

## Don Francisco

### "Too Small A Price"

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I awoke to hear the jailer turn the key and push the door  
'Get out here!' he shouted, but I stayed there on the floor  
Frozen in the terror that rose and filled my brain  
I knew what they intended; I could not face the pain

Then soldiers came into the cell and dragged me to the yard  
They threw me down before a cross and brought the whip down hard  
'Carry it!' they shouted, as I struggled to my feet  
I put my shoulder under it; dragged it to the street

I stumbled through a wall of screams as they drove me through the gate  
It seemed that thousands lined the streets, their voices filled with hate  
Like a wolf pack in the night that moves in for the kill  
They closed the gap and followed us as we started up the hill

And it seemed I'd barely reached the top when they grabbed me from behind  
They threw the cross down under me and tied the ropes that bind  
The arms close to the beams as they nailed the feet and hands  
And they raised the cross up in the air and dropped it in its stand

Through a blur of pain I saw the cross there next to mine  
There were people all around it so I looked to read the sign  
It was nailed there up above His head so the world could see the news  
That the man who seemed so helpless there was the King of all the Jews

The crowd that stood around His cross made jokes

about His name  
They shouted, laughed and spat on Him so I joined in  
the game  
I said, 'Hey! If you're the King why don't you get us  
down from here?  
The taunt just sounded hollow and it echoed in my ears

'Cause He looked at me with eyes that seemed to reach  
into my heart  
They shone a light on all my lies and tore my life apart  
There was more that lay behind His gaze than simply  
blood and clay  
But knowing was too much for me; I had to look away

Then I chanced another look at Him as He was looking  
down  
Where the soldiers who'd just crucified us drank there  
on the ground  
And although He spoke them quietly, somehow His  
words came through  
He said 'Father, please forgive them; they don't know  
what they do'

Then as if they'd heard Him speak, the crowd began to  
roar  
Whipped to frenzy by the priests who urged them on to  
more  
But the worse the accusations, now, the plainer I could  
see  
The guilt of the accusers - not the One there next to me

Then the man upon the other cross began to curse and  
swear  
But his voice was filled with venom as he hurled it  
through the air  
When all the horror that was in him and had laid his life  
to waste  
Came out in every syllable he flung in Jesus' face

And Jesus only looked at him, but something rose  
inside of me  
And in spite of all that watched us there, it couldn't be  
denied  
Because His righteousness and innocence were  
shining bright and strong  
I just couldn't keep my silence and that cursing still  
went on

I cried out, 'Don't you fear the wrath of God even at the  
end?  
You'll curse us both into the pit - is that what you

intend?

We're only getting what we're due - we've sinned our  
whole lives long

But don't you talk to Him that way - He's done nothing  
wrong!'

Then with all my courage, in a voice not quite my own  
I asked Him 'Lord, remember me when you sit upon  
Your throne'

He answered me and, even then, His love was  
undisguised

He said 'Before the sun has set today, you'll be with Me  
in Paradise'

Well the shouts and curses did not stop even when the  
sunlight ceased

But somehow in the midst of it, my soul had been  
released

And though the agony continued, it was still too small a  
price

To be allowed to hear those words, and to die beside  
the Christ!

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