

# Woman in Red Magdalene Speaks

BY KRISHNA ROSE

*krishnarose.com*

*“Prophecy speaks of a time when  
the Bride of Israel is restored. Finally  
returned to her husband’s side after a  
long period of separation, it is said  
that the deserts will bloom,  
the landscape will heal, and all wars  
will cease. That time is now . . .  
for she has returned.”*

~KR

CHAPTER ONE

# SACRIFICE

*“To sacrifice means to surrender something of value to gain something of greater worth.” - KR*

“It is finished,” I heard him say. His head and body went limp. Death was upon him. A motionless silence wove a wicked web devouring me in grief. I trembled as his vacant eyes stared at me. Letting out an uncontrollable scream, I fell to my knees, weak with grief. Rocking back and forth, swooning, my voice choked with tears. I had no power to change the course of destiny’s bitter wheel. I was to bear witness to that which I was warned would come to pass.

My world crumbled in those darkest of hours. Time slowed. My heart was broken for all to see. I wanted nothing more than for this pain to end, though I knew there would be no escape from it. Mournfulness bequeathed a cross which I would now bear until I breathed my last. For my love was gone. The wailing women on the hills behind us began their somber cries, perfectly expressing this most awful juncture of predetermined fate. Despair had me gulping for air. I was entirely overwhelmed. Ashen-faced, my uncle and The Mary took my arms, helping me to my feet. My rounded belly now a stark reminder of my woeful situation—a child without a father, a wife without a husband, a disciple without a master. I would within one year be married off

## W O M A N I N R E D

to my husband's closest male relative, passed like a cup, a possession, not a free woman.

I had loved Jesu for as long as I had breath in my body. He had been my friend and teacher from the first moment our eyes had met. All that I held sacred was to be found within him. Frozen, with his mother by my side, we huddled together holding on to one another as we wept our bitter tears, shared in grief. Her grip on my arm was tight and terrified. The Mary wished more than anything to squeeze out her own life airs to give breath to her son, my husband. Groaning, she beat her breast hard with her left fist. She had once nurtured her son from that same breast, yet now it was agonizingly dry and empty, like her son who hung limp on the cross before her.

The wind whirled about us like an almighty requiem and a bitter darkness descended on those of us who remained. We were united in our mourning on that hill of ruin. Our terrified family, pale and grave, felt something awful stirring in the air. We were all transfixed and somber, as side by side we witnessed the most sorrowful torture, of the monumental kind. We would never be the same again.

Memories of those grotesque and twisted moments which were brought about at the hands of vulgar men, would forever torment me. Theirs was a fools' paradise. It had been commercial interest alone, which had driven their evil-mindedness to this. Despite their insidious displays of religious grandeur, I was certain their future was ill-omened, though it would be my grief which would eventually drive them to their own self-destruction.

I had heard about the dark Roman ritual of crucifixion from the women in the village who had lost family or friends to the

Roman thirst for order. But never had I witnessed one. Now, I remembered their stories, and I shared in their anguish. I didn't know it then, but it was to be the beginning of what would become a life dedicated to the eventual ruin of all those who had caused this startling display of vileness. For neither they, nor I knew, that one day my name would become a force to be reckoned with. From this life to the next, and the next, and on, long into the future . . . I vowed, that those who are corrupt, would fear my name—for I am Mary, who became the Magdalene.

I could hear the sound of celestial choirs, harps, and drums, circling in the air above us as weeping angels drenched us in their tears, which mingled with ours. I think none of us were prepared for what came to pass, for we were unable to contain the confusion, as a bleak gloom descended on us. Jesu glanced in our direction with that all-knowing look in his eye which I had grown to understand. His anguished eyes closed for the last time in silent passing, as a loud clap of thunder roared disapprovingly overhead. My Uncle Joseph immediately shouted commands for the Roman guards to bring Jesu down from the cross. The wooden cross . . . such a cursed instrument . . . for it had been the ghastly instrument by which mankind enchained the bravest of men the earth did know. In the recesses of my spirit I perceived the futility of it all.

“It is time” he told them authoritatively, “on the orders of Pilate!”

Torrents of rain fell beneath the backdrop of a blackened afternoon sky. The guards seemed bewildered. In truth, they cared not whether this man lived or died. They never wanted him dead to begin with. They were under orders and orders must be obeyed. Everyone knew my uncle from the council, and overlords

of the Jewish Kingdom, for he was a wealthy, well-connected man, highly respected by Jewish and Roman leaders alike. He was famous for his patient, wise counsel . . . as well as his generosity.

It seemed like the heavens had come to earth to collect the soul of their fallen soldier, for never had I seen such a storm. The Roman soldiers moved quickly as if they too sensed an impending doom. The taller of them took a spear in hand and climbed upon a ladder which leaned eerily against Jesu's cross. Reaching over, he thrust the sword forcibly into my husband's side. My uncle cried out, and within seconds the sun was no longer visible in the sky. Engulfed in a blanket of heavy darkness, darker than the darkest night, I shuddered with dread. I regarded my uncle's astonishment as he buried his face in his hands, through which trickled many despairing tears. "Get him down!" he screamed desperately.

Quickly, for fear of the gods, the soldiers urgently cut the wooden cross at its root, bringing Jesu's lifeless body tumbling to the ground. Startled, we cried out, slipping in the mud as we ran to him. The downpour intensified, and with its deluge, my fatigue washed away. Slicing the ropes with their knives, the men drew the dense iron nails from Jesu's feet and wrists, and blood oozed from his wounds—blood and water. I didn't think of it then, but years later I pondered on that one thing. If he were dead, how could blood and water still drain from him? Thank the Lord no one else had that same thought. The Mary and I reached for his slightly warm corpse, touching him, despite the soldiers obligatory shoves, as they tried to keep us away. We were consumed with an intense concentration and a singular need to see if he still lived. Jesu's head fell to one side as they lifted him onto a stretcher. He was without sign of life.

## W O M A N I N R E D

Just as if the sun had disappeared from the sky, so too had Jesu left with it. No more could I watch his chest rise and fall, I thought. Such is the prostrating power of death. How as simple a thing as breathing in and out, meant so much, yet had been relatively left unnoticed and under-appreciated. Now it mattered more than anything, and in that moment, I knew grief would become my constant companion from this day forth.

Some would claim Jesu as not so handsome, but in my eyes, and the eyes of those who knew him, he was so much more than that. I had spent many moments scanning every inch of his nature, collecting memories of his limitless dignity and grace, knowing that one day I would likely have need to recall and retain him in some way. I had measured and maintained the tribute of every moment I was given with him, which I had judiciously recorded.

Jesu's brother John surreptitiously covered Jesu's distinctive face with a cloth to avoid further humiliation. Disheartened, we escaped through the thickening storm, seeking a prepared burial chamber not far from that place where countless lives had been destroyed by crucifixion. A small procession of us trailed behind in silence. The tenuous path was demonstratively sunless. It was hard to see where we trod, though my uncle's self-assured footsteps guided us by the light of his devotion. The Mary and I followed closely behind Jesu, who lay disastrously still on the canvas stretcher which was held between two long wooden poles. With our shawls pulled tight over our heads, the wind and rain whipped and twisted from all sides. The ground, pulverized by the sudden change in weather, quickly became muddy, making it difficult to keep up. With each step I lost my footing on the slippery path as we made our way down the hill entirely compelled by our joined grief.

## W O M A N I N R E D

The wailing women could still be heard. They had stayed despite the profuse trembling and quaking of the elements which they endured for our sake. Their doleful prayers were soothing to my soul, in a way that only a grieving widow could understand, for they perfectly expressed my torment and struggle. Never again would such a poignant moment as this be recorded in the stars.

The funeral rituals would instantly, and in haste, have to be completed before our holy night began at sundown. Shabbat, like a heroic and valiant friend, seemed to have come sooner than expected. Praise the Lord for the Sabbath, I thought to myself, for without it, we would not have been granted permission to bring Jesu down this early. In fact they would have left his tragic life ending there, upon the cross, garishly displayed for all to see, for at least three days hence.

I thought of the wicked and miserly men of my faith, who, out of cowardliness and predisposed sinister deceptions, had demanded Jesu's execution by Roman hands. To them, he was nothing more than another deftly set aside false prophet. Mindful of the time restraint, we rushed gingerly through the accelerating downpour. Death is the inevitable fate of us all, yet despite a lifetime of spiritual learning, nothing could have prepared me for a moment such as this. Grief crept in like a melancholy nightmare which I anticipated with dismay. I shivered, chilled by the violent upheaval of my sudden loss as cold winds bit at my saturated dress. Wearily, I clung to the hand of The Mary who was determinedly eager to bury her son before sundown.

A sudden break in the weather beamed a majestic light from behind the darkest of clouds, curiously interrupting the storm long enough for us to pass a steep narrow pathway down into the cavernous mouth of the crypt. In this moment I considered

myself to be a most unfortunate woman. A cock crowed. Funny how something that seemingly insignificant would later haunt me. Our child stirred within my womb, and shock, like a great malady, overcame me with weak-kneed heaviness. I gripped The Mary's arm to stop myself from falling. Frozen, we stood there a moment, silently reflecting upon our uneasy assignment. Like a great serpent, the sepulcher would now take Jesu from us forever.

"Mariam, providence demands you to rise above your mournful misfortune," she said, clutching me urgently. "Your duty as his wife is to prepare my son for burial. So be strong for him, and for us all. Promise me," she said insistently, "promise that as you prepare him, you will remind him of his mother who bathed and nurtured him when he was a child," she told me, in a broken, dejected voice. I nodded in agreement, anxious, and uncertain as a newborn child. She acknowledged my harrowed expression, while with her hand encouraged me into the tomb. While I, like a most unwilling prisoner of fate, obliged, nervously bustling past the guards, leaving behind a small crowd of gathered mourners. The wailers distant pitiful howls clung to me, strengthening my resolve.

The Mary turned to rush home with her son before the Lord's day began, where our family and faithful friends would sing the Shabbat prayers, weeping for her deceased son, our dead leader. I was sick to my stomach. In the hope that a glimmer of life would yet remain, I, with a broken heart, pensively approached, until I came upon Jesu's side. There upon the cold burial slab, stained with blood, mud, and water, he lay. I reached for him, hopeful that I might feel his strong affirming fingers wrap themselves around mine reassuringly, as they had done so many times in the past. Anything to let me know he still lived. But nothing. Cold

unfeeling nothing.

The vault's torches were lit, illuminating the otherwise soulless, dark, forbidding subterranean cave. Jesu's pallid corpse lay still upon the bloodstained stretcher. Quickly the guards pulled out the poles which had held the stretcher in place, making a sharp grating sound as the posts moved through the wet cloth. Something crept up on me in slow, certain degrees. The vault had an oppressive atmosphere which was dank and disproportionately sinister. Handing me a sponge and bowl of floral water to bathe Jesu's discharged body, my uncle said, "I'm going outside to speak with Nicodemus. Mariam, you know what to do."

I nodded nervously, watching as he walked away, leaving me quivering in terror.

Unfortunately, yes, I knew what must be done. I grimaced. Like a bitter pill this was a trial I did not wish to swallow. I could hear their voices outside. Alone, I stood rooted to the floor, staring at Jesu's ashen inanimate remains. The torch's flames flickered restlessly in the extreme darkness, producing frightening shadows on the limestone walls, which heaved and quivered in silent reverie. I knew undoubtedly in that moment that I was not alone. From behind my grim reality a quiet strength flowed into my bones like water to a dried-up flower. I loathed the power invested in me, for it would force me to do the unthinkable—to bury my husband. The guards rolled the immensely heavy stone door closed behind my uncle after depositing four ceremonial jars at my feet, one by one, with a loud thud, rubbing salt into the wound of my mournful disorientation.

"Heal him Maria" Uncle Joseph said, in a voice surprisingly full of hope.

“What can you mean heal him? He is dead!” I stated uneasily, as a fluttering of nerves moved through the pit of my stomach. “The jars are of frankincense, aloe, sandalwood, and myrrh,” he said breathlessly, moving to sit in the corner of the brooding chamber. Pausing to catch a breath, he said dejectedly “we failed to keep him safe.” The stiff tone of his voice sent a cool shiver down my spine. “I tried, but it was futile. I am so sorry Mariam! The opposition was too strong,” he said, slumping his shoulders, seemingly much aggrieved.

“I am faint with faithless grief,” I admitted, “I am completely unsure of myself uncle! These past few days have been too much to bear” I said broken-heartedly, as icy-cold tears trickled down my withered face. My heart beat hard in my chest. I was breathless with trepidation. “I have faith in you Mariam,” he said confidently. “You are strong. It is your sacred duty to minister to him in his hour of need, and since Shabbat is soon upon us, be swift, and do what must be done,” he said nervously.

I nodded, wiping the bounteous tears from my cheeks with my shawl. I was painfully aware of the uneasiness which had dominion over me, still, I nervously peeled off the blood-soaked cloth from Jesu’s body. I was startled when I saw him. My hands shook, as agonized, I removed the thorns which were wrapped tight around his head—the vines, twigs, and thorns of which had been made as a crown. Taunting Jesu just a few hours before, the soldiers had made jest, heedlessly caring nothing for the pain they inflicted. “A King must wear a crown. Must he not?” they teased, in their drunken cheer. Those same vines had cut deep into my husband’s sun-kissed skin, leaving him covered in a horrifying amount of blood. By law, I was forbidden to wipe blood from his body, for our laws dictated that a man’s blood must be

buried with him. Therefore, legally I could not bathe him as a wife ordinarily would. Jesu's body was plentifully bestrewn with blood, one could scarcely see his skin beneath the stains of his death. I knew not what to do.

With my cold wet clothes clinging to my limbs I felt uncomfortably chilled to my bones. Shivering, teary-eyed, I handed the thorny crown to my uncle, asking him "what am I to do? There is too much blood covering his body." "Wash him Mariam. We make our own laws now," he said righteously. I nodded in agreement for what he said was true. It did not seem appropriate to bury a great man such as Jesu in this pitiful state, for his blood harbored the cruelty of the Roman and Jewish regime. Their whips had cut his flesh in countless places. My fingertips, with profound care, removed the last of the bloody shrouds from his disfigured body. I shuddered seeing Jesu this broken. He was a silent testimony of incomprehensible human barbarity.

It felt good to fill my mind with the practical things which needed to be done and I soon began to sense a new and profound inner fearlessness. Rebelliously I wiped him clean breaking with all protocol and Judaic law. Concentrating on being rather than doing, my whole body vibrated mysteriously. And as I loosened the shields which protectively guarded my consciousness, I fell into the silence of compassion. I put my own need for survival aside to tend Jesu's hands and feet, even though his injuries intimidated me, as here were the uncivilized signs of his persecution.

I shook recalling the derision of the soldiers who knew not what they did. They were numb to it. For to them, Jesu was just another victim of Judaic-Roman rule. Another fallen man to poke fun at, to make light of their own surrender to Roman orders.

Jesting was their assumed means of coping with the parody of torture and murder to which they were privy. Morning, noon, and night, the orders came in, day after day, week after week, year after year. He was just another man, of many, to be crucified. To make light of what they did, was to show off how unaffected they were, how 'Roman' they were. And as long as they were well compensated, they kept the appearance of strength while their false pretensions gave them all the reassurance that everything was just fine. Again, theirs too was a fools' paradise.

Those hours were for me devoid of any hope in humanity. I endeavored hard to rouse myself from my pitiable condition, as awed, I was sickened by just how damaged Jesu's body was as I bathed him despairingly. It was shocking—his illustrious heroic life, now desolate and ruined, taken from him in a few cruel moments of unnecessary brutality. With his death went all my bravery, for Jesu was the source of my soul's respite, as well as its inspiration. He was my rock and my best friend. An irrepressible panic suddenly overcame me, deftly pushing aside my newfound composure. Truthfully, I feared life without him. I speculated that I might live a half-life. I was now a widow, and the mother of a child without a father . . . a disciple without a living master.

Obediently I poured water and oil over his head as I had done when we were first married, combing his hair with my fingers. Fortunately he looked peaceful, not anguished like a man who had been ridiculed, crucified and scorned by his own people. This would be the last time I would with these hands touch him. I quivered at the thought. My hairs stood on end as yet another wave of intense darkness hearkened at the thought of ever breaking from him. It was more than I could bear. He was too young to die. We had only been married a short while, and now I won-

dered if this would make a coward or a bitter monster of me? A cold tremor ran through my body. Every fiber of me ached with rigid exhaustion.

For the sake of Jesu's good name, fate would necessitate that I become the hero of my own story. Moreover I would be obligated to overcome all thoughts for myself as our unborn child would soon be born to me, I thought to myself. Concentrating on the gentle hum of the ancestral prayers my uncle recited fraught with emotion, I felt comforted and strengthened by them. Their low definite presence relieved me. Following the lead of each ancient word, I refocused, washing every inch of blood from him methodically until he was spotless. Yet still, his wounds oozed, so again I cleaned them, until the blood slowed and stopped. Then, with the fragrant charms of curative oils upon my fingers, I anointed him to the doleful crooning of last rites.

Despite being born of a stalwart, Jewish aristocratic family, I did not believe nor behave as the others did. The temples built as displays of wealth and power were bricks of lies. Outwardly the priests and leaders spoke as the authority on all matters of faith whilst privately sinning. Not much was holy about them, for their extravagant shows of opulence had all but been acquired on the backs of others' hard work. And while their demonstrations of learning meant they were respected in society, secretly they were beyond doubt pleasure-seekers. This had become the standard of the rich and powerful leaders, while the common man had only the fantasy of one day living like them. Like an itch burning to be scratched, ambition and coin was the eagerness they pursued, while God and righteous living had been replaced by want of riches.

This was no longer my faith. I knew it now more than ever

before. I felt like a stranger in my own lands. My faith had assuredly been hijacked by criticism, animosity, and control. The old ways were fast becoming lost, and with it, the simple life of Godly devotion had been covered with prim faultfinding and the veneer of respectability. Reputation and honor mattered more than purity, truth, and devotion. Jesu had opened the people's eyes to such things. Therefore he had endangered their positions, as well as his own. The enchantment which was upon the people who faithfully, albeit blindly, followed, had fallen heavily over them. With eyes fixated on their false masters they feared any who might lift the veil of illusion which had held them beholden to untruth. They were ready to battle to the death to remain secure in the discernible lies they believed.

I would carve for us a new path upon which all could walk, taking with me only the essence of our true faith. For money had fast become the new god, and position and power were more important than honesty and goodness. Jesu was a heroic threat to their balance. He preached the evils of false leadership and taught his followers to live pure, simple lives, refraining from luxury and self-indulgence. In a society which was fast becoming a moral sinking ship, people like sheep, herded one another, to keep the norm of false existence at any cost. And Jesu, though being a Prince among men, by blood, title, and birthright, was a paramount thorn in their illusory bubble.

To dare to defy the norm in any way meant potentially ostracizing one's self and one's family from an entire community. Often imprisonment, or death, was a very real possibility for any brave soul daring to rebel against society. It was not for the faint of heart to be gallant, as Jesu and John had been, for they had stood up fearlessly to the cultish mentalities which had infected

our populace like a disease. And by their bravery, the false spiritualists were left exposed. Jesu's assured disposition and authority struck fear into the hearts of many, for by him, these things were glaringly apparent for all to see. He had smeared the people's eyes with the healing balm of truth and now many leaders' honor was in question.

The priests and politicians were the pillars of our society, and Jesu had disturbed them. Yet as a consequence, they played a desperate game to hold the illusion firm over the sway of public opinion, calling Jesu a dangerous rebel not to be trusted . . . an enemy of the faith. The truth was, God had become big business. Faith was a powerful means of income and a guaranteed good lifestyle. It was not something they were easily willing to let go of, not even for the expected Messiah. In fact they feared the Jesu's expected arrival so much, that they executed any and all who claimed to be the one whom God had anointed and sent to help them. To be dutiful to the spiritless mass agenda, meant that one would have to give up freedom of forthright speech and even free thought, which were considered heretical by the brainwashed multitudes. To doubt or question the temple leaders, politicians, aristocrats, or the rich well-placed business men in power, was a crime punishable by death.

"Mariam," my uncle whispered, pulling me from my thoughts, "you have the power to heal him. Please, I implore you, try and bring him back to us!" he said desperately. "I cannot bear this a moment longer! I had arranged to have Jesu brought down from the cross early so that we might revive him," he said confidently. "It takes a man two full days to die of suffocation, when crucified. Only in rare cases does a man die after a day on the cross, and then only from dehydration on an extremely hot day. There-

fore, I fed Jesu a powerful sleeping draft on a sponge when he said he thirsted. Then immediately he seemingly died, and under the guise of needing to prepare him for burial before sundown, I called for him to be brought down believing we would have a chance of reviving him.”

My heart skipped a beat as he spoke. I stared at my blood-stained hands, and asked grimly “but is it appropriate for me to bring back from the Lord’s Kingdom what He has taken from us?” “Mariam, have you forgotten how Jesu returned Lazarus to us? He did not consider it wrong or inappropriate. In fact he did not hesitate for a moment to try and save him even though Lazarus had passed over days before. Remember?” he reminded me. “Listen. The child stirring in your womb needs a father, you need a husband, and the world needs their King to rise and fulfill prophecy!” he said, suddenly animated, with an air of anticipation in his voice.

The problem was that I doubted whether I could do it.

I thought of my mother and wondered if her spirit was here with me now, watching over me. What would she say? I liked to imagine that she would advise me since she had died giving birth to me. While I, never having known a mother, felt I had a relationship forged of the spirit. I thought about it for a minute, unsure of how to explain the impossibility of what my uncle was asking. It would take enormous courage and faith to undertake such a feat, and to be honest, I wasn’t sure if I had either left in me. I was a beaten-down, worn woman. My thoughts reeled, while I gazed longingly at the stony rigidity of my husband’s body. I let out a low moaning cry and fell on Jesu’s limp corpse weeping, considering the import of my uncle’s words.

“I can’t . . . I can’t do it,” I cried.

“Mariam, you of all people should know that we cannot allow our fears to overtake us at such a poignant moment as this. Jesu would want this. He was born to fulfill the prophecy and now he needs our help. Move quickly Mariam before it’s too late and he crosses beyond the ninth wave!” He saw my inner struggle and said “do you wish for Jesu to die in a great show of humiliation and failure, where the wagging tongues of local gossip vines will forever speak of him as an imposter? He must rise again and show the world he is our Messiah. The Lord can have him in due course, now is not the time for his death. It is time for his resurrection!” he said assuredly, his eyes suddenly serious and determined. He was so faithful and confident.

I had seen Jesu return life to a dead body on more than one occasion and now I wished that I could remember step by step what he had done to make the impossible possible. I struggled to find the right words, as they would have to be spoken with unflinching intention and belief. Grief and exhaustion overwhelmed my ability to think straight. Secretly I wished my uncle would try. “Can’t you do it?” I pleaded with him.

“Child, you are his wife! None but you could be more qualified to call his spirit from that place which he spent a lifetime laboring to penetrate!” My uncle’s countenance was firm, and of course I knew he was right. It was me who Jesu loved over all others, save God himself. My pleas and petitions to his soul would be the strongest reminder of our need for his company, for his unborn child, and most importantly, of his true mission. He had lived and died for this moment. But could I really return the spirit of the man I loved? I could try, for most surely it was better to try and fail, than not to try at all. This might be my final chance of

ever seeing him again.

Sensing my thoughts, my uncle encouraged me. "You have the gift Mariam, so use it to heal him!" he said, seemingly relieved that I was willing to try. "The soldier who speared Jesu's side was never a part of the plan," he added gravely. "The plan?" I asked. "What do you mean the plan?" "Forgive me Mariam, I didn't want to give you hope," he said, suppressing the swelling grief which I sensed clutching at his throat. "Caiaphas must have paid that soldier a large sum to ensure Jesu's death. In his shrewd mind, he knew we might try to revive him, and he wasn't taking any chances." "The plan?" I asked him, turning to meet his eyes. "Yes Mariam, you don't really suppose I was going to let them kill him? God's blood Mariam, your husband is the most important man walking the earth! Our entire faith rests on his survival. Antipas and Pilate are no friends of the Annas priests and they simply did not want Jesu's blood on their hands. They are well aware of his right to rule. His birth was predicted in the stars, for the blood in his veins runs royal in every way. He is the heir to the thrones of Herod and David, and that makes him the biggest threat, on many sides," he said thoughtfully, as I kept my awareness on Jesu's body.

"It was Caiaphas, not the Romans, who wanted Jesu arrested and crucified right from the start. Luckily for us, Pilate never trusted Caiaphas, for we all know how much Caiaphas secretly hates Rome. He looks down on anyone not born of a Jewish mother," he said, indignantly cracking his knuckles. "Therefore, Antipas, Pilate, and I, struck a deal to have Jesu released early. They both willingly agreed, since King Herod the Great, God rest his soul, and the threat of his bloodline, is something which no one any longer fears. But Antipas's nephew was fearful Jesu would

usurp the throne from him, and rightfully so!" he said, clenching his teeth.

"Pilate and Antipas knew Jesu was Prince Antipater's child. It is obvious to all who are privy to such understanding. And believe me, they were both extremely willing to make an agreement for all of Rome wishes to see Herod-Agrippa fall," he said matter-of-factly. "So it was arranged that Jesu would bear the cross for a few hours, to fulfill the hunger of Caiaphas and his retinue, feigning an execution. Only the plan was, we would swiftly rescue him before the Sabbath. I had planned for us to escape Judea before they could find us," he explained, rubbing his eyes sleepily. "Well, that was the plot Mariam, but we hadn't counted on the soldier's spear . . . now it will take more than just herbs and aloes to bring him back. It will take a miracle! We planned to heal him, if only that damned soldier hadn't stabbed him, for certain we could have saved him. Now it will be the will of God alone. Don't doubt yourself Mariam . . . or your abilities, remember who you are!"

My uncle had devised a plan which neither I, nor my husband had known of. Now Jesu had not even the faintest hint of life within him. He lay limp as a tree which had been cut down at its root long before its time.

"Do it Mariam, and don't ever doubt your power!" he urged me.

WOMAN IN RED

Woman in Red  
Magdalene Speaks

BY KRISHNA ROSE

*krishnarose.com*  
*womaninredbook.com*