

"Welcome, Lord." the hostess says. "Welcome to my home. Please come in. Just one thing - could you please remove your shoes first. You see, we've just laid a new shag-pile carpet, and it's a devil to keep clean."

She ushers him to a room off the passage. "I've prepared the guest room for you. We had it refurbished for you. I chose the decor - notice how the doona cover matches the curtains."

Leading him into the lounge room she says, "Please make yourself comfortable - but not there, if you don't mind. It was my mother's favourite chair. I know she died fifteen years ago, but I just can't bear to see anyone else sitting there."

Jesus sits down on one of the other chairs, and hostess continues: "Since you are a special guest, I've cooked a lovely meal for you - scotch fillet with gourmet salads, followed by sticky date pudding."

Jesus smiles and says, "That's very kind of you, but I really can't stay for long. I have other business to attend to."

"Oh....that's disappointing! I thought you might like to be pampered for a change. Is there anything wrong with what I've showed you?"

"No. Not at all. But I do have other places to go."

The hostess is becoming agitated. "I thought you might have appreciated my efforts." By now she is pouting.

"I do. But I must go. I know you need me here, but others need me too"

The hostess is close to tears. Jesus says, "You seem to be upset. Can you tell me what you really want me to do for you?"

"I want you to tell me that my work is not wasted on you, that I've done well."

"It isn't, and you have." he says gently. "Now tell me what you *really* want."

She is silent, trying to struggle with emotions she hasn't shared for a long, long time. Finally she says tearfully, "Tell me that I'm good. Please.... tell me that I matter to you."

Jesus smiles. "You are, and you do. But if *you* really want to understand that, come with me now." He stands up.

"Where are you going?" she asks.

"I'm going to where the carpet is a cold pavement; where the bedroom is under a bridge somewhere, with only thin blanket for warmth. Where there are no comfortable lounge chairs, only some comer of a building out of the wind, and where a square meal is a bowl of soup at the Salvation Army kitchen. Come with me, and learn of my love, which cares nothing for house - or hovel for that matter - only the person who lives there. Whether they can or can't afford to feed a guest is doesn't matter. Only *they* matter.

Follow me. Be *my* guest."

Be my guest



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