

# THE SONG AT THE SCAFFOLD

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A 10-WEEK BOOK STUDY



SESSION TEN: CHAPTER 10, PAGES 72-77 AND WRAP UP

Good to know: *Salve, Regina* – Hail, Holy Queen – sung at a nun's deathbed

*Veni, Creator Spiritus* – Come, Creator Spirit

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator, come from thy bright heav'nly throne;  
come, take possession of our souls, and make them all thine own.

Thou who art called the [Paraclete](#), best gift of God above,  
the living spring, the living fire, sweet unction and true love.

Thou who art sevenfold in thy grace, finger of God's right hand;  
his promise, teaching little ones to speak and understand.

O guide our minds with thy blest light, with love our hearts inflame;  
and with thy strength, which ne'er decays, confirm our mortal frame.

Far from us drive our deadly foe; true peace unto us bring;  
and through all perils lead us safe beneath thy sacred wing.

Through thee may we the Father know, through thee th'eternal Son,  
and thee the Spirit of them both, thrice-blessed three in One.

All glory to the Father be, with his coequal Son;  
the same to thee, great Paraclete, while endless ages run. Amen.

*Regina Caeli Laetare* – Queen of Heaven, Rejoice!

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia. The Son you merited to bear, alleluia,  
Has risen as he said, alleluia. Pray to God for us, alleluia.

(HOW WOULD YOU TITLE THIS CHAPTER?)

The image at the beginning of the chapter depicts the guillotine, the instrument by which the nuns will win the crown of martyrdom.

- ❁ Sister Marie begs permission to join her sisters.
  - ✚ She wanted to be the last to sing, as that would be the hardest cross to bear.
  - ✚ The hardest cross for her to bear was to be denied permission even to sing.
- ❁ The executions take place at *Revolution Square*, where the fireworks catastrophe brought Blanche, into the world. She ends where she began. She has come full circle.
- ❁ Do you agree that “the machine” is a “worthy tool of chaos”?
  - ✚ Do you agree that “the machine” is “the very symbol of our destiny”?
  - ✚ Would you rather face a human executioner or the guillotine?
- ❁ Consider Villeroi’s point of view of the song “effacing” the mob, the bloody square, the guillotine, and chaos.
  - ✚ Reading the words of the song, the focus is on the Eternal.
  - ✚ Suddenly, Villeroi feels as if he is among human beings again, not a faceless mob.
  - ✚ In the song to the Eternal, Villeroi sees His Image in the sons of men.
  - ✚ The nuns are happy to shed their “pure and noble” blood for the sake of His Name.
- ❁ Blanche breaks free from the “September Mothers” to finish the *Veni, Creator Spiritus*. She was “struck down on the spot.” Was she killed by the September Mothers’ fury or did they lead her, too, to the guillotine?
- ❁ Villeroi muses that human nature is not enough to offer sacrifice. Divine grace is necessary and showed itself miraculously in Blanche’s final burst of fearlessness.
- ❁ The last image is of a Divine Hand relighting a broken candle, with the Infant Christ restored. Light prevails over darkness.

