

<sup>32</sup>[Jesus and the disciples] went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup>He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. <sup>34</sup>And he said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.” <sup>35</sup>And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup>He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.” <sup>37</sup>He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? <sup>38</sup>Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” <sup>39</sup>And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. <sup>40</sup>And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. <sup>41</sup>He came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup>Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

<sup>43</sup>Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

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“Sit here while I pray,” Jesus says to you and your friends. It’s getting late, so everyone obliges by figuring out where they will sit. But before you can sit down, Jesus places his hand on your shoulder, and he also snags James and John before they are seated. He motions with a quick head gesture that the three of you are supposed to follow him. You begin to venture further into this garden of olive trees, but before you get too far you turn to notice that the other disciples have interpreted the instruction to “sit here while I pray” as permission to

take a late-night doze either laying on the ground or leaning against a tree. You feel a bit jealous of the others.

You, James, and John continue to follow Jesus. It's late, and you all just had a big meal. What's in store for the three of you? Once out of eyesight from the others, Jesus stops and says, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." With that, he goes a little further into the garden. You, James, and John can only look at each other and shrug. Why did he bring you three out to this spot if you are going to sit and wait just like the others? Well, you might as well sit down and make yourself comfortable like the others have done. You nestle into a comfortable spot against one of the trees.

"That was a good meal," you think to yourself. It hit the spot, and it was the first time in a while that you had an actual meal. The atmosphere around the meal became a little awkward, though. Not long into it, Jesus said one of the disciples would not betray him. "Surely, not I" you and the others said. Where was he getting this idea of betrayal?

Speaking of ideas, that spot on the ground right over there looks like it would fit a body of your size quite comfortably if you nestled into a fetal position. There's only one way to find out. So you navigate through the moonlight to that spot. As you do, you notice that James and John have fashioned make-shift pillows from a portion of their outer garment. ...Are they asleep? That seems like another good idea: the pillow, that is. Jesus asked you to keep awake, and you have every intention to do just that... but why not do it as comfortably as possible? You curl up into the spot that you staked out, and you borrow the idea from James and John to fashion your own pillow. It has been a long week, you think to yourself. After the long journey to reach Jerusalem, there was a festive parade thrown for Jesus. Everything seemed great; your rabbi was heralded as the Messiah who would run off the Romans. Things this week began on a high note, but they quickly went downhill from there. You get the sense now that everyone is upset with Jesus for one reason or another, and that he's overstayed his welcome in this city. It's not as though you haven't had your frustrations

with Jesus. He affirmed you when you said that he is the Messiah. Well, why isn't he getting on with it?!? Since he's the Messiah, he should be gathering people together to begin this campaign against the Romans. He should be gathering people into a body who can assert their will against those invaders. Instead, he took some bread at supper and said "This is my body." What did that mean? What will that ever accomplish? That bread did pair well with the wine, you think to yourself. It wasn't bad for Judean wine, but you prefer the complexity of the grapes grown in your native Galilee. Your grandmother once placed her hand on your shoulder to explain how the grapes grown in Galilee have a more concentrated flavor. "It has something to do with the soil," she tells you as she jostles your shoulder.

"Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?" Jesus says as he shakes you out of your slumber. You sit yourself up for a moment, seeking to regather your bearings. You strain under the weight of your eyelids. Jesus continues; "Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." As he walks away, you think, "Is it wise to convey adages to someone half awake?"

You try to shake yourself out of it. When you're through, you notice that James and John are asleep. Then you listen for the others down the way... not a word is being spoken. The only noise coming from that direction is the typical snoring of Andrew, Philip, and Bart. Why is Jesus singling you out for falling asleep? Earlier he said his disciples would desert him... well, Jesus, clearly no one is going anywhere. You told him that you would never desert him, and he came back by saying you would deny him three times or something. Whatever. Jesus is clearly in one of those states of mind. It's the middle of the night, and he is agitated for some reason. Was he sweating when he woke you? At this hour, there is no reason for him to be so worked up in his praying. You lower your body back to its spot on the ground. "Deny him?" you think to yourself. "Never gonna happen."

"Simon! Keep awake!" he urges you. "I'm awake. I'm awake," you reply. "Really, I'm awake." He wanders off again. Jesus clearly does not know how hard this task is. He wants

you to sit here... at this hour of the night... and just stay awake. That is some request coming from the guy who kept sleeping in a boat while a storm was actively sinking it. His request for you to stay awake is quite the hardship. It's not as though he's carrying any burdens at this hour. What is he doing over there, anyway? You scan your surroundings, but you can't make out what Jesus is doing. You look the other way, but there is only the pale moonlight and the sound of snoring. What in this hour would engross Jesus so much? It's not as if the fate of the world is on the line. Before you can finish that thought, your eyes roll back and your body finds its way to the ground once again.

More jostling. "Simon! James! John! Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand." What? Surely it's the same as it ever was. But it's not... you hear a commotion coming from where the other disciples are sleeping. Startled, you sit up to see torchlight approaching from that direction, and voices. You, James, and John get up to stand with Jesus. If he was agitated in prayer earlier, something has happened to fill him with resolve. The torches and the hands holding them make their way toward you through the garden of olive trees. Not certain what is about to transpire, you position your hand near your dagger. The crowd stops in front of the four of you. They have clubs and swords of their own. Can anything good come from this hour? A figure emerges from the crowd... it is your friend Judas.