

**Beacon Light
of Love**

By R. B. Forsyth

Contd. from page 40

better go way altogether, we really don't need anything and I'm too busy to interview tramps."

Can't I do as I please in my own house?" he asked. "I'm the new master."

Marie ran down the hall. A door slammed, a series of giggles from the farther side and the housekeeper, staid, self-possessed and penetrating of gaze, stood before him.

"You are Mr. Summers, I suppose. Mr. Wilson telephoned that the new owners would take possession soon."

Vistas of big rooms swam before him. There did not seem to be a friendly face in the building. Even the big grandfather's clock in the hallway seemed to share the hauteur and iciness of the surroundings.

"Shall I show you to your rooms?" the footman interjected. "You will find things comfortable, sir, and I hope to your liking," and with a grand bow, he was gone, leaving Jake alone upstairs.

A little later a servant came into the room to turn on the lights, and Jake blinked at the unaccustomed glare. Through the window the city below looked a great panorama of light. Swiftly moving motor busses dashed across a bridge to his right, finding their way about like minnows in a stream. He wondered what Elspeth was doing. Would she remember to water the strawberry plants? Wee shrivelled things that were hardly holding the life in themselves. And Meg, rollicking, boisterous Meg, what would he not give for her company at this moment?

The evening wore slowly on. He had been shown his sleeping apartment and his head sought the pillows, but not to sleep. Elspeth had told him not to muss things up; the bed was so fussy in its frills and furbelows, he hardly dared touch it. Ten, eleven, twelve, one, the clock in the hall struck with unfailing regularity. Then two came and went.

"I wonder if Elspeth is lonesome, and Meg just a wearyin' Elspeth," he quavered, with trembling lips. Three! pealed the clock in the hall.

He could stand it no longer. He flung on his clothes as fast as his trembling hands would allow.

"I'm coming right back, Elspeth, fortune, or no fortune," he muttered, as he slid carefully down the stairway. The door swung closed behind him on carefully balanced hinges, as he stepped through the portico, overrun with roses, into the night. He plucked one in passing. It pricked his finger in the picking—just like wealth, he thought.

The street was almost deserted. Fortunately, he remembered the turns in the avenue. He scarcely glanced back at the big, silent house behind him. A little cottage overrun with vines held his thoughts far closer. A wearied, much-spent old Jake climbed the steps of the in-to-town car a few minutes later. His face was pathetically tired, the wrinkles deeper than ever, but the wonderful "homing" look in his eyes was beautiful to see.

CHAPTER III.

The morning ferry was slowly making its way down the lake. It was almost deserted as the traffic of the day had not yet begun.

"Pears to me there's a man passenger, Meg," Elspeth remarked, straining her eyes down the lake.

"They're comin' in here, granny. Is things fit for the guvner?"

Elspeth looked across the water gleaming blue in the morning sun.

"I can't understand it, child, it looks for all the world like Jake, but it can't be. He ain't much more than there." Then, quickly, "but it is—it is—it's Jake himself, come back!"

He struggled quickly ashore and two very foolish old folks, each with the true light of love in eyes and face, fell silently into each other's arms.

"I've been to see it, wife," he choked, when he had begun to regain his breath.

"It's worse nor Windsor Castle with so much style and fixins'. It ain't like home."

Home! Such a small mighty word! "I reckon the good Lord meant us to stay. He knows best," Elspeth said,

through her tears, as they walked arm in arm, like the lovers they were, back to the cottage.

And again the seagull, wheeling in its flight, paused ever so little to utter its cheery greeting. The fresh sea odors drifted across the sands, ribbed by the play of many waves and the morning-glory, tossed saucily by the wind, with rows of roguishly petalled child faces, smiled its welcome to the prodigal returned.

Educating the Children

Says a keen observer of human nature, I know a Christian woman, so pure, so consistent, that in heaven she will be so near the throne that I cannot catch a glimpse of her, and yet that woman unwittingly by her traditions made void the Commandments of God. One day from the breast of her dead daughter she lifted a little child, a baby boy, fatherless and motherless. And in that hour the commandment of God came to her. "Take this child and nurse him for Me." The child grew. She fed him; she clothed him; she loved him; she sent him to Sunday school and to the day school. What though her hands grew sometimes tired, and her eyes ached at night sewing on his little garments? Was he not her boy? Bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh? Ah! but she forgot that she was seventy years old and he was only seven. She forgot that he, with his youthful restfulness, wanted something beside the primer and the Bible. And when he grew older and brought home his little games, she didn't believe in checkers; she didn't believe in chess; she didn't believe in games. And what was the result? He said to me when I talked to him: "Mr. Dowling, I must have amusement. If I bring these things home they are put in the fire." And when he found he could not have these things at home, he did just what your son is doing, though you may not know it. He went where he could have them. And ere long it was the old story. Sunday school forgotten; church forgotten. And the very woman who would have given her heart's blood for him forgotten. And when she came to me, tottering on her staff, her head bent, and the grey locks falling on her temples, throbbing in sorrow, and said, "What shall I do for my boy?" how I longed to tell her of her mistake; but it was too late.

At a camp-meeting where hats were used as collection-baskets, the preacher said: "Let us sing while the hats are coming in." The pianist, after some fumbling with the pages, turned to him and said: "I can't find it." "Beg pardon," said the preacher, not understanding. "Why," replied the pianist, "I can't find that song, 'While the hats are coming in,' in my book."

Deacon Saved the Situation

At a meeting of ministers, one speaker said of a certain resolution:

"It was, perhaps, unintelligible, like a certain man's prayer of which I have heard."

"This man, praying in the meeting for a brother who lay very ill, cried:

"O Lord, restore unto us our brother, if it does not interfere with Thy perquisites."

"The situation was saved by a deacon who shouted:

"Hallelujah, the Lord knows what he means!"

Tramp—"Yes, lady, it was awful! I heard the chug-chug of the motor and smelt the petrol. I made a spring, but wasn't quick enough, and the roaring machine passed over me prostrate form."

Housewife—"And you live to tell the tale?"

Tramp (shuffling away).—"Yes, lady, it was an aeroplane."

Old Lady (pushing her way into the crowd).—"What's the matter, constable?"

Constable—Cat run over by a tram-car."

Old Lady—"How sad! Was the cat on the line?"

Constable (fed up with asinine inquiries).—"No, mum: tram chased it up a tree."

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