

HAMMER & NAILS- The Sounds of the Crucifixion

Cast of Characters

Caiaphas	_____
Prosecutor	_____
First Witness	_____
Second Witness	_____
Jesus	_____
Soldier One	_____
Soldier Two	_____
Soldier Three	_____
Peter	_____
Servant Girl One	_____
Servant Girl Two	_____
Man	_____
Pilate	_____
Chief Priest	_____
Mary	_____
Voice One (Male)	_____
Voice Three (Male)	_____
Voice Two (Male or Female)	_____
Voice Four (Male or Female)	_____

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.

Scene 1: *The Hall of the Sanhedrin.* *It is 4:00 AM. All the Sanhedrin are aggravated and angry about the delays and their own inability to bring the trial of Jesus to a close. ALL (except for PETER, MARY, and female VOICES) are muttering and grumbling which builds toward CAIAPHAS' first words.*

CAIAPHAS: Are there any more witnesses?!

PROSECUTOR: Yes, Caiaphas. We have two whose testimony will stand, who cannot be denied!

CAIAPHAS: Let them speak.

FIRST WITNESS: Sir, this man blasphemed the temple!

CAIAPHAS: What do you mean?

SECOND WITNESS: His exact words were, "I am able to destroy the temple, and to rebuild it in three days."

Cries of denial and disgust from crowd throughout the following.

CAIAPHAS: These are very serious charges. Jesus of Nazareth, what is your defense? Why don't you answer? *(Pause)* I command you by the living God to tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God!

JESUS: Yes, it is as you say!

Crowd explodes with indignation. Quiet during the beginnings of Jesus statement then gradually building to rage.

JESUS: Nevertheless, I tell you that the time will come when you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

CAIAPHAS: This is blasphemy, we don't need any more witnesses. Now, you have all heard him. What do you think?

ALL: Guilty! He should die!

Allow at least five (5) full seconds between each scene.

Scene 2: The Mocking by the Temple Guards

SOLDIER ONE: *(Slapping sounds, laughter)* Tell us who hit you.

SOLDIER TWO: You're supposed to be the Christ. Prophecy to us, tell us who hit you.

Scene 3: Peter's Denial

Peter runs from back of auditorium to center front, panting he talks to himself.

PETER: It wasn't suppose to happen this way. He is supposed to be the King of Kings and now they are going to kill him. WHAT--WENT--WRONG?! *(Pause)* It sure is cold out here. I wish I was by that fire, but someone might recognize me. I guess I could take the chance.

Pause as Peter walks over to "fire" and rubs his hands together before the fire.

SERVANT GIRL ONE: Sir, weren't you with Jesus the Galilean?

PETER: I don't know what you're talking about.

SERVANT GIRL TWO: This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.

PETER: I said I don't know the man!

MAN: Surely you are one of them. Your accent gives you away.

PETER: I swear I don't know the man!

Rooster crows.

PETER: *(Pause)* What have I done? What have I done?!

Scene 4: Pilate's Judgment

ALL (but PETER) start off with subdued complaining and grumbling, quickly building in volume. As they see Pilate, they explode into a mob of threats and demands. Pilate has to almost scream to be heard above them. The crowd responds to each of his statements vehemently.

PILATE: You brought this man to me saying that he incited rebellions. I have examined him before you and do not find him guilty of the charges. Neither has Herod found him guilty. Therefore, I will punish him and release him.

CHIEF PRIEST: Away with this man and release Barabbas.

PILATE: Then what shall I do with the one who is called "King of the Jews"?

ALL: Crucify him! Release Barabbas to us instead!

PILATE: Why? What wrong has he done? Let me punish him and release him.

ALL: Crucify him! Crucify him!

PILATE: Very well, I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your responsibility.

VOICE THREE: Let his blood be on us and on our children.

Scene 5: The Flogging and the Soldiers' Mocking

From the back of the room, one of the soldiers brings down a whip across Jesus' shoulders (use a large stuffed sack as a body). Jesus cries out in pain. Repeat six or seven times. Then Jesus is roughly tussled and pushed down one of the aisles leading to downstage center. The soldier's mocking goes on during the walk to the cross.

SOLDIER ONE: Jewish dog! Hail, King of the Jews!

SOLDIER TWO: Well, every king needs a crown.

SOLDIER THREE: Here's a crown. Let's see if it fits.

SOLDIER ONE: And a robe! Every king needs a robe.

SOLDIER TWO: Bring this king a robe.

SOLDIER THREE: Look at him now! King of the Jews!

SOLDIER ONE: Hail, King of the Jews!

ALL SOLDIERS: Hail, King of the Jews!

Scene 6: The Crucifixion

The soldiers roughly push Jesus down onto the "cross". We hear the clinking of hammer and nails as one of the soldiers prepares for the crucifixion. The hammer and nail connect three times with Jesus screaming in agony each time, his cries diminishing in intensity. Repeat at Jesus' other side.

JESUS: *(Gasping for breath)* Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing.

VOICE ONE: What did he say?

VOICE TWO: Forgive them?

VOICE THREE: What do we need forgiveness for? Isn't he the one that's guilty?

VOICE FOUR: Look at him hanging there!

VOICE ONE: He's nothing but a common criminal.

VOICE TWO: You who said you could destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days--save yourself!

VOICE THREE: If you are the Son of God, come down from there!

VOICE FOUR: He saved others, he can't even save himself.

VOICE ONE: Let him come down and then we'll believe him.

JESUS: Eloi! My God, my God. Why have you forsaken me?

VOICE TWO: Listen to him! He's calling for Elisha.

JESUS: I thirst--

VOICE THREE: Hey, the king says he's thirsty.

VOICE FOUR: Well, give him something to drink.

VOICE ONE: Here, see how you like this.

VOICE TWO: Let's see if Elisha will come and save him now.

MARY: *(Weeping in anguish)* NO! Jesus! My baby! *(To the crowd)* He fed you! He healed your babies! *(Back at Jesus)* Oh, Jesus, don't let them do this to you. Tell them who you are, Jesus. Please, tell them who you are.

JESUS: Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. *(Pause)* It is finished.

A prolonged silence.

SOLDIER ONE: Truly this man was the son of God.

Scene 7: Epilogue

In the dark, ALL freeze while song "Rescue" by Acapella is played. ALL exit at last chorus. HOUSE LIGHTS UP at conclusion of song.