



# The VALIANTS of VIRGINIA

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### ILLUSTRATIONS BY LAUREN STOUT

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## INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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### LESSON FOR AUGUST 16

#### THE WICKED HUSBANDMAN.

LESSON TEXT—Matt. 21:33-46. GOLDEN TEXT—"The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner." Matt. 21:42 R. V.

Tuesday morning of this his last week (Mark 11:20) the disciples saw the fig tree withered away from the roots. Passing on they enter the temple where Christ's authority is challenged. Following his disconcerting reply (21:23-27) Jesus taught three parables of warning of which this lesson is the second.

**I. The parable, vv. 33-39.** It is a story of God's long suffering goodness and Luke (20:9) tells us that it was addressed to the people. We need to keep in mind the previous parable of the two sons (vv. 28-32) in order to understand perfectly the method he employed in answering the chief priests. In the first he states a case and appeals to them for a verdict. Without hesitation they replied and by so doing condemned themselves. In this parable he states a case and asks for a reply, v. 40. This they gave and in so doing declared a righteous judgment which must fall upon their motives. In both parables Jesus employs the figure of a vineyard. In the Old Testament this stands for Israel, Ps. 80:8-11, Isa. 5:1.

**Kingdom Committed to Us.** In this case it stands for the Kingdom of God which is no longer identified with Israel but taken away from it and given to the Gentiles (v. 43). The Lord was dealing with the responsible rulers of Israel, those familiar with the prophetic writings. His reference to the digging and care suggests that for his vineyard he had done all that could have been done, Isa. 5:4. Being fully equipped, he places it first of all in the care of Israel, verse 43. Today it is in charge of believers, I Peter 4:10. The husbandman did not own the vineyard, it was only entrusted to his care. So in a sense, God has committed the kingdom to us, does his work through us, and of a right expects an accounting by us, see Matt. 25:14, 15; Mark 13:34; Luke 19:12.

In these parables we can trace the whole history of Israel according to Isaiah. The fruits he looked for from the vineyard "let out to the husbandman" were those of judgment and of righteousness. Their response had ever been that of persecuting the prophets, ill treatment of those that were sent, and a selfish appropriation of the blessings he had given. These servants sent to get an accounting were God-commissioned and God-inspired, hence it is small wonder that such people would accord a like treatment of the king when he came. This is still the way the world uses godly men, II Tim. 3:12. It reveals the world's natural hatred to God, John 15:18, 19; Rom. 8:7.

**Appeal to Hearers.** II. The application, vv. 40-46. Jesus then appeals to his hearers as to what should be done to the husbandman, v. 40. They declared, "he will miserably destroy those miserable men and will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." At this Jesus reminds them of their Scriptures and what they taught concerning the fact of the stone rejected by the builders becoming the head of the corner.

The master's question (v. 40) suggests the one found in Heb. 10:28, 29. Historically, God did "miserably destroy those miserable men." That happened at the destruction of Jerusalem, one of the most appalling sieges recorded in military history. It was then that the doom pronounced by Jesus was executed when he said, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," see Acts 15:14; I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:9. In these words Jesus formally and authoritatively passed sentence upon the nation and rejected it from a place of service. It is significant to observe the alternative of falling upon the stone and being broken or of having the stone fall upon and crushing all to dust. In the erection of the temple one is the keystone of the whole. On that stone the builders were now "falling" and being "broken," Isa. 8:15. Soon in their corporate capacity, as ones entrusted with a vineyard, the stone should "fall upon them" in the destruction of the city, and individually and personally as unbelievers, in a more awful sense.

Once again in this lesson we face the fact that the chosen people were rejected because of their unfruitfulness, that is, they had failed to fulfill the purpose for which they were created. The sin of these rulers was that of their failure to administer the affairs of the people in the interests of God's kingdom. The failure of the people was that they submitted to such false rulers. The supreme value of this lesson is in the revelation of the wonderful power and wisdom of God. This is shown by his compelling these men to find a verdict that passed sentence upon themselves.

#### SYNOPSIS.

John Valiant, a rich society favorite, suddenly discovers that the Valiant corporation, which his father founded and which was the principal source of his wealth, had failed. He voluntarily turns over his private fortune to the receiver for the corporation. His entire remaining possessions consist of an old motor car, a white bull dog and Damory court, a neglected estate in Virginia. On the way to Damory court he meets Shirley Dandridge, an Auburn-haired beauty, and decides that he is going to like Virginia immensely. Shirley's mother, Mrs. Dandridge, and Major Bristow exchange reminiscences during which it is revealed that the major, Valiant's father, and a man named Sassoon were rivals for the hand of Mrs. Dandridge in her youth. Sassoon and Valiant fought a duel on her account in which the former was killed. Valiant finds Damory court overgrown with weeds and creepers and decides to rehabilitate the place. Valiant saves Shirley from the bite of a snake, which bites him. Knowing the deadliness of the bite, Shirley sucks the poison from the wound and saves his life. Valiant learns for the first time that his father left Virginia on account of a duel in which Doctor Southall and Major Bristow acted as his father's seconds. Valiant and Shirley become good friends. Mrs. Dandridge faints when she meets Valiant for the first time. Valiant discovers that he has a fortune in old walnut trees. The yearly tournament of the knights, who is sick, and enters the lists. He wins and chooses Shirley Dandridge as queen of beauty to the dismay of Katherine Fargo, a former sweetheart, who is visiting in Virginia. The tournament ball at Damory court draws the elite of the countryside. Shirley is crowned by Valiant as queen of beauty. Valiant tells Shirley of his love and they become engaged. Katherine Fargo, determining not to give up Valiant without a struggle, points out to Shirley how terrible it would be for the woman who caused the duel to meet Valiant, who looks so much like his father. Shirley, uncertain, but feeling that her mother was in love with the victim of Valiant's pistol, breaks the engagement.

#### CHAPTER XXIX—Continued.

The inquiry was drowned in a shriek from several children in unison. They scrambled to their feet, casting fearful glances over their shoulders. The man who had been lying behind the bush had risen and was coming toward them at a slouching amble, one foot dragging slightly. His appearance, indeed, was enough to cause panic. With his savage face, set now in a grin, and his tramp-like costume, he looked fierce and animal-like. White and black, the children fled like startled rabbits, older ones dragging younger, without a backward look—all save Rickey, who stood quiet still, her widening eyes fixed on him in a kind of blanched fascinated terror.

He came close to her, never taking his eyes from hers, then put his heavy grimy hand under her chin and turned her twitching face upward, chuckling. "Ain't afraid, d—n me!" he said with admiration. "Wouldn't skeedaddle with th' fine folks' white-livered young 'uns! Know who I am, don't ye?"

"Greef King." Rickey's lips rather formed than spoke the name.

"Right. An' I know you, too. Got jes' th' same look ez when ye wuzn't no higher'n my knee. So ye ain't at th' Dome no mo', eh? Purkin an' fine flinny an' a eddication. Ho-ho! Gein'ter make ye another lady like the sweet ducky-dovey that recoosed ye from th' lovin' embrace o' yer fond step-parient, eh?"

Rickey's small arm went suddenly out and her fingers tore at his shirt.

"There He Goes!" He Said With Bitter Hatred.

"Don't you," she burst in a paroxysm of passion; "don't you even speak her name! If you do, I'll kill you!"

So fierce was her leap that he fell back a step in sheer surprise. Then he laughed loudly. "Why, ye little spittin' wile-cat!" he grinned.

She wrenched suddenly, gripped her wrist and covering her mouth tightly with his palm, dragged her behind a clump of dogwood bushes. A heavy step was coming along the wood-path. He held her motionless and breathless in this cruel grip till the pedestrian had passed. It was Major Bristow, his spruce white hat on the back of his head, his unbuttoned waistcoat dappled with the leaf-shadows. He stepped out briskly toward Damory court, swinging his stick, all unconscious of the fierce scrutiny bent on him from behind the dogwoods.

Greef King did not withdraw his hand till the steps had died in the distance. When he did, he clenched his fist and shook it in the air. "There he goes!" he said with bitter hatred. "Ye noble friend that sent me up for six years! I break my heart on th' rock-pile! Oh, he's a top-notch,

he is! But he's got Greef King to reckon with yit!" He looked at her balefully and shook her.

"Look-a-yere," he said in a hissing voice. "Ye remember me. I'm a bad one ter fool with. Yer maw foun't that out, I reckon. Now ye'll promise me ye'll tell nobody who ye've seen. I'm only a tramp; d'ye hear?" He shook her roughly.

Rickey's fingers and teeth were clenched hard and she said no word. He shook her again viciously, the blood pouring into his scarred face. "Ye snivelin' brat, ye!" he snarled. "I'll show yer!" He began to drag her after him through the bushes. A few yards and they were on the brink of the headlong ugly chasm of Lovers' Leap. She cast one desperate look about her and shut her eyes. Catching her about the waist he leaned over and held her out in mid-air, as if she had been a kitten. "Ye ain't seen me, hev yer? Promise, or over ye go. Ye won't look so pretty when yer layin' down there on them rocks!"

The child's face was paper-white and she had begun to tremble like a leaf, but her eyes remained closed.

"One—two—" he counted deliberately. Her eyes opened. She turned one shuddering glance below, then her resolution broke. She clutched his arm and broke into wild supplications. "I promise, I promise!" she cried. "Oh, don't let go! I promise!"

He set her on the solid ground and released her, looking at her with a sneering laugh. "Now we'll see ef ye belong here or up ter Hell's-Half-Acre," he said. "Fine folks keeps their promises, I've heard tell."

Rickey looked at him a moment shaking; then she burst into a passion of sob and with her face averted ran from him like a deer through the bushes.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

In the Rain. Shirley stood looking out at the rain. It was falling in no steady downpour which held forth promise of ending, but with a gentle constancy that gave the hills a look of sudden discomfort and made disconsolate miry pools by the roadside. The clouds were not too thick, however, to let through a dismal gray brightness that shone on the foliage and touched with glistening lines of high-light the draggled tufts of the soaked bluegrass. Now and then, across the dripping fields, fraying skeins of mist wandered, to lie curdled in the flooded hollows where, here and there, cattle stood lowing at intervals in a mournful key.

The indoors had become impossible to her. She was sick of trying to read, sick of the endless pacings and purposeless invention of needless tasks. She wanted movement, the cobwebby mist about her knees, the wet rain in her face. She ran upstairs and came down clad in a close scarlet jersey, with leather gaiters and a soft hat.

Emmaline saw her thus accoutered with disapproval. "Lawdy-mercy, chile!" she urged; "you ain't goin' out? It's rainin' cats en dogs!"

"I'm neither sugar nor salt, Emmaline," responded Shirley listlessly, dragging on her rain-coat, "and the walk will do me good."

On the sopping lawn she glanced up at her mother's window. Since the night of the ball her own panging self-consciousness had overlaid the fine and sensitive association between them. She had been full of horrible feeling that her face must betray her and the cause of her loss of spirits be guessed.

Her mother, had, in fact, been troubled by this, but was far from guessing the truth. A somewhat long indisposition had followed her first sight of Valiant, and she had not witnessed the tournament. She had hung upon Shirley's description of it, however, with an excited interest that the other was later to translate in the light of her own discovery. If the thought had flitted to her that fate might hold something deeper than friendship in Shirley's acquaintance with Valiant, it had been of the vaguest. His choice of her as Queen of Beauty had seemed a natural homage to that swift and unflinching act of hers which had saved his life. There was in her mind a more obvious explanation of Shirley's altered demeanor. "Perhaps it's Chilly Lusk," she had said to herself. "Have they had a foolish quarrel, I wonder? Ah, well, in her own time she will tell me."

There was some relief to Shirley's overcharged feelings in the very discomfort of the drenched weather; the sucking pull of the wet clay on her boots and the flit of the drops on her cheeks and hair. She thrust her dogskin gloves into her pocket and held her arms outstretched to let the wind blow through her fingers. The moisture clung in damp wreaths to her hair and rolled in great drops down her coat as she went.

The wildest, most secluded walks had always drawn her most and she instinctively chose one of these today. It was the road whereon squatted Ma's white-washed cabin. "Dah's or mah's wife look in see see, honey,

en gwine make 'em cry en cry." She had forgotten the incident of that day, when he had read her fortune, but now the quivering prophecy came back to her with a shivering sense of reality. "Fo' dah's fiah en she ain' ahead'd, en dah's watah en she ain' ahead'd. Et's de watah whut eat de ha'at outen de breas—dat whut she ahead'd of!" If it were only fire and water that threatened her!

She struck her hands together with an inarticulate cry. She remembered the laugh in Valiant's eyes as they had planted the roses, the characteristic gesture with which he tossed the waving hair from his forehead—how she had named the ducks and the peacock and chosen the spots for his flowers; and she smiled for such memories, even in the stabbing knowledge that these dear trivial things could mean nothing to her in the future. She tried to realize that he was gone from her life, that he was the one man on earth whom to marry would



"Doesn't That Prove What I Say?" He Said, Bending Toward Her.

be to strike to the heart her love and loyalty to her mother, and she said this over and over to herself in varying phrases:

"You can't! No matter how much you love him, you can't! His father deliberately ruined your mother's life—your own mother! It's bad enough to love him—you can't help that. But you can help marrying him. You would hate yourself. You can never kiss him again, or feel his arms around you. You can't touch his hand. You mustn't even see him. Not if it breaks your heart—as your mother's heart was broken!"

She had turned into an unbeaten way that ambled from the road through a track of tall oaks and pines, scarce more than a bridle-path, winding aimlessly through bracken-strewn depths so dense that even the wild-roses had not found them. In her childish hurts she had always fled to the companionship of the trees. She had known them every one—the black-gum and pale dogwood and gnarled hickory, the prickly-balled "button-wood," the lowly mulberry and the majestic red oak and walnut. They had seemed friendly and pitying counselors, standing about her with arms intertwined. Now, with the rain weeping in sighing gusts through them, they offered her no comfort. She suddenly threw herself face down on the soaked moss.

"Oh, God!" she cried. "I love him so! And I had only that one evening. It doesn't seem just. If I could only have him, and suffer some other way! He's suffering, too, and it isn't our fault! We neither of us harmed anyone! He isn't responsible for what his father did—why, he hardly knew him! Oh, God, why must it be so hard for us? Millions of other people love each other and nothing separates them like this!"

Shirley's warm breath made a little fog against the star-eyed moss. She was scarcely conscious of her wet and clinging clothing, and the soaked strands of her hair. She was so wrapped in her desolation that she no longer heard the sound of the persevering rain and the wet swishing of the bushes—parting now to a hurried step that fell almost without sound on the spongy forest soil. She started up suddenly to see Valiant before her.

He was in a somewhat battered walking suit of brown khaki, with a leather belt and a felt hat whose brim, stiff with the wet, was curved down visor-wise over his brow. In an instant he had drawn her upright, and they stood, looking at each other, drenched and trembling.

"How can you?" he said with a roughness that sounded akin to anger. "Here in this atrocious weather—like this!" he laid a hand on her arm. "You're wet through."

"I—I don't mind the rain," she answered, drawing away, yet feeling with a guilty thrill the masterfulness of his tone, as well as its real concern. "I'm often wet."

His gaze searched her face, feature by feature, noting her pallor, the blue-black shadows beneath her eyes, the caught breath, uneven like a child's from crying. He still held her hands in his

"Shirley," he said, "I know what you intended to tell me by those flowers—I went to St. Andrew's that night, in the dark, after I read your letter. Who told you? Your—mother?"

"No, no!" she cried. "She would never have told me!"

His face lighted. With an irresistible movement he caught her to him. "Shirley!" he cried. "It shan't be! It shan't, I tell you! You can't break our lives in two like this! It's unthinkable."

"No, no!" she said piteously, pushing him from her. "You don't understand. You are a man, and men—can't."

"I do understand," he insisted. "Oh, my darling, my darling! It isn't right for that spectral thing to come between us! Why, it belonged to a past generation! However sad the outcome of that duel, it held no dishonor. I know only too well the ruin it brought my father! It's enough that it wrecked three lives. It shan't rise again, like Banquo's ghost to haunt ours! I know what you think—I would love you the more, if I could love you more, for that sweet loyalty—but it's wrong, dear. It's wrong!"

"It's the only way."

"Listen. Your mother loves you. If she knew you loved me, she would bear anything rather than have you suffer like this. You say she wouldn't have told you herself. Why, if my father—"

She tore her hands from his and faced him with a cry. "Ah, that is it! You knew your father so little. He was never to you what she is to me. Why, I've been all the life she has had. I remember when she mended my dolls, and held me when I had scarlet fever, and sang me the songs the trees sang to themselves at night. I said my prayers at her knee till I was twelve years old. We were never apart a day till I went away to school."

She paused, breathless. "Doesn't that prove what I say?" he said, bending toward her. "She loves you far better than herself. She wants your happiness."

"Could that mean hers?" she demanded, her bosom heaving. To see us together—always—always! To be reminded in everything—the lines of your face—the tones of your voice, maybe—that! Oh, you don't know how women feel—how they remember—how they grieve! I've gone over all you can say till my soul cries out, but it can't change it. It can't!

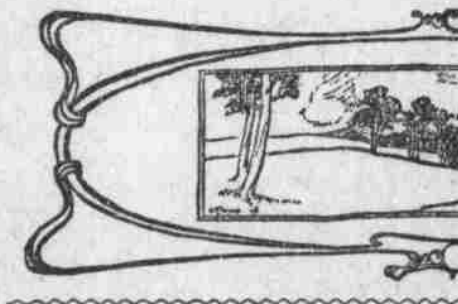
Valiant felt as though he were battering with bruised knuckles at a stone wall. A helpless anger shimmered in him. "Suppose," he said bitterly, "that your mother one day, perhaps after long years, learns of your sacrifice. She is likely to guess in the end, I think. Will it add to her pleasure, do you fancy, to discover that out of this conception of filial loyalty—for it's that, I suppose—you have spoiled your own life?"

She shuddered. "She will never learn," she said brokenly. "Oh, I know she would not have spoken. She would suffer anything for my happiness. But I wouldn't have her bear any more for my sake."

His anger faded suddenly, and when he looked at her again, tears were burning in his eyes.

"Shirley!" he said. "It's my heart, too, that you are binding on the wheel! I love you. I want nothing but you! I'd rather beg my bread from door to door with your hand in mine than sit on a throne without you! What can there be in life for me unless you share it? Think of our love! Think of the fate that brought me here to find you in Virginia! Think of our garden—where I thought we would live and work and dream, till we were old and gray—together,

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



#### EFFICIENCY IN "NEWS STYLE"

Columns of the Modern Journal Contain, It Is Claimed, the Best of English Phrasing.

It is seldom that a good word is said in academic circles for what is termed "newspaper English," meaning the terse, trenchant style in which the best journalists are in the habit of expressing themselves. The College of Journalism, however, recognizes the value of this style, and Prof. F. W. Beekman, a well-known educator, says:

"With all its faults I still believe in the news style as the most efficient style of this modern day of presenting information through the written word. It has been hammered out in the heat and stress of newspaper work to meet the demands of the millions for something to compel their attention, interest them and give them information in the quickest, clearest way possible." There is much truth in this, but not

all the truth. So-called "newspaper English" has left its indelible mark on the literature and especially the fiction of our times. The most successful stories are those told in the fewest words. The old-fashioned flowing periods, which produced verbal melody instead of recording facts, have lost their charm for novel readers, whose eager brains are anxious to absorb the tale rather than linger over "fine writing."

Will Lecture in America. Celestin Demblon, whose books endeavor to prove that the plays attributed to Shakespeare were written by Lord Rutland, will come to this country to lecture on his theory. He is deputy and professor of literature at Brussels university.

Asks Little of Himself. "Gadson is a man whose distinguishing trait is self-approval." "I understand now why everybody says he is easy to please."

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Evening of an Old Score. Rat-tat-tat-tat!—Major Bristow's ivory-headed camphor-wood stick thumped on the great door of Damory court. The sound had a tang of impatience, for he had used the knocker more than once without result. Now he strode to the end of the porch and raised his voice in a stentorian bellow that brought Uncle Jefferson shuffling around the path from the kitchens with all the whites of his eyes showing.

"You dog-gone lazy rascal!" thundered the major. "What do you mean, sah, by keeping a gentleman cooling his heels on the door-step like a tax-collector? Where's your master?"

"Fo' de Lawd, Major, Ah ain't seen Mars' John sence dis mawnin'. Staht out aftah breakfas' en he nevoh showed up ergin et all. Yo' reckon whut de mattah, suh?" he added anxiously. "Peahs lak sumpin' preyin' on he mind. Don' seem er bit hese'f lately."

"H-m-m!" The major looked thoughtful. "Isn't he well?"

"No, suh. Ain't et no mor'n er humin-budd dese las' few days. Jes' hangs aroun' wholesome lak. Don' laugh no mo', don' sing no mo'. Ain' play de pianny sence de day aftah de ball. Me en Daph moght'y pestered 'bout him."

"Pshaw!" said the major. "Tough of spring fever, I reckon. Aunt Daph feeds him too well. Give him less fried chicken and more ash-ake and buttermilk. Make him some juleps."

The old negro shook his head. "Moghty neah use up all dat mint-baid Ah foun'." he said, "but ain' do no good. Majah, Ah's sho' feahed sumpin' gwine ter happen."

"Nonsense!" the major sniffed. "What fool idea's got under your wool now? Been seeing Mad Anthony again, I'll bet a dollar."

Uncle Jefferson swallowed once or twice with seeming difficulty and turned the gravel with his toe. "Dat's so," he said gloomily. "Ah done see de old man de yuddah day 'bout et. An'ty, he know! He see trouble er-comin' en trouble er-gwine. Dat same night de hen-shoe drop offen de stable do', en dis ve'y mawnin' er buhd done fly inter de house. Das' er mighty bad hoodoo, er mighty bad hoodoo!"

"Shucks!" said the major. "You're as loony as old Anthony, with your infernal signs. If your Mars' John's been out all day I reckon he'll turn up before long. I'll wait for him a while." He started in, but paused on the threshold. "Did you say—that mint was all gone, Unc' Jefferson?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

