

Story

Martha & Mary

Requiring four voices: Narrator, Martha, Mary & Jesus

Narrator: The sisters Martha and Mary had a tidy house in Bethany. It was modest in size but clean, neat and well organised. This wasn't achieved by an equal share of the household duties and Martha was only too well aware of this as she got the heavy end. As far as Mary was concerned it was actually quite a good arrangement. Martha always seemed so preoccupied and keen to make sure everything was just right – so why interfere?

Martha: Well that's the bedrooms sorted, I've taken out the rubbish and I have just put some bread to cook in the oven. Can you take in the washing Mary? I'm just going to run down to the market to get a few things – do you want to come?

Mary: No, I'm fine here – this is a great book. What did you say about doing the washing?

Narrator: Martha left Mary to her book knowing full well that the washing would still be on the line when she got back. Although Mary often frustrated her she secretly didn't mind busying about as she knew that things would be done properly.

As Martha entered the market she was aware of a crowd attracting attention so she went to have a look. Was it who she hoped it might be?

There were so many people but at last she caught a glimpse of who they were all trying to speak to – it was Jesus, the one everyone was talking about. But Martha was too busy to hang around, she couldn't get near anyway so headed for the stalls selling what she had come for.

The crowd was growing and heading up the way Martha normally took to go home. She would take the other route. It was slightly longer but at least she would avoid all these people.

As Martha turned the corner and headed towards her house she could hear the crowd. They were very close. At first she did not pay much attention to the man leaning against her front wall. Her only concern was that he was standing very close to the flowers she had planted a few weeks ago.

As Martha approached her house the man turned and looked straight at her.

Martha: Hello. Can I help you? Are you looking for someone?

Narrator: The man did not reply.

Martha couldn't help noticing that he looked pretty worn out and in need of a rest.

As his gaze was powerful Martha couldn't help staring back. She could hear the raised voices in the crowd shout where is he? Where did he go?

It was at that moment Martha knew who this man was.

Martha: Jesus?
Please come in. You're very welcome in our home.
Mary....Mary

Mary: What? Are you back? Who is this?

Martha: Mary, clear a space and sort these cushions. Did you remember the washing?

Mary: Washing? You never mentioned washing. Who is this?

Martha: Mary don't you know? This is Jesus.

Mary: Jesus..Jesus?

Narrator: As Jesus sat and made himself comfortable he began to speak to the sisters. Mary was captivated and sat as his feet listening carefully. After a few minutes Martha got up.

Martha: Right, what I get everyone. Jesus you must be hungry. There is a loaf just about ready and I've just been to the market so.....

Mary: Don't bother with that. Come and sit with us.

Martha: Oh no. Jesus is our guest so let me get organised.

Narrator: Martha disappeared into the kitchen. This was Martha at her best as she confidently began preparing a meal knowing exactly what Jesus needed.

There was actually quite a bit to do and of course it would all have to be done properly. But it was Jesus so this was going to be no chore.

As Martha worked Mary sat contently listening to Jesus.

Conscious that time was going on Martha was beginning to get anxious. Maybe she had been too ambitious; but it was nearly ready. The conversation in the living room was now beginning to irritate Martha. Mary had left it to her again. This was of course nothing new but they had a guest. Surely Mary could help with the finishing touches?

Martha: Mary..Mary

Mary: What?

Martha: Well, we're nearly ready and I hope you're hungry Jesus. Sorry to interrupt, but Mary I could do with a bit of help to finish off.

Jesus, don't you care that my sister has abandoned me in the kitchen and let me prepare all this by myself? Tell her to help me.

Jesus: Martha, Martha you're fussing far too much. Sit down and calm down. What you've been doing isn't what's important right now.

Only one thing is important and that is what Mary has heard. She has listened and she has chosen. That will not be taken from her.