

...a voice say, "My son, give me thine heart." He clasped his hands together and replied, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" And with the words a flood of light poured in. He at once knelt down. It was an unusual habit with him. Now it seemed as necessary as breathing and as full of joy as loving.

How long he had been in that deep communion with his Saviour, so newly found, he could not have told. It must have been some time. He was aroused by one of the servants knocking at the door and announcing breakfast. He went down stairs, and the first person to meet him in the hallway was Louise. It was a new world that Stuart was henceforth to know, and his heart went out to his sister this morning with a new tenderness. She put her arm about his neck as he stopped to kiss her.

"What a dreadful time you must have had, Stuart. It is a great blessing you were not killed in that awful mine. The doctor has been telling me about it."

"Yes, I feel as if my life had been spared for some great reason," replied Stuart. "How is Eric this morning?"

"How is Eric this morning?" he put his arm about Louise and moved with her toward the door of Eric's room, which was near by. Louise slipped away from him and answered: "Oh, he is getting on all right! I don't want to see him. Don't wait breakfast long, Stuart."

She crossed over into the dining room, and Stuart went in to see Eric, who still lay in the down stairs bedroom which remained a feature of Ross Duncan's house as he had first designed and built it.

The doctor was there by the bed. He had come up early. He had attended to the wound, and Eric was resting comfortably. He lay there looking very pale and almost stern. Stuart felt an added tenderness for the man who had been his companion in that hour of peril. Somehow the experience of the morning deepened and enlarged all his thoughts of friendship and love.

He knelt down by the bed and smiled as Eric turned his dark eyes toward him.

"What sort of a night did you have, dear fellow?" he asked as he laid his hand on Eric's.

"Oh, I rested well. I'm able to get up this morning, but the doctor here won't let me move."

"You can get up if you want to," replied Dr. Saxon gravely. "Stuart, please order my horse around so I can get around to the undertaker's in time to make arrangements with him for Eric's funeral. Do you want to be here with the black plumes all round the top, or the other one with the weeping urn arrangement in the middle?"

"Nonsense! I'm not so bad off as that," replied Eric, with a feeble attempt at a smile.

"You will be if you get out of that bed for two weeks," replied the doctor. "He gathered up his things to go. Besides, you can't get up if you want to. Stuart, I leave him in your care. The nurse will be able to attend to him all right. She has full instructions." And with a word or two more he departed from the house and the door closed behind him.

Stuart remained a few minutes with Eric and then went in to breakfast. There was a good deal to talk over, and he asked questions about the accident. Stuart answered, feeling all the time that everything about him had changed since that light had shined upon him. Even Louise could feel a difference, although she could not tell what it was. Finally she stopped in her questions about the accident and said:

"What is the matter with you, Stuart? What has happened? Are you any better from the effects of your exposure yesterday?"

Stuart looked across the table at her. It was several moments before he replied. Then he said: "I will tell you, when we are alone. I want time to think. No, I am not ill. I feel better than I have in a long time."

Louise looked surprised, but she asked nothing more and went on to tell Stuart about the gathering at the Vespines' on the evening before. Stuart listened to her, now and then putting a question, and then Louise came back and told him of the miners.

"What do you think have been ordered, Stuart? The strike will end, won't it?"

"I don't know. Maybe it will just stop."

"You don't intend to get new men in all the mines in the lower range?"

"I don't know. It is a question whether we are running our own business or having it run for us by a lot of wild, ignorant fanatics engineered by Salvation Army cranks and other fools of the sort."

Stuart had all he could do to keep from striking the man in the mouth as he spoke of the Salvation Army. That delicate face in the army bonnet, that kneeling figure in the midst of the mob, that prayer, the sweet, clear, refined voice—all smote his imagination and memory as his eyes looked past the big man out of the window which opened on the scenes of the past evening. It was good proof perhaps of the genuine nature of Stuart's new manhood that he calmly listened until the speaker was through and then said quietly: "I do not regard the Salvation Army as you do, Mr. Wyman. My dearest friend, Eric Vassall, is a member of it, and I believe we owe our freedom so far from lawlessness to the religious influence exerted by the army."

Stuart's reply surprised all the other men. The big man reddened and was about to say something when one of the others spoke up:

"That aside, Mr. Duncan, we do not see your reason for refusing to get new men in and starting up again. Your refusal gives the strikers encouragement."

"I believe they ought to have the scale they demand," replied Stuart quietly.

leaned over Louise as she sat at the table and kissed her again.

"And do have some sense about this strike business. Get new men in. What can you do if all the other owners start up again?"

"I'll do the best thing," replied Stuart gently. He went into Eric's room a minute.

"I'm sorry to leave you, Eric," he said affectionately.

Eric groaned: "To think of my lying here of all times in my life! Stuart, I must get up and go with you. The men!"

Eric tried to raise himself, but fell back with a cry of pain. The sweat stood out on his forehead in large drops. He clinched his hands and his teeth in a sort of rage that was not only terrible to see, but pitiful.

As Stuart stood by him there was a great feeling of compassion in his heart for him. "Eric, you will have to be patient. After all, the men have not broken over the law yet. With the exception of the men who fired the engine house I believe the most of them are minded to be law abiding."

"Not if they get to drinking," replied Eric, with a spasm of pain crossing his face. "They are devils when they drink. Curse the saloons! They will be the ruin of our cause yet. You will do all you can, Stuart, to hold the men in check? The troops are coming in today and the new men. O God, if I were only with my men today I believe I could control them!"

"Yes, yes, Eric, I'll do my best. After all, we are not in the hands of one who knows the end from the beginning!"

Eric stared at Stuart in astonishment.

Stuart continued as he leaned over the bed: "Eric, the light has shone upon me. God has spoken to me. I am a Christian. It has all come to me suddenly."

Eric was too bewildered to understand all that was meant by Stuart's confession. He feebly returned Stuart's hand grasp.

Stuart added simply, "I will tell you more when I get back." Then after a moment he said:



"We don't!" exclaimed the first speaker viciously. "I'll see every striker starve before I'll grant anything like the terms they ask. The price of ore at present wouldn't allow it."

"But," said another of the men, speaking to Stuart, who remained standing in the middle of the room, "the Cleveland men are determined to set new men at work today. The first load will come in on the noon train. Troops are coming with them. The two companies that were here last night have gone on down to the lower range early this morning. We have the game in our own hands if we act together. You are the largest owner here. A good deal depends on your action."

Stuart pondered. The men all looked at him anxiously. At last he lighted straight at them, and his face lighted up.

"I have given the men my word that I would take them back at their terms. They have refused to come back unless all the other owners make the same terms. I still think I am right in the matter, and the rest of you ought to grant their demands. I do not see how in honesty, to my own convictions I can do otherwise. My present refusal to get in new men is certainly not adding to the danger of the situation here in Champion. Gentlemen," Stuart paused for a moment, then went on firmly—"I cannot see my way clear to hire the men at smaller wages than \$2 a day. I do not agree with the statement that the price of ore does not warrant the increase in wages. I firmly believe it does. The plain fact is that the work of the men is such dangerous, difficult work that \$2 a day is little enough for the labor. There isn't a man of us here or in Cleveland who would do the work these men do for ten times \$2 a day. I cannot look at it as you do. I shall do my utmost to prevent trouble, but if at any time during the strike my men come back I will open up with \$2 a day for the underground men."

The other men looked at Stuart in added astonishment. There was silence in the office, broken finally by the big man who had spoken first:

"Well, that beats me! If I ever expected to hear a son of Ross Duncan make a sensible speech! You ought to go on the platform, sir!"

The manner of the remark was so offensive that Stuart grew pale and trembled. But he controlled his passion and turned to the other men. For half an hour more they talked animatedly, while the big man smoked and smoked a cigarette in the corner. At last Stuart saw that he was not and could not be understood. He could not give his best reasons for his position to these men. They lay too deep at the foundations of his newly found life to be explained to men whose spiritual natures were buried under cash values of existence.

When he was convinced that all the talk would result in nothing satisfactory, Stuart went out. He felt the need of something that responded to his own life. He felt choked and "poisoned" he could not think of a less strong word as he realized how firm a hold the love of money had on the business world. All the time he cried out in his heart: "God help me! I want to do the right thing and will do it as fast as the light comes." He examined his position toward the strike so far in the light of his Christian discipleship and heard no accusing voice in his heart over the judgment that he had declared to be just, and as he went out into the street he felt at peace as far as that was concerned.

As he walked the street thinking it all over he had a great desire to have a talk with some one he could trust who would sympathize with him. At once he thought of the new minister. "I ought to go and inquire about him anyway." He quickened his pace across the street, entered the square and took one of the diagonal paths to the hotel where Burke was staying.

He found Andrew Burke going through the hotel office with a large box. He saw Stuart coming in and exclaimed:

"Come up, come up, Mr. Duncan! I've got some beauties here. I want you to see them."

Stuart followed up one flight of stairs and entered a large room in the corner of the hotel, and Andrew Burke set down his burden, shook hands strongly and asked Stuart to excuse him while he opened his box. Stuart looked on wonderingly.

It was a box full of potted plants, young roses most of them. As fast as Burke took them out he arranged them on a temporary shelf by the window.

"There's a Nymphis, one of the most delicate roses going. And here is my Kaiserine. That's a new variety just out this year. This Catherine Mermet is a beauty. Very hard to get a bloom in this climate, I fear. The Safrano is better. And just see here! I raised this Meteor myself and had six magnificent blooms from it last winter. You see, my wife was visiting some relatives in the east when my call came to come up here, and I try to amuse myself until she arrives with rocks and roses. Those are my pets. Let me show you some of my friends since I got here."

The Rev. Andrew Burke brought out a tray from another room and set it down on the table near Stuart. Then he noticed the look on Stuart's face, and his whole manner underwent a swift and remarkable change. He looked and spoke like the strong, deep, true man that he really was in spite of his "rocks and roses."

"Mr. Duncan, you did not come here to talk botany or geology, did you?"

"To tell the truth, I did not, Mr. Burke."

"What is it?" asked Andrew Burke, leaning forward and putting a hand on Stuart's arm.

It was a simple question simply put. But it revealed so strong and genuine a desire to know and sympathize with

him that before Stuart knew it he was telling his experience of the morning. The tea rose odor of the plants in the window and on the table filled the room, and Andrew Burke listened with kindling eye and long drawn breath. "Thank God! Thank God!" he was saying as Stuart went on. When Stuart finally paused, Andrew said, "Can't we have a little prayer of thanksgiving over this right here as we sit?"

"Yes, yes," replied Stuart gladly.

Before Andrew Burke was through with his prayer Stuart was sobbing. It was the first real touch of Christian sympathy he had ever known. It was wonderful to him, though, to think that he was now linked in sympathetic knowledge with every other disciple.

In the next few moments of question and answer he experienced one of the rarest and sweetest joys of his life.

It was not a shock to anything to find himself at last talking over the strike and its problems with Burke. After all, was that not a part of life, and was not all of it henceforth to be lived to the glory of God?

He was relieved to have Burke agree with his decision as to wages.

"My sympathies are with the workmen, Mr. Duncan. In fact I was born on a farm and raised in a factory. I'll tell you about it some time."

"I am going to make a request," said Stuart, with a smile. "Do you think a man who saves another man's life ought to call him 'minister' very long?"

"What shall I say?"

"Stuart is not a hard name to pronounce, is it?"

"No harder than 'Andrew'."

"It's a bargain then. No more 'ministers.'"

"Eh, but this is sudden, young man," replied Andrew Burke, rising and coming over nearer Stuart. "I'm ten years your senior, and you need my advice. It's a bargain, yes."

The two men shook hands again and thoroughly understood each other. It was the Christian fellowship that made such swift friendship possible. On any other basis these two men would have saved each the life of the other every day and "ministered" each other to a gray old age.

But events in the outer world were hurrying on fast, and Stuart could not avoid a feeling of anxiety concerning the train due at noon with the new men and the troops. Already the miners were gathering in the square. Looking out of the hotel window, the two men could see that the miners were excited and that the gathering was massing about the depot rather than around the hotel stand.

"I believe I will go down, and if there is any trouble I will do all in my power to prevent violence," said Stuart.

"Let me go with you," replied Andrew Burke.

So it happened that these two stood close by the depot when the noon train came in and saw the whole scene, which no man present that day ever forgot.

The train came in slowly, and the miners watched it in sullen silence. The first two coaches were filled with troops. The rest of the cars, six in all, contained the new men.

It was not known until long after ward just how the events of that day were planned and carried out, but before the engineer or fireman could offer any resistance, even if they had thought of such a thing, they were pulled down out of the cab and in a twinkling the tender was unscrambled from the coaches and two of the miners who understood the working of the engine started it forward and switched it off the main track upon one of the tracks built by the side of the ore shoots.

Meanwhile the miners at the rear of the train began to call out to the men in the coaches to get out and show themselves.

"We want to see the brave men who have come up to take bread out of our mouths!" "Show yourselves! Come out and have a taste of a club!"

While this was going on at the rear the officer of the troops, seeing what

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(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)