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Box 09, Folder 08 - "Mary Magdaleine" (E.M.S.)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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Mary Magdalene

Now one of the Pharisees asked him to dine with him ;so he went into the house of the ~~Pharisee~~ Pharisee and reclined at table . And behold a woman in the town who was a sinner ,

upon learning that he was at table in the Pharisees house , brought an alabaster jar of ointment; and standing behind him at his feet , she began to bather his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head , and kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment.

Now when the Pharisees , who had invited him , saw it he said within himself "This man , were he a prophet, would surely know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching him , for she is a sinner .

And Jesus answered him and said to him Simon I have something to say to thee. And he said "Master speak "

A certain money lender had two debtors ; the one owed five hundred denarii , the other fifty . As they had no means of paying he forgave them both . Which of them therefore will love him the more ?

Simon answered and said "He I suppose to whom he forgave more "

And he said to him "Thou has judged rightly "

And turning to the woman he said to Simon :

"Dost thou see this woman ? I came into your house and you gave me no water for my feet ; but she has bathed my feet with her tears, and has wiped them with her hair . You gave me no kiss ; but she , from the moment she came in has not ceased to kiss my feet . You did not anoint my head with oil ; but she has anointed my feet with ointment . Wherefore I say to you : her sins , many as they are , shall be forgiven her because she has loved much . But he to whom little is forgiven , loves little " And he said to her "Thy sins are forgiven "

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And they who were at table with him began to say within themselves "Who is this man ?who even forgives sins ?" But he said to the woman "Thy faith has saved thee :go in peace "

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Magdala Half way between Tiberias and Capernaum

Gay rich luxurious . leisured classes .

The only road clings close to the lake -- and one has to pass through Magdala .

Jesus must have often passed through it .

Did not have a good reputation .

People were open minded - not harsh like Jerusalem , fanatical like Galilee

Certain leading magnate -- Pharisee but not so bigoted as -- Simon had heard about Jesus --an interesting character -- all sorts of wild tales -- prophet uses bit not like John goes to banquets --indeed not too particular ...

Son of a carpenter --- but had natural talents --

Must not go too far --- fall at his feet etc.
after all only the son of a carpenter ...

His manners ? picked up - the listening rogue has caught the trick of it ...Even some people in high places ...wife of "the God's steward .

Did he know how to behave in society ...he must be kept in his place -- not treated as if he were a gentleman and an equal ...Dispense with usual ceremonie of reception

the washing of feet at the door

the formal embrace and formal kiss

Could n't treat him like the other guests on an equality . . .

Calls the chief servant and gives him directions...

The invitation was accepted

This could be brought in earlier ..

preliminary discussion with his wife ?

to invite or not invite ..

Well no harm to give it a try .

Can't stand in a hot and smelly crowd listening to him
by the road side ... let's get him here to dinner.

By Simon and his friends Jesus was put in his place
just the little things

Make him feel that we are giving him an unusual honour
in inviting him here .

The other guests received all these attentions .

The chief steward just showed Jesus directly to his
place at the table --- not the highest --- reserved for the
other Pharisees .

Jesus made no comment - seemed not to notice anything
sat down at the place allotted .

The meal began the guests all there
Noticed that Jesus ate like a Christian .

Said nothing unusual ...

Seemed a very ordinary meal --- no sparks of wisdom
no miracles ---

A sudden and unexpected turn of events ... unrehearsed
The room was open to the street ... hot summer evening
connected by a verandah ...

A woman was standing there - uninvited .

Striking appearance .

She was tall and commanding .

Strong face -- determined character ---

but beautiful ..

but hard lines on her face had taken the edge of its beauty
a face of one who did nothing by halves .

Her dress was brilliant colours yellow and red and black

Jewelry on her fingers and wrists. and ankles
She carried in her hand an alabaster box of ointment precious.
spikenard She stood there tall erect and her eyes swept the
banquet hall as if looking for something or someone .

They rested on the couch where Jesus reclined .

There was a stirring among the guests ---they recognised at once what kind of a woman she was and they involuntarily drew themselves in -- as though afraid of contamination .

Their eyes met . The eyes of Jesus were calm and understandingthere was understanding and sympathy --- and welcome no trace of contempt nor even of surprise at her entrance.

Even the servants were taken aback and seem unable to take action . Before they or anyone else moved she had moved swiftly into the hall and across it to the couch where Jesus reclined .

Every eye in the room followed her actions . At her approach Jesus remained quietly stretched out upon the couch . Without a word the woman fell on her knees overcome by a flood of tears. Tenderly she embraced his feet over which her hot tears fell abundantly wetting the dust which had they had brought in from the street . With gentle hands she wiped the tears with her long black hair which coming unbound had fallen over them . Then pushing back her hair she stooped still further and kissed them again and again . Then she took the alabaster box of ointment- which she had placed on the floor beside her - and with firm fingers broke the seal . Immediately the room was filled with an exquisite perfume . She poured out the precious ointment over those beloved feet , emptied it to the last drop ,

Then with an action which was at the same time a caress she spread the spikenard over his feet, now cleaned by her tears from the dust of the streets. This done she began once more to kiss them while her tears - more precious even than the ointment - ~~gained~~ continues to fall.

All this had happened so quickly and so unexpectedly that there was a noticeable astonishment on the faces of those present, and upon those of the servants - who not having received any orders continued to stand watching the scene as though rooted to the spot.

The only one of the guests who seemed neither surprised nor shocked ~~at this~~ neither by the entrance of the woman nor by what she had done and was doing was Jesus himself. He sat quite still and let her have her way completely. Undisturbed he lay still on the cushions but with his face turned towards her. His expression was one of complete understanding and approval. Far from being put out by the attention of this woman from the streets his expression showed not only approval but ~~pleasure~~ gratitude and joy. His eyes shone with the light of sympathy and even love - the kind of love she had never experienced before nor had even imagined could ever exist.

Everyone knew what kind of a woman she was - by her dress and appearance. ²² well known in the city. The audacity of coming in ¹ And he allowed her ---made no comment- showed appreciation etc This showed him up

No prophet - an impostor --etc. This was proof of what the others had said ... he must be a fraud

you would almost think they had met before (so perhaps they had) The only other alternative was that he was a simpleton inexperienced in judging people.

The scene went on a long time -- Jesus was in no hurry to cut it short. The guests looked on -- first in wonder and then more and more in and bewilderment ... then more and more in disapproval and distrust and horror .

Jesus knew well what was going on in their minds But it was to his host he turned ... he had a duty to his host to explain things --- also Simon had believed in him enough to want to know more about him . To let him go on in his unshaken ignorance was not fair . he should be given a chance of understanding the situation . The others all shared this doubt and distrust but none of them had dared to voice their opinion but they had shown clearly enough in their expressions what they were thinking .

Simon I have something to say to you .
There was a different tone in his voice --- this was not going to be small talk as in the earlier part of the meal .

At this everyone sat still and no conversation

Master say it please --- still called him Rabbi .

A certain man had two debtors . . .

Which therefore loves him most .

Simon was a magnate - a rich man and has many creditors and no doubt also his debts . . But this bringing of love into business perhaps it was a sort of trap -----Cautiously almost suspiciously he answers I suppose the one to whom he forgave most .

You have answered rightly

Dost thou see this woman ? etc.

It was a masterly report , summing up , vindication of himself , restoration of the woman , and rebuke to Simon all in a few sentences



