

Through the Prism of Her Tears
Mary of Magdala
sees the risen Christ.
by Ralph Milton

Narr: Ralph

Mary: Allison

Peter: Donald

Ralph: Mary stumbled and fell in the dark. Her hand and elbow scraped against the ugly rocks. And though she couldn't see it, she knew she was bleeding. No matter. She had bled before.

On she stumbled through the clutching darkness, along a half remembered path. She felt her way up to the garden tomb. Gradually, the cold gray light of early dawn outlined the naked rock that should have sealed the tomb, the place where they had buried her best friend.

The reality, the horror hit her instantly. Even in his death they could not give him peace. This kind and gentle friend had died the cruel death of criminals, and now to add to all the horror, all the insult, someone had stolen Jesus' body.

Screaming, she crashed back down the path, back to the house where she'd been mourning Jesus death since that horror filled Friday.

Mary: (SCREAMING) Peter! They've taken him away. Damn them anyway. They couldn't let him rest. Peter, they've stolen Jesus' body. Oh my God! How can people be so brutal?"

R: Now again, with Peter, she scabbled up the path toward the tomb. Her rage carried her now. Her unfocused anger at this outrage carried her through the bitter morning darkness up the broken path, rocks and bushes scratched and tore her skin until she stood, chest heaving, beside Peter at the open tomb. Then she and Peter forced themselves to believe the unbelievable.

Donald: (DEAD AND UNINFLECTED VOICE) He's gone, Mary. All they left us was a corpse. Now they've got that too.

R: And Peter stumbled off, going nowhere but away – away from this revolting desecration.

Mary stayed. She had nowhere to go. She had nothing left. The power of her rage was spent. She was exhausted. She slumped her almost lifeless body on a rock.

Head in hands she sat. Her mind shut down. She felt nothing. Not even the will to die.

Then memories. Memories of terror. Memories of despair. The pain of life in home-town Magdala came back--back in all its horrors. The darkness of that other life in that small town where she was beaten, starved and raped. Where people called her "slut" and "whore" though she was neither. Where she was called "possessed of seven demons." It wasn't till she remembered overhearing rumors of a healer, just down the lakeside at Capernaum, that a sense of feeling returned, and with the feeling, tears – tears that slowly washed her dry, red, angry eyes, tears that moved to moans, then into body heaving sobs – great gasping, screaming cries that found their way from the bottom of her wounded soul. Linnea: Why God? Why?

R. Through the prism of her tears she saw the light of dawn slanting through the rocks into the garden. And there, in that golden light, a figure, a man, it could be any man, it must be the gardener, who else would it be here in this place so early.

M: (DESPERATELY) Look, if you took his body, tell me where, please, just tell me where, so I can go and get him and give him a decent, human burial. Tell me, for God sake tell me."

D: (GENTLY) Mary.

R: The voice seemed to come from another world. It took some moments to move its way through her sobs and into her consciousness. She heard the voice a second time.

D: Mary.

R: Through her tears – through her salted tears of pain and anger and rejection, Mary saw him.

M: (WHISPERING) Rabbi,
(SHOUTING) Rabbi!"

R: Springing to her feet to embrace him, the light of morning sparkling through her tears, Mary rushed toward her Jesus.

D: (GENTLY) Please don't touch me, Mary, There are reasons. But don't be afraid, Mary. Go and tell our friends that death has been transformed to life - - that despair has turned to hope."

R: This time the path unrolled beneath her dancing feet. This time the amber rocks and greening bushes sparkled in the morning light. This time she shouted hope to all her friends.

M: (LOUDLY, JOYFULLY) I have seen him. He's alive. It's true. All that he said is true. God loves us. All of us. And pain and death are not the end of everything. Suffering and death are.. are.. birth-pains into new, abundant life!