

THE MASTER'S TABLE

by John Cosper

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: The teenage daughter of the family that owned the upper room where Jesus ate the last supper shows the room to a friend and recalls everything that happened that weekend.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: Extended monologues like this one, it's especially important for the actor to have a very clear understanding of who they are talking to and why. The writer's synopsis indicates that a teenage girl is telling this story to a friend, but why is the girl choosing this moment to show the room and tell this story? Why did her friend want to see the room in the first place? Did the girl bring her friend here with the intention of telling her about Jesus' death, at what point in the narrative does she decide to do so? The clearer these questions (and questions like them) are answered in the mind of the actor, the clearer it will be to your audience.

TIME: Over 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1

TOPIC: Easter, Purpose, Biblical Times

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: John 13

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Easter

SUGGESTED USE: Seeker Service, Easter Service

CHARACTERS: A teenage Jewish girl —speaker in monologue

PROPS: Bare stage or stacks of boxes (the set is the upper room from the Easter story, but it is several years later)

COSTUMES: Biblical attire

SOUND: One wireless or standing mic

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: The Upper Room

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THE MASTER'S TABLE *by John Cospier*

The stage may be bare, or set as the Upper Room where Jesus and the disciples ate Passover the night he was betrayed. This scene takes place a few years later, so it is not still set as it was at the Last Supper.

Well, you wanted to see it? Here it is. I told you it wasn't much. Just a big, empty room really, mostly storage space since my older sisters got married. But this is where it happened a few years ago. I'm not sure how Father got word Jesus was coming. All I know is three days before the Passover, we were clearing out years of junk to make room for two long dinner tables. Mother was practically in a panic. Thirteen guests on top of the family she had to feed. But no one complained too much. Not after all he'd done for us.

Two of the disciples arrived first, Peter and John. They came in with one of Father's apprentices to prepare for Passover. Dinah and I spent the afternoon helping them set up the room. Peter was ... well, he was funny. Every little detail had to be perfect. John was much more laid back, but still, you got a sense from the guys that we were setting the table for a king. It sure felt that way.

We were still finishing up the room when Jesus and the rest of his guests arrived. Dinah and I raced down the steps to see him, and Father put us right back to work, washing their feet. We didn't expect much more than a hello, but Jesus took the time to talk with us and thank us for our hospitality. The least we could do, really. I mean a year earlier, he had healed Dinah of a terrible illness. He was as kind and gentle as I remembered, and yet ... I sensed something was different. I couldn't be sure, but it felt like something was troubling him. It was a terrible feeling. I mean, if this man was the son of God, what did he have to be worried about?

Jesus went up to eat with his disciples while we ate with the family. As soon as dinner ended, Dinah and I crept up the steps to listen. I couldn't get that sense of worry out of my mind. I was hoping maybe Jesus might calm those fears, but was I in for a surprise.

There was Jesus, with a towel around his waist, washing the feet of his own followers. One after another, he came to them and washed the same feet Dinah and I had just washed. It felt like a dream. These men called Jesus "Teacher" and "Master." They were his followers and helpers. So why was Jesus acting like he was their servant?

When he finished, Jesus sat at the table and served his disciples. He took a loaf of bread and broke it. "Take and eat this," he said. "This is my body, broken for you." Then he took a cup of wine and blessed it. "This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for you."

The disciples looked as confused as my sister and me. First Jesus was acting like a servant. And now he was talking like ... well, what did he mean by his body and blood?