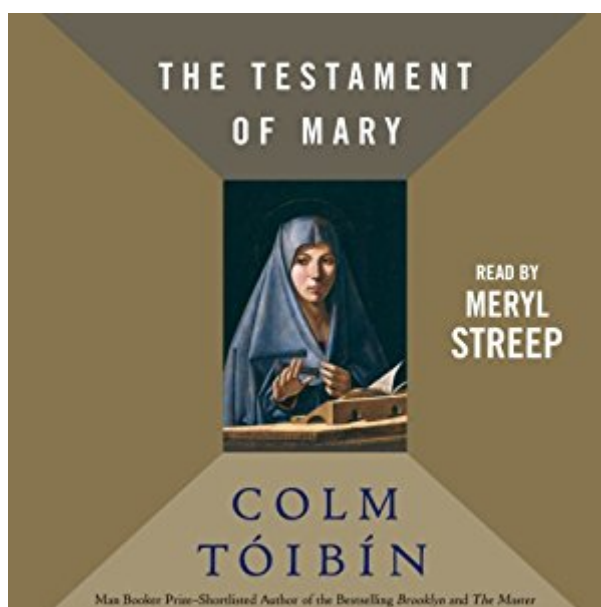


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# The Testament Of Mary



## Synopsis

Audie Award Finalist, Solo Narration - Female, 2014 Audie Award Finalist, Literary Fiction, 2014

Meryl Streep's performance of Colm Tóibín's acclaimed portrait of Mary is hailed by the New York Times Book Review as "an ideal audiobook," presenting the three-time Academy Award-winner in "yet another great role." Shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, Colm Tóibín's *The Testament of Mary* presents Mary as a solitary older woman still seeking to understand the events that become the narrative of the New Testament and the foundation of Christianity. In the ancient town of Ephesus, Mary lives alone, years after her son's crucifixion. She has no interest in collaborating with the authors of the Gospel. They are her keepers, providing her with food and shelter and visiting her regularly. She does not agree that her son is the Son of God; nor that his death was "worth it"; nor that the "group of misfits he gathered around him, men who could not look a woman in the eye," were holy disciples. This woman who we know from centuries of paintings and scripture as the docile, loving, silent, long-suffering, obedient, worshipful mother of Christ becomes a tragic heroine with the relentless eloquence of *Electra* or *Medea* or *Antigone*, in a portrait so vivid and convincing that our image of Mary will be forever transformed. Now Meryl Streep brings Tóibín's tour de force of imagination and language to unforgettable life with "simplicity, honesty, [and] a clarity that draws us into the emotional landscape of the book through the beauty of the writing," writes Charles Isherwood in the New York Times Book Review. "Streep has an impressive ability to crest the structurally intricate sentences Tóibín has fashioned, which sometimes have the flowing, rhythmic cadences of certain passages in the Bible itself," Isherwood writes of her performance. "Streep's voice is familiar to generations of moviegoers, but its beauty as an instrument can be appreciated in this context as it often cannot be in films. ... Tóibín's exquisite book [is] rendered by Streep with all its detached, quiet, consoling humanity intact."

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 3 hours and 7 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio

Audible.com Release Date: September 10, 2013

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00EHNSNO6

Best Sellers Rank: #63 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Religious Fiction  
#63 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Short Stories #533 in Books >  
Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Historical Fiction

## Customer Reviews

Caution: spoilers ahead. You can write a book that reimagines the story of a beloved hero or heroine, that turns myths about them on their head, and yet provides deeper insights into their character. Then again, you can write a book that merely inverts everything that you know about such a character, turns their virtues into failings and teaches us nothing about them. "Testament of Mary" belongs in the latter category. In ToM, Colm Toibin gives us a scant 81 pages that are long on Mary's self-pitying reflections about her life, short on insights about her and Jesus, dismissive about Jesus's mission and full of bizarre details and anachronisms. Toibin's conceit is that Mary was traumatized by the crucifixion of her son. No doubt. But since there is no resurrection in his book, just followers claiming one, there is little to solace her grief and pain. She inhabits Ephesus, lonely among those who do not speak her language, enduring visits by her male keepers, and loitering around pagan temples. Mostly, she mopes and complains, knowing that her real and ordinary life is being transformed by those who want to make her son into something she knows he was not. The Jesus that Mary describes in ToM is a miracle worker, to be sure. He raises the dead, changes water to wine and walks on water. But his mother is unimpressed. To her, Jesus is a pompous jerk who likes to talk, "his voice all false and his tone all stilted, and I could not bear to hear him." He pals around with rabble - "a group of misfits, who were only children like himself, or men without fathers, or men who could not look a woman in the eye. Men who were seen smiling to themselves, or who had grown old when they were still young." His teaching are the late-night ramblings of fools.

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