

Easter Cantata

a new telling from Mary



for

mezzo soprano
bass baritone
tenors I and II
clarinet
viola
piano

by Debra Rowe

CRUCIFIXION

Mary
Mezzo-soprano

Jesus
Bass-baritone

Angels 1 and 2
Tenors
Agnus Dei

His mother weeps but my eyes burn.
My eyes burn dry.

So much joy.
Thank you Lord, I believe!

So little time.

Why must I be so alone?
Always to be so alone.
So little time to be with him, so little time.
I followed him right to this moment.
I'd follow wherever he'd go.
But here's where my following ends, and I'm left all alone.
My lord! My lord.
He heal'd me of wounds that cut deep,
accepted my touch on his feet. I thought he'd see my devotion.
I thought he'd see.
He walk'd open-eyed into danger.
No plea for his safety he'd hear.
And now it's too late. He is there, out of reach and alone.
My lord. My lord.
Why must we be so alone?
Always to be so alone, my lord.
My lord. My lord. My lord.

His feet. His poor feet.

The blood! The blood!
The blood drips while I can do nothing.
Tell me what to do!

His poor feet. Such dreadful pain, such pain.
The blood!
He cannot breathe! Someone please help him!
He writhes in pain. God help him!

Someone please help him!
He cannot breathe.
He tries to speak, to speak?

The pain!
He tries to stand to breathe. His flesh tears.
He tries to stand. He cannot breathe.
He's dying!
Dying.
Oh God, I do not understand.
I do not understand.
Please help him. Please help.
Where is the sun? It's noon, and suddenly it's dark.
Where is the sun?
Where is God?

Sour wine? They give him sour wine?
How can they be so cruel?

Don't leave me!

The hour has come. Mark 14:41

Father! John 17:1 **I have made your name known.** John 17:6
Now they know. John 17:7
They have believed that you sent me. John 17:8

And now, I am no longer in the world. John 17:11
I am coming to you, John 17:11

I have given them your word and the world has hated them. John 17:14
I ask you to protect them. John 17:15
Sanctify them in the truth. John 17:17

Agnus Dei

Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing. Luke 23:34

I am thirsty. John 19:28

Truly I tell you today you will be with me in paradise. Luke 23:43

It is finished. John 19:30
Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. Luke 23:46
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Mark 15:34

RESURRECTION

Mary

The Sabbath is over.
 He's gone and I'm alone.
 One last time. I must see him one last time.
 One last gift to give him.
 I could not save him. I could not prevent his pain.
 But there is one last offering he wanted from me.
 I remember when I anointed his feet.
 Fragrant perfume to heal the wounds from the street.
 Smiling, he told me to save some for his burial.
 Smiling, I promised him gladly.
 I never dreamed it would come so soon.
 He trusted me.
 I will anoint him one last time.
 I will not disappoint him.
 This much I can do. This much I must do.
But who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb? Mark 16:3
 What's this? The tomb is open! The stone aside!
 And two men where once his body lay.

Who are they? Where have they put him? Where's Jesus?
 Who are they? What are they saying? Where's Jesus?

Can it be true?
 He spoke of returning I know.
 But surely that was a story?
 But look! The tomb is empty. Where is his body? Where is he?

Can it be true? Can it be true? I am afraid to believe.

They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him. John 20:13
 He is gone.
 And I have not said goodbye.

Another stranger, probably the gardener. But where is my Lord?

How can he ask?
 Even the gardener must know must know that this is where he was laid.
 But maybe a gardener will know where they have put him. I'll ask.

Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away. John 20:15

Master?
Master! John 20:16
 It's you! It's really you! You are here! And yet how can you be?

Jesus

Angels 1 and 2

There is no need for you to be afraid. Matthew 28:5

There is no need for you to be amazed. Mark 16:6

You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. But he is not here! Mark 16:6

Why look among the dead for someone who is alive?

He has risen!

He is not here for he has risen as he said he would! Matthew 28:6

Come and see the place where he lay. Matthew 28:6

You must go and tell his disciples; he is going ahead of you to Galilee; Matthew 28:7

That is where you will see him. Mark 16:7

Woman, why are you weeping? John 20:13

Woman, why are you weeping? John 20:15

Who are you looking for? John 20:15

Mary! John 20:16

Greetings. Matthew 28:9
Do not be afraid. Matthew 28:10

RESURRECTION

Mary

My lord! My lord! My lord! It is you!
I see you.
I touch you.
I see that it is you yourself!
It's really you, you are here.
I touch you and see and believe.
I touch you and see.
I touch and believe.
Touch me and see, and believe.
My lord.

My lord?

Do not cling?
Do not cling?
Just three days ago I kept a vigil as you died, there, hung upon the cross.
Since then I've been grieving, searching for the reason to live after such a loss. Now the impossible! You appear.
And just when I am learning to believe, you say "do not cling"?
I am still in wonder how you can be standing here before my very eyes.
Faced with life without you, now I'm faced with you and truth that I must recognize.
It is so wonderful to be with you.
And just as I feel happiness return, you say "do not cling"?
I have known you have work to do.
I have believed in your goals.
I've done all I could to ease your way,
and now that things have changed,
what about me?

I know you have work to do.
I believe in your goals.
I'll do all I can to ease your way,
just stay with me awhile.
Things have changed. You are here.
The worst took place, yet you live.
It must be true. Everlasting life is true.
My love and joy overflow.
I need to share what I know.
The proof is you. Everlasting life is true
and you are here always,

Must I leave you so soon?
Must I leave?
Go? Tell! I will go and tell them.
I will say that they must leave for Galilee. They will see!
I must go and tell the disciples he is going ahead, he is going ahead of them to Galilee, Galilee. I must go I must go and tell the disciples
I have seen the Lord! John 20:18
and he goes to Galilee.
They will see!

Jesus

See my hands. Luke 24:39
Touch me and see,,,, that it is I myself. Luke 24:39
Touch me and see... Luke 24:39
...believe. John 20:27

Mary John 20:16

Do not cling to me... John 20:17

Mary John 20:16
Do not cling to me because I have not yet ascended to the Father. John 20:17
Do not be afraid. Matthew 28:10

I am with you always. Matthew 28:20

Mary John 20:16
Do not cling to me John 20:17
But go to the brothers. John 20:17

Go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; there they will see me. Matthew 28:10

You must go and tell the disciples he is going ahead of them to Galilee.
You must go and tell the disciples, he is risen. Mark 16:7
They must go to Galilee; there they will see!

RESURRECTION

Mary

The candles are lit, meat and drink on the table.
The brothers have gathered tonight.
They're hoping to see him, expecting to see him.
They're fearing to see him tonight.

And yet they do not believe.
They're still afraid to believe.
They huddle together, with deepest suspicion.
They stare, and do not believe. They try to believe.

They still can't believe.
They give to him a piece of grilled fish which he eats before their eyes.
And see, how this ordinary thing finally convinces them.
They believe!

What joy there is in living!
The miracle of living!
To talk and laugh and be together with my lord!
To feel him walk beside me,
and know he's there to guide me.
I know that he lives.
I do not understand how this can be.
I can't explain these things I see.
I see beyond all doubt that he is here.
I know that he lives.

What joy to be with my lord!

I know that he lives, and that his presence is a blessing for us all.

Peace be with you.

Peace.

Jesus

Greetings. Matthew 28:9
Peace be with you. Luke 24:36

Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts?

Luke 24:38

See by my hands... by my feet that it is I myself.

Touch me and see for yourselves.

A ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have. Luke 24:39

Put your finger here; look, here are my hands.

John 20:27

Give me your hand, put it in to my side. John 20:27

Do not be unbelieving anymore but believe.

John 20:27

Have you any thing here to eat? Luke 24:41

He lives!
What joy there is in living!
The miracle of living! To talk and laugh and be together with our lord!
To feel him walk beside us, and know he's there to guide us.
I know that he lives! I know that he lives!

Peace be with you. John 20:19
And look, I am with you al ways; yes, to the end of time. Matthew 28 20

Peace. John 20:19

Peace be with you.

Peace.

Sources:

- The New Jerusalem Bible Reader's Edition, *Doubleday 1990*
- Holy Bible New Revised Standard Version, *Oxford University Press 1962, 1973, 1977*