# **The Cloistered Soul**

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#### Characters

Sister Agatha, a nun Sister Geraldine, a younger nun Mother Marie-David, the Mother Abbess Bridget, a postulant

Time

Present

Place

Note on punctuation and formatting:

## SCENE 1, INT. CHURCH, DAY

## <u>THE ANUNCIATION BELL TOLLS, THEN WE HEAR MUSIC</u> <u>FROM THE OFFICE OF COMPLINE (INTROIT EXSURGE:</u> <u>TRACK 2), T ÒŠUÖØÁY UT ÒÞ¢JÁKUØÒÙÊÜÙ@@ŐÁŒÐÖÁZOŠŠ@ŐÈ</u>

Agatha (v/o) The silence starts after Compline Rule. Mother Abbess moves down the aisle, sprinkling us with Holy Water.

On the days she pauses to give a blessing, I keep my eyes averted. Look down at the black and white tiles, praying:

Geraldine (v/o, whispering)

Please choose me.

Agatha (v/o)I hear my heart pounding in my ears. But she stops and makes<br/>the sign of the cross in front of Sister Geraldine.

Sister Geraldine, who has just been elected Choir Mistress.

Geraldine (v/o) I hear them in my head - Vigils, Lauds and Mass all the he silence is like waiting to be filled with music.

## <u>A SHORT SILENCE, THEN RESUME INTROIT EXSURGE</u> (TRACK 2)

Agatha (v/o) We preserve the silence until morning. o written messages. No visitors.

#### SCENE 2, EXT. CONVENT, NIGHT

#### <u>HEAVY RAIN. KNOCKING AT THE FRONT DOOR OF THE</u> <u>CONVENT. IT IS BRIDGET, HAMMERING PERSISTENTLY.</u>

Bridget	Oh. At last. This is it, right
Geraldine (v/o)	Something about her, something - her clothes are wrong. The wimple big
Mother Abbess	You are Bridget? Sure, you must be. Mother Cecilia - o silence?

#### BRIDGET ENTERS THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR

Bridget	The oh, s
	You got the letter, though, right?
Mother Abbess	She said you were due this afternoon.
	such a
	David. This is Sister Agatha.
Bridget	I missed the train. Then I got lost. It were a nightmare. The directions feel my coat. See? Totally soaked.
Agatha	
Mother Abbess	Tomorrow is the time to talk things through. Now, Sister Agatha will show you to

#### AGATHA AND BRIDGET WALK DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

THERE IS THE CLANGING SOUND OF THE ENCLOSURE GATE BEING SHUT AND LOCKED, A METALLIC, ECHOING, RING.

#### <u>SCENE 4, INT. % 5 , '\* (7 ¶ 6 & (// 1</u> , \* + 7

#### <u>ŒŒ/PŒĹÚÒÞÙÁ/PÒÆ̈́UUÜÁ/UǼÖÖÕV¢ÙǼÒYǼÒŠŠ. THEY</u> ENTER THE ROOM

Bridget	Oh this is
Bridget	Oh, this is

Agatha Is something wrong?

Bridget

Agatha You can put your luggage down now.

Bridget Right, yeah. Thanks.

So how long have you been a

Agatha You must be tired from the journey. And eager to be out of those wet things. Here, you can use this to get dry.

AGATHA HANDS BRIDGET A TOWEL

#### SCENE 6, EXT. CONVENT GARDEN, DAY

<u>GERALDINE IS GARDENING WITH HER HEADPHONES ON,</u> <u>LISTENING TO THE PSALM FROM LAUDS (INVITATORY</u> <u>SURREXIT DOMINUM . TRACK 1). WE HEAR THE MUSIC AS</u> <u>BHÖ, ÑBH. ÄLTERIHEAD.</u> "OKA) ÁTEXÁODÁSÜENDŐSÁVU BAŘÖ, MÖGEDSE ACCOMPANYING HER AS S[LP)-2(CC) (OMPA)- (NYI)-2(NG HE) TJETBTF5/2TF5/21S[LH Geraldine Oh! You gave me a fright there.

#### GERALDINE REMOVES HER HEADPHONES

Agatha Sister Eustochium needs you in the delivery of hosts to send out.

Geraldine

 Geraldine
 Agatha
 a brother.

 Geraldine
 One brother? Blimey, your house must have been dead quiet, compared to ours.

 even imagine it. There were eight of us

Agatha	Well I suppose we should remember that it love in action. Service, I mean.
Geraldine	We
	Sister - I wanted to say - we missed you. This morning. At practice.
Agatha	This morning? I had reading to do.
Geraldine	You always avoid it.
Agatha	- t so much to do. Mother
	asked me to write this paper for the
Geraldine	You know you?
Agatha	So is <i>Lectio Divina</i> .
Geraldine	For you it is.
Agatha	For all of us.
Geraldine	

Agatha

For a stupid, blind moment of anger; . There was no need for *me* to pay, he said. No need to imprison myself.

But my deal. I thought I could save his soul.

I left him. I walked down the corridor. And there was the terrible sound of the gate closing behind me.

Bridgetnever guess.AgathaSorry?Bridgetborn Catholic.AgathaLook, we should get back to Babel.

### BRIDGET SIGHS AND BEGINS TO RECITE FROM GENESIS. FADE TO SILENCE AS SHE READS.

Bridget Genesis. Chapter 11. Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east that they foun

> BRIEF SNATCH OF A SOLO VOICE SINGING (LAMENTATION ORATIO JEREMIAE: TRACK 3)

#### SCENE 10, INT. CONVENT COMMON ROOM, DAY

### <u>RECREATION TIME. BRIDGET AND AGATHA ARE READING.</u> <u>VPÒÜÒ¢JÁ/PÒÂUWÞÖÁUØÁŒÍ/ÔS¢PÕÁCLOCK IN THE</u> <u>BACKGROUND</u>

#### **GERALDINE ENTERS**

Geraldine	I	Ignatius.
Bridget	Is it her birthday?	
Geraldine	eBay.	
Bridget	What stuff?	
Geraldine	Linen bags for the drawer scenters. Ap online. She says loads of money honest, I addicted. You should see h wins. She runs up the corridor, and she kind of - t air, i	her when she
Bridget		
Agatha	Sister Ignatius would impressed by you speaway.	aking that
Geraldine	ta	

Agatha	Thank you.
Geraldine	Letterbox Link
Agatha	They put people in touch with each other.
Bridget	In touch? Can I see?

# BRIDGET SNATCHES THE LETTER

Bridget!

Geraldine

Bridget

# SCENE 12, EXT. CONVENT GARDEN, DAY

Bridget	at. I
Agatha	I faith.
Bridget	I want to know. Where you where people - come from. What makes people join, and that.
Agatha	People join for all kinds of reasons.
Bridget	Well, doh.Obviously.Like, your thing what matters to youmost?And the other day.converted after Uni.But, I mean, if you loved your studies somuchcarry on with them?
Agatha	I
Bridget	Why not?
Agatha	Something - happened.
Bridget	What? What happened? Were you in
Agatha	<ul> <li>the only thing I can say is that I. Well. I saw what I needed to do. It was a sudden realisation. But it was very powerful.</li> </ul>
Bridget	If it was sudden you must have, you know, left things behind. Something.
Agatha	I prayed a great deal. I thought it would be the right thing. I could give my life in service if you understand. I could withdraw.
Bridget	I there anyone you miss?
Agatha	There there was - someone.
Bridget	Tell me. Please.
Agatha	I talk about it.

# <u>SCENE 13 , 1 7 \$\*\$7+\$¶6 N&GH/T</u>

Agatha (v/o)	Her questions puncture the silence.	
Bridget (v/o, whispering)		
	Why did you choose this life?	
Agatha (v/o)	f the sin-sickness of the soul is a hidden one, let her reveal it only to the Abbess who knows how to cure her own and others'	
Bridget (v/o, whispering)		
	?	
Agatha (v/o)	That last visit, before I took the veil. touch him . I remembered when he was ill, - how I stroked his cheek. It was so hot.	
	What does it mean? A life sentence. Life. I believed I could balance things out.	
	The pact. I was an adult when I made it, but now I think - I must have had the blind faith of a child. T o faith left. Only this: the sin-sickness of the soul.	

## SCENE 15, EXT. CONVENT GARDEN, DAY

#### BRIDGET AND GERALDINE ARE PLAYING BADMINTON. THEY BAT THE SHUTTLECOCK BETWEEN THEM FOR A WHILE, LAUGHING AND JOKING WITH EACH OTHER. THEN GERALDINE MISSES IT.

Geraldine	No way! That was miles out.	
Bridget	Go and fetch it. Hurry up!	
	re a right slow coach.	
Geraldine (walking a	way)	
	Give me a chance.	
Bridget (catching up with her)		
	Geraldine. I need to know something. About Sister Agatha.	
Geraldine	What about her?	
Bridget	Does she ever say anything about you know, what happened to her? Before she came here.	
Geraldine	Nah. She keeps dead quiet about everything.	
Bridget	She said there was is someone. But	
Geraldine	I well, she must trust you. tell you.	
Bridget	Do you really think she trusts me? Yeah. Maybe she will.	
	Are we going to finish this game, or what?	

### BRIDGET STARTS RUNNING

Geraldine Oh y are you? Not in this get up.

Bridget Totally. Come on.

so not fair. You shorter than mine.

## BRIDGET RUNS OFF. WE HEAR HER VOICE FROM A DISTANCE, GLEEFUL AND LIGHT

### SCENE 16, EXT. CONVENT GARDEN, DAY

Geraldine (v/o) . Only that When she came, she was different from any other postulant.

SCENE 1

#### SCENE 18, INT. CHURCH, DAY

a

#### THE ANUNCIATION BELL CALLS THE NUNS TO PRAYER. THE GATE TO THE CLOISTER IS UNLOCKED AND OPENED.

THE NUNS FILE IN TO CHURCJEs(CJ9CBJEIL)-6G,3 BDC BT1 0 0 日. 節Cf 詳考了論 12番T

# SCENE 19, INT. CONVENT, DAY

Bridget

Agatha But the **8**68.2**β** 

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Bridget	I know. I	This
Agatha	Proof - ? How 58 Tm[?)6()]TJET	BT1 0 0 1 238I3 <b>3</b> 2. <b>8</b> Tm <b>[</b> How)T1 0 0 1 224.

# SCENE 20, INT. CONVENT CORRIDOR, DAY

## BRIDGET RUSHES OUT OF THE DOOR AND BUMPS INTO GERALDINE, WHO IS STARTLED

Geraldine	Bridget!
Bridget	
Bridget	I was just she
Geraldine	She?
Bridget	Sister Agatha.
Geraldine	in to the music room?
Bridget	No!
Geraldine	What did she say?
Bridget	She found something I dropped I've had it for years.
Geraldine	
Bridget	I tried to Oh, I you. Not not yet. I need to talk to <i>her</i> .

### SCENE 21, INT. CHURCH, DAY

#### THE PEAL OF ANNUNCIATION BELLS SIGNALS THE START OF MASS. THE GATE TO THE CLOISTER IS UNLOCKED AND OPENED.

#### THE NUNS FILE IN TO CHURCH AND BEGIN TO SING THE MASS (COMMUNION PANIS: TRACK 10)

Agatha (v/o)All through Mass, I watch her. Who is she, to doubt me? All<br/>those questions. Chapter 6:that I may

Who am I? I thought I knew: But all this time, have I been hiding?

#### MUSIC FROM THE MASS (COMMUNION PANIS), TO FADE

#### SCENE 23, EXT. CONVENT GARDEN, DAY

## <u>SOUND OF THE ANUNCIATION BELL TOLLING IN THE</u> <u>BACKGROUND AS THEY LEAVE MASS, BRIDGET IN A HURRY</u> <u>AND GERALDINE FOLLOWING</u>idget tw you,

Geraldine	Wait!
Bridget	
Geraldine	important. I need to talk to you. I saw you, in Mass $\pm$ just now. W
Bridget	
Geraldine	you tell me?
Bridget	Tell you what?
Geraldine	Th
Bridget	mean.
Geraldine	
Bridget	Who?
Geraldine	

Bridget	My real mother.	
	was when I	
	found out but now	
Agatha	Bridget, what are you	
Bridget	You left me You after me, so you brought me here to be protected by St and that's why you decided to come so you	
Agatha		
Geraldine (warning)	Sister Agatha.	
Bridget	Sorry, spend all your time hiding from it.	
Agatha	anything.	
Agatha (angry, to Geraldine)		
	Sister Geraldine.	

Bridget	Thank you.	
	crying and all.	
Agatha (still upset)		
Bridget	I wish it could be you. That - you could be her.	
	face and touch her.	
Agatha	Yes.	
Bridget	Do you understand?	
Agatha	I think so. I can	
	Your mother she want you to make the best choices. To live the right life. her but I we - Sister Geraldine and I we can help you.	
Bridget	Do you mean it?	
Geraldine	Course. But it means you have to face up to things, too.	
Bridget	You mean, the truth?	
Geraldine	Yes. But I know you can do it. Y dead strong.	
Bridget	You said though do you mean it? ?	
Geraldine	When you love when people love each other. You take responsibility for each other.	
Agatha	When people love each other.	

# <u>MUSICAL INTERLUDE (LAMENTATION ORATIO JEREMIAE:</u> <u>TRACK 3)</u>

#### SCENE 24, INT. CHURCH, DAY

THE ANUNCIATION BELL TOLLS, CALLING THE NUNS TO PRAYER. THE GATE TO THE CLOISTER IS UNLOCKED AND OPENED.

<u>THE NUNS FILE IN TO CHURCH AND BEGIN TO SING</u> <u>VESPERS (ANTIPHON NONNE COR NOSTRUM, MAGNIFICAT,</u> <u>TRACK 16)</u>

Geraldine (v/o) The last prayer of Vespers, the Magnificat. Giving thanks for the day . For everything

Bridget This.

#### BRIDGET HOLDS OUT THE PRAYER CARD

-

Geraldine Oh.

# AGATHA DESCENDS THE STAIRS

Agatha You can give it to me yourself. If you like.

Bridget

### BRIDGET HANDS OVER THE PRAYER CARD TO AGATHA

Agatha		
Bridget	I thought it were all I had of her. I well, not worthless. But. lost its value.	
Agatha	the last thing from your childhood. Do you want	
Bridget	You helped me see straight. About the truth and that you to have it.	
	symbolic But I might never find her of card will help. And anyway, I were just sort of clinging to what I thought it meant. what I should be doing.	
Agatha	Bridget.	
Bridget	Yeah?	
Agatha	Before you go I want to say thank you.	
Bridget	Why? I as should be thanking you! Both of you.	

Agatha	Coming here.	It was brave. Really brave
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Bridget That means a lot, Sister.

#### BRIDGET TAKES A DEEP BREATH

	Right. Better not keep them waiting.
Geraldine	Safe journey.
Bridget	I mean it. Thanks. For everything.

#### BRIDGET LEAVES, CLOSING THE DOOR BEHIND HER

Agatha	brave. Braver than I am. This card, it was a talisman for her. So to have the strength to let it go	
Geraldine	Hang20611.427677n it over again.	
Agatha	What?	
Geraldine	Look.	
Agatha	S	
Geraldine	, then? About you leaving.	
Agatha		

# SCENE 28, EXT. CLOISTER GATE, DAY

Geraldine	So. This is it?	
Agatha	I suppose it is.	
	Geraldine?	
Geraldine	Yeah?	
Agatha	the gate after me?	
Geraldine	ourse.	
Agatha	Thank you.	

#### THE CLANGING SOUND OF THE CLOISTER GATE CLOSING.