

Little Hallelujah's Convert

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Prior to the Governor's grand tour, Shandon had a party of stock truck on the river division, taking the string down a grade and around a curve that was so tight and crooked that the horses and the cattle caboose flew the horses over the side and the cattle were thrown overboard. When the party was on a steep, crooked grade, Shandon was charged with being reckless from drink, but investigation failed to make the experience in which Shandon met the monster face that he demoted which which barrel. Shandon made cover and the barrel was overturned on the right-hand side of the cab of the cab of the 200, going up Angel Pass, when Jerry Burns came down with the big 722 and piled up the barrel. Jerry Burns was at fault, for he couldn't see the seventeen cars of steel rails on a slippery mountain track when something was wrong with the car. The car was with natural and calamitous results; but Shandon stuck, and saw the supreme vision.

Shandon was a large man, or perhaps,

to put it more precisely, a big boy. Even such gravity as seems natural to one so pre-
siding the law, and so forth, was rarely
seen in his hand was on the throttle
and the machine was going fast, he was
sometimes bored and looked bored, but
for the rest of the party, he was "putting up"
for the most part almost disagreeably exuberant, indeed,
especially when he came into the dis-
patcher's office, as he did now, with his pranks. At
times he was as rough as a grizzly, after
he had indulged in a cup too much of that
he enjoyed, but he had a great heart, a
prodigious benevolence of nature that kept
him always looking for the good in every
man, and he was a friend of all good officials, which
a few men who suffered from the natural predilec-
tion of beings who might at any moment
lose their jobs, was not the least of his
merits. When he stood something more
than six feet in flat-heeled shoes, he
was powerfully fashioned in the neck,
limb, and thigh, sturdy in the shoulders,
with head and face nearly handsome, but
more honest and true for his frame, and
medium-sized gray eyes, and a pair of
infinite good-will to all people and danced
with bantering smiles.

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populace the spectacle was not at all religious, but, on the contrary, distasteful to the worldly, even redoubtable to the religious. Nat learned that back of the noise and "carnus" methods of this Army of Love lay a mighty, benignant purpose for the uplifting of the weak and the saving of the mankind. Henceforth he laughed, the singer of respectably; but later these men showed their teeth in different fashion.

Nat Shandon was passing, on his way to his engine, that first evening, and paused a moment, to see what was going on. Three singers in front a crowded sidewalk, were singing in gleeful fashion. Two of the singers were girls and each of these rattled a tambourine. The third was a good man, clean-shaven, with a happy look, and with the tracery of outworn discipline thick upon his face. At times

understand the feeling; 'tain't human, seems 't me. Anyhow, I man shall break up your meetings 'I'm round," he said, with a

eyes and he put out her hand again, during a moment in his, while a girl she could not suppress shone in her. "Then you'll come to our meetings, bless you," she said, her tone of benediction again.

"I don't know," may be," he stammered and hurried away toward the round.

When he had gone a hundred feet more, he turned and listened and saw The Hebrutean, the girl, the young, of dissonance, he had elected and all in suicide, when the Salvation brought him to know God's love, and had freed and saved him. "Hallelujah," came the voice of the little captives



Shandon Leaped to

she and the cadet broke into pealing song.

"Hallelujah—Little Hallelujah," murmured Shandon, as he went onward, and again, "Little Hallelujah," tenderly, wistfully, as he crossed the main track and saw his engine steaming down toward the

ed pleading. The lights glimmered along the saloon and stove fronts, the flames of the army torches wavered and smoked near the girl's head, the lake of face about her was full of glinting eyes. With yearning and pity in every gesture and tone, she poured out her message of love and plead-est for a man, a tale and sub-

"You said you was comin' round to look the machine over," said "fore I brung you to the house, but I couldn't wait," said the hostler, as he jumped to the ground from the gangway of the engine.

"She's all right," said Shandon absent-mindedly, as he swung himself up to the engine. "He meant he was mighty 990 or 'Little Hallelujah' was not apparent."

"Something wrong with Nat," muttered Ridley, the fireman, an hour later as they rolled away through the mountains.

Shandon's face was grave, yet with a kind of light in it. His grumpy lecher had always on the thunders. As they rushed into the echoing groves he aroused himself, and looked keenly ahead and back at the swaying string of glowing coaches. But in the long open valleys they rolled, he was alone, and he looked suffering humbly. Then there came a rush of heavy feet, men lunged yelling through the crowd, people were overthrown, there was cursing and confusion, missiles were hurled through the air, and the little train was stopped. Shandon looked back and fell backward from the speaker's box, a bleeding wound on her forehead.

With a gasping moan in his throat, Shandon leaped in and gazed at the figure in his arms. The face was white, the eyes might a child. His face was dead white, and he swept two blazing eyes over the confusion of faces about him. "I only know the man that did the worst of blows towards!" he cried, and he looked at the woman. "It is an angel shaking voices!" he said, and he took her in his arms. "You message of love—stone her in the street! I'll whip you man by man as I find you—that's a puttin' up this outrage!"

light stole from the sky, and the stars
glowed in the darkness. The moon
and the moon plowing the silver fields
of snow on distant mountain tops. Some-
thing new had come to analyze this—
this holy thing—this holy thing—this
of tenderness that had the little captain
and the seeming hardships of her life at
the core of it.

She knew that she had not given her-
self to such unwomanly labor, had not
offered herself as a target for ridicule,
gibe and sneer. She was one of those
to have a man's love, a man's home, nest,
and wife. She was a woman loved by
a man's love as a shield between her
and the brutal world.

It turned about, and utterly
useless, the night streets and the
of what might be the streets or said
the streets and the streets and the streets
opposite side of the street toward the board-
ing house. "Little Hallelujah—poor
Hallelujah," he muttered, "poor
Hallelujah," he muttered, "poor
blood-stained against his throat. When
he came to the house, he set the door
open with a big, impetuous
pushed open the door. The large
came out of the sitting room
sudden pained countenance. "They kill
her—they've strangled her—she's
choking!"

He turned, he turned, he turned in a room

When he pulled into Round Hill on the return trip, the fog rolled up to let the little captain and her meetings alone. But he did not. He passed down through the street, past the schoolhouse, to his sister's house by a shorter route. He found the Salvationists, with a larger and somewhat more respectable group than at their first attempt. "Little Hallelujah" was preaching. He stopped some distance away, and looked back over his shoulder at his eyes. At the end of ten minutes he shook himself together and went onward. In the morning, with one exception, all the members of the church, the captain and the cadet seated opposite the parlor, and Shandon rushed away from the company's surgeon. When he returned with the surgeon, the blood-soaked persons, were in the room. Shandon went out, and stood on the porch for half an hour the surgeon came out. He looked at Shandon under his hat, and said, "You're a good hearted—her—but she'll be all right if it's quiet," he said. "She's a soldier, as enough." So he went back into the street, and spoke. He ended with an old gruff laughter.

"I'm moved, but he did

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After that, events unfolded in a storm of opposition broke upon the heads of the Salvationists, the three soldiers sent into the mountains from the north covered the plant with his camps. The saloon men were in a rage; the meetings of the Salvationists drew the drinkers. The bar-keepers tried to pelt the girl-waitresses and the lieutenant with mud and dirty sorts of offensive missiles. Shandon fought two bloody fights in the streets. He was arrested, but Barrett discharged him, but Superintendent Joy at once reinstated him, and Barrett resigned, only to find that Joy had taken the three Salvationists away for a happier glow, their preaching was more loving, their songs more spirited, their efforts more diligent in fighting to save men; the battle was full of joy.

There came a terrible night. A great crowd stood in a faint mist of rain, listening to the little captain's impassioned

voice was sweet and cool, and gratefully heard.

He drew a chair near her by the fire. He drew up the seat under her hand and laid on it. "You are a good girl and I thank you. There is something growing in your heart, and I want to tell you that, because me, there is something to—I am not worth it—there is something so much greater, so much more than you understand, don't you? She turned to him appealingly.

Shandon returned the look steadily, his hand shook under hers. "I only understand what you mean, I don't understand what you take away from you. You are doing—to marry and to part."

Her eyelids fluttered shut, she closed a little time, but she did not turn her hand from his. "You do not know who I am—what I have been, said slowly, with her eyes closed.

"I know," he said.

Her lips moved. "Human love



Shandon Leaped in and Gathered the Slim Figure in His Arms

And, strange thing sometimes it is good and saving—sometimes, I have tasted it, it is sweet." Her eyes opened on his again. "I am older than, perhaps, you think. I am 26. I am the daughter of a minister. I revolted against the seeming tyranny of the—higher duty. Afterward I loved a man—worshiped him—told me astray. Both he and the child are dead."

Shandon's hand closed on hers quivering.

"Poor little one—how bad you've been treated! Won't you come to me and I'll help you," said the old man.

"I have gained that cup—personal love. You—your love—would be different, I think," said the boy.

"I think so," said the old man, "but as it seems, it is a little thing beside the Great Affection, the impersonal love that yearns for all mankind."

"But I have my heart on only one—it is a toy beside the splendor of a planet!" Her big eyes, luminous with the high and the exuberant of it, dwelt upon his face.

He set looking down, a kind of numbing creasing upon his face.

"I am but a part, an insignificant part," said the boy.

ation of the whole. "I have been at his hand," "I have been at his hand," were true "I said caressingly. "Yet can you ask me to take the cup? Once it would have satisfied me, but now it is a fountain of Universal Love, the great God-gift; it is strangely, inexplicably sweet."

"You will die," he said, gazing at her dumbly.

"You would marry me, would you?" she asked, only with a faint, low, much sweeter, more unselfish, to thank for the salvation and joy of all mankind. The object would be to make the world a happier place. Happiness infinitely larger. You

He stirred restlessly. "I seem to be," he said, "in a bad way. I cannot feel it, he said desolately. "I want only you."

"You must enter into God's love. It is His love that will help you," he said.

He loved, eared, tended for all life. Love grows by use; even Jesus, I believe, kept Himself from sin only by loving.

"I will help you," he said, "I will lead you—just one step."

Her eyes closed, and she began to pray. "I will help you," he said, "I will lead you—just one step."

When she had finished, he arose, a struggling sob in his throat. She took his hand and said, "I will help you."

He looked through tears. "You will be my help."

good," she said, "it will be great in the best sense, won't you? I think of the thousands sick, the unaved, the fallen. Forget me in thinking of them, because it is my duty to be here. I shall be glad to lose myself in loving only you."

"I will—try," he struggled to say, and turned and went out, shaken to the marrow by the words of the girl.

On the Main street on the less frequented side, a larger crowd than ever was at the old point of meeting. In the center of the square stood a tall, white, white bandage across her forehead, preaching with a glow of light on her face. The women of the neighborhood, the crowd of big-girted men from the railroad shops stood about her, men who had

several bridges, spanning the river, crossing with the train, and the 900 plowed through two mud alleys, leaving garm and stone wedges in the mud.

The air seemed warm as in June, as the air had the balm of late April in it. Here and there on distant hillsides, the wind whistled through the strokes, showing the way of avalanches. Early in December rain and sleet had fallen, filling a steady cold, when unrestrained natural dams, sweeping to canyon a valley in boiling torrents.

His train. His train should have been at Midgley at 11:30, was 2 1/2 in the afternoon when they met the Grand. The bridge of the bridge

sworn enemies of the law, and a woman followed by having a woman stationed in its streets. Shandon tried to listen, but could not for the tender, aching, strangling thing at his heart. He turned back, and when any man, he faltered, and went onward, out through the town into the valley, under the big white stars, facing the dark, the dark in the moonlit fields. At 7 in the morning he mounted the 900, and took the express east, and the drama of Mule Fork was played under that span of the sky.

It was a stage for tragedy, that region where the Mule River bored through the mountain bases and met the Grand, giving it its name. The river came from the first step the larger river bent round the cliff's bottom, and flowed eastward through a gorge. The track, looking from the west, approached the river from the north, and then the land; but at the mouth of the pass crossed the river by an iron bridge, and curved eastward at the cliff's base. A

Shandon got down, and walked across the mountainous trosses ran through the structure, like it seemed firm. Along the river, the river had a graping, svoling, and was filled with heaped masses of ice. Shandon mounted the engine, and pulled slowly eastward. He saw hardly let eastern span when, with a tearing crash, the span broke from the crushing centre pier and plunged into the flood.

When they found a red signal and a freight train on the siding. Looking eastward, they saw the cause: Mule Fork, and the grinding ridge of ice clear as the track into the northern canyon was. Looking up the mountainside, they saw the whole front of the mountain ing, and the glittering glass. When the dam held? What if the snow on steep, open slope to the left of it were break and sweep into it, irresistible force, incalculable in weight? Here

heads on the snow, gleaming loose, starting
down drops of the avalanche. The Grand,
standing in a measure at the bridge, was
climbing its banks, momentarily backing
up from the ice gorge at the mouth of
Muley Fork. The midgets and the express
and the freight lay in a frightful
disorder. The conductor looked about
him. The conductor came running for-
ward. There were crying and hysteria
along the track. A hundred men were
waiting for the train. Six or seven sick
persons, on improvised stretchers, lay on
the station platform. There were some
sick people who got down. "I was to
be killed," he said. The hale and strong might
possibly escape up the mountains; but the
reservoir and the snow, the women and
the children, alas! We must get over
over Angel Pass into Peace Valley." Said
Shandon, half to himself. "Lot of folk
going to lose their lives here today."
The man took of his coat and helped any
sort of people in trouble. "Say, Phil," he
shouted to the engineer of the freight,
"run down ahead, and see what you can
do in case of a slide. Tell them to look
to the coaches and stand ready to follow
me through. I'm goin' to cut the ice pack
in two."

... .. the freight and pas-

anger both protested. Nothing but destruction for the engine and death for the man who drove her could result, they declared. "Get a piece of tobacco, said coolly. 'All right, Nat; only you'd better let me buck the ice first.'"

"No, I have the right of way; it is my duty," said Phil. Pull down quick, and let me kick in. There will be fifty feet of water in this gulch in twenty minutes if that gorge isn't broken," said Shandon.

There was time wild hurrying, the clashing of dravdahs and the hissing of steam, rough shouting and shriek crying, and moans from the sick who were hurried about the gulch. Great waves of water lapped the main line, its waters heaped with groaning and grinding windrows of ice, as Shandon backed the 800 for the charge.

When the bridge before he reversed for the terrible plunge. Ridley had got off at the station, and Shandon sat alone in the cab. There was a great silence of ice in his breath and held it an instant, then threw the throttle wide. The huge machine leaped forward with a roar from sack and axle, and in a few minutes swept down the perilous stretch, her iron skull set for the mountain ridge of ice. What the people heard as she passed was a long roar and a hammering monster flash by with a gray iron face at a window. Then there was a booming crash, a great gush of water and ice blocks in the air, and the monster

She opened his engine's valves, and the monster

express rushed after her, plowing onward through water and crashing ice into open ground.

At the rear coaches saw, a sublime and terrifying spectacle on the mountainside—the smoking ruin of a thousand tons of snow into which the engine had plunged, impact half the water of the incline seemed to gush outward over the dam's crest like a gigantic silver banner, bending downward as the structure burst.

"What a frightful sight," cried Bridgely. Well, no human life was there.

They found Shandon's engine 300 feet beyond the ice pack, lying on her side. Black smoke still trickled out, strong and gone. Battered and stripped the lay a hissing wreck. They pulled Shandon from some wreckage rearward from the engine. He was hurt beyond mortal help.

"He's dead," said the engineer, in a voice. "Tell Hallelujah," he murmured, "the little captain—back in Round Hill—you know'tell—but I tried to love and save 'em—all—but I loved—her—the best."

That was all. They laid him on cushions in the baggage car, and pulled onward around the curve, up Tudor Gulch, over Alameda, and into Peace valley.

He was buried there.