

Maid
of
the
Mohawks



(The story of KATERI TEKAKWITHA)

By Mary Eunice of Mary Productions



ONE ACT PLAY

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MAID OF THE MOHAWKS

(The Story of Kateri Tekakwitha)

1 Act play in 6 scenes

By Mary-Eunice of Mary Productions

CAST:

- NARRATOR
- KARITHA (*Car-Rith-A*) Wife of Chief and Foster Mother of Tekakwitha. (*Middle-aged*)
- AROSEN (*Ah-Ro-Sen*) Sister of Chief and Aunt of Tekakwitha. (*Middle-aged*)
- ENNITA (*En-Neeta*) Sister of Tekakwitha. (*Adopted Sister*)
- (*As a Child*)
- ENNITA
- (*Now grown to Womanhood*)
- TEKAKWITHA (*Teh-Ga-Kwi-Ta*) Lily of the Mohawks. Adopted by the Chief. Daughter of his Brother.
- (*As a Child*)
- TEKAKWITHA
- (*Now grown to Womanhood*)
- IOWERANO (*Yoh-Ra-No*) Chief of the Mohawks. (*Middle-aged*)
- RED HAWK Indian warrior.
- ANASTASIA Christian Indian and friend of Tekakwitha. (*Middle-aged*)
- FATHER JAMES Missionary Jesuit Priest.
- BLUE FOX Indian Brave who would like to marry Tekakwitha. (*Young and strong*)
- MARY-TERESA Friend of Tekakwitha in Canada. (*A widow about Kateri's age..20-24*)
- WHITE FLOWER Jealous but beautiful Indian squaw.

ADDITION TO CAST IF DESIRED:

Indian Braves for the dance.

Voices of children.

	PLACE	TIME	YEAR
Scene 1:	The long house.	Evening,	1666
Scene 2:	The long house.	Morning,	1667
Scene 3:	The long house.	Seven years later,	1674
Scene 4:	The long house.	Sunday, late afternoon,	1674
Scene 5:	Outdoor scene, Canada	1 year later,	1675
Scene 6:	Outdoor scene, Canada	Holy week,	1680

MAID OF THE MOHAWKS
(The Story of Kateri Tekakwitha)

NARRATOR:

This is the story of Kateri Tekakwitha, a North American Indian, the first of that great and sorely tried human family to be presented to the Sacred Congregation of Rites as a candidate for the honors of the altar for sainthood.

She belonged to the nation of the Iroquois, well known for their warlike unrest in the history of the colonization of North America. She was a member of the great and fearless Mohawk tribe, who lived in upper New York State.

Kateri's mother, a member of the Algonquin tribe and a Christian had been taken a prisoner of war, but was fortunate to win the affections of one of the Chiefs of the Mohawks, a pagan, who finally married her. Two children were born of this marriage, a girl, Kateri Tekakwitha and her younger brother. But all too soon, the young family was destroyed. Kateri was not yet four years old when she lost her father, mother and brother in a great epidemic of smallpox. Tekakwitha was then taken by a Pagan Uncle, another Chief of the tribe, Iowerano. He was a man strongly opposed to Christianity and to the Missionaries that now began to inhabit the land.

At the time our play opens the Mohawks are at war with the French and Canadian Indians, and they have been driven back to the hills. Only the Indian women and children remain. There is little food and comfort. The wife of the chief and his sister, Arosen huddle near the campfire. Tekakwitha, about ten years of age, watches the fire. It is her duty to see that it does not go out. Ennita, adopted sister of Tekakwitha sits on a log, hungry and cold. The time is 1666. It is the long house of Iowerano.

PLACE: The long house of Iowerano.

TIME: The year 1666.

KARITHA: We are so hungry and the food has all been devoured.
It would be better if we could be Braves and go off to war.
AROSEN: We women have the honor of caring for the cornfields . . .
but now it is our duty to sit and wait . . . and hope the
enemy does not find us.
ENNITA: Could we not find some old roots in the forest to eat ?
KARITHA: And freeze to death ? The woods are not kind when there
is ice on the ground.
AROSEN: We might have to burn our blankets to keep the fire going.
TEKAKWITHA: Maybe the Braves will come home from the war soon.
AROSEN: No, Tekakwitha, Mohawks never ask for peace. We fight
and if the enemies want blood . . . let us give it to them !

KARITHA: (*Blowing on hands to keep warm*) My hands are so cold !
If only we had some prisoners to roast at the stake. It
would be good sport and keep us warm too.
AROSEN: It has been many moons since we have had such fun. If we
could find some Chrisitan dogs, they would burn well.
(*Tekakwitha goes out during the above scene. She puts
her blanket over her head like a shawl.*)
KARITHA: The fire is getting low . . . It is almost out. Tekakwitha !
ENNITA: I think she went out to find some branches.
KARITHA: Well, that's better than hiding in a dark corner to save her eyes.
ENNITA: She does that because the sunlight bothers them.
(*There is a noise outside . . . the sound of male voices.*)
KARITHA: Ennita, get my hatchet ! It might be the Frenchmen !
(*Ennita gives it to her quickly.*)
IOWERANO: (*From outside*) It is Iowerano and many Mohawks back
from the wars. (*He enters with Red Hawk, tired and
hungry.*)
RED HAWK: We bring corn from the enemy. (*Tosses the bag to Arosen
who greedily holds it to her.*)
IOWERANO: (*Looking about.*) Where is my little princess ?
(*Tekakwitha enters with a few branches. Karitha grabs
them for the fire.*)
TEKAKWITHA: I found a few branches to help us keep warm.
IOWERANO: As usual you think of the comfort of others. Yet you have
grown thin, my little princess.
(*They all sit about the fire. Arosen and Karitha are busy preparing the corn.
Tekakwitha takes her uncle's hand.*)
TEKAKWITHA: My Uncle, I am glad that you have come home from the wars.
IOWERANO: Tekakwitha, bring me my pipe. (*She gets it from the nearby
wall. She settles at his feet. He takes a few leaves and lights
pipe. Red Hawk watches. Anastasia, a Christian Indian, enters.*)
Woman, go back to your cabin ! We want no Christian dogs here.
RED HAWK: You defile our camp ! Go!
TEKAWITHA: (*Getting Up*) But Anastasia is my friend.
ANASTASIA: I'll go back to the long house, little one . . . I just thank my
God for your uncle's safe return. (*She goes quickly*)
RED HAWK: We should kill all followers of the Blackrobes.
TEKAKWITHA: No, no, you must not ! Anastasia was my mother's good
friend.

IOWERANO: Do not show your tears, child. We do not harm one who cared for you. But see, look, what I have for you. *(Iowerano takes a mirror from his pocket. The women watch.)* Now watch the glass. *(Tekakwitha stands beside him and sees his face reflected in the glass.)*

TEKAKWITHA: *(Excitedly)* It's you . . . You on the glass !

IOWERANO: *(Turning to Karitha)* Squaw ! *(Karitha crosses to him. She too looks at the mirror. Arosen must see too and crowds about.)* This is for Tekakwitha. *(He puts it into her hand and she looks into it . . For the first time she see herself.)*

TEKAKWITHA: It's me on the glass. *(Iowerano nods. The girl for the first time notices the Pox marks on her face, and she puts her hand up to feel them. Tekakwitha takes the mirror sadly and goes over to the corner.)*

IOWERANO: What is the matter ? Do you not like the glass that comes from a dead Frenchman ?

KARITHA: Can you not guess, oh wise one ?

AROSEN: She has seen her face for the first time, and now she knows she is ugly with a marked up face.

IOWERANO: Watch your tongue !

AROSEN: It is the truth. *(Turning to Ennita)*See, how smooth Ennita's face is not a mark on it.

KARITHA: And who will marry an ugly maiden ?

IOWERANO: She is not like the other girls. She is as my daughter. . . . It is an honor for a man to marry her . . . because I am the Chief !

KARITHA: But her sight is bad . . the light hurts her eyes. . . .

IOWERANO: One day a great Brave will come for her. Now get me some food.

KARITHA: Yes, Iowerano. yes. *(Iowerano crosses to Tekakwitha)*

IOWERANO: We have plans for you, child. . . . many. I am glad you were spared and did not have to see us fight.

AROSEN: Ah, that one won't even torture a prisoner.

RED HAWK: She must be taught ! She must know the ways of the great tribe.

IOWERANO: *(Coming back to the campfire.)*Only we Mohawks fight like the serpent. If we finish the battle before spring we can plant corn.

AROSEN: That is if we do not starve before Spring comes. There are stories that the Frenchmen will come with many soldiers. . . . all fighting for our land. . . .the Red Man's land !

IOWERANO: Let them come and when we have cut them into bits, we again shall rule the land !

ACT 1: Scene 2

PLACE: *The long house.*

TIME: *Morning of the year 1667.*

NARRATOR: Now it is the year of 1667. The treaty has been signed by the Indian and the White Man and it seems as though peace will prevail. Not far from the Indian village the Jesuits have started their missionary work. Some of the Redmen, out of curiosity, visit the Mission and are converted to Christianity. Many of them leave for the land of the praying Indian in Canada. This year the harvest has been good and Anastasia helps Arosen pound the corn into cornmeal.

ANASTASIA: We have much to be thankful for this year, Arosen. God has sent us much food. *(Tekakwitha comes in carrying a bag of corn so more may be pounded. Anastasia jumps up and helps her.)*

TEKAKWITHA: Thank you, Anastasia. *(The child wipes her wet brow and gets another bowl.)*

ANASTASIA: The little one is tired, Arosen. She has carried much corn today. . . and the sunlight gives her eyes pain.

AROSEN: She has always had the trouble since the fever. Her vision is not too clear and she stumbles and fallsso she must get used to hard work. She'll never make the wife of a warrior . . . far too meek and tenderhearted.

TEKAKWITHA: *(To Anastasia)* Why must we always fight and hate the Christian ? In my heart I ask the Great Spirit who rules the universe for peace . . .peace between the Indian and White man. Will he listen, Anastasia ?

ANASTASIA: Perhaps little one, perhaps. . . .but the ways of men are not always God's way.

TEKAKWITHA: Wise must be His ways — as the blackrobes say !

ANASTASIA: Yes, my child, yes. *(Iowerano enters)*

IOWERANO: The blackrobe, Father James, comes to our home. We did meet on the path and now that the treaty has been signed we must keep our word . . . and put away our weapons for another time. *(To Anastasia)*You, Christian dog, leave our house ! *(She goes quickly)* The rest of you close your ears to what this Priest has to say. *(Iowerano sees the Priest.)* He comes. *(Father James enters.)*
(Karitha follows the Priest and goes to Arosen and Tekakwitha.)

FR. JAMES: I am Father James. I come to teach you not the ways of the French but to teach you the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and about life eternal. (*The Chief nods, Women continue to work. There are some different bowls with food for a meal.*)

IOWERANO: We are now friends.

FR. JAMES: (*Holding his Crucifix forward. Tekakwitha looks up for the first time and sees it.*) I pray to Rawennio, the Great Spirit of the Indian, that this peace of welcome will be a sign of the peace of God. . . the peace that the world cannot give.

IOWERANO: Tonight you sleep in our cabin. Our women give you our food. You sit ! (*Fr. James does as commanded. Karitha gives Tekawitha the food to give to the Priest. She carries two bowls . . . one for Iowerano and one for the Priest.*)

FR. JAMES: Thank you, little one. (*Karitha goes to them and from her kettle pours the food into the dishes.*)

IOWERANO: (*Watching the Priest eat.*) It is good food they prepare . . . corn with toad and field mouse. (*The Priest stops for a moment . . . but seeing eyes upon him continues to eat bravely.*) Karitha, fetch the young braves to come and entertain us. (*She goes out quickly.*)

FR. JAMES: Your people are very hospitable — very friendly.

IOWERANO: They do fire dance for you. (*Several Indians enter in war paint and dance about the fire. Karitha and Arosen join. After the dance they sit about.*)

FR. JAMES: Thank you . . . thank you very much. (*Chief Iowerano stands and takes his bow and arrow . . . aims it . . . in the direction of the Priest . . . and finally at the fire. Iowerano knowing he has frightened the Priest smiles and breaks the bow and arrow and throws it into the fire.*)

IOWERANO: Now we are friends. (*Father James is relieved and wipes his forehead.*)

FR. JAMES: Thanks be to God ! By the blood of Jogues, this is a hot day ! (*Anastasia enters quickly and goes to the Priest.*)

ANASTASIA: You must help, Father, please. Our people have taken a captive . . . a Mohican. You must help him before he dies. (*The Indians go out quickly. Iowerano calls to Tekakwitha.*)

IOWERANO: Bring my hatchet, Tekakwitha ! This lesson is for all Mohicans that sneak into our village to kill. We teach them to stay away from the Mohawks !

KARITHA: (*Taking the hatchet from Tekakwitha.*) I am your Squaw ! Let me be the first to use it on him !

IOWERANO: (*Grabbing the hatchet from Karitha.*) Give it to me, woman ! (*He rushes out.*)

FR. JAMES: (*To Anastasia*) Can we not free the prisoner ?

ANASTASIA: It is the Indian way of retribution. We dare not free him. . .but perhaps you can give him some comfort in his torture.

FR. JAMES: Take me to him, Anastasia. (*They go out and in his excitement, he drops his rosary.*)

KARITHA: Come, Tekakwitha.

TEKAKWITHA: No, I want no part in scalping captives ! I cannot watch the agony and slow burning to death of a man. Do not make me go !

KARITHA: Stupid one, you must learn to torture enemies ! (*Karitha takes her hand but Tekakwitha pushes away.*) You show you are no real Mohawk !

AROSEN: She acts like her Algonquin mother . . .but come, or we'll be too late for the fun. (*They go out. Tekakwitha hearing the cries of pain, covers her ears. She picks up Fr. James' rosary.*)

TEKAKWITHA: (*Looking at the cross.*) Great, Great White Spirit. . . .have mercy !

ACT 1: Scene 3

PLACE: *The long house.*

TIME: *Several years later.*

NARRATOR:

Soon more Priests arrived to make friends among the Indians and they finally established a permanent mission station. However because of the open and general antagonism of the Indians, the number of baptized scarcely increased. The Indian Maiden often watched the public instructions but because of her shyness and even more because of her fear of her uncle, she never dared to approach a Missionary. As the years went on the womenfolk, in Indian fashion, instructed her in all household tasks and craft. Now Tekakwitha became old enough to marry.

(*Karitha and Arosen are busy with their needlework. Iowerano sits in the corner apparently not listening to the talk of the squaws.*)

AROSEN: If we could work our fingers like Tekakwitha, we would have many fine treasures.

KARITHA: We have been her teachers, and she'll make some Brave a good wife. We must find a husband for her.

AROSEN: We had better be quick about it. We do not want to have to take care of her forever. Besides Iowerano is getting old and needs help in getting furs and shooting animals for food.

KARITHA: If only she would take an interest in getting a husband. We found a husband for Ennita very quickly and she has been married for almost two years now.

AROSEN: A lot of help she is to us. . . .She listened to the Blackrobes and goes to far off Canada with her husband to the land of the praying Indians.

KARITHA: Many of our people go . . . and now they say Anastasia leaves soon . . . with one of our leaders . . . the great Kryn, now turned Christian too !

IOWERANO: (*Getting up angrily*) They are fools and lead our people away from this land ! I am Chief and the Mohawk tribe must listen to me. It was a sad day when the Blackrobes came to our village.

KARITHA: Many times I see Tekakwitha looking toward the Mission House. She listens too much to Anastasia.

IOWERANO: She is one of us and listens to Iowerano !

KARITHA: Still we must think of getting her a husband.

AROSEN: It is too bad she does not have a prettier face.

IOWERANO: She belongs to my household ! She works well and does not talk all the time. . . Like other squaws.

KARITHA: (*In anger*) You never see her faults. She is meek and docile ! A true Mohawk is fierce like the wolf !

IOWERANO: She always smiles and does not look like a thundercloud. Blue Fox is looking for a wife . . . and if he takes Tekakwitha as his squaw . . . we'll always have plenty of game and furs to exchange at the trading post in Albany. He is a great hunter !

AROSEN: Then speak to him quickly.

KARITHA: But will she take him for her husband ? She does not talk of marriage as the other girls.

AROSEN: Could we not prepare the bowl of corn for her to give him ? Then, when she gives it to him. . . she will be married as is the Indian custom.

IOWERANO: You have the ways of a sly fox. Much time will be saved in that way. Prepare the bowl of corn for her to give to him. (*Now Tekakwitha enters carrying a heavy bucket of water. Arosen takes it from her.*) Now, my Princess, listen to what my squaw and Arosen will tell you. . . .while I go to see Blue Fox.

TEKAKWITHA: Yes, my uncle.(*While Arosen prepares the bowl of corn, Karitha gets out Tekakwitha's moccasins and beads.*)

KARITHA: Put on your moccasins and beads and best finery. (*She does so.*)

TEKAKWITHA: Are we going to feast, my aunt ?

KARITHA: No. We have taken you to many but you do not seem to care for them. It is time you think about a husband. Two Feathers would marry you. . but you never even give him so much as a glance. Then there is Red Eagle. . .

TEKAKWITHA: I do not want a man that has killed and has many scalps on his belt. . . or a man who drinks too much firewater.

KARITHA: What do you think of Blue Fox ?

TEKAKWITHA: I do not wish to marry. (*Karitha braids her hair.*)

KARITHA: You do as you are told, my girl. Now you must look like a bride.

(*Anastasia enters with a bundle on her back. She has come to say "Goodby". Tekakwitha goes to her.*)

ANASTASIA: Little one, I have come to say, "goodbye."

KARITHA: (*Disgusted, she and Arosen walk over to where the food is being prepared.*) Foolish, foolish, one. (*Tears come to Tekakwitha's eyes.*)

ANASTASIA: (*Gently to Tekakwitha*) Do not feel so bad, little one. If only you could come with me and see your tribal sister and her husband, Ennita and Onas. Your mother always wanted me to look after you but how can I stay here. . . when the life of a Christian is always in danger ?

TEKAKWITHA: My uncle needs my help. You see it is his law that I stay. . . but you must go, Anastasia. The Blackrobe are good men and do not hate . . . they do not torture like the Indian . . . and I have heard of the place far away called Canada . . . the place of the laughing waters . . . and praying Indians. It must be beautiful there.

ANASTASIA: The Christian God brings us a new freedom. . .so do not forget the ways of your mother. My prayers and thoughts will always be with you. (*Tekakwitha kisses her. Anastasia gives her a red blanket.*) This is my gift to you. . .to go with your pretty hair. . .and to remember me always ! (*She turns and goes quickly from the long house. Tekakwitha calls.*)

TEKAKWITHA: I'll not forget you, Anastasia. (*Karitha and Arosen cross over and inspect the blanket.*)

KARITHA: We are well rid of that one !

TEKAKWITHA: (*Walking sadly back toward center-stage.*) I can never forget her ways.

AROSEN: It is better you do. She fills your head with unheard of things.

KARITHA: What a pretty blanket. Put it around your shoulders. (*As she does so. . .Arosen and Karitha smile at their cleverness.*) See ! Blue Fox comes with Iowerano.

AROSEN: (*Giving the dish of corn to Tekakwitha.*) When you offer this corn to Blue Fox, do not act so shy like a rabbit . . . smile for him.
 KARITHA: Blue Fox carries many furs. . . Oh, how rich he'll make us.
 AROSEN: When I was very young, I was not beautiful. . . but a man would look at me twice, My face did not have the marks of sickness and my eyes were then very bright. Ah, and my marriage lasted many years. . . then the sickness killed my husband, and I was too old for another.
 TEKAKWITHA: Do not be sad, my aunt.
 AROSEN: Now I must think only of our family in the long house. But see, how handsome is the great Blue Fox. (*Iowerano enters followed by Blue Fox carrying many furs.*)
 IOWERANO: Welcome to our house, Blue Fox. (*He whispers to Blue Fox.*) You will see that Tekakwitha works well and says little. A fine quality in a squaw. (*Blue Fox delighted, crosses to center of the stage. Karitha goes to Tekakwitha and whispers.*)
 KARITHA: Sit down, child, so he can see how pretty you look. (*Iowerano gives Blue Fox a little push and he takes his place beside her.*)
 BLUE FOX: See, I have brought you many furs. (*He pushes them into her arms. Tekakwitha bewildered drops them on the floor. Arosen runs to pick them up. Karitha gets the bowl and gives it to Tekakwitha.*)
 KARITHA: Give this corn to Blue Fox, child. (*Now Tekakwitha realizes that this is the marriage rite. If she gives the bowl to Blue Fox, she becomes his wife. She hesitates a moment, pushes the bowl back to Karitha and runs out of the house.*) Come back, Tekakwitha!
 IOWERANO: (*Furious*) Get her home!
 AROSEN: Yes, my brother. (*Blue Fox grabs the furs from Arosen.*)
 BLUE FOX: Is this how she accepts the great Blue Fox? Now many braves laugh at Blue Fox. (*He leaves in anger. The women and Iowerano follow him out.*)
 IOWERANO: Now I'll find her and teach her to obey! (*A few seconds later, Tekakwitha comes timidly in and starts taking off her beads and mocassins. She hears a noise and sees Father James in the doorway. He has been making his rounds in the village but hesitates not knowing if he should enter.*)
 TEKAKWITHA: Father, please stay!
 FR. JAMES: I know that it is the wish of your Uncle that I do not enter your house. . . and his words must be respected but as I passed your home something compelled me to come back and look in. I remember you from my first encounter with your people. . . and I know Anastasia is your friend.

TEKAKWITHA: Many times I have wanted to speak with you, Father, but never had the courage. They tell me my mother was a Christian. She died many moons ago. . . I would like to know the ways of my mother and more about the white man's God. I have listened outside of the place you call your chapel . . . but my Uncle, Iowerano, has forbidden me to go in. . . Now I feel I must disobey and hear about your God.
 FR. JAMES: Still you are the niece of Iowerano and he believes we are the enemy of the Red Man. It is not his fault. . . but the fault of many greedy white men. . . who take from the Indian. . . his land . . . his furs . . . his way of life. It might be better if you would wait for awhile.
 TEKAKWITHA: Too long have I waited! Please, teach me and let me know more about the ceremony with the water called Baptism. The Christians speak of a soul inside. Mine must be put in order.
 FR. JAMES: Your name in Indian language means "putting everything in order". How well that becomes you. Come to the Mission on the day we call Sunday, and I will teach you the ways of the Great Spirit, and may He bring you much comfort. (*Arosen, Karitha, and Iowerano appear in the doorway watching and glaring. Fr. James nods and leaves quickly.*)
 KARITHA: You run away from Blue Fox and disgrace us all!
 IOWERANO: (*Crosses over to Tekakwitha and strikes her in the face. She falls to the floor. The two women withdraw to the corner to watch.*) You are my charge and you will obey me! It is my law. Get to bed! I do not wish to see your face until you come to your senses!

ACT 1: Scene 4

PLACE: The long house.

TIME: Several months later. Sunday, late afternoon.

NARRATOR:

Tekakwitha attended her religion lessons faithfully, and Father James soon perceived that the soul of this Indian was naturally Christian and impressed by the progress of his pupil decided to admit her to Baptism on the coming Easter, 1676. So when 20 years old, she was baptized at the village church at Fonda, New York, and given the name of Kateri. Her pagan relatives were angry that this girl should devote time to prayer and abstain from working on Sundays . . . and again she was persecuted . . . and by her own people.

KARITHA: She says that work is forbidden on Sundays and has not yet returned from the Mission.

IOWERANO: No work, no food ! An empty stomach can bring a dog back to his master. I have given orders that the children stone her. Maybe they can shame her into working on this day. (*A commotion is heard outside.*)

CHILDREN: (*Outside.*) If you do not work, Tekakwitha, we stone you !

TEKAWITHA: (*Enters with mud on her face and clothes.*) My eyes ! The mud in them blinds me ! (*She wipes her face.*) You are angry because this is the day that belongs to my God. . . I could not work today . . . but I shall work harder and longer tomorrow . . . as I did yesterday.

KARITHA: Stupid, starve, if you want ! No work, no food ! You must work everyday ! You'll get no food in this house !

IOWERANO: You have grown lazy and pray on Sundays. You are no true Mohawk ! You now think as a Christian. . .but if you again go near the praying Indians. . . I kill you ! Hear me now ! (*Karitha carries out all the food. Iowerano goes also. Tekakwitha looks about for food . . . but finds nothing. Father James enters.*)

TEKAKWITHA: It is not good that you are here, Father. My uncle does not spare lives when he is angry.

FR. JAMES: Kateri, when you were baptized and received the name "Kateri", your life changed from that moment. Now that you know you have a soul . . . you must nourish it. You have to leave this village . . . before they kill you.

TEKAKWITHA: It is you that I worry about, Father.

FR. JAMES: I have heard that they do not feed you and the children stone you. Now one of our great leaders comes from the Canada Mission. He is the Brave known as Hot Powder, and two Christian Indians accompany him. One is your adopted sister's husband, Onas. The other is Swift Arrow. Hot Powder will stay in the area and teach. The others can take you back with them to safety. Anastasia and Ennita want you to come to them in Canada.

TEKAKWITHA: I am sorry to leave my people. . .I did want them to know of our God . . . but maybe it is better I leave . . . then my faith will grow stronger and I can pray always for Iowerano and my people.

FR. JAMES: Yes, Kateri, that is best and sometime I too, will join you in Canada. God be with you. . . May your trip be safe. . .but be cautious. (*The Priest leaves.*)

(*Tekakwitha prepares to gather her few belongings and puts her red blanket over her head. As she is about to leave the long house, she takes her rosary out and kisses it on the Crucifix . . . and says a prayer. Just then Blue Fox quietly opens the curtained door of the long house. He is dressed in war paint and carries a tomahawk. He grabs her by the hair.*)

BLUE FOX: You not move ! You cannot run away now. Many braves laugh because you do not marry me. Forget your new ways and the White Man's God !

TEKAKWITHA: Let me go ! The God of the White Man is now my God ! It is He that I want to know, love and serve.

BLUE FOX: (*Raising the tomahawk*) If I kill you, you can no longer serve Him !

TEKAKWITHA: Then kill me if you must !

(*Blue Fox lifts his hatchet as though to strike. She looks at him steadily. Puts the roasry before her. Suddenly as though pursued, he runs from her and goes screaming out of the house. Tekakwitha falls to the floor and weeps. . . Then, she gathers her few precious items and slips out.*)

ACT 1: Scene 5

PLACE: *An outdoor scene, in Canada.*

TIME: *One year later. Daylight.*

NARRATOR:

The route to Canada was long and difficult. Tekakwitha journeyed with Onas, her brother-in-law, and Swift Arrow, who go to great length to outwit Iowerano and the braves, who follow to kill Tekakwitha. Many times they sacrifice their safety, but finally lose their pursuers. Our next scene takes place at the Indian mission in Canada. It is a year or so later. It is late morning, spring of the year. Father has arrived also safely at this mission.

ANASTASIA: This morning, Ennita, I talked with Kateri. .and she has said she will not go with us next winter to find food. It is not because she does not want to do her share of work . . . it is because she does not want to leave the church and be without the Sacraments.

ENNITA: It is the same way when she made her First Communion on Christmas Day. She would not join us in our great feast because she wanted to pray all day. I cannot forget what she told me. She said she wanted to spend Christmas the way of the Holy Family. . . in the cold of the night.

ANASTASIA: Very few are given the honor of making their First Communion so soon after arriving here, but the Priest seemed to think she deserved it. We must find her a Christian husband. . . . I have heard gossip. . . a terrible rumor. . .

ENNITA: White Flower is at the root of it ! She is jealous because her husband speaks well of our Kateri.

ANASTASIA: Well, I must speak to Father about it. . . marriage would stop any cruel gossip. But see she comes with the widow, Mary-Teresa. (*Tekakwitha and Mary-Teresa enter.*)

TEKAKWITHA: Good day to you both. Mary-Teresa and I met while watching the new Chapel being built.

ENNITA: You are welcome to come here, Mary-Teresa.

MARY-TERESA: Soon we shall have a Chapel of our very own. . .

TEKAKWITHA: "A Chapel of wood is not what God wants. He wants our Souls to make a temple of them. I certainly do not deserve to enter this Chapel because I have so often driven Him from my heart. I should be out with the dogs."

ANASTASIA: You should not say such a terrible thing, Kateri, you who receive Holy Communion so often. We all know of your goodness.

TEKAKWITHA: But there have been many times when I displeased Him.

MARY-TERESA: You never denied Him as I did. Let me tell you my story. After my Baptism, I soon forgot about God. I denied Him for fear of what others would say about my being a Christian. Once my husband and some others were on a hunting party. . . but we could find no food. We were all starving to death. . . several died and my husband too. Two of our braves went hunting. One came back well fed and we knew he must have eaten his companion. The others in the party asked me if it were not right to eat the weakest in our group. They knew I was a Christian. Many eyes were upon me, and I knew that soon I would be next. Suddenly, by the Grace of God, there was an animal to kill and I was saved. God had sent an Angel to protect me. When I left for the Mission and found a Blackrobe to hear my confession, I vowed to do penance always to make up for my sins. So you see what a poor creature I am.

TEKAKWITHA: Then let us do penance together. . . for ourselves and our friends and relatives that know not about the Blessed Lord.

MARY-TERESA: I believe you have been sent by the Holy Ghost !

TEKAKWITHA: And you to me ! But come, I want to show you my little shrine in the woods where we can pray together.

ANASTASIA: Do not be long . . . You ate no supper last night or breakfast this morning. . . and wear your moccasins or your feet will be cut. (*She puts them on obediently.*)

ENNITA: And be back soon. . . .

TEKAKWITHA: (*Coughing*) Yes, Ennita. (*Mary-Teresa and Kateri go off.*)

ANASTASIA: I do not like the sound of that cough. She should come on the hunt with us so she might eat a share of good meat to make her strong. Here she only has dried fruit.

ENNITA: (*Looking in the opposite direction of where Tekakwitha left.*) Look, it is White Flower coming . . . and from the look on her face she is not happy.

(*White Flower enters. She is very attractive, and wears many ornaments.*)

WHITE FLOWER: My husband commands me to tell the girl, Kateri, to go to his canoe. It seems she mends better than I !

ENNITA: We will tell her when she returns.

WHITE FLOWER: And see that she does not linger when she has finished her work !

ANASTASIA: Your manner does not commend you. Kateri works better and faster than any other maiden and that is why the braves are glad to have her help. She does not waste time on idle gossip. I have heard the stories that you tell about Kateri.

WHITE FLOWER: And you do not believe them ?

ENNITA: Go ! Go! (*Chasing her offstage.*) Get out ! You make me forget I'm Christian. (*Now Father enters.*)

FR. JAMES: What is happening here ? In this mission we are to deal with one another as brothers and sisters.

WHITE FLOWER: It is about the girl, Kateri. Always she goes at the same time every day to the woods . . . always alone . . . and she is there now. . . ask Anastasia and Ennita what she does by herself and see if they can give you an answer !

FR. JAMES: Oh, God, give me patience to understand . . . give me an answer.

ANASTASIA: Father, perhaps I should have told you before. . . but Kateri didn't wish it. If you should walk to the tree marked with a cross in the woods, you will see her kneeling until her knees bleed. . . always she punishes herself. . . offering her sorrows for others.

FR. JAMES: What do you mean ? (*Anastasia goes over to Kateri's mat beneath the canopy.*)

ANASTASIA: This is where she sleeps. . . (*She turns up the mat.*)

FR. JAMES: Thorns and briars ! It is too often the way of the Christian Indian. They put every White Man to shame. . . when they discover God. . . they give their very lives for Him. White Flower, you go home and pray that you might have a little faith in others. Go now. (*She goes.*)

ENNITA: Another thing is that Tekakwitha eats very little. Have you noticed how thin she has grown ? How she has a bad cough ? If she does not give up these penances, I am afraid of what might happen to her.

ANASTASIA: Would you also tell her that she should find an Indian to marry ?
FR. JAMES: You mean she prefers not to marry ?
ANASTASIA: You must speak to her, Father. She comes now.
(Tekakwitha enters.)
TEKAKWITHA: Greetings, Father, how nice of you to come.
FR. JAMES: I have heard many good things about you, Kateri. . . .how you care for the old people and those that are sick . . . and the many children in the village . . . however I must caution you to take care of yourself. . .you do not please God when you destroy the Temple. From now on I forbid you to go without your moccasins and to sleep on briars. You must eat more so you'll keep well. Anastasia also tells me you refuse to marry. . .and marriage is a great treasure.
TEKAKWITHA: But I wish Jesus as my spouse ! I want no other ! So please do not ask me to marry.
FR. JAMES: (He hesitates and pauses.) Could it be God's desire that you serve as an example to your people ? If so. . . it is well and good. . .but our concern is how can you support yourself later in life ? A husband would make it much easier for you.
TEKAKWITHA: I do not mind being poor. . .If I have God's love in my heart.
FR. JAMES: Very well, Kateri. You are the master of your soul. But pray hard and ask the Lord for guidance. But forget your penance. . . you have already done more than your share ! Take time to think about your vow before considering it.
TEKAKWITHA: Yes, Father. (She gets on her knees; Father watches her for a moment and turns to go. She gets up and runs after him.) Wait, Father, please. I need no more time to think. This has been the desire of my whole life.
FR. JAMES: Then prepare to give yourself entirely to God.
TEKAKWITHA: (Happily) Yes, Father, Yes.

ACT 1: Scene 6
PLACE: Same outdoor scene.
TIME: Holy week, 1680.
NARRATOR:
The life of Kateri Tekakwitha had been one of continual illness from her earliest years. She did not consider as a discomfort the eye-trouble which she had since the age of four; nor the almost constant headaches; not even a stomach ailment during the last year of her life, which was accompanied by a fever.
She practiced penances during the summer of 1679. She resolved to go no more to the hunts. She preferred the Holy Mass, the Communions, the indulgences to be gained, the instructions they had in the church and the spirit of Christianity. Yet most of all she was remembered for her charity toward others and her love for all mankind. Now her illness increased and in the year 1680, the people knew that soon her spirit would depart. The time is Holy week.
(There is a somber note. Under the canopy we see Tekakwitha lying on a rather crude looking bed. Beside her is Mary-Teresa who nurses her. Away from the canopy, we see Father talking to Anastasia.)
FR. JAMES: It is too bad . . . too bad.
ANASTASIA: Is there nothing we can do for her, Father ?
FATHER: In moments like these, we must put all our faith in God. He alone can help us overcome our sorrow. You have cared for her well, Anastasia. Come, let us speak to the Indians in the field. (Anastasia and Father go off quickly and silently.)
MARY-TERESA: (Tekakwitha wakes and Mary-Teresa jumps up.) Kateri, what is it ?
TEKAKWITHA: How useless I have grown. I can no longer decorate the statue of Our Lady. . .my head aches and I am so warm.
MARY-TERESA: (Trying to give her a sip of water beside the bed.) This will refresh you. Try to drink some of it.
TEKAKWITHA: I have no need of water. But give me my Rosary . . . It must always be close to me. (Mary-Teresa gives it to her.) You have done so much for me, Mary-Teresa. . .It will not be much longer. . .I am grateful that you let me have your tunic to receive Our Lord in . . . my own dress was much to shabby and worn.
MARY-TERESA: Please save your strength.

TEKAKWITHA: *(Trying to sit up.)* “ I am leaving you, Teresa. I am going to die. Always remember what we have done together. If you change, I shall accuse you before God. Keep up your courage. I will love you in heaven. I will pray for you. I will help you. ”

MARY-TERESA: I do not forget.

TEKAKWITHA: Two friends wish to do penance for a happy death for me. Tell them they are pleasing to God and I shall pray for them in heaven. Oh, I know who they are . . and what they are doing this very moment.

MARY-TERESA: How do you know these things ?

TEKAKWITHA: *(Smiling)* God is good.

(White Flower comes in and crosses to Mary-Teresa.)

MARY-TERESA: Have you come to see Kateri, White Flower ? *(White Flower hesitates a moment.)* Do not be afraid.

WHITE FLOWER: I wanted to come before. . .but I was afraid she would not want to see me.

TEKAKWITHA: Oh, that is not so. I know why you were afraid and that you wish to ask my forgiveness. *(White Flower kneels at her bedside and begins to weep.)* I forgive you, White Flower. . .but pray much for me.

WHITE FLOWER: Oh, yes, . . . anything !

(Father, Anastasia, and Ennita enter .)

MARY-TERESA: She grows weak and has little strength to fight off the fever.

ENNITA: *(Going to the bedside.)* How are you, sister ? *(She feels her forehead.)* You are so warm. . .but soon you'll be better and out in the fields with the rest of us.

MARY-TERESA: *(Lighting the candles.)* How peaceful she looks.

FR. JAMES: *(Crosses and takes her pulse.)* She is going fast. Kateri, remember the promise of the Redeemer. . .of the great happiness you will share. Do not forget us, my child.

ANASTASIA: Her face shines like the sun.

(Tekakwitha rises slightly, looks at them all. . .very fondly and whispers.)

TEKAKWITHA: “My Jesus, I love you.” *(Father feels her pulse as her head falls back.)*

FR. JAMES: Kateri has finally gone home – to the home of the Great Spirit. *(Ennita kisses her hand. Anastasia goes to Ennita to comfort her. White Flower goes to Father. Mary- Teresa smooths her hair.)*

FR. JAMES: You, Mary-Teresa, have known her last days more than any of us. Remember what you have heard. . . try to put it into writing. I believe her memory will live forever.

ANASTASIA: *(Looking at Tekakwitha)*Look ! Look at her ! The ugly marks on her face are gone !

WHITE FLOWER: Her skin is as smooth as silk.

FR. JAMES: God be praised ! The marks of suffering have left her. How radiant and peaceful she looks. It is almost like a miracle ! Somehow we all have the feeling the world will know about this maiden – this girl that loved God so much she wanted to spend every minute with Him. . . .She is our Lily of the Mohawks!

(The characters in the play all remain in their last position as the narrator steps forth.)

NARRATOR:

Years later this Mohawk Indian Princess became known as Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha. The stories of her life were told and remembered by those who knew and respected her many ways. Scarcely a year after her death there began a series of favors and miracles, especially cures, which were attributed to her intercession. Thus the name of Kateri Tekakwitha has been accepted among the faithful of the world. Many prayers are now said for her Beatification and when it comes about it will be one more token of the universality of the Church and of its profound humanism, capable of winning men of every nation and period. The lily of the Mohawk will then be called. ST. KATERI TEKAKWITHA

THE END

NOTE TO THE DIRECTOR:

COSTUMES: These can be easily made for the Indians by using old sheets and dying them into brown, beige, and orange colorings. Cut dress in box form and stitch. Also make simple leggings with same material and fringe bottom of leggings, dress and sleeves. Bright beads or colorful felt material cut in squares and sewn together makes the costume better for stage appearances. Moccasins can be used or bedroom slippers. Though the Mohawks didn't use feathers, they can be used to help make costumes more colorful.

Costumes for children can be made out of old pillowcases. Fringe the bottoms and paint designs on costumes.

Men may wear work trousers and colorful shirts (old) and fringed. When the Indians come back from war they should wear war paint. Indian blankets could be used in the first scene for the women.

Wigs can be made and braided out of black cotton yarn if desired.

Costumes



Indian Male Costume

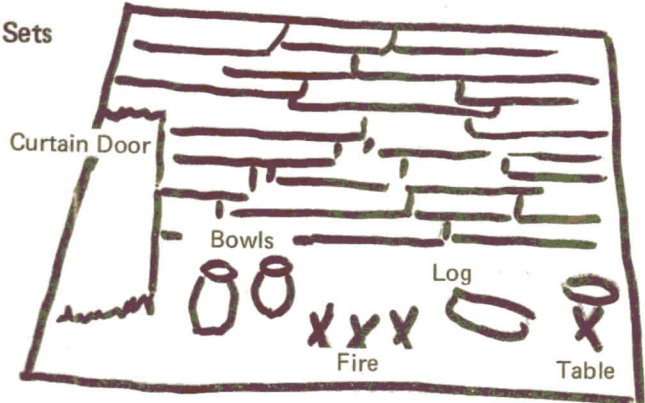


Indian Girl Costume

Leggings

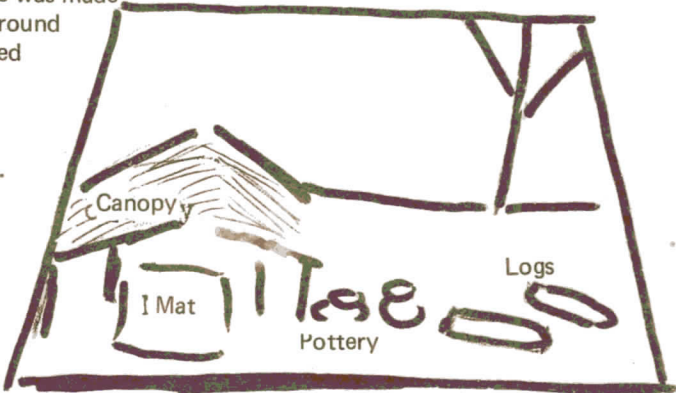
SETS:

1. Long house of Chief Iowerano. There is a fire on left and a door with a curtain covering on the right. Scenery would be the inside of the long house. No outside.
2. Out door scene with a canopy, put up on four sticks on the right side. It is a place to get out of the heat and sun and leads into the long house of Ennita. (Background of canopy could be painted long house entrance. Rest of stage scenery would be outdoors scene.)



Use bright colors, blankets, pottery, curtained door, logs to sit on, etc.

NOTE: Long house was made of tree logs. Background of set can be painted as brown logs. Logs can also be drawn on paper and pasted on wall.



EXPLANATION: The long house is a log cabin made by the Indians. Usually several families lived within. Occupants of this house is only the Chief's family.

MICROPHONE: The Narrator may either be off-stage . . . or on the side of the stage. . . away from the play itself. A microphone provides excellent effect for the narration.

PROPS: Blankets, fire, mat bed, canopy, corn kernels, pipe, mirror, bowls (wooden and clay), mallet to pound corn, hatchet, knife, stick, Rosary (large family type), needlework, furs, beads, moccasins, candles, cup, and logs to sit on.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As a result of visiting Auriesville, Fonda, New York and Caughnawaga, Canada, Mary-Eunice was inspired with the story of the Indian, Kateri Tekakwitha and the many Indians who became Christian. It was while performing at St. Francis Xavier Church in N.Y.C., she met Rev. Thomas J. Coffey, S.J., then the Vice-Postulator of the Tekakwitha Cause. He gave Mary-Eunice the “POSITIO” which is a collection of original documents of the historical section of the Sacred Congregation of Rites on the introduction of the Cause for Beatification of Tekakwitha. This helped the Mary Production Guild to bring forth much dramatic material on the subject of this Indian Princess and provided authentic reference for this play.

Offered by Mary Productions Guild and authored by Mary-Eunice are the following dramatic pieces:

TEKAKWITHA – Full length play, first produced by Court Fulgens Corona, Catholic Daughters of America, St. Mary’s Church, New Monmouth, N.J.

A CHRISTMAS STAR – A short, inspiring Christmas play for children and adults dramatizing the story of Tekakwitha.

MOHAWK INDIAN PRINCESS – ½ hour radio play.

DEATH OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA – A monologue in book, “Center-Stage”. \$ 2.00 Book contains 26 historical, religious, comedy, and patriotic monologues. (The same character sketch is published separately in leaflet form by the Cloistered Dominican Sisters of Syracuse, N.Y., who also published “Center-Stage”).

KATERI TEKAKWITHA – A film script that we hope one day to be produced by a movie company thus making her better known to many more people.

MARY-EUNICE PERFORMS – The Death Of Kateri Tekakwitha on her record, Skeptics and Saints. It is one of four of her character sketches. Others on album are: Woman At The Well, Skeptic At Fatima, and St. Teresa Of Avila.

Mary-Eunice and Joe also appear in person with their special entertainment program at school assemblies (all levels). Basic program is comedy and religious monologues. . .among them The Life Of Kateri Tekakwitha. Joe speaks on Catholic action, root causes of poverty and economic chaos, and the field of communications.

Mary Productions Guild was founded by the Spagnola’s and the name taken in honor of the Blessed Mother when they first organized the guild. Their work was brought to the attention of many when Rev. Francis Doino, S.J. had them produce their plays at Nativity Auditorium which was considered off-Broadway. Later they found they had requests for their scripts and started their library membership guild. Members may borrow, copy and produce plays royalty-free. Mary Productions is a non-profit group that supplies plays and radio scripts to school, societies and missionaries all over the world. Their services go to over 40 nations of the 6 continents of the world. They have over 100 plays . . . from monologues, short scenes, to 1 or 3 acts. Plays are religious, comedy, historical, and patriotic.

Mary-Eunice and Joe are grateful to those that have helped them get to know the TEKAKWITHA CAUSE. . . to: Rev. Thomas J. Coffey, S.J., former Vice-Postulator, Rev. William Schlaerth, S.J., who was Vice-Postulator since 1956 and now the new Vice-Postulator, Rev. Joseph S. McBride, S.J.