



and be my Love

By PEGGY DERN

W.N.U. RELEASE

CHAPTER I

"Miss Meggie!" It was Annie's voice lifted above the roar of a truck in the backyard. "Hit's de feed man."

"All right, Annie." Megan looked up from the desk where she was writing labels for the latest batch of canned goods. "The money's in the old brown teapot."

"Ain' no money in de brown teapot, Miss Meggie," shouted Annie after a moment. "Cep't jes' a dime an' two pennies."

Megan sat very still for a moment and felt her heart go down into her worn shoes. Dad had found her secret cache! That was why he had been so eager to take advantage of Mr. McCurtie's offer to drive him into the county seat that morning!

Annie, vast and black, loomed in the doorway. Her eyes were gentle and warm with affection.

"Miss Meggie, yo' reckon yo' Paw—" she began impulsively, but Megan silenced her with a glance and reached for her checkbook. Annie accepted the unspoken rebuff good humoredly and said helpfully, consulting a slip of paper in her hand, "Hit's fo'teen dollars an' sixty-fo' cents, Miss Meggie."

Megan nodded, wrote the check, ripped it out, and signed the slip. Annie extended. Annie padded out and the door closed behind her.

For a moment Megan sat still, her elbows on the desk, her chin propped in her hands. She could have wept, and yet she tried hard to laugh at herself for the wave of discouragement that swept over her.

She had been carefully hoarding the egg money in that old brown teapot, to pay for feed. She had been so sure that her father knew nothing about its being there. He must have prowled—or else he had spied on her. Neither thought was pleasant.

Megan finished the last of the labels and straightened wearily.

As she went out of the small sitting room that was her "office" she glanced across the road and saw the glimmer of lights in the shabby little cottage well back from the road, that was her nearest neighbor. So Alicia Stevenson had returned from her visit to Atlanta. She knew a moment of sharp envy for Alicia's ease and freedom from the grueling farm labor that was the lot of practically all the residents of Pleasant Grove.

Busy with milking, a task which she had done so many times that it was purely automatic, she found herself thinking about Alicia. The shabby little old cottage across the road from the MacTavish place had stood vacant for years, ever since Old Man Brigham had died, six months after the death of his wife.

Then, late one June evening, the New York Limited, which ordinarily raced through Pleasant Grove with merely a derisive toot of its whistle, had stopped and a woman had alighted, a woman of perhaps forty, smartly dressed according to Pleasant Grove standards, and surrounded by a sea of luggage.

She had announced herself in Burns Mercantile, Pleasant Grove's general store, as Alicia Stevenson, only child of the Brigbams, and stated that she had come to live in the old Brigham place—at least "for the duration."

From the first, Megan had been established as Alicia's best friend, although Megan was ashamed to admit to herself that she neither liked nor trusted Alicia. There was something about her that was, to Megan, almost sly; perhaps the relish with which she pounced on the smallest morsel of gossip and rolled it about on her tongue and found exactly the moment to mention it when it would do the most harm.

Occasionally Alicia departed on a trip. She was quite closemouthed about where she was going and why; Megan suspected that Alicia liked being "a woman of mystery," and that it fed her sense of importance to know that people wondered where she went, and why.

Annie Megan finished the milking and she and Amos took the brimming milk pails to the spring house, cool and dark, where the milk would be left over night and where, in the morning, Annie would churn.

Coming back across the backyard, almost completely dark now that the sun had gone and twilight was deepening, she saw a man standing waiting for her at the steps and was startled. He was a stranger, and strangers—especially masculine strangers—were sufficiently rare in Pleasant Grove to arouse a bit of surprise.

"Miss MacTavish?" he came towards her, smiling, and she saw that he was tall and rugged looking and that he must have been close to forty. "I'm Tom Fallon—your neighbor down the road there. We've just moved in, and they told me that you might be willing to supply us with milk and butter and eggs."

"Why, yes, I think so," said Megan, and then remembered. "Oh, you're Professor Fallon, the new high school principal! Welcome to Pleasant Grove!"

"Thank you," said Tom, and his handshake was warm and friendly. "That's very kind of you."

"It's going to be nice to have someone in the Westbrook place," said Megan pleasantly. "I'd like to call on Mrs. Fallon as soon as you are settled."

She saw the shadow fall over his face. Even in the dusk she could sense the tightening, the stiffening, that made him look older and somehow, aloof.

"You're very kind," he told her formally. "But Mrs. Fallon is—an invalid. Her health does not permit her to have callers. Her sister lives with us and takes care of her."

"Oh—I'm sorry," said Megan quickly and meant it. "You will let us know, though, if there is anything we can do to help? We pride ourselves on being neighborly in Pleasant Grove."

Tom smiled and the darkening of his face was gone now. He said pleasantly, "I'd almost forgot that such a thing existed—neighborliness, I mean. You don't find any evidences of it in a city any more."

The Fallons had moved into the Westbrook place early in September. But by the time school was in its second week, people were speaking approvingly of Tom Fallon.

There was something about Tom Fallon that made Megan feel sorry for him; something, too, that put her on the defensive when he and his family affairs were being discussed. Pleasant Grove was a small town where everybody knew everybody else's business; you might think you had secrets from your neighbors—perhaps they let you think so—but occasionally there would be little spatters of rumor, whispers, revelations that your secret was no secret at all, but that your friends and neighbors were perfectly willing that you should think they were.

Megan's favorite relaxation, when she could find time for it, was a walk to the top of the low-lying hill beyond the meadow, that rejoiced in the ambitious title of the Ridge. Here she crawled under a barbed wire fence, walked a hundred yards more and was on top of the Ridge. Here there were lordly pines whose green feathery tops seemed almost to brush the sky; here the aisles between the pines were kept clean and free of underbrush, and thickly carpeted with resinous, slippery, brown pine needles. Here there were several big flat rocks that offered a pleasant place to sit and rest after the walk. And from here one had a beautiful view over rolling meadowland and pasture and green woods.

On an afternoon late in October, Megan emerged from the barbed wire fence and straightened, to look back down the low meadow valley. The dogs were scampering wildly; Dixie, the small black water spaniel who was a superb hunter, self-taught, had treed game and was barking his head off; Bessie, the pointer, was racing through the underbrush at the edge of the pines, her tail quivering with delight at the scent she had disturbed; while the cats were climbing trees with joyous abandon.

But as she stepped out of the pines to the small clearing where the rock lay, she paused and said, startled, "Oh—I'm sorry—I didn't know there was anyone here."

Tom stood up, smiling, eager.

"Well, Miss MacTavish! How are you? Am I trespassing on your property?" he said quickly.

"Oh, no, as a matter of fact this property belongs to your place," Megan assured him. "The circus and I just use it as a finish to our walk."

"Shall I go?" suggested Tom lightly.

"Of course not—how silly!" protested Megan swiftly. "After all, there are two rocks and plenty of room for both of us!"

"Thanks," said Tom, and smiled as he watched her settle herself on the rock while he selected another one.

The four cats, shy of strangers, stepped daintily into the clearing, saw him and drew back startled, velvety ears erect, fluffy plummy tails quivering a little, tiny growls starting deep in their soft throats.

"Behave yourselves, boys!" Megan ordered sternly, and Tom laughed as the arched tails relaxed a little and the cats went on about their business of investigating fascinating scents, yet keeping wary golden eyes on him as they did so.

"They are beauties, aren't they?" said Tom in quite honest admiration.

"Well, naturally I think so," Megan laughed.

Tom nodded. "I'm a little that way myself," he admitted.

"(TO BE CONTINUED)"

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"(TO BE CONTINUED)"

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D. Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for July 14

JESUS AND SUPREME LOYALTY TO GOD

LESSON TEXT—Exodus 20:3-6; Joshua 24:14, 22-24; Luke 14:26-33.

MEMORY SELECTION—No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.—Matthew 6:24.

The first three commandments bring man into the presence of God, where he is taught how to worship God in spirit and in truth.

"The first commandment (Exod. 20:3) bids us worship God exclusively; the second (vv. 4-6) bids us worship him spiritually. The first commandment forbids us to worship false gods; the second forbids us to worship the true God under false forms" (Farrar).

We shall lose much of the value of our lesson if we confine the application of it to Israel. We miss the point if we think only of the gods of wood and stone which the heathen worship and fail to apply the truth to any and all idol worship of our day.

The loyalty to God of which our lesson text teaches may be summarized in four words. It is a loyalty of

I. Purpose (Exod. 20:3).

Jehovah means, "I will be what I will be," or "I am that I am" (Exod. 3:14). His very name declares God to be the self-existent, eternal one. How infinitely gracious then is the use of the word "thy" in Exodus 10:21! He—the great I AM—is my God, a personal God. It must be our constant purpose to worship him only.

There are many things concerning which we do not speak dogmatically. There are even Christian doctrines about which spiritual and earnest men may honestly differ, but regarding God we say with absolute assurance and complete exclusiveness—there is but one true God. If he is what he claims to be, if God is not to be declared to be a liar, then it is beyond the realm of possibility that there could be any other God.

Hear it, men and women of America who in an enlightened land and age bow down in heathenish worship "before the god of gold, the god of self, the god of wine, the god of success, the god of fame, the goddess of pleasure, the god of licentiousness." The one true God says, "I am Jehovah. . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

II. Performance (Exod. 20:4-6).

What is in the heart must show in the life. The second commandment calls for the undivided devotion and worship of man. It expressly forbids idolatry in any form. The injunction is twofold. (1) Men are forbidden to make any material likeness which to them represents a being to be worshiped. It matters not whether it be an image of what men believe God to be like, or the image of an angelic being, a heavenly body, in fact, "anything that is in the heaven above," or on the earth, such as a man or animal; or under the water, such as a fish. (2) If such objects have been made either by ourselves or others we may not bow down to them, nor render any service to them. Let us all examine our religious ceremonies and practices in the light of God's commandment.

Observe that obedience to this command brings rich blessing to "thousands" (v. 6), whereas disobedience is a curse not only to the man who disobeys, but also to his descendants.

III. Promise (Josh. 24:16, 22-24).

Before the aged leader of Israel came to the close of his life he called leaders of the people, whom he had led in the taking of the Promised Land, and urged them to continue in the way of faith and loyalty to God.

They promised rather readily, but he made clear to them that God was not interested in lip service. They were to prove their promise by putting away all strange gods. This they agreed to do. Wherein they failed, they suffered defeat, and wherein they kept their promise, God blessed them. We may learn from their experience.

IV. Practice (Luke 14:25-27).

It is not always necessary to choose between our natural affections for those near to us and our loyalty to Christ, but if the time comes for that decision, Christ must come first without question and without hesitation (cf. Matt. 10:37).

The word "hate" (v. 26) does not carry with it any thought of malice or personal dislike. We know from other scriptures that we are to honor our father and our mother (Exod. 20:12). The one who fails his own is declared to be worse than an infidel (I Tim. 5:8).

The point is that no personal loyalty or responsibility is to stand in the way of our devotion to Christ. Our own lives must be counted as a glad sacrifice to him as we take up our cross—in the crucifixion of self-will and devotion to his will (see Gal. 2:20; 6:14).

Washington MERRY GO ROUND

DREW PEARSON

NEW NATIONAL ANTHEM

WASHINGTON.—Gen. Joseph P. McNarney, who is doing a better job as commander of occupied Germany than most people think, likes to sing. And when he comes up to Berlin for his regular visits with the other Allied commanders, he always engages in a song fest with the Russians.

As a result, the Russians have adopted a new song which they virtually regard as the American national anthem. They sing it on any and all occasions. They think it brings pride and pleasure to the hearts of Americans; and the Red army in Berlin, at least, is anxious to please Americans.

Actually the song may bring great pride and pleasure to General McNarney, but other Americans privately are getting a bit weary of it. The Russians have learned the English words, and to the tune of "The Stars and Stripes Forever," here is what they sing as the new American national anthem:

"Three cheers for the Sam Jones Junior high school. The best junior high in Toledo."

The fact that they have learned the words illustrates a point which some of our top-bracket statesmen don't always realize—namely, despite our difficulties with the Soviet government, we have no quarrel with the Russian people. Not much has been said about it, but relations between the American and Soviet armies in Berlin have been extraordinarily good. At first, the Russians were suspicious, didn't want any fraternization of their troops with ours. But that suspicion has largely disappeared. The Red army is a large, unwieldy, badly disciplined, very human cross section of the Russian people, and that part of the Red army which is in Berlin likes Americans.

PRUSSIAN JUNKERS

Robert Murphy, political adviser to General McNarney in Berlin, has secretly sent a bitter complaint to the state department because the Russians have redistributed the estates of the Prussian Junkers in the Soviet zone of Germany. The Russians have broken up some 10,000 large estates among about 275,000 peasants. Despite the fact that the Potsdam agreement specifically called for breaking up large estates, Murphy has warned Washington that this land reform in the Russian zone is endangering the western type of democracy we want.

WE DIDN'T DEFEAT JAPAN

Most people won't believe it, but in Czechoslovakia, a country not friendly to the U. S. A., the people have no idea that the United States had anything to do with defeating Japan. They think it was Russia that did it all.

Reason is that the Russian radio and propaganda machine has done a skillful job of propagandizing the Czechoslovak people, while we have done absolutely nothing to counteract it. Reason we haven't told our side of the story is that congress has hamstringed the state department on shortwave broadcasting. The house appropriations committee cut the heart out of the state department's appropriation for propaganda, especially radio broadcasting.

MAILMAN SULLIVAN

Too little attention is paid in this politics-ridden capital to the quiet, unassuming officials who consistently do a bang-up job.

One of them is Assistant Postmaster General Gael Sullivan. Coming from Chicago and trained under Mayor Ed Kelly, Sullivan at first looked like a pure political appointee. In six months, however, he has become one of the most effective members of the little cabinet.

CAPITAL CHAFF

Both the Chinese Nationalists and the Chinese Communists are bursting to learn what's in the script for "The Life of Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen," a new movie to be made by Producer Lester Cowan. Perhaps General Marshall could use oriental curiosity to persuade both sides to get together. . . . Assistant Secretary of the Navy John Kenny is the latest to knife President Truman's atomic control policy. Kenny testified on Capitol Hill that he was personally in favor of giving the military greater control over atomic energy—which was directly contrary to his commander-in-chief. . . . British Tories are urging ex-Prime Minister Winston Churchill to resign as Tory leader of commons and devote himself solely to writing his memoirs. They seem to feel he can be more useful in private life.

MERRY GO ROUND

It got little publicity, but President Truman pulled an A-1 man out of the navy when he made Comdr. Jim Reynolds a member of the National Labor Relations board. Reynolds is brother of famed War Correspondent Quentin Reynolds, has been doing a good job handling the navy's labor relations. . . . Harold Ickes had his first censorship difficulties when the Washington Star didn't like what he wrote about Senator McCarran of Nevada, and omitted that particular column.

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ASK ME ANOTHER?

A General Quiz

The Questions

1. Canada is made up of how many provinces and territories?
2. The Rock of Gibraltar, symbolic of strength, is composed of what?
3. Calenda was the name given by the Romans to what?
4. What was the original name given the department of state?
5. The testimony of what animal is accepted in a court of law as evidence?
6. Does the ostrich put its head in the sand to hide?
7. What is the bird referred to in William Cullen Bryant's poem that ends: "Robert of Lincoln, come back again; chee, chee, chee"?
8. Bullets fired to the right of a swiftly moving plane have a tendency to drop, those fired to the left to rise. Why?

The Answers

1. Nine provinces and two territories.
2. Soft limestone.
3. The first day of the month.
4. The department of foreign affairs.
5. The bloodhound.
6. No. It grubs for worms and other food.
7. Bobolink.
8. The bullets spin clockwise and friction from the right-angle wind exerts force at the top of the bullets fired to the right and on the bottom of bullets fired to the left.

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