

Roman Soldier monologue

CHARACTER: 1

PROPS: Sword optional

COSTUME: Roman soldier toga, helmet, sandals

SETTING: Jerusalem, AD 33

At rise: Soldier is pacing. Something is bothering him.

(To no one in particular) Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.

(Directly to audience) That's what he said. Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.

I've been a Roman legionnaire for nearly ten years and in all that time I always knew what I was doing. I might not know why but the orders were loud and clear. I'd crucified scores of enemies of the Roman Empire but never before had any one of them said Father, forgive them. They know not what they do. *(Pause, paces a bit)*

(to audience) Most of them screamed in pain when we drove the spikes through their hands and feet. They'd thrash futilely but in the end they all were nailed to their crosses, struggling to breathe, dripping out their life a drop of blood at a time.

Some begged for mercy. Many of them cursed us. But never before had they forgiven us.

Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.

I don't know why those nine words haunt me so, why I can't banish them from my mind. I can still see his eyes locked onto mine when he said

Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.