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FOREVER TRIUMPHANT!

Created by Randy Vader and Jay Rouse

DRAMA COMPANION

By Rose Aspinall

Characters

Julie - age late twenties, single mom, manager of William's Diner. She and her son, Max are putting down roots in this town and have recently started attending a local church body located not far from the diner.

Gene - age 60-something, frequent customer at the diner. He is a devoted member of the church body where Julie and her son have begun attending. It was due to his friendship along with his late wife and another friend that brought Julie and Max into the church.

Max - Julie's son, 10 - 12 years old.

Waitress - Amy- non-speaking. Wears name tag

Diner clientele – non speaking

Catherine - Julie's mother, age 50 to 55

Russell - Julie's father, age 50 to 55- non-speaking

Setting

This drama opens in William's diner. The name is prominently displayed on a menu board that indicates the daily specials. This establishment is a favorite hangout of the locals. It looks like every other small town diner that you might have seen. There are tables with sugar, salt and pepper, napkin dispensers and ketchup bottles.

Another area of the stage should be set up to represent Julie and Max's apartment. There is a combination sitting and dining area, a small table with two side chairs will suffice.

Scene three takes place right in the church building following choir rehearsal. If you have Gene come right out the choir loft, he can be holding a **Forever Triumphant!** choral book.

Since the various scenes take place on different days have Max and Julie and Gene make changes in their attire. All you will need to do to convey this is have them change shirts.

Narration: (pg. 3)

This is a chronicle of our redemption - an account of events removed from us by two millennia - and yet a story that reverberates today in the echoes of ancient thunder.

The world was changed by what occurred during this week we remember. From the promise first voiced by the prophets - to the angel chorus rejoicing in the evening sky near Bethlehem - to the ministry years and miraculous deeds - Jesus has been a divine enigma.

For those who encounter Him and are able to behold His glory - He is all that He claims to be and more.

For those who are blinded by sin and pride He is a threat to be dealt with. He has been misquoted, mistreated, misunderstood, misrepresented and marked as a heretic.

But make no mistake - the evil one knows exactly who He is and has but one plan for Him - eternal defeat and death.

The Father - the Creator of the World - knows Jesus as only a Father can - and He has but one plan for His Child - eternal victory.

His only Son will be forever triumphant.

This is our story...

This is our song!

Song: EASTER SONG OVERTURE (pg. 3)

Scene 1

Julie is standing at the counter totaling receipts. Her attire is "business casual". There is a young waitress, dressed in black slacks and a white shirt and an apron with pockets bussing tables. Some clientele are preparing to leave as Gene walks in the door. Julie hears him enter and looks up. Surprise and happiness register on her face.

Julie: *(Walking from behind the counter and over to Gene, she greets him warmly, gives him a brief hug and holds him at arms length searching his face.) This is a surprise. What brings you here? This is the first time since... (Her voice trails off and Gene finishes her sentence)*

Gene: ...since I lost Marilyn.

Julie: *(Nodding her head, smiling sadly, while repeating his words) Since you lost Marilyn.*

Gene: Yeah, well I thought maybe it was time. Can't stay away forever you know. Anyway, Marilyn would want me to make sure the peanut butter pie was still top notch.

Julie: Well, I think we have some left. Let me bring you a slice and you be the judge. I'm just about done here. Mind if I join you?

Gene: That's why I'm here. I could use a listening ear.

Julie: Two minutes and I'm all yours.

Gene settles in at the table. He props up his elbows and momentarily rests his head on his hands. He is obviously weary. Julie gathers up the receipts she has been working on and puts them away. She puts a pot of coffee, two cups and a slice of pie on a tray and walks over to Gene. She pours coffee for both of them, slides the pie in front of Gene and sits down.

Julie: I'm so glad you came. This place hasn't been the same without you here to "liven" things up. How are you? And no brave face; just give it to me straight.

Gene: Straight? I think I'm too overwhelmed to do otherwise. Living without Marilyn is like missing an arm. She's gone but she's still in everything I do. She's in every thought... some days it would just be easier to stay in bed.

Julie: We all miss her, Gene. She was one of a kind.

Gene: *(Smiling sadly)* That she was. Do you know that the other day I was looking in the freezer and there are frozen meals in there? *(Emphatically)* Dated and labeled, I mean to tell you! She actually made them for me after she found out how sick she was. She was worried that I wouldn't eat right after she was gone. *(Shaking his head)* She knew me alright...like a book. I can't bring myself to eat them.

Julie: But that's why she made them. She wouldn't want you to waste them.

Gene: I know and I'll eat them - just not yet.

Julie: With her sweet tooth. I'd be surprised if there weren't a few frozen pies in there too.

Gene: As a matter of fact there are. *(Taking a bite of pie)* And I can tell you right now she would have loved this pie.

Julie: Well, considering that her only criterion was “is it sweet?” I won’t bother to enter it in the county fair just yet. *(They laugh.)*

Gene: Julie, I can’t thank you enough for the way that you pitched in and helped those last few months. It seemed like you became a second daughter to us. And Max... he’s a joy. We both loved it when he started calling us Grandma and Grandpa. Besides, he’s such a good friend for David.

Julie: I’m so glad David doesn’t mind sharing his grandpa with Max. You’ve all made such a difference in Max’s life. Mine too. I didn’t even realize what we were missing until God brought you into our lives. I wish there was some way that we could take some of your heartache away.

Gene: But you do...every time I see you serving in some way at the church, every time Max spends the night or calls me to come watch one of his basketball games, I know God is comforting me. There’s a scripture in Corinthians that fits me pretty well right now. “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed.” This is hard, but I know my Lord. I’ve felt His presence and His comfort.

Julie: Hey, I’m supposed to be encouraging you.

Gene: Well, you are. You’re a good listener. Besides it helps just to talk.

Julie: You know where to find me. I’m always available. You coming to Max’s game on Thursday? He said to tell you that the coach might start him.

Gene: Wouldn’t miss it. You tell him to look for me in my usual spot.

Julie: Thanks Gene. You know if it’s ever too much of a burden...

Gene: Julie, I love it that Max wants me there. Don’t give it another thought.

The young waitress who has been cleaning up is now finished and she indicates to Julie that she is leaving for the night.

Julie: Alright, thanks. *(turning back to Gene)* Since you’re here, mind if I ask your advice on something?

Gene: Not at all.

Julie: Lately, I’ve been thinking a lot about maybe getting in touch with my fam-

ily. The idea's a little scary to me, but I can't seem to shake it.

Gene: Hmmm, that sure seems like a sign that God is up to something. He does have a way of pushing us out of our comfort zone. And if it's about reconciliation, well you already know how he feels about that.

Julie: That's what I was afraid of.

Gene: Want the good news?

Julie: *(Adamantly)* Yes.

Gene: If He's asking you to do something, he always gives you the ability to carry it out.

Julie: Ok, I'll keep that in mind. It helps.

Gene: Julie, you belong to Him now. You know His voice. Trust that. He only has good plans for us.

Julie: If you can be that confident even after losing Marilyn, then I have to believe that you know what you are talking about.

Gene: Yeah, you know what? In this case I do know what I'm talking about because I've seen His faithfulness. *(Looking at his watch)* Wow, I better get going. I didn't mean to hold you up this long. I'm keeping you from getting home to Max. *(Gets up)* Thanks for the coffee and pie, but most of all the company.

Julie: Anytime, Gene. When you get home and your house feels empty, remember there are a lot of people who love you.

Gene: Thanks, I'll remember. See you Thursday if not before.

Lights out

Narration: (pg. 10)

This last week in the earthly ministry of Jesus the Christ is a week of celebration and jubilation - a week of introspection and communion - a week of treachery and tragedy. The week begins with a spontaneous parade that was scripted from the beginning of time.

This day - forever remembered as Palm Sunday - is a study in irony. The crowds in Jerusalem hail Jesus of Nazareth as king - never realizing that He is the King of all kings who will ever

reign on this earth.

These cheering voices will call for His death in just a few days. He is not the king they expect. He is a leader who speaks with authority yet walks in humility.

He is a teacher who talks in the language of peasants yet leaves scholars perplexed.

He is a master who exemplifies servanthood.

And yet there is something so compelling about His presence on this Holy day that the crowds begin to shout His praises.

Song: TRIUMPHANT KING (pg. 10)

SCENE 2

This scene takes place in Julie and Max's apartment. Julie is straightening up the apartment when Max comes in from school. Max enters with his backpack on and a basketball in one hand.

Max: *(Tossing his backpack on a chair)* Hey Mom. *(He tosses the basketball back and forth from one hand to the other)*

Julie: Hey Buddy! How was school?

Max: Good. *(Excited)* David wants to know if I can spend the night with him this weekend. He wants to camp out in Grandpa Gene's back yard.

Julie: Oh yeah? Did anyone clear this with Grandpa Gene?

Max: David's gonna call him tonight.

Julie: Well, we'll see then, after we see how Grandpa Gene feels about it, ok?

Max: Ok, did you ask him about coming to my game?

Julie: As a matter of fact, I didn't even have to call him. He stopped in at the diner today. First time he's been in there since Grandma Marilyn passed away. He said that you should look for him in his usual spot.

Max: *(Pumping his fist in the air)* Yes!

Julie: *(Awkwardly)* We ah... we talked about something else too.

Max: *(Still somewhat distracted by his basketball)* What?

Julie: *(Hesitating)* Well, I've been thinking... about calling home. You know, just to kinda touch base.

Max: *(Puzzled, he stops tossing the ball back and forth)* Home?

Julie: Yeah, Catherine and Russell, your grandparents.

Max: Why? We don't even know them.

Julie: *(Correcting him)* You don't know them, I do. They're my parents.

Max: *(Starting to sound a little stressed)* But, why should we call them? Everything is going fine. Besides I thought you didn't like them.

Julie: Max, it's not that I don't like them. It's more complicated than that. Besides it's been a long time and people change. I've changed. *(Trying to make him understand)* They're your grandparents.

Max: *(Loses control and starts to yell)* No they aren't, Grandpa Gene is. You're gonna ruin everything. I won't talk to them. I won't. *(He runs out of the room)*

Julie: *(Sternly)* Max! *(Julie looks perplexed and worried.)*

Lights out

Narration: (pg. 24)

The confusion about Jesus grows stronger as the week progresses. Many recognize Him - yet few know Him.

However, those who are touched by the Master know they are changed forever. To them Jesus does not need to be defined by doctrine - explained by scholars - dismissed by detractors - or defended by disciples.

By the miracle of divine revelation - the certainty of knowing something you have never learned - they see Christ for who He is - and at this moment, that is all they need to know;

Song: ALL I KNOW (pg. 24)

SCENE 3

This scene takes place at the church. Choir rehearsal has just finished and Julie enters with her coat on and her purse over one shoulder. She catches Gene as he is leaving rehearsal.

Julie: Hey Gene, glad I caught you. Do you have a minute?

Gene: *(Smiling warmly)* For you? You bet.

Julie: Remember what we talked about the other night? About me contacting my family?

Gene: Yes.

Julie: Well, there's something going on with Max. I decided to talk to him about it and he flipped out. It completely threw me.

Gene: Really, what happened?

Julie: Well, I just told him what I told you; that I was thinking about calling them. He said I was going to ruin everything.

Gene: That sounds a little odd. Did he say anything else?

Julie: He said that everything was going fine and when I reminded him that they were his grandparents, he said that you were his grandpa and that he wouldn't talk to them.

Gene: Sounds like he's afraid, Julie.

Julie: Of what?

Gene: I don't know. Maybe he thinks that I can't be his grandpa if they are or that our relationship will have to change.

Julie: Maybe. I guess that makes sense. But, he won't talk to me. I couldn't get him to eat any breakfast this morning. All he did was sulk around.

Gene: How about if I take him out for a burger after his game tomorrow. Maybe he'll open up to me.

Julie: Would you? That would be so great. I'm sure he'll talk to you. Sometimes I think that he just needs a man to talk to. I've got the evening off so you two could just hit William's if you wanted.

Gene: Sounds like a plan. I'll tell him I'm in need of some company, which is the truth anyway. We'll have a little "guy to guy" talk.

Julie: What a relief. Thanks Gene. You're the best.

Gene: Don't worry, Julie. This is just part of growing up and learning. There's nothing happening here that hasn't already been covered in the plan.

Julie: The plan?

Gene: Yeah, Jesus has a plan and He's got you covered. You just stay on board. Ok?

Julie: *(Shaking her head)* Ok. I'm trying to.

Gene: Well, it's a day to day process for sure. I remember when I first started to get to know Him. I had so many questions. Oh, but what a journey! I wouldn't trade a moment either. Lately, I find myself wishing that I could go back. *(He starts to choke up)* Guess it's 'cause this is such a tough time. It's hard to not wish for those early days.

Julie: Oh Gene. It's gonna get better. I know it will. I know things can't be the same, but He'll restore your joy, I know He will. *(Not knowing what else to say, Julie reaches out to hug him)*

Lights out

Narration: (pg. 39)

All who have been touched by the Master have been set free. (music begins) May we never forget the joy we felt when we first encountered the Christ -

the joy of our salvation offered through Him.

Circumstances may enter our life that seem to erode the memory of that joy.

But God remembers - and He can restore our joy.

Remember the day your life changed forever?

Song: TAKE ME BACK (pg. 39)