

## THAT FRIDAY



The soldiers wrenched the nails out of him with pliers  
and let him down (none too gently).

Joseph of Arimathea had bartered with Pilate for his body,  
so we were allowed to begin the preparation.

We prised the crown of thorns out of his flesh and hair  
matted with blood,

then stood by to allow his sobbing mother  
to wash the blood and grime from his body,  
crooning the lullaby she probably would have sung  
when she bathed him as a child.

We wanted to allow her all the time in the world  
but Sabbath was too close,

so we women helped her with her tender task.

Joseph had brought strips of linen  
and we wrapped him in them.

He helped us carry him to the tomb  
where, weeping, we laid him,  
and then rolled the heavy stone across the entrance.  
But even that wasn't good enough for Rome,  
because as we turned to go,  
some soldiers came to make sure it was properly sealed.  
We left them laughing as they shared some macabre joke.

Is that all his life was worth,  
to be consigned to a tomb guarded by uncaring soldiers?  
Didn't they know?  
Couldn't they see?

But the sun was about to set,  
and we had to hurry home,  
unable to even protest their callousness.

Just before he died he had cried out  
"It is finished!"  
But for us it was not finished,  
and it seemed that our grief was such  
that it would never be finished.

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