PILATE
He called himself a king.

PILATE strikes TULLIUS, but

TULLIUS deflects:

PILATE (CONT'D)
There is only one king.

TULLIUS
Kings threaten kings, not
bureaucrats!

PILATE
He threatened Rome!

PILATE strikes at TULLIUS.

They fight.

TULLIUS disarms PILATE, then lunges at him.

Clumsily, PILATE DROPS his SWORD knowing he is defeated.

In a daze, PILATE slowly turns, and thinking all is lost,
pleads to CLAUDIA:

PILATE (CONT'D)
You loved the Nazarene over me!

CLAUDIA
I loved his work and his message. I
never stopped loving you.

PILATE
I would slit my own throat, sell
tickets for each drop of blood, and
with the money build you a god of
gods, but for what I have done, as
you say: I am irredeemable.

PILATE drops to his knees:

CLAUDIA
You are the love of my life.

CLAUDIA embraces recalcitrant PILATE.

MAGDALENE
Pontius Pilate, no one is
irredeemable.

PILATE
If that is so, Apostle Mary, I wish
I could say, "Rabbi, wash away my
iniquities." I wish I could say,
"Judge him again!" I wish I could
say, "I found no harm in him."

EXT. CAVE GROTTO - RAINSTORM

MARY OF NAZARETH weeps as she hears PILATE'S admission.

EXT. HILLSIDE

PILATE cries out:

PILATE
But, I cannot.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE

THE WICKER MAN collapses in FIRE and SMOKE.

EXT. HILLSIDE - RAINSTORM

PILATE'S SWORD splashes into MUD.

PILATE mounts up,

His HORSE rears up and

PILATE turns to them:

PILATE

You, all of you, embarrass me to be alive in this world. I cringe to be part of it. In my mother's womb, had I known then as much about humanity as I know now, given a choice between being and nothing, I would have begged her to abort.

PILATE spurs his HORSE and vanishes into FOG and RAIN.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - NIGHT

Routed by ROMAN TROOPS,

BARBARIANS scatter.

Defeated TRIBAL PRIESTS and FOLLOWERS meekly remove their HOODS, as if "showing" who they are:

ARABS, HEBREWS, ETHIOPIANS, SPANIARDS, blonde CELTICS, ITALIANS, red-headed GERMANS, NORWEGIANS, SHORT PEOPLE, TALL PEOPLE, et al, all disperse.

EXT. GAUL LANDSCAPE - DAWN

MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA watch as ROMAN TROOPS pick up (or cover up) ROMAN CORPSES and carry them to the center of the amphitheatre.

ROMANS and BARBARIANS face off at the altar. The once dueling sides now stand silently opposite each other over GASPAROF'S, ANDERGOS', and other ROMAN and BARBARIAN CORPSES.

Just then, a wounded, ELDER BARBARIAN, 60, limps up to MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA:

ELDER

He told us to give up our children and we believed him.

MAGDALENE SEES:

ANDERGOS hobbles to her.

He FALLS into her ARMS.

CLAUDIA

Who is this?

MAGDALENE grabs hold of ANDERGOS, helping him stand.

MAGDALENE
A glance at the future.

EXT. CAVE GROTTO - MORNING

SARAH watches over MARY OF NAZARETH and the sleeping CHILDREN.

BLACK SMOKE hovers in the SKY suggesting the burning of bodies.

MARY OF NAZARETH looks at her hands:

MARY OF NAZARETH'S HANDS have stopped trembling.

SARAH
Mother Mary! Your hands steady.

BETHANY slowly wakes to SEE:

MARY OF NAZARETH touches her FACE, then wrings her HANDS and claps them as if to make sure the shaking is over.

SARAH hugs MARY OF NAZARETH.

LAZARUS wakes to see MAGDALENE and CLAUDIA kneel next to MARY OF NAZARETH.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Magdalene, you saved me, Bethany,
the children, Mother Mary, even
you, Lazarus.

ANDERGOS sits among them. He takes note of Sarah.

LAZARUS is struck by MARY OF NAZARETH'S cure.

LAZARUS
Go, then, Mary Magdalene. Lead your
people to a new promised land. Be a
new kind of rabbi and why not? You
make us fall in love with you:
Greeks, Romans, Roman wives,
slaves, barbarians, barbarian
children --

CLETUS hangs his head.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)
Hoard not the love, Mary. Save some
for the rest of us.

MAGDALENE

What would you do with it?

LAZARUS walks out.

BETHANY

For all that he has done for us,
you persecute him still? For shame,
Mary Magdalene!

MAGDALENE follows LAZARUS outside:

EXT. CAVE GROTTO

LAZARUS hangs his head as MAGDALENE approaches.

MAGDALENE and LAZARUS embrace.

MAGDALENE

Lazarus --

LAZARUS

You followed him and you are larger
than life now. I am a nobody who
lost everything.

MAGDALENE

You live (because of him).

LAZARUS

What did he want from me? Abandon a
business my father and his father
before him started? Watch Martha
and Mary Bethany starve? Give up
house, my staff, a lifetime of
success, and for what? When Eashoa
asked me to follow him --

MAGDALENE

He asked too much of you. I asked
too much.

LAZARUS

I tried, Mary, and I wrecked the
caravan instead. No surprise Vrago
wanted me dead.

MAGDALENE

Did Eashoa give everything for us?

LAZARUS

And I gave less, is that it? He said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter his kingdom."

MAGDALENE

He could not have achieved what he did without you. That is your gift.

LAZARUS breaks down and WEEPS; they EMBRACE and KISS.

LAZARUS

I loved him, Mary, as I love you.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - DAY

LAZARUS, MARY OF NAZARETH, BETHANY, CLAUDIA, SARAH, THE CHILDREN, and ANDERGOS stand, sit, lay on the ground and listen to the female version of their rabbi as Magdalene walks among them WITH SIGNIFICANT GLOW OF THE BROCKEN SPECTRE:

MAGDALENE

"Those who have eyes, let them see. Those who have ears, let them hear. We are all equal on this Earth. Love one another and bind one another. Hurt one another, you not only divide one another, you cut off part of your own soul. I am his apostle, Magdalene. In his name, I carry his word to pass on to you."

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE - FUNERAL PYRE

CENTURION FELIX and ROMAN CAVALRY salute as ROMAN DRUMS ROLL.

TULLIUS lights the FIRE under SEVERUS' CORPSE.

FIRE consumes SEVERUS.

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE RUINS

MAGDALENE walks among FOLLOWERS:

MAGDALENE

"Remain not in sorrow and doubt,
for his grace guides and comforts
us even in the darkest of our
blackest nights. It is with us like
a garment, even when we do not
recognize it."

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE AND AMPHITHEATRE

APOSTLE THOMAS alights down a hill. He carries a WOODEN BOX.

APOSTLE THOMAS presents THE BOX to MAGDALENE:

THOMAS

Forgive me, Magdalene, for how I
behaved. I prayed, "into what land
shall I fly from the just?" I was a
coward then, and I am a coward now.
To the silk road I went and on my
way into India, there was he: here
and there to my grief I found him."

MAGDALENE

How did you find me?

THOMAS

I know not. I did not see him, but
he brought me back to you. This, I
know.

THOMAS opens, then offers THE BOX to MAGDALENE.

INSERT: WRITING UTENSILS, INK, and PAPYRUS.

THOMAS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Writing tools to spread his word.

MAGDELENE clutches the WRITING UTENSILS TO HER BREAST.

MAGDALENE

O, Thomas! What have I done? I got
you out of bed.

THOMAS giggles, then WEEPS.

EXT. SHRINE OF SAINTES MARIES DE LA MER, ET AL.

**SUPER: THE THREE MARYS ARE REVERED AND PRAYED TO IN THE
SHRINE OF SAINTS MARIES DE LA MER IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.**

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE

SIMON PETER drops to his knees and then

SIMON PETER kisses the FEET of MAGDALENE.

APOSTLE JOHN embraces MAGDALENE.

SUPER: AFTER 45 DAYS FROM THE TIME OF THEIR CASTAWAY, SIMON PETER AND JOHN THE APOSTLE CAME TO TAKE MARY OF NAZARETH AND MARY OF BETHANY BACK TO JERUSALEM --

EXT. MARSEILLES HARBOR

SIMON PETER and JOHN THE APOSTLE stand next to THOMAS, BETHANY, and MARY OF NAZARETH as their SHIP sails away from the dock.

SUPER: -- WHERE MARY OF NAZARETH WAS WITH THE APOSTLES FOR WHAT BECAME KNOWN AS THE PENTECOST.

EXT. GAUL HILLSIDE

LAZARUS WEEPS.

SUPER: LAZARUS BECAME BISHOP OF PROVENCE, THEN ARCHBISHOP OF CRETE. HE WOULD BE DECLARED "SAINT LAZARUS" IN THE EASTERN CHURCH ALONG WITH CLAUDIA PROCULA AND SARAH E KILI, WHO IS REGARDED AS THE BLACK MADONNA.

EXT. GAUL COUNTRYSIDE

PONTIUS PILATE, in full ARMOR, rides his STEED up a hill and disappears from view into rolling FOG and CLOUDS.

SUPER: IT IS SAID THAT PONTIUS PILATE COMMITTED SUICIDE IN VIENNE AND HIS GHOST LIVES IN A POND NEAR LUCERNE VALLEY IN SWITZERLAND WHERE ON GOOD FRIDAY EACH YEAR, IT EMERGES TO WASH ITS HANDS.

EXT. SHRINE OF SAINTE MAXIMIN LA ST. BAUME - PRESENT DAY

SUPER: MARY MAGDALENE LIVED OUT HER LIFE IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE WHERE SHE DIED PEACEFULLY IN THE ARMS OF SAINT BAUME. HER REMAINS ARE SAID TO BE IN THE SHRINE OF SAINTE MAXIMIN LA ST. BAUME IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

SUPER: There is nothing more to be added to this.

FADE OUT

Sources:

Based on the treatment INTERCESSION and
the screenplay CRY: A STORY OF THREE MARYS.

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