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BROTHER ANTHONY.

SCENE: *A Monastery Garden, May 1632.*

How fair a dawn, all things so sweet and calm;
 The gentle dews refresh the flowering earth;
 Each glistening leaf as if with diamonds hung,
 And pearls bedeck the grass. From out the elm
 The blackbird bravely sings—S. Chrysostom,
 As Brother Simon calls the golden-bill;
 The rapturous lark soars high to greet the sun.
 But on my fevered heart there falls no balm;
 The garden of my soul, where happy birds
 Sang in the fulness of their joy, and bloomed
 The flowers bright, finds only winter now;
 And bleak winds moan about the leafless trees,
 And chill rains beat to earth the rotting stalks.
 Hope, Faith, and God, alike are gone, all gone—
 If it be so, as this Galileo saith.

*"The earth is round and moves about the sun;
 The sun,"* he saith, *"is still, the axle fixed
 Of nature's wheel, centre of all the worlds?"*

Galileo is an honest soul, God knows—
 No end has he to serve but only truth,
 By that which he declares, daring to risk
 Position, liberty, and even life itself. He knows.
 And yet the ages have believed it not.
 Have they not meditated, watched and prayed—
 Great souls with vision purged and purified?
 Had God no messenger until arose
 Galileo! Long years the Church has prayed,
 Seeking His grace who guideth into truth,
 And weary eyes have watched the sun and stars,
 And heard the many voices that proclaim
 God's hidden ways,—did they believe a lie?

The Church's Holy Fathers, were they wrong?
Yet speaks Galileo as one who knows.

Shrinks all my soul from breathing any word
That dares to question God's most holy Book,
As men beneath an avalanche pass dumb
For fear a sound should bring destruction down.
If but a jot or tittle of the Word
Do pass away then is all lost. And yet
If what Galileo maintains be true!—
“*The sun itself moves not.*” The Scripture tells
At Joshua's command the sun stood still.
Doth scripture lie? The blessed Lord Himself,
Spake He not of the sun that rose and set!
So cracks and cleaves the ground beneath my feet.
The sun that fills and floods the world with light
My darkness and confusion hath become!
Oh God, as here about the old grey walls
The ivy clings and twines its arms, and finds
A strength by which it rises from the earth
And mounts toward heaven, then gladly flings
Its grateful crown of greenery round the height,
So by Thy word my all uncertain soul
Hath mounted toward Thy heaven, and brought
Its love, its all, wherewith to crown my Lord.
Alas, the wall is fallen. Beneath it crushed
The clinging ivy lies; its stronghold once
Is now the prison house, the cruel grave.

* * * * *

There sounds the bell that summons me to prayer.

MARK GUY PEARSE.