

# "THE UNTOLD STORY!"



Brendan McCrossan

## **The untold story.**

By Brendan Mc Crossan

Copyright at 6<sup>th</sup> June 2002

### **Chapter 1**

#### **Life was good.**

'Joseph! 'Would you go and get baby Jesus he has wandered outside again.' 'Ok Mary,' replied Joseph leaving down his hammer and chisel, and exiting his work shed he looked around to see where Jesus had gone. This boy never sits still he muttered to himself. Since he started walking he just seems to want to go outside all the time. As Joseph turned round the side of the house sure enough there was Jesus looking up into the heavens his little arms lifted upwards.

Coming up behind him Joseph heard him say his first words. 'Abba. Abba.'

Joseph smiled to himself. He knows already whom his father is he thought and he is only a year old.

• Yes my son that is Abba up there, your heavenly father. •

Joseph said as he picked Jesus up.

• Abba! Abba! • Jesus said and pointed upwards. He touched Josephs face his podgy little hands covered in dust where he had fallen and picked himself up again and again.

• He• s ok Joseph called to Mary. • He has just spoken his first words. •

Mary rushed outside cleaning her hands on her apron. • What did he say? • she enquired.

He said • Abba Abba. • Laughed Joseph, • he knows who his true father is. • • He had his hands lifted up towards heaven when he said it. •

They marvelled at his understanding at such a young age. Jesus was still in nappies, and Mary asked Joseph would he check and see if he needed changing.

• Phew! He sure does, I'll do it, go on back to what you were doing.

Laying Jesus down on the bed Joseph changed his nappy for a fresh new one. • That's better wee man he laughed. • sitting Jesus down on the floor.

• Stay there until I steep your nappy. • He went outside to the water troth and steeped the dirty nappy.

Life was good for Mary and Joseph here in Nazareth he earned a good living as a carpenter, and he was much sought after by all because his quality of work was excellent. They were well respected by the local community. Mary also was a hard worker.

Apart from her own household chores she helped out their neighbours with anything they needed doing and many times babysat for the young couple that lived close by. They had a baby son called Judas who was a bit temperamental at times. For a child of four he was a very deep thinker and was given to bouts of anger sometimes kicking their dog as it sat in the shade beside their house. But Mary loved him and delighted to watch him for the young couple giving them a chance to earn some money. The husband had no trade and found it difficult to get work. Apart from the vineyard there was not very much work around so the young man worked at what ever he could and was a hard worker, working long hours to supply for his family and travelling far to get work. His wife worked in the market place helping out the orange sellers.

Judas didn't like Jesus he was jealous of him and at times he would taunt Jesus making him cry. Mary scolded him gently

about this and put it down to boyish things.

One day as Mary was babysitting Judas she heard her dog yelping. It was a cross between every kind of dog there was, and a rag daggled thing with long hair and floppy ears that hung down almost to the ground. This animal was hard to describe and it had a love of scratching its ears and rubbed its bottom on the ground to scratch itself. They called it scratchy!

This is Scratchy!



Going to investigate she was just in time to see Judas lift his foot and plant a kick on the poor mutts face. {With there being no social workers in those days she lifted Judas and placed him across her knee and spanked him.} Telling him that what he was doing was cruel and not to do it again or she would not be able to look after him again. Jesus meanwhile was sitting playing in the mud making mud pies with his grubby little hands. His face and mouth had mud on it and his little robe was covered in mud he looked a right mess. Mary laughed at the sight of him, a little bit of mud hurt no one she thought, and as long as he is healthy that• s what counts. Funny enough she thought, Jesus never had so much as a cold .He was never sick, and she was glad of that.

Not long after this incident Judas parents had to move to another town as his father was given work there. Mary and Joseph both called over to their little house to bid them farewell. Joseph slipped the husband some money saying let it be

a blessing of better times to come. He protested but Joseph insisted firmly shaking his hand. After hugs were exchanged and kisses for little Judas they bid their closest neighbours farewell.

That Night as Mary was settling Jesus down to sleep in his crib; she felt the need to pray for young Judas. She knelt down and prayed long into the night as Jesus slept, for his little friend Judas. She pondered about this many times over the years to come. She was so uneasy as she prayed and hoped that all was well with Judas and his parents.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Get up quick!**

• Mary! Get up quick! We have to leave at once. • A year had passed since their friends had left and Mary was dreaming about them when Joseph urgently awakened her. Rubbing the sleep from her eyes Mary asked him what was wrong? Hurry! Hurry no time to loose, get Jesus and all our belongings we have to get out of here Jesus is in danger. Mary questioned no more she grabbed everything she could carry and made her way outside to where her husband had their donkeys waiting. Scratchy was standing beside the donkey• s his nose pointed upwards sniffing the air for sign of danger, a growl came to his throat and Joseph hearing him called, to Mary leave everything and lets go now! • Helping Mary onto the donkey with Jesus in her arms, they fled into the dark of the night and none too

soon because they could see horsemen with torches approaching their little home as they reached the top of the hill. Don't look back whispered Joseph in case they see the whites of our faces keep low and go, go go.

As they fled past the neighbouring village of Ramah, they could hear terrible screams of anguish coming from mothers screaming as soldiers killed their babies.



Travelling far into the night they pushed their little donkeys onwards as hard as they could out of whatever danger Joseph knew about. When Joseph called a halt Mary was only too glad she was in pain, exhausted and frightened.

• It's Ok now Mary,• he said tenderly, helping her down off her donkey. Her poor legs were chaffed and bleeding from the donkey's rough coat. They had no time to put a blanket on them.

• Here,• said Joseph, • put some of that frankincense those shepherds gave us two years ago the night Jesus was born on your legs it will help.• Ill go and collect some wood for a fire. Ten minutes later he arrived back with small twigs and lit a welcome fire. Stretching out a blanket on the ground he made Mary and Jesus a little bed. Under the blanket he had put some grass to try and make her comfortable. He put a piece of flat rock with grass over it and covered with a blanket to soften it as a place for her to rest her head.

• I will explain everything when you're settled.•

But as soon as poor Mary's head touched the rock for a pillow she was fast asleep exhausted from their terrible journey. Joseph put some more thick pieces of wood on the fire and snuggled in beside Mary and Jesus huddling together for warmth in the chill of the desert night air.

Next morning just as the dawn was breaking, Joseph arose quietly he fixed the covers around Mary and Jesus, added some wood to the fire and prepared a little meal for Mary and Jesus. Mary awoke to the smell of bread cooking, Stretching her arms above her head she greeted the day with a song of praise to the lord as was her custom. Joseph had already sung his early morning praises quietly as he prepared the breakfast, he didn't wish to awaken Mary or Jesus.

• Joseph! You should have wakened me. • Mary scolded Joseph gently; • I could have made the breakfast while you seen to the donkeys. •

Looking over to where the donkeys were tethered Mary had seen that they were fed and watered.

• You are a kind husband Joseph, • she smiled at him. Joseph handed Mary her food and began telling her why they had to leave their home so quickly.

He explained that an angel of the Lord had appeared to him in a dream. • Get up and flee to Egypt with the baby and his mother, • the angel had said. • Stay there until I tell you to return, for King Herod is going to kill the child.

Mary was horrified; she sat with her mouth open shocked to think someone could be so cruel to harm her innocent child. • My son has caused no one hurt why would anyone wish to

harm him. •

Then she remembered the prophecy in sacred scripture.

- Screams of anguish comes from Ramah, weeping unrestrained; Rachel weeping for her children Uncomforted - For they are dead. •

Tears flooded into Mary eyes for she realised that Herod had fulfilled the prophecy concerning the children of Ramah saddened because she realised also that it was her son they were looking for, they died because of him.

Leaving the fire she went off by herself alone to pray. She pleaded for God's grace on the poor mothers and fathers whose children had been murdered by Herod. She lay prostrate on the ground weeping and moaning for their terrible loss. Mary stayed there quite a while praying and interceding for those poor families.

- Mary could you please come now we need to be on our way were still not out of danger. • • There are robbers and renegades in these areas and we must go quickly. •

Seeing that Joseph had taken care of baby Jesus, Mary picked him up and this time sitting side-saddle on the donkey she held him in her arms. She thanked Joseph for taking care of everything and they went on their way.

Travelling over hills and valleys they made it safely to the land of Egypt.

After some searching Joseph finally found a little shack where they could live until they got something better.

Mary soon got to work making the shack into a home making it comfortable for her and Joseph and Jesus. They stayed in that area for quite some time and it wasn't long before Joseph

was back in full time employment.

**{Home Sweet home}**



## **Chapter-3**

### **The pond.**

Jesus had a great time growing up he made many friends with the local children, and they played games around the little village, games like hiding and seeking. The children used to wonder how did Jesus know where they were hiding he seemed to have a knack for finding them.

{The children and Scratchy at play}



One day when Jesus was about five, some of his older friends suggested they go swimming at the local pond it was a hot day and the children wished to cool off. Jesus rushed home and asked Mary for permission. Attaining permission to watch only, Jesus rushed back to his friend who also had gone home to seek permission. And they all set off to the pond at the edge of the village.

When they got there all the kids except Jesus and a little girl with bright red hair dived in splashing about. They splashed each other with water and ran screaming with delight as water

hit them. They were having a great time. An older boy called Matthew scooped up some water in a little bucket and crept up behind Jesus and tossed the cold water over him then ran and hid behind some bushes that surrounded the pond.

Spluttering and coughing and squealing in delight Jesus grabbed the little wooden bucket and filled it with water from a little pool beside the pond and went searching for Matthew. Creeping up behind Matthew Jesus raised the bucket in his hands and prepared to drench Matthew. But Matthew knowing Jesus knack of finding them waited until Jesus was right behind him, he turned quickly and grabbing the bucket, lifted it up above Jesus head taking him totally by surprise he poured the water over Jesus again. Jesus squealed again in shock and then laughed aloud.

The two friends played around for a little while chasing each other with the little water that they in turn scooped into the bucket, then dropping the bucket and running away.

Having worn themselves out they decided to join their friends. Matthew his arm draped around Jesus shoulder chatted merrily away as they went back to their friends at the pond.

On reaching the pond they were surprised to hear silence. Coming around the bushes at the pond they saw that the friends were standing staring at the body of the little girl with red hair. She fell in explained the friends we didn't see her she went behind some bushes to pick flowers and we thought she was ok. Then Ahmed spotted her floating face down in the water, we dragged her out and lay her here at the waters edge.

• Go quickly. • Jesus said, • and get help, Ill stay here with her in case some wild dogs come around. •

Running off they went in different directions each trying to get some adult to help.

Turning to the dead Girl Jesus sighed deeply. Looked up to

heaven and said. • Father!• • I know it isn• t yet my time but I ask that you return this little girls life back to her. •

Reaching down he touched her head and said, • awake!• The little girl immediately sat up and spit some water out of her mouth.

• Hi Jesus where• s everyone? She asked.

They will be back in a moment, and just as he was speaking some villagers and the little girls mother arrived at the scene.

My baby, my baby, cried the mother seeing her sitting there.

She ran over to her, picked her up in her arms and said. • Mary

Magdalene, you scarred me half to death I thought you had

drowned. • No more pond for you my girl, not after the scare

you gave us all. She turned and walked away everyone follow-

ing her delighted that Mary Magdalene was all right.

Matthew turned and stared at Jesus, their eyes met but he never

spoke and until the day Jesus left he never brought up the

subject of little Mary Magdalene.

{Mary Magdalene with Scratchy.}

## Chapter 4



## Going home at last.

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and told him. • Get up and take the baby and his mother back to Israel, for those who were trying to kill the child are dead. •

In the morning Joseph told Mary of his dream and they agreed to begin packing things to get ready to leave the day after

tomorrow. Joseph had some presses he needed to finish for a customer and Mary wished to say goodbye to all their many friends. They invited all the people they befriended to a little leaving party the night before they were due to leave.

On the night of the leaving party all their friend arrived and brought with them gifts for Mary and Joseph and little Jesus. Joseph and Mary were delighted that all could come they were sad to be leaving the next day but also glad to be going home to Israel.

Everyone stayed up late into the night going over the good times they had together as friends and neighbours. Joseph was a little concerned that there would be enough food and drink for all but he needn't have worried as Jesus seen that it didn't run out. He passed out the wine and bread and fish, all the time thanking his father in heaven for supplying their needs.

At last all the friends departed taking with them presents from Mary and Joseph, some of them supporting each other as they walked home laughing as they staggered along saying they will miss this little Jewish family with the strange quiet little boy, who was always praying. He was not like other kids but a real nice boy.

Bye Mary Bye Joseph, • shee you agin shome time and shoon we hope,• they called tittering merrily as they slurred their sentences.

Mary and Joseph had a good nights sleep the wine helping to make them relaxed. Lying on a little later that morning they awoke and prepared to leave for home. But first they joined hand and all three sang psalms and gave praise and glory unto God for his mercy endures forever.

Jesus began stoking up the fire getting it ready for Mary to make breakfast.

Right mom he called, • fires stoked and ready. •  
• Right son, • replied Mary, • could you get some water in from the well. •  
• Going now, • yelled Jesus as he made his way outside towards the well.

Turning the handle he lowered the bucket down into the water and drew up some water then transferred it into an urn, which he brought to his mother. Struggling to place it on the table he at last succeeded, then called out. • Do you need anything else mom? •

• No • answered Mary, busy stripping the beds. • Could you see if dad needs any help? •

Going outside again Jesus wandered over to the stable where Joseph was getting the donkeys ready for their journey he asked, • Dad do you need any help? •

[Jesus and Scratchy}



• No son its ok. • • See if scratchy is about and bring him here for his food before we leave. •

Jesus went looking for scratchy, he didn• t want to leave him behind he loved the flea bitten mutt very much.

Scratchy bounded out from behind the stable where he had been laying in the shade dreaming of the large bone he had buried but couldn• t remember where he had buried it. He heard Jesus whistling for him. Bounding over to Jesus he knocked him backwards as he jumped up on Jesus chest.

Putting his dusty paws on Jesus chest he licked his face. Jesus grabbed his ears tickling him. He rolled over onto his back so that Jesus could tickle his tummy his back paw jerking like

mad; he enjoyed having his tummy tickled. He was a weird looking dog but Jesus loved him anyway.

• Right old fellow breakfast• s ready. • At Jesus mention of food he leapt up and ran to the back door of the house and barked signalling he was ready to eat. Wagging his tail he put his nose into the dish before Mary had it placed on the ground, he sure liked his food did our scratchy. In no time at all it was finished and going over to where Joseph had the donkeys standing he lay down in the shade of one of them, and drifted back to sleep and back to dreaming of that large bone wondering where he had buried it.

Finishing breakfast they mounted their donkeys and taking one last look at their former home they set off back to Israel.

Travelling by day and resting at night they eventually made it to the outskirts of Judea. They settled down for the night Joseph saying they will enter the town in the daylight rather than at night.

Before long they were all fast asleep, tired out from the long trek through the desert.

Then Joseph in another dream was warned not to go to Judea. He felt they should go to Galilee instead.



In the morning they set off for the region of Galilee. Travelling towards Galilee they decided between them they should go to the town of Nazareth as they had relatives there.

As they made their way towards Nazareth they come across a man who lay by the side of the road, he was badly bleeding from wounds he sustained from robbers. They stopped and

Joseph attended to the man's wounds, while Mary and Jesus lit a little fire and made the man some broth.

As he ate some food the man told them he had been set upon by a bunch of robbers. He was a black man called Simon from Cyrene in Africa. He said that people had passed by him refusing to stop and help him. Putting him on his donkey Joseph walked beside it holding onto the man who was too weak to hold himself on.

Coming to an Inn just outside Nazareth, Joseph carried the man inside and asking the landlord to look after the injured man he gave him some money enough to cover the man's needs. Then they carried the injured man upstairs, the landlord assuring Joseph he would take care of him.

Wearily the man lay down on the bed and thanking Joseph and Mary called a blessing from heaven down on them. He bid them farewell, saying he hoped he could repay them some day for their kindness.

Later on that evening they reached the little town of Nazareth they called on Mary's relations, Elizabeth and Zechariah's. Elizabeth opened the door and squealed with delight when she saw Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Ushering them inside she called to her husband Zechariah to come and see who had arrived. Entering into the living room Zechariah threw his arms around Mary and Joseph welcoming them, he patted Jesus on the head and said. • My goodness! • • Little man how you have grown. • You're a sturdy young lad, just like your cousin John. And he called out. • John come in here and meet your cousin, aunt and uncle. •

John entered the room, he was a dark skinned swarthy young boy with piercing blue eyes that looked right through, he had a beautiful smile with even white teeth. He was strong tall and

well built. Reaching out his hand he greeted Mary and Joseph shyly.

Turning to Jesus he said, • do you want to come outside to play?

Jesus followed him outside to a swing that Zechariahs had made for John, and they took turns pushing each other on it. They had loads of fun.



A little while later Elizabeth called. • Boy• s come in dinner is ready. • Neither had to be called twice and they sat down at the dinner table beside their respective parents.

Elizabeth had prepared a lovely stew of lamb and after prayer they all tucked into it except for John who had a portion of wild honey and locusts. • It is all he would ever eat, • explained Elizabeth laughing and he wouldn• t wear anything but cloth woven from camel• s hair.

The two boys became firm friends and shared many an adventure together.

Over the next few days Joseph looked at houses and finally settled for a nice little three bedroom at the edge of town. He knew Jesus liked to go out into the countryside and talk with God there. They moved in next day and soon settled down into the community. Joseph at once setting up his carpentry shop and was soon doing a brisk business.

One day Joseph when Jesus was about nine Joseph asked him if he would like to come into Galilee with him he needed to pick up some imported wood he had ordered.

Jesus was thrilled he loved helping Joseph and spent lots of time helping him in his shop as well as helping his mom with

the housework.

• Leave scratchy here,• said Joseph, he fights with the other dogs and I don• t want him getting hurt, he• s much too old now to be fighting,• he laughed. • He• s older than you son remember and that• s old for a dog. •

• Stay boy!• Jesus ordered Scratchy. Who immediately plumped himself down in an ungainly heap his back leg working at his left ear? One of these days he would get that darn flea.

Sitting on the little kart that he had made Joseph and Jesus set off for Galilee to collect the wood he had ordered.

Arriving at the place where the wood was kept they were told they would have to wait a little while as the order wasn• t quite ready yet. Neither of them minded as it gave them a chance to see around and to get to hear any news.

Joseph sat down beside some local men and began chatting while Jesus went to have a look at the boats in the lake.



As he walked along Jesus noticed a youth of about seventeen working at mending some nets, he was a course fellow with swarthy weather beaten skin from his work as a fisherman. Jesus stopped and watched him for a while, he could hear the young man laughing and swearing while he joked with his fellow fishermen who worked along side him. He did not seem to have been blessed with good manners, but Jesus looked long and hard at him and liked what he saw. After a while the youth noticed Jesus staring at him and scowled at him saying.

• Away you go lad you have no place here. •  
• He• d never make a fisherman,• he joked with his friends and they all laughed. But Jesus just kept looking at him and after a while the youth became embarrassed because of the language he was using. For some reason this darned kid was making him feel uncomfortable and he became aware of the many profanities he was using and for some reason he was beginning to get embarrassed.

• Clear off you,• he called to Jesus but Jesus just smiled back at him making him feel worse. He couldn• t keep his eyes off this pesky kid who was making him feel uncomfortable; there was something about him that was strange.

After looking at him long and deep Jesus called out to him.

• Fisher of men, your catch will be large. • Turned and walked away.

• Fisherman silly boy,• the youth called after Jesus, • fisherman not fisher of men. • • IM a fisherman,• he called again. Jesus paused and smiling looked at him and said, • No! You are a fisher of men. •

What did the little brat call you Simon, asked one of his friends, that you look so perplexed?

• Nothing,• muttered Simon • forget about it,• and he cursed. • Weird kid. •

He turned back to mending his nets but couldn• t get the kids words out of his head it disturbed him somewhat.

On arriving back to Joseph Jesus discovered that their order was now ready and they began putting it on their cart and made their way home.

Joseph was deep in thought and never spoke much on the return journey home, the men he talked with told him of the terrible times that the Jewish people were suffering under the

Roman government and of the terrible ways they had of making prisoners suffer and die. They seemed to favour flogging with weighted whips with many strands and also favoured crucifixion a terrible slow death for those unfortunate to have to face it. For some reason Joseph was deeply distressed to hear of their latest means of execution, and putting his arm around Jesus pulled him nearer and hugged him.

Over the next three years Jesus worked very hard with Joseph in the shop learning the trade of carpentry. He grew very strong of build and character.

Mary worked hard helping her husband and son as best as she could, taking the kindling and making it into bundles and selling it as firewood to their neighbours. Nothing was wasted they used every piece of wood they didn't like using too many trees and tried to conserve their supply and used everything leaving no waste.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Jesus gets lost!**

When Jesus was twelve years old he accompanied his parents to Jerusalem for the annual Passover Festival, which they attended each year. After the celebration was over they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him the first day for they assumed he was with friends among the other travellers. But when he didn't show up that evening they started to look for him among their

relatives and friends; but couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there.

Three days later they finally discovered him. He was in the temple sitting with the teachers of law, discussing deep questions with them and amazing everybody with his understanding and answers,

His poor parents didn't know what to think.

• Son!• His mother said to him. Why have you done this to us? Your father and I were frantic, searching everywhere for you.•

• But why did you need to search?• He asked. • Didn't you realise that I would be here at the Temple, in my Fathers House?•

But they didn't understand what he meant.

• Just you wait until I get you home,• Mary scolded him. • Your grounded for two weeks, and extra chores.•

Jesus was silent. He didn't like being grounded. He loved taking his walks out into the desert to pray.

• I am sorry mom and dad I will never be disobedient to you again,• and he never was. But he was still grounded.

Many of the local girls came visiting with the pretence of needing something from Mary just to see Jesus but he heeded them not. He was always polite to them and made them feel very special but none of them felt like he would be theirs and so remained friends, confiding in him with their many troubles knowing he would be a good confidant.

What the girls didn't know was that the local lads also came to talk with Joseph seemingly but always ended up talking with Jesus and sharing their problems and ideas with him. The trusted him to keep quiet over the things they shared with him

and of course he did.

Jesus steered many a little romance with just the right words or little suggestions never betraying a confidence but always using much wisdom. He was well known in the area for his understanding and counsel.

The next few years brought him many new friends and he never missed the opportunity of telling them about the love God had for them and how God wished to bless them and teaching them to always put God first in their lives then all would work out for them in life.

## **Chapter 6**

### **The death of Joseph.**

• Jesus! Jesus! • Come quick! • Jesus heard his mother Mary calling him urgently. Dropping his hammer and chisel he ran for the house to find Joseph laying on the ground, he was dying and Mary was crying and cradling his head in her lap. • Jesus do something! • She pleaded. But when Jesus went to put his hands on Joseph, he looked up at Jesus and said. • No son! • this is my time to go the father has called me home, • look after your mother for me. •

Looking up to Mary, his eyes growing dim, smiled and said.

• Mary I have always loved you, with every beat of my heart and even now as my heart is stopping beating I will continue to love you for eternity. •

• And I you husband, Joseph my love forever. • She replied

kissing him on the forehead and he stopped breathing.

• No! No!• Screamed Jesus his heart breaking at not being able to do anything for his stepfather Joseph. He had all the power in the world growing stronger and stronger inside him and yet he could do nothing for Joseph. He could not contradict his heavenly fathers wishes.

Together they lifted Joseph onto his bed and prepared him for burial

When the neighbours heard of Josephs death they hurried to support Mary and Jesus bringing with them food and wine and oil for the funeral rite. Mary was glad to see so many friends gathered in her home they were a good source of comfort. Many who came brought money or foodstuff as payment for work they had done by Joseph who never pushed for immediate payment but rather let them pay when they could afford. Mary was glad of all the help she received. Next day they took Josephs body to a tomb already prepared and paid for by Joseph when he was alive. They laid his body in the tomb then rolled a large stone over the front of it, said their farewells to him and left, Hugging Mary and Jesus as they left.



When they were left on their own, Mary turned to Jesus and said, • Joseph was a good husband and father to us he provided well the love we needed and worked hard to support us, • Oh Jesus!• she cried. • What will we do without him, I loved him with all my heart and will miss him terribly. •

• Don• t worry mom I will look after you and provide for you from now on,• replied Jesus the tears streaming down his face

at the death of Joseph. His heart was torn in two at his great loss. • Dad taught me well the trade of carpentry, and I will continue the family business looking after you. •

• You're a good son, • Mary told him as she threw her arms around him kissing his cheek, • let's go home. •

On arriving back home they discovered one of their kind neighbours had prepared a hot meal for them and was busy tidying up after the mourners had gone.

Mary hugged the woman thanking her and said. • Join us for our meal. • • Here sit you down and I will serve it out, • she insisted.

They all sat down and eat a hearty meal, this woman was a very good cook, and the bread she baked was the most delicious bread they had ever tasted.

As they tucked into the meal an idea came into Mary's head. Turning to the woman she asked her did she bake her bread and scones for anyone else apart from her own family and the woman replied she did not.

• Would you be interested in an idea I just had, • asked Mary.

• Yes, • answered the woman, go ahead tell me. •

• You have a great skill in baking, your scones and bread have a unique flavour, they are marvellous, • said Mary. • Would you like to join in business with me in starting a little home bakery, • she continued, • you bake and I will go into the market and sell your scones and bread, once people taste your baking they will love it.

So they agreed to go into partnership and shook hands on it and hugged, patting each other on the back, laughing. They agreed to begin in three days time giving Jesus enough time to make a little shed and a little oven where they could bake their scones and bread.

Mary in the meantime went around her friends telling them of her new venture with Martha her partner, and letting them sample Martha's baking. Everyone was impressed and offered to buy it and said they would come to the shed, which they jokingly now named, • **Martha and Mary's**, rather than Mary coming into the market area. We could always have a little chat when we call they said, they loved talking with Mary sharing many woman's problems with her.

This gave Mary another idea she would ask Jesus if he would make them some tables and a little overhang for shelter from the sun, and she would serve refreshments as well as selling the baked bread and scones. She would use the few cents she would charge to help the poor.

{Jesus building the store}

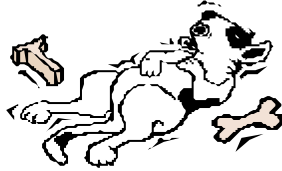


In no time at all they had a thriving little business, and the women from the village came to buy and to meet and have a little chat catching up on the latest news.

Jesus in the meantime was working hard fulfilling the orders that Joseph had outstanding and he continued to make a good impression on those who purchased his work. In the mornings he arose to greet the dawn to sing psalms and hymns to his heavenly father before he began his work. And in the evenings Jesus went off into the desert to pray and talk with his heavenly father scratch plodding along beside him, stopping to scratch at his ear every now and then.

Early one morning as Jesus was getting ready to sing his

psalms he heard a noise coming from outside. Going out to look he found poor old Scratchy lying moaning. Looking at him Jesus knew that Scratchy's time on earth was over. Lifting him in his arms, Scratchy feebly licked Jesus face he kissed Scratchy on the head just as he drew his last breath.



Jesus and Mary put Scratchy in a hole that Jesus dug, their eyes filled with tears, how they loved that old flea bitten mutt. No matter how often he was washed Scratchy still seemed to be as dirty as before he received his wash and those darned fleas seemed to be as much a part of Scratchy as was the desert dirt that clung to his coat.

Jesus and Mary spent the rest of their time together running their respective businesses and they managed to earn a good living.

During his morning psalms His Heavenly Father spoke to Jesus telling him his time had come to enter into ministry He was to go out into the desert for forty days and forty nights to learn what the fathers will was for him.

Telling Mary was the hardest thing Jesus had to do, he did not wish to leave her on her own.

I'M not on my own son, she replied. Martha and Abba God is with me.

Taking his leave of her next morning Jesus set off into the desert, Mary waving goodbye tears in her eyes.

Thus Jesus began his ministry.

And this ends their untold story. The rest you all know yourselves, or can read about in the books of Mathew. Mark, Luke and John.

The End

