

# Sunday 5am

by Rod Belt

**Theme:** A script for Easter. It's early morning on that first Easter Sunday, and most of the eleven disciples are still asleep. Those waking up are chatting about life, the weather and fish – but mostly about Jesus and, more pressingly, what he would have wanted them to do next. The trouble is, no-one can remember there being any actual instructions.

John 20:1-18, Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12

**Cast:**

JAMES	Impatient and quick-tempered.
MATTHEW	Thoughtful.
THOMAS	Confused.
OTHERS	Initially asleep, snoring.

**Notes:** The setting is very early morning in a room where the eleven disciples are holed up in the aftermath of the crucifixion. Scattered around are all the signs of too many people living too closely together and not looking after themselves very well – unwashed cups and plates, clothes, sandals and other objects. The script implies that the other disciples are all sleeping somewhere amongst this, but there is no need for them to be actually represented – all you need is someone (maybe off-stage) to snore, grunt etc at appropriate points.

This is a sort-of sequel to the script Sunday 4am, where we hear Mary's tangled thoughts as she prepares to set off to visit Jesus' tomb.

*(THOMAS and JAMES are standing centre stage, holding cups from which they sip occasionally. They are in the middle of a conversation. MATTHEW is sleeping at their feet. Scattered around are cups, bowls, sandals, clothes and other evidence of lots of people living together in a cramped space.)*

THOMAS All I'm saying is, he would want us to stay here, together.

JAMES Until when? Do we stay another night, another month – or what? He didn't leave any instructions, he just left us alone.

*(Snoring comes from MATTHEW, who is lying at their feet.)*

JAMES Give him a nudge. He snores almost as much as Peter.

THOMAS That's not possible! *(tips his cup so a trickle of water splashes on MATTHEW's face)* Wakey wakey Matthew!

MATTHEW *(Groans and sits up)* Oh... what? What happened? What hour is it? It doesn't look very light!

THOMAS Well, no, it's still early, but you were snoring and annoying us.

MATTHEW *(Groans again and clutches head as he stands up)* Why are you awake?

THOMAS *(Hands his cup to Matthew so he can take a sip)* Why are you asleep? How can you sleep at a time like this? We've been talking for hours!

MATTHEW What about?

JAMES What do you think!

THOMAS Anything and everything. Life, childhood, wine, Romans, the weather, love, fish.

MATTHEW Ooh, I don't know about wine or fish but have we got any of that crusty bread left? If I'm awake it must be breakfast...

*(THOMAS Picks up a piece of bread from a plate and passes it to MATTHEW. James pauses slightly for this but then pointedly carries on with the original conversation.)*

JAMES But mostly we've been talking about what we should do next.

THOMAS On the one hand, we could stay here and wait.

JAMES But wait for what? And how long? On the other hand, we could go back to our towns and our jobs and wait there.

MATTHEW *(annoyed)* That's easy for you to say! You're a fisherman and the fish will always be there. So will your family. But me, I was a tax collector for the Romans and I put all that all behind me when Jesus walked in to my life. I can't go back to that! I don't think my family would be all that keen on me either.

JAMES So you've got nowhere to go?

MATTHEW Well - I could take a gap year – everyone does it these days!

JAMES A gap year! You mean waste time for a year?

MATTHEW I mean travel the world and learn what life is all about. The problem is, I've sort-of just spent three years finding out what life is about. I'm not sure another year would make things clearer.

THOMAS That's true. How can we ever top the three years we've just had with Jesus?

JAMES So we still don't know what to do next.

*(Snoring comes from somewhere behind.)*

JAMES That'll be Peter. Sort him out Matthew.

MATTHEW Why me?

JAMES It's your turn.

*(MATTHEW looks around, picks up a shirt and throws it upstage. There is a grunt and then silence.)*

THOMAS That was feeble!

MATTHEW Well it worked. *(Pause, looks back)* He let Jesus down you know.

THOMAS Who, Peter? He was frightened. We would all have done the same, and there was nothing he could do to change things. What happened wasn't his fault.

JAMES Judas was the real betrayer – we all know that! He sold us out!

MATTHEW I got the impression Jesus knew about Judas, he didn't seem all that surprised when Judas turned up with an army of soldiers!

JAMES *(Angry)* That doesn't make it alright. He was a traitor!

MATTHEW I know that, I'm just saying that Jesus knew more about it than he said!

THOMAS No fighting! Yes Jesus knew, no that doesn't make it OK.

*(They are silent for a few moments.)*

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MATTHEW I blame the priests – they plot and plan to hang on to their power.

THOMAS The mob turned on him and shouted for his blood – they all worshipped him a few days earlier!

JAMES But the Romans are behind everything in this world. They had the power to save him but instead they cruelly nailed him up and let everyone mock.

THOMAS No one was forced to mock, they all chose for themselves.

*(Snoring comes from behind.)*

JAMES Oh good grief, who's that now?

*(JAMES picks up a sandal and throws it upstage. There is a muffled cry and the snoring stops.)*

***So, who was really to blame? How much did Jesus know about what was going to happen? And (Thorny question) was Jesus actually the Son of God? What was his plan? Will anyone else snore? What about Matthew's gap year? And who is that knocking at the door?***

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