

A TOUCH of HIS ROBE

By N. L. Davis

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DEDICATION

To Mary Stuart Brooks. Her shared creativity and concern for detail made A TOUCH OF HIS ROBE happen.

The Playwright

STORY OF THE PLAY

To touch His robe - the sick, the lame, the helpless and hopeless. As He walked through the streets or preached, how many people tried to touch His robe to be healed?

The days just before Jesus' crucifixion are recreated in stunning detail as Jesus is questioned by high priests at the temple, then later arrested through Judas' deception.

When He is finally led away to the cross, His robe tossed to the ground, we feel the crush of emotion of those involved including James, John, Judas, the priests, and finally Mary Magdalene.

Left alone, cradling His robe she says, "To receive His forgiveness, you need only to believe He is the Son of God, and reach out your hand for a touch of His robe."

SETTING

There are four playing areas: entrance to temple DC/doubles as street; Solomon's porch CS /doubles as traders' market; balcony UL/doubles as upper room; roof UR.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(4 m, 2 w, 4 flexible parts)**

MARY MAGDALENE: Young girl, healed by Jesus.

MARTA: Cousin of Mary.

JAMES: Disciple of Jesus.

JOHN: Disciple of Jesus.

JUDAS: Disciple of Jesus.

ANANIAS: High Priest in Jerusalem.

JOHAN ('Yohan): Scribe.

THOG: Servant to Johan.

KEDAR (Ke'dar): Captain of the Guard.

JESUS: Son of God.

Six to twelve extras play Cheerleaders, Gift Givers, Traders, Guards, and Voices. Mary and Marta should be female. Jesus and His three disciples should be male. Other roles may be played by either gender.

ON STAGE PROPS

Center, Temple Area. Baskets, scarves, fruit, jewelry, rugs, tables. *(Used by the traders.)*

CAST PROPS

Offstage right. Two placards, one reading HOSANNA and the other BARABBAS, for Thog. Also pan of water and towel. Robe for Johan.

Offstage left. Yarn for Marta to tie in Mary's hair; pear for John; sandals for James; rope for Jesus; rope for Judas.

AUDIENCE PROPS:

Flowers, loaves of bread, palm branches to hand to disciples. Long, colorful scarves, pottery, jewelry, cages, rugs, baskets to be used in trader scene on stage.

COSTUMES

Costumes should be simple. A basic shift robe of a rough unbleached cotton is a good base from which to work. The calf-length garment should have rounded neck, wide, elbow-length sleeves, and a loose fit. Belt it with rope or braided yarn. Lengths of raw material, colorful scarves, metal buckles and old jewelry can be draped and pinned, braided and clipped, to add style and interest to costumes. Below are suggestions on costume color and style for the characters.

Mary: Cream shift; gray and beige muted print drape.

Marta: Brown shift; aqua, gray, and brown drape.

John: Cream shift; maroon and gray check drape; beige belt.

James: Cream shift; gray and green striped shawl; beige belt.

Judas: Cream robe; rust shawl; beige tie. (*Judas should have more style than James and John.*)

Ananias: Regal, multi-colored robe. Peacock with gold flecks. Maroon belt with silver buckle. *Necklace with large stones in jewel colors.

Johan: Tailored, silky beige robe. Transparent, royal blue, sleeveless cape. Bright scarf. Gold sandals. *Large blue and gold stone earrings.

Thog: Bleached white shift. Light blue and white striped belt. *Lightweight dangle earrings.

Kedar: Square look. *Short black skirt. Black T-shirt. Shoulder pads. Black and maroon vest, belted to form triangle below belt. Wide black or metal belt with heavy buckle. Rope shoes. Black wrist bands. Black and gold braided headband.

Jesus: White robe; white, thick belt. White shorts under robe. Sandals.

*Female cast members. Make appropriate change if male.

SOUND EFFECTS

Crowd noises; cock crowing; trader music; night sounds of birds; soft string music; hammering.

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: MARY and MARTA enter DR aisle.)

MARTA: Stop pulling me.

MARY: Then hurry.

MARTA: My feet hurt. *(Stops and sits.)* Where are you dragging me, Mary Magdalene?

MARY: *(Points.)* To Solomon's porch. There, we can see everything.

MARTA: All right. All right, I'm coming.

MARY: *(Throws HER arms around MARTA.)* Look at all the people waiting to see Jesus. Isn't it wonderful?

MARTA: No, it is not wonderful. Stop twirling me around. *(To an audience member.)* What are you staring at?

MARY: *(At bottom of steps leading to stage.)* Give me your hand and we'll climb together.

MARTA: You go ahead. I can climb alone. Go! *(MARY runs ahead. MARTA mumbles as she climbs.)* Dear God in Heaven. Save me from love-sick cousins.

(LIGHT on THOG DCR. MARTA climbs to porch. Thog holds up a placard which reads "Hosanna." Audience joins in, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!")

MARY: Look, everywhere we go, the crowd follows, just like in Galilee, when we first saw Him. Remember? It was time for the Feast of the Tabernacles, a time to celebrate the harvest. A time to give thanks for God's protection in the wilderness. Jesus sat with his back to the sea, framed in the blue sky like a prince from Heaven. The grain was threshed and the harvest in. The hills were matted gold like an old lion skin, and the sea smelled of early fall.

MARTA: "Sea smells," "Matted gold like an old lion skin," "Prince of Heaven." Some say He is the "Prince of Darkness."

MARY: Stop it.

MARTA: The Son of Satan.

MARY: Hush, hateful cousin.

A Touch of His Robe

- 6 -

MARTA: Demonic child.

MARY: Stray dog.

MARTA: Unbetrothed, barren brat.

MARY: *(Pause. "Unbetrothed" hurts.)* Go home. I don't need you here. Go!

MARTA: *(Pause.)* Why do we call each other silly names?

MARY: You hurt me.

MARTA: *(Hand on MARY's shoulder.)* I'm sorry. When you spoke of the hills and the sea, it made me homesick for Magdala.

MARY: Then go.

MARTA: Let's both go.

MARY: Home for me is here, Marta, with Salome and Mary, and the others. I have clothes to wash and children to bathe. I must stay here.

MARTA: You stay because of Jesus.

MARY: He is my friend.

MARTA: You are in love with Him.

MARY: Of course I love Him. Before I touched the robe of Jesus, children spit at me in the streets.

MARTA: You spit first.

MARY: And they threw stones at me.

MARTA: You threw stones first.

MARY: I threw stones at them because they called me names, and I spit on them because they wouldn't look at me. I made them look. I wanted to hurt them until that day on the hillside, when Jesus called my name, "Mary Magdalene." I touched His robe and He demanded the evil spirits 'leave,' and they fell away into the shadows and were gone. Now I don't hurt people anymore. I am happy just to be alive, to stand here on Solomon's porch on this first day of the Passover.

MARTA: I am glad you are grateful. We are both grateful. But must we follow Him to every dusty village in Israel?

MARY: I choose to follow.

MARTA: You choose wrong. Jesus will never marry you, Mary Magdalene.

MARY: Why not? He loves me.

End of Freeview

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