

## Barabbas

Today in Pilate's courtyard I take my place,  
And gaze upon a beautiful face,  
So serene and calm and kind.  
A better Master one cannot find:  
I'd like to serve Him with all my mind.

Pilate appears – I see him now,  
Confused, with perspiration on his brow,  
I hear his trembling, anxious plea:  
“Barabbas and Jesus ye can see:  
Which of the twain will ye that I free?”

From Jesus I gaze do turn  
And look on Barabbas' face so stern.  
So many times I've quaked in fear,  
When I've heard his raucous jeer,  
While the pain causes cost many tear.

Without me and within the voices yell:  
Barabbas Barabbas let him be well.”  
“And with Jesus? Is Pilate's sigh.”  
Can it be those voices cry,  
“Away with Him, and crucify!”

Often I've stood in this selfsame wing  
and chosen Barabbas as my kink.  
Although I knew I couldn't win,  
Pressures without and passions within  
Led me to choose him, and to sin.

As often as for Barabbas I've cried,  
So often has Jesus been crucified.  
Every time He has hung on the tree,  
His precious blood paying the fee -  
Me from tyrant Barabbas to free.

Today, do I dare to shout above the throng -  
To chose the right and always shun wrong?  
What will my friends and family think,  
If with Jesus my life I link?  
Will they mock, and laugh, and wink?

The crowd around me hate the gentle man.  
“Barabbas!” they shout as loud they can.  
Their faces too are cruel and hard.  
If I choose Jesus, their looks like shard  
Will cause my happiness to be marred.

Pilate is washing his hands but in vain;  
This cannot remove the guilty stain.  
There is no neutrality on which to rely:  
If Barabbas his freedom I do not deny,  
then Jesus indeed I crucify.

The nails must not be driven again;  
No more must His face be drawn in pain.  
Above the din I voice my plea:  
“Crucified must Barabbas be,  
Christ Jesus to me set free!”

The Saviour's smile is plenteous reward,  
But struck in my heart is a joyous chord,  
Where and there in that vast throng,  
Other voices take up the song:  
“To Jesus Christ we wish to belong!”

Pharisees and scribes lead us into the street.  
With words like whips they merc'lessly beat.  
But all of us, we hardly mind,  
For Barabbas to the cross we bind,  
And Jesus our Lord of life we find.

By Sonia Vitus