

MARY MAGDALENE AT THE TOMB

A Monologue

by

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Just before dawn. A garden near the tomb in which Jesus has been laid. Mary Magdalene is alone. She carries a small jar of ointment with which she intends to anoint the body. She speaks, as we all do, to her departed loved one.

MARY

I don't know if you can hear me. I couldn't sleep.

Your mother suggested I try to write -- she's fine, by the way, or she will be, eventually, maybe not. But John's taking care of her. -- Anyway, I couldn't write. I don't have anything in me.

I *do* have more aloe and myrrh, for you, for your body -- (a memory suddenly bubbles to the surface and then pops) do you remember that time you packed mud onto that blind man's eyes? -- but this is just resin, nothing more. Nothing --

Did you hear that? (She listens for it again). A bird. It's only the sun waking up, little bird, that's all. Nothing more. Nothing and no one to help me roll back the stone.

Mary turns in the direction of the tomb. The stone has been rolled away. At first, she thinks someone anticipated her -- a disciple? The gardener? Someone else?

Oh my God, the stone. But who --? (calling into the dark)  
Hello?

Mary draws nearer the tomb and as she does, sees that the body of Jesus is gone. She leaps to the conclusion that he has been stolen. The distress of this opens the door to what she's not wanted to give voice to.

No, no, no, no, no, where is he? Where--? How could they? How could they take him? How could they -- how could he leave me? You just left me.

Mary sinks to a seated position and weeps. Beat shift to direct address to the congregation from where she sits.

That was how it went. That early morning. And then I heard a voice. Hazy like morning light. A man was speaking to me.

Mary speaks the words of the man as she hears them.

Dear lady, why do you weep? Who is it you are seeking?

I couldn't lift my head. My eyes stung. I could only suppose he was the gardener, so I said, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him and I will take him.

And then he said my name. Mary. (She looks up at the sound of her name). And I knew it was him. (Stands). Mary, he said. Standing right there in front of me. Rabboni.

The following exchange moves between Mary and Jesus as spoken through Mary. No need for affectation. Intension makes clear who is who.

I think he said, it is good to see you.

I wish I'd responded with something poetic, something worthy of the moment, but all that came out was: I brought the myrrh?

He laughed. Faithful anyway, right?

I hope so. I -- and then I saw his hands. Pierced. And I remembered the nails, and the blood, and the agony --

Mary. Do not dwell inside old pain. I am risen. And I will ascend to my Father --

Your mother will want to see you.

He nodded. Go to our friends and tell them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and --

Yes, yes of course I will, but first, can we just, I just want to stay here, with you, just for a little bit.

Mary, you must not cling. This is a beginning. But only if you begin.

Yes.

So tell our friends, and we will share a table together again --

A beginning --

I promise. Go tell them!

Yes. Right!

Mary rallies and begins to leave with energy and purpose, but quickly stops herself. She turns back to Jesus with this last note of intimacy.

It is good to see you.

EXIT.