

He is dead.

I feel empty. It has been three days and yet, I still feel as if life itself has been stripped from me. The bloody images will not go away, and I still awake screaming at night. How is it, that in a matter of hours, everything changed? An innocent man, my friend, dead.

And I ran like a coward when they took him away. I should have stayed with him, but instead, I betrayed him. He had done so much for me and in return, I denied him. And I will never get to ask for his forgiveness.

He was perfect. We all thought he was the one we were waiting for. But he died—we all watched it. Were we wrong? Was he not who he said he was?

A tear trickles down my cheek and I do not bother to stop it from rolling down my chin and hitting the dirt floor. I look to see if any of my brothers notice, but they do not. All of them have the same expression. It is the same one I wear. Hopelessness. None of us know what to do. We went back to doing what we did before, but it is not the same. We have lost our purpose.

No one thought it was going to end this way when we gave up everything. It was not supposed to end this way. But he is dead. It is finished.

Suddenly, the door flies open and two women rush in. Their dark eyes are wide and their faces bright. Their breathing is quick as they look at us. I stand. “What--”

“He’s alive!” One of them grabs my arm and shakes me.

“They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised up,” my thoughts remind me. I can still hear his voice.

“Impossible,” one of my brothers say, “We saw him die.”

She looks at me and smiles. “Peter, he is alive!”

I run out the door before anyone says anything. Though I have only seen it once, I have the path memorized. I had watched him die. I had watched as they put him in the tomb and sealed it. There was no way. Like my brother said, it was impossible.

But the stone is rolled away. I touch it before entering the tomb, mesmerized. It is impossible. I grab the empty cloths, the ones I had watched his mother and sisters wrap him in.

“They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised up.”

He was dead. I had watched him die. I had watched as they fought over his clothes. I watched as they rejected him, mocked him, spat on him. I watched the blood drip from his body. I watched as he cried out and questioned his father. I saw him scream in agony and take his last breath. He was dead and buried.

But there is no longer the stench of death. His body is not here.