

Sealed With a Kiss

Despite your humility you never had any doubts, did you? You were never afraid. Not like the rest of us. At the time, I was blinded by you. I mistook humility for caution. I confused foolhardy fearlessness with certainty in victory. No revolutionary zeal for us, but a measured way to change the world. The law and reason were on our side. We would lead our people to a land free of poverty and injustice.

It went to plan at first. Your teachings convinced us, and we in turn convinced others, until you had a sizeable following. But a land free of poverty and injustice meant challenging the wealthy and the lawmakers secular and religious. Inevitably we caught their attention. I realised it was not going to end well. You foresaw the same outcome as I, but you did not tell us that this was your gameplan all along. You shared your vision with Judas, didn't you, but not with me, your rock and right-hand man. So, who exactly betrayed who?

At our last meal together, you said that I would deny you. I did not understand. Was it a prediction or an instruction? I saw you talk to sweet, naïve, idealistic Judas. Were your words to him dripping in honeyed ambivalence as your words had been to me? Did he fully understand the consequences? I think not, and now I know what you did.

Under the olive scented moon light we followed you into the garden and we slept while you prayed. I saw Judas softly kiss your cheek, I saw the soldiers drag you away. I saw the horror and terror on Judas's face as he realised what he had done. You sacrificed him to your plan, but you also condemned him to death, eternally a traitor. How else to bring about your martyrdom and secure your place as the Son of God?

I denied you, of course I did, just as you had predicted (or commanded?). I saw them cut down Judas's body from the tree.

For a while I struggled with my faith in you. I had trusted you, but you had not confided in me. In time, I came to understand why you had spared me and had not required my death. You needed my blind faith, to bear witness to your teachings, to spread your word and establish your church. And this I did. To do otherwise would have denied you again, and my soul could not bear another betrayal.