

MAN OF THE YEAR

By Dave Tippett

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PUBLISHED BY
ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY
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STORY OF THE PLAY

The emotional highs and lows of Holy Week, from Palm Sunday through Easter, are shared by two families in "The Man of the Year." One family, set in the present...and the other, from the time of Christ...share the stage and tell two parallel stories of the expectations, fears, pain and final joy that characterize the last week of Jesus' life on earth.

John and his sister's family live in the present day, struggling with relationships and John's pending departure from their home. The family of Benjamin and Sarah live during Jesus' time on earth. They wrestle with divided reactions to Christ's triumphant entrance into their city, and the events of the days that follow.

On Good Friday, both families experience the crisis of sudden loss, and then the subsequent healing and hope of Easter.

"The Man of the Year" ties both past and present together in a poignant story of families searching for and finding the Christ of their times.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Jill, for her unceasing encouragement, love, and for being the toughest editor a man could love; to Pastor Phil Fuller, for his support and vision for Drama Ministries; to Pastor Thom Sneed, whose overall talents and abilities far exceed those of us mere mortals, and for all the wonderful and talented actors, actresses, and tech people at the Oregon Church of the Nazarene in Oregon, Ohio. I can write it all, but if they aren't there to make it come to life, I'm lost. To His glory. Always.

The Playwright, Dave Tippett

CAST OF CHARACTERS

KATHY: Mid-thirties, sister of John.

JOHN: Early 40s, Kathy's brother.

AMY: Kathy's 15-year-old daughter.

SCOTT: Kathy's 9-year-old son.

LEA: Sarah and Benjamin's 15-year-old daughter.

SARAH: Mother of Lea and Daniel, early 40s.

BENJAMIN: Father of Lea and Daniel, early 40s.

DANIEL: Sarah and Benjamin's 13-year-old son.

PASTOR WILLIAMS: Mid to late 50s.

EXTRAS (for current day)

MAN 1: No special age.

MAN 2: Another.

WOMAN 1: Another.

SYNOPSIS

Scene 1 - Sunday, the celebration.

Scene 2 - Thursday, the parting.

Scene 3 - Friday, forsaken.

Scene 4 - Sunday, message from home.

PROPS

'Modern' couch, chair, table, telephone, books/magazines,
cake decorated with a small sandwich on top, streamers,
confetti

Old wooden bowls, mats, straw, wooden bench, chair,
carpentry equipment

Palm branches

Hymnals, six folding chairs

Small Bible

Crown of thorns

Clear plastic stand

Performance Time: Approx. 45 minutes

SFX

Crowds cheering
Low music
Angry mob
Low music
Low bass note
Louder bass note
Angry crowd and bass note
Increased crowd noises
Low bass note
Crowd noises diminish
Loud bass note
Metal hitting metal, 4 to 5 times
Several more hits
Somber music
Rooster and birds
Distant bells
Louder bells
Music

SET

The set consists of three main areas. Extreme SR contains the set of a modern living room that includes a couch, a chair, and a table with a telephone on it, and a cake, covered by a cloth. There are several books and newspapers lying around. Extreme SL is the set of another home, this one from the time of Jesus. There are a few pieces of wooden furniture, wooden bowls, straw mats, etc. At CS, there are a series of walls that serve as exits and entrances, with a common area where several of the scenes will take place.

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Sunday. The entire stage is in darkness. The LIGHTS come up on SR, highlighting only the modern living room. SL and the common area remain unlit. After several beats, we hear some commotion off SR, then a group of people enter the set, as if they were coming from the outside. Leading the way is KATHY, followed by AMY, SCOTT, JOHN, and MAN 1, MAN 2 and WOMAN 1. They are all talking at once, and dressed as if they had been to a banquet. On SL, SARAH, BENJAMIN and DANIEL have taken their places in the darkness and remain motionless.)

KATHY: Come on in, guys, there's room for everybody...especially for my brother, *(Shouts)* THE MAN OF THE YEAR! *(EVERYONE looks at JOHN and applauds.)*

KATHY and OTHERS: SPEECH! SPEECH! *(EVERYONE starts chanting, as JOHN half-heartedly waves them off.)*

JOHN: Oh, come on you guys...I've already given my speech at the reception tonight...cut me some slack.

SCOTT: Come on, Uncle John!

KATHY: Yeah, John, it's not often that we get to entertain the high and mighty you know.

JOHN: More like the lowly and tired...*(More shouts for a speech)*...OK, OK...what do you want? The stuffy stiff-shirt version or how I really feel?

KATHY: *(Teasing)* Oh, the stuffy version we heard at church tonight wasn't the real you?

JOHN: Ha. Ha. Well, what can I say? This night has really just been incredible, the banquet, the award, the crowds, whew. I...*(Smirks to SELF, then goes into an old man's voice)*...I remember when I was a small boy, growing up in that old log cabin that my Grandpa built. Yep, I read the family Bible by firelight and did my school work with a piece of coal —

KATHY: *(Interrupting)* Uh, brother dear...I don't seem to remember our home quite like that...

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JOHN: *(Normal voice again)* Oh, that's because you were brought up by some gypsies and left at our door when you were just 10 years old.

SCOTT: *(To KATHY)* Really, Mom??!

KATHY: Certainly not! *(To JOHN, still amused)* Now see what you've done?

JOHN: Hey, you all wanted a speech, so I'm giving you one. I'm just making reality a bit more interesting, that's all.

AMY: You mean you're lying, right?

JOHN: Much too harsh a word, sweet niece. It's simply embellishing the past a bit...OK, OK, a speech, huh? *(Smirks to SELF again, and in a bold voice, gripping an imaginary podium)* I'd like to thank the academy for this wonderful award and all the little people that did all the stuff that little people do so people like me can get big awards and...

KATHY: *(Puts HER hand over JOHN'S mouth)* Forget it! Sorry we asked!

(JOHN and KATHY turn to talk to their guests, shaking hands, etc. Kathy waits for a beat, then taps John on the shoulder. He indicates he'll be with her in a minute. This happens several more times, until Kathy finally grabs John's arm and drags him to the common area at CS...as she's dragging him he says:)

JOHN: *(To guests)* Guess I'm going this way...

(THEY stop at common area. The LIGHTS on SR go down, and AMY, SCOTT and EXTRAS freeze. A SPOTLIGHT now highlights KATHY and JOHN.)

KATHY: You big ham...*(Imitates HIM)* Reading the family Bible by firelight...what am I going to do with you?

JOHN: *(In a sing-song voice)* Love me!

KATHY: That's asking quite a bit, I don't know...

End of Freeview

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