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# THE BRETHREN

By RIDER HAGGARD

Author "King Solomon's Mines," "She," "Cleopatra," "Allan Quartermain," "The World's Desire," Etc.

much," replied Godwin. Then Wulf looked at him curiously and asked: "What have you seen?"

"If I told you, Wulf, you would not believe."

"Tell me, and I will say."

So Godwin told him all, and at the end asked him, "What think you?"

Wulf considered awhile, and answered: "Well, brother, you have touched no wine to-day, so you are not drunk, and you have done nothing foolish, so you are not mad. Therefore it would seem that the saints have been talking to you, or, at least, so I should think of any other man whom I knew to be as good as you are. Yet it is folk like you that see visions, and those visions are not always true."

"Sometimes, I believe, the devil is their showman. Our watch is ended, for I hear the horses of the knights who come to relieve us. Listen; this is my counsel. In the camp yonder is our friend with whom we traveled from Jerusalem, Egbert, the bishop of Nazareth, who marches with the host. Let us go to him and lay this matter before him, for he is a holy man and learned; no false, self-seeking priest."

Godwin nodded in assent, and presently, when the other knights were come and they had drunk their wine, he rose, took the keys of the tent, and leaving their horses in charge of a servant, entered.

Egbert was an Englishman who had spent more than thirty years of his life in the East, whereof the sun had tanned his wrinkled face to the hue of bronze, that seemed the darker in contrast with his blue eyes and snow-white hair and beard. Entering the tent, he found him at his prayers before a little image of the Virgin, and stood with bowed head until he had finished. Presently he rose, and greeting them with a blessing, asked them what they needed.

"Your counsel, holy father," answered Wulf. "Godwin, set out your tale."

So, having seen that the tent flap was closed and that none lingered near, Godwin drew him to the side of the old man listened patiently, nor did he seem surprised at this strange story, since in those days men saw—or thought they saw—many such visions, which were accepted by the Church as true.

When he had finished Godwin asked of him as he had asked of Wulf: "What think you, holy father? Is this a dream, or is it a message? And if so, from whom comes the message?"

"Godwin D'Arcy," he answered, "in my youth I knew your father. It was he who showed him when he lay dying of his wounds, and a noble soul never passed from earth to heaven. After you had left Damascus, when you were the guest of Saladin, we dwelt together in the same lodging in Jerusalem, and together we traveled here, during which time I learned to know you also as the worthy servant of a worthy sire—no dissolute knight, but a true servant of the Church. It will be that to such a one as you foresight has been given, that through you those who rule us may be warned, and all Christendom saved from great sorrow and disgrace. Come; let us go to the king, and tell this story, for he still sits in council yonder."

So they went out together and rode to the royal tent. Here the bishop was admitted, leaving them without. Presently he turned and beckoned to them, and as they passed, the guards whispered to them:

"A strange council, sirs, and a fatal!"

Already it was near midnight, but still the great pavilion was crowded with barons and chief captains who sat in groups, or at round tables, and made of boards placed upon tripods. At the head of that table sat the king, Guy of Lusignan, a weak-faced man, clad in splendid armour. On his right was the white-haired Count Raymond of Tripoli, and on his

left the black-bearded, frowning master of the Templars, clad in his white mantle on the left breast of which the red cross was visible. Words had been running high, their faces showed it, but just then a silence reigned as though the disputants were weary, and the king leaned back in his chair, passing his hand to and fro across his forehead. He looked up, and seeing the bishop, asked peevishly:

"What is it now? Oh! I remember, some tale from those tall twin knights. Well, bring them forward and speak it out, for we have no time to lose."

So the three of them came forward, and at Godwin's prayer the bishop Egbert told of the vision that had come to him not more than an hour ago while he kept watch upon the mountain top. At first one or two of the barons seemed disposed to laugh, but when they looked at Godwin's high and spiritual face, their laughter died

away, for it did not seem wonderful to them that such a man should see visions. Indeed, as the tale of the rocky hill and the dead who were stretched on the anvil, they grew white with fear, and whilst of them all was the king, Guy of Lusignan.

"Is all this true, Sir Godwin?" he asked when the bishop had finished.

"It is true, my lord king," answered Godwin.

"His lord is not enough," broke in the Master of the Templars. "Let him swear to it on the Holy Rood, knowing that if he lies it will blast his soul to all eternity." And the council muttered, "Ay, let him swear."

Now there was an annex to the tent, rudely furnished as a chapel, and at the end of this annex, a well-wooded object, Rufinus, the bishop of Acre, who was clad in the armour of a knight, went to the object, and drawing the veil, revealed a broken, blackened cross, set around with jewels, that stood about the height of a man above the ground, for all the lower part was gone.

At the sight of it Godwin and every man present there fell upon his knees, for since St. Helena found it, over seven centuries before, this had been accounted the most precious relic in all Christendom; the very wood upon which the Saviour suffered, as, indeed, it may have been. Millions had worshipped it, tens of thousands had died for it, and now, in the hour of this great struggle between Christ and the false prophet, it was brought from its shrine, that was been visible in battle, it might prove invisible in battle. Soldiers who fought around the very Cross could not be defeated, they said, for, if need were, legions of angels would come to aid them.

Godwin and Wulf stared at the relic with wonder, fear, and adoration. There were the nail marks, there was the place where the scroll of Pilate had been affixed above the holy head—almost could they seem to see that Form divine and dying.

"Now," broke in the voice of the Master of the Templars, "let Sir Godwin D'Arcy swear to the truth of his tale upon this Rood."

Rising from his knees Godwin advanced to the Cross, and laying his hand upon the wood, said:

"Upon the very Rood I swear that not more than an hour ago I saw a vision which was told to me by the king's highness, and to all that I believe this vision was sent to me in answer to my prayer to preserve our host and the holy city from the power of the Saracens, and that it is a true

revelation of what was come about should we advance upon the Sultan, I can say no more. I swear, knowing that if I lie eternal damnation is my doom."

The bishop drew back the covering over the Cross, and in silence, the council took their seats again about the table. Now the king was very pale, and his face indeed a gloom lay upon all of them.

"It would seem," he said, "that here a messenger has been sent to us from heaven. Dare we disobey his message?"

The Grand Templar lifted his rugged, frowning face.

"A messenger from heaven, said you, king? To me he seems more like a messenger from Saladin. Tell us, Sir Godwin, were not you and your brother once the Sultan's guests at Damascus?"

"That is so, my lord Templar. We left before the war was declared."

"And," went on the Master, "were you not officers of the Sultan's body-guard?"

Now all looked intently at Godwin, who hesitated a little, proceasing how his answer would be read, whereon Wulf spoke in his loud voice:

"Ay, we acted as such for awhile, and—doubtless you have heard the story—saved Saladin's life when he was attacked by the Assassins."

"Oh!" said the Templar, with bitter sarcasm, "you saved Saladin's life, did you? I can well believe it. You, being Christians, who above everything should desire the death of Saladin, saved his life! Now, Sir Knights, answer me one more question."

"Sir Templar, with my tongue or with my sword?" broke in Wulf, but the king held up his hand and bade him be silent.

"A truce to your tavern ruffing, young sir, and answer," went on the Templar. Or, rather, do you answer, the daughter of Sir Andrew D'Arcy, a niece of Saladin, and has she been created by him princess of Baalbec, and is she at this moment in his city at Damascus?"

"She is his niece," answered Godwin quietly, "and the princess of Baalbec, but at this moment she is not in Damascus."

"How do you know that, Sir Godwin?"

"I know it because in the vision of which you have been told I saw her sleeping in a tent in the camp of Saladin."

Now the council began to laugh, but Godwin, with a set, white face, went on:

"Ay, my lord Templar, and near that very blazoned tent I saw scores of the Templars and of the Hospitaliers lying dead. Remember it when the dreadful hour comes and you see them also."

Now the laughter died away, and a murmur of fear ran round the board, amidst such words as "Wizardry," "He has learnt it from the Paynim," "A black Sorcerer, without doubt."

Only the Templar, who feared neither man nor spirit, laughed, and gave him the lie with his eyes.

"You do not believe me," said Godwin, "nor will you believe me when I say that while I was on guard on yonder hill-top I saw you wrangling with the Count of Tripoli—ay, and draw your sword and dash it down in front of him upon this very table."

Now again the council stared and muttered, for they too had seen this; but the Master answered:

"He may have learnt it otherwise than from an angel. Folk have been in and out of this tent, my lord king, have we more time to waste upon the visions of a knight of whom all know for certain that he lies like a liar, he has been in the service of Saladin, which they left, he says, in order to fight against him in this war? It may be so; it is not for us to judge; though were the times different I would inform against Sir Godwin D'Arcy as a sorcerer, and one who has been in treasonous communication with our common foe."

"And I would thrust the lie down your throat with my sword's point!" shouted Wulf.

But Godwin only shrugged his shoulders and said nothing, and the Master went on, taking the Templar's words as his own:

"King, we await your word, and it must be spoken soon, for in four hours it will be dawn. Do we march against Saladin like bold, Christian men, or do we blide here like cowards?"

Then Count Raymond of Tripoli rose, and said:

"Before you answer, king, hear me, if it for the last time, who an old in war and know the Saracens. My town of Tiberias is sacked; my yassals have been put to the sword by thousands; my wife is imprisoned in her citadel, and soon must yield, if she be not rescued; you, and you, and you, the barons here assembled, better so than that you should advance across the desert to attack Saladin. Leave Tiberias to its fate and my wife with it, I save your army, which is the last of the Christians of the East. Christ has no more of us in these lands, Jerusalem has no other shield. The army of the Sultan is larger than yours; his cavalry are more skilled. Turn his flank—or, better still, bide here and await his attack, and victory will be to the soldiers of the Cross. Advance and the vision of that knight at whom you scoff will come true, and the cause of Christendom be lost in Syria. I have spoken, and for the last time."

"Like his friend the knight of 'Visions,' sneered the Grand Master, "the count Raymond is an old ally of Saladin. Will you take such coward counsel? On—on! and smite these heathen dogs, or be forever shamed. On, in the name of the Cross! The Cross is with us!"

"Ay," answered Raymond, "for the last time."

Then there arose a tumult through which every man shouted, and his fellow, some saying one thing and some another, while the king sat at the head of the board, his face hidden in his hands. Presently he lifted it, and said:

"I command that we march at dawn. If the count Raymond and these brethren think the words I have said, let them leave us and remain here under guard until the issue be known."

Now followed a great silence, for all there knew that the words were fateful, in the midst of which count Raymond said:

"Nay, I go with you," while Godwin echoed, "And we go also to show whether or not we are the spies of Saladin."

Of these speeches none of them seemed to take heed, for all were lost in their own thoughts. One by one they rose, bowed to the king, and left the tent to give their commands and rest awhile, before it was time to ride. Godwin and Wulf went also, and with them the bishop of Nazareth, who wrung his hands and seemed ill at ease. But Wulf comforted him, saying:

"Grieve no more, father; let us think of joy of battle, not of the sorrow by which it may be followed."

"I find no joy in battles," answered the holy Egbert.

When they had slept awhile, Godwin and Wulf rose and fed their horses. After they had washed and groomed them, they tested and did on their armour, then took them down to the spring to drink their fill, as their masters did. Also Wulf, who was cutting in the forest, the king's horse, the wineskins which he had provided against this hour, and filling them with pure water, fastened two of them with thongs behind the saddle of Godwin and two behind his own. Further, he filled the water-bottles at their saddles, saying:

"At least we will be among the last to die of thirst."

Then they went back and watched the host break its camp, which it did with no light heart, for many of them knew of the danger in which they followed the king. As they did so, the Templars, five hundred strong, came up, a fierce and gallant band, and the Master, who was at their head, saw the brethren and called out, pointing to the wineskins which were hung behind their saddles:

"What do these water-carriers here among brave knights who trust in God alone?"

Wulf would have answered, but Godwin bade him be silent, saying:

"Fall back; we will find less ill-omened company."

So they stood on one side and bowed themselves as the host went by, guarded by the mailed bishop of Acre. Then came Reginald of Chatillon, Saladin's enemy, the cause of all this woe, who saw them and cried:

"Sir Knights, whatever they may say, I know you for brave men, for I have heard the tale of your doings among the Assassins. There is room for you among my suite—follow me."

"As well him as another," said Godwin. "Let us go where we are led." So they followed him.

By the time that the army reached Kenna, where once the water was made warm, the July sun was already hot, and the spring was so soon drunk dry that many men could get no water. On they pushed into the desert lands below, which lay between them and Tiberias, and were bordered on the right and left by hills. Now clouds of dust were seen moving across the plains, and the heart of them bodies of Saracen horsemen, which continually attacked the vanguard under count Raymond, and as continually retreated before they could be crushed, slaying many with their spears and arrows. Also these came round behind them, and charged the rearward, where marched the Templars and the light-armed troops named Turcopoles, and the band of Reginald de Chatillon, with which rode the brethren.

From noon till near sundown the long harassed line, broken now into fragments, struggled forward across the rough, stony plain, the burning heat upon their armour till the air danced about it as it does before a fire. Towards evening men and horses became exhausted, and the soldiers cried to their captains to lead them to water. But in that place there was no water.

The rearward fell behind, worn out with constant attacks that must be repelled in the burning heat, so that there was a great gap between it and the king who marched in the centre. Messages reached them to push on, but they could not, and at length camp was pitched in the desert near a place called Marescalca, and upon this camp Raymond and his vanguard were forced back. As Godwin and Wulf rode up, they saw him come in bringing his wounded with him, and heard him pray the king to push on and at all hazards to cut his way through to the king, where they might drink—ay, and heard the king say that he could not, since the soldiers would march no more that day. Then Raymond wrung his hands in despair and rode back to his men, crying aloud:

"Alas! alas! Oh! Lord God, alas! We are dead, and Thy Kingdom is lost!"

That night none slept, for all were athirst, and who can sleep with a burning throat? Now also Godwin and Wulf were no longer laughed at because of the water-skins they carried on their horses. Rather did great nobles come to them, and almost on their knees craved for the boon of a single cup. Having watered their horses sparingly from a bowl, they gave what they could, till at length only two skins remained, and one of these was split by a thief, who crept up and slashed it with his knife that he might drink while the water ran to waste. After this the brethren drew their swords and watched, swearing that they would kill any man who so much as touched the skin which was left.

All that long night through there arose a confused clamour from the camp, of which the burden seemed to be, "Water! Give us water!" while from without came the shouts of the

others crept up behind, seized his arms and dragged him to the ground.

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## DIED SUDDENLY OF HEART DISEASE.

How frequently does a head line similar to the above greet us in the newspapers. The rush, push and strenuousness of the American people has a strong tendency to lead up to valvular and other affections of the heart, attended by irregular action, palpitation, dizziness, smothered sensations and other distressing symptoms.

Three of the prominent ingredients of which Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is made are recommended by some of the leading writers on *Materia Medica* for the cure of just such cases. Golden Seal root, for instance, is said by the United States Dispensatory, a standard authority, "to impart tone and increased power to the heart's action."

Numerous other leading authorities represent Golden Seal as an unsurpassed tonic for the muscular system in general, and as the heart is almost wholly composed of muscular tissue, it naturally follows that it must be greatly strengthened by this superb, generic tonic. But probably the most important ingredient of "Golden Medical Discovery," so far as its marvelous cures of valvular and other affections of the heart are concerned, is Stone root, or *Collinsonia Can.*, Prof. Wm. Paine, author of Paine's Epitome of Medicine, says of a patient who was so much oppressed with valvular disease of the heart that his friends were obliged to carry him up stairs. He, however, gradually recovered under the influence of Collinsonia (medical principles extracted from Stone root), and is now attending to his business. Heretofore physicians knew of no remedy for the removal of so distressing and so dangerous a malady. With them it was all gross-work, and it fearfully retarded the progress of the cure. Collinsonia unquestionably affords relief in such cases, and in most instances effects a permanent cure.

Stone root is also recommended by Dr. Hale and Ellingwood, of Chicago, for valvular and other diseases of the heart. The latter says: "It is a heart tonic of direct and permanent influence."

"Golden Medical Discovery," not only cures serious heart affections, but is a most efficient general tonic and invigorator, strengthening the stomach, invigorating the liver, regulating the bowels and curing catarrhal affections in all parts of the system.

Dr. Pierce's Pellets cure Constipation.

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