

## THE DARKEST OF DAYS

## Intro

The disciples were blind-sided by Judas' betrayal - one of their own, and a close friend and compatriot. Before they had a chance to process their anger and surprise, their feelings were already off to fears of their own safety and the horror of what was happening to another of their friends - their teacher and leader. Within that, Judas commits suicide and Jesus is murdered, and many of their hopes and dreams and guiding principles are thrown into a blender.

A confusing time for them all, no doubt.

## I.

Shock of revelation (*the Knowing*)

It was Matthew that found the body, where it lay twisted  
 Against the base of the cliff. He enlisted  
 Some of the others to move it for burial.  
 I refused – I couldn't set my eyes on something so terrible.  
 (They said his innards were outward, and 'round his neck was a rope.) I'm still trying to deal with  
 the fact of him lying to us, and now any hope Of any much-owed explanation has been dashed.

I admit, in my anger I had lusted to smash  
 His face and his body – how could he do such a thing!?  
 After three years' camaraderie, how could he bring  
 Such an act to fruition?  
 It's ironic, I guess – I wouldn't dare use the word funny-  
 That it was none other than Matthew, considering their mutual mindset to money And the many  
 conversations they shared.  
 Fitting is a better word. (It also spared  
 Us having to endure a complete mystery,  
 For through Levi's connections we later discovered the history  
 Of Judas' traitorous transaction involving the thirty silver coins,  
 And the murderous plot he voluntarily joined.)

Thinking of it fills me with nausea.  
 And fills me with hate,  
 With no ability for resolution. For the hour is late  
 And we're all scattered to and fro.  
 Hard to imagine that not even twenty-four hours ago  
 Had the thirteen of us dining  
 With fresh bread and good wine, and all reclining  
 With faces upturned toward our beloved Teacher.  
 Even now I can picture his candlelit features,  
 And though torn, I'm glad I ran thus to hide,  
 So have but that final image to accompany the words: "He's died! He's died, our Master has died!"

II.

As dark as the hollow depth within the gut (*the wish for un-knowing*)

Birdsong.

For what do they cry?

Did they, too, have a loved one that died?

Yet as their warbling accosts me, acutely renting my solace

I sense it's due less to grief than because of their knowledge

Of some upcoming reveal of great joy, which to me remains hidden. Though I've been let in on the know, it seems yet forbidden.

I wish they'd desist, for their melodies are opp'site

To my state of despair which has turned me inoperant.

I've spent the morn weary, castaway'd in my loss

Bleary-eyed, hungover – nay, still drunk –

Trying to bleach out the mold of such pervasive, black thoughts:

The endless loop of stark images, that seemed burned into my mind Of the day-before's agonies that have turned my heart blind.

From behind a smallish ridge, I spied things like a coward

(John was the only one who remained throughout stalwart)

Where I gasped like a *musht* taken out of its waters. All allegiance and courage and sanity faltered,

As I debilitatingly watched the most unspeakable acts Being committed to Rabboni's head, neck and back.

I wept and I bit my own sleeve in frustration,

Begging the Almighty for some sort of divine liberation;

But as the torture continued, I heard nothing but cries –

From the women, from me, from my friend – and the question of why Overwhelmed all my senses, until consumed by a rage

I fled with my guilt from that damned, wretched place.

Master,

Brother,

How can I make logic from what you once said, When all is but darkness, and all is but dead?

III.

Morning sprint, before confirmation (*the Understanding*)

Thomas, I too agree with your doubt

That those reports we keep hearing in no ways wipe out

The disappointment and fear of the past however many hours. Oil that turns rancid and sours

Can't simply be reversed.

It's not as easy as a pervasive deep thirst

That is quenched by one or two swigs.

Right?

Yet there went John and Peter, without a trace of hesitation, The moment they heard of the women's visitation

To the crypt that was empty, with the shroud askew on the floor.  
(No sooner had they heard the word 'angel' than they raced out the door.) Still I refuse to believe something utterly impossible.

Getting suckered into trusting once again? How comical  
That we, who were oblivious to betrayal and naïve in our fealty,  
Would so soon jump on a bandwagon counter-intuitive to reality.  
Thaddeus used a word yesterday, an important point he touched on,  
While brooding over our grief - he used the word 'pawn.'  
Mostly in regard to Judas, though more than a few of us  
Believe that perhaps our own roles in all of this was more than just gratuitous. A fist-fight broke out, between hot-headed Simon  
And that pessimist Philip, which didn't help but to heighten  
Our already feeling fractured, and the sting of disunity.

We never imagined losing this tight-knit community.

Still, in my corner, where I ponder and wait  
I wish I, too, had dashed out to the tomb where he's laid. Partly to give my legs somewhere to tread,  
But mostly because the tug in the back of head  
Is murmuring 'what if, Andrew, what if?'