The Free Press Short Story

ALICE DYAR RUBBELI

passed, feet following; but Mary Alice

did not hear. The screeching of a jay

world seemed bright and normal.

with greats, eating and chatting. Mary

"Not so very," she answered soberly.

moke. I suppose I was mistaken?"

caughter last year, and she clung

generally known in camp."

her home. Tried to throw herself into

Alice gravely. "I appreciate your con-

fidence." All inclination to smile had

lady!" she thought as she turned away.

"I hope you are coming to our morn-

ing service in the chapel!" Mr. Mason

Easter service? Never, never again,

of the cross that gleamed pure golden

against the infinitely clear and beautiful

sky. The rough stone walls hewn from

the rock of the mountain rose on a small

spur jutting from the path and overlooking not only the little settlement of tents

and cabins by the stream but the great

gorge itself into which the canon wid-

ened and the water plunged with a loud

roar of a falls over a steep rock preci-

pice Mary Alice did not pause to look.

but climbed on and on. The only thought

to penerate her mind was that no carer over climbed by her side, no beloved

nother watted for her to come home

Some one to come home to! Was not that the need of every human being? The

girl flung herself on the sun-warmed

grass of a gentle slope and buried her

She lost all sense of time It seemed

to her that hours had passed. The sun

was near the meridian when she slowly

Perfect quiet rested over the chapel

No sounds issued from the canon but

Alice paused by one of the harrow, deep-

mbrasured windows set in the walls of

stone and glanced inside. The plain

arnest-faced man was speaking from the

pulpit that was wreathed with cones and

wild flowers. The girl's gaze lingered

over the motionless, absorbed listeners

What held them? What gave their faces

that selfless look of peace? Abruptly her

heart plunged in her breast. The young

man in khaki mountain togs sitting by

the window on the farther side had his

face half turned from her; but she could

not mistake those firmly set shoulders,

he low dispason of the falls.

mard scals were well filled

redescended the trail

'They'd better have let her die."

the flames; wouldn't budge after the fire was saying to the young man's protests.

had happened in the night.

termined to be frank.

"Anything disturb you?"

HE night seemed endless. Mary | longer over the mystery, she dropped into Alice Paring could not sleep. She | sleep. Shortly before the first graying of turned and twisted under the the sky, for a third time horse and rider heavy blankets, breathed in deeply the cold, aromatic mountain air, and stared into the darkness until her eyes ached. Her body sched, too, from the arduous four-mile climb she had taken that afternoon to reach camp; but it was not fatigue that kept her awake. It was her with a faint lifting of her spirits. unhappy mind.

Deep below her in the canon was wondered if she had dreamed all that audible the liquid running of the stream. Par, far in the distance, its remoteness lending an corie quality to the sound, the pine-hung rafters was already filled she heard the barking of a fox. With a sighing breath the wind stirred the Alice slipped shyly into a vacant place the cabin. She tried to think of the no one. As she was about to go out, in!" flashed instantly to Mary Alice's tranquil beauty of the night, the splen- after everyone else, the owner of the brain. Glancing back at Donald, now dor of the beauty of the starry heavens, camp stopped her. He was a tall, gaunt safely halfway down, the girl caught the the towering majesty of the surrounding brown-faced man with the gentle, far- gleam of sun on the silver star on the mountain peaks, to draw in peace and relaxation. No use! Her sorrowful He loved the mountains and had dream- the ranger. Here in the forest and the thoughts pursued their weary round.

it seemed to her that her life was ended. Lover, mother, home, faith-all had been taken from her within the year. What tears, had she to live for? To-morrow. perhaps it already was to-day. Easter would dawn. In the little stone chapel perched high on the mountain side. sacred services would be held and joyful voices lifted in hymns of hope and praise; but they would stir no response in the girl's numb heart. Heaven had been cruel. Mary Alice owned no God.

Ostensibly, she had come to this retreat because she had heard of its beauty and needed a week-end holiday. She felt that she must get away from the emptiness of her life, try the efficacy of exercise and mountain air for a despairing heart. If she had cherished a little bud of hope, deep and unacknowledged, that in the voice of Nature she would hear also the voice of God, it closed again. was crasy to come," she told herself alcepless, turning. "There is nothing for me here either. The chapel is-just a building. Why did anyone go to herculean inbors to build it? What does if stand for more than any other four

A new sound broke the stillness of the night. Rigid she lay, listening. It grew more distinct, came nearer.

The cabin, half of logs and half of canvas, to which Mary Alice at her own request had been assigned, was at the far end of the camp, nearly a quarter of a mile from the main lodge, situated well above the stream and the rocky trail that ran a tortuous way along its edge. Mary Alice had wanted to be quiet and apart. She was not afraid. away. She sat up in bed, clutching a smell of smoke.

The naise was made by a horse an rider coming hurriedly down the canon of that she was now sure. She could hear hoofs striking against the stones. They passed, She lay down again, told herself that it meant nothing and tried to compose herself to aleep. If there really had been the smell of smoke, seemed quite gone; perhaps her imagination was only working overtime. was more than ever vividly awake, however. Brighter, more lacerating images flashed on her mental screen.

She thought of Donald Reece, whom for so long she had tried to push from her heart because he was unworthy. remembered the last time she had him standing before her, shamed head bowed, gray eyes ahe had believed so honest refusing to meet hers. "I did it for you, Mary Alice," his muffled voice had said. "I wanted you to have everything. Because I loved you so"

"I detest that love. It shames me!" she had flared.

They were to have been married month from that day. The little allky heap of white stuff piled in the basket her stricken gaze had rested on and lastened in her memory was part of the trousseau her mother had been fushioning Darling mother! How stameh, how staunch, how sweet she had been through those dark days, through the humiliation, the pain and the dread of Donald's dismissal the restitution by his father of his defalcation, and his unexplained disappearance. She had cheered and strengthened Mary Alice and helped her to the soluting belief that Donald's wrong deed had been but the single slip of his thoughtless youth and that his own true manhood would reassert itself. The girl's poise was returning: then, all Mary Alice had left in the world, her mother, had been taken from her by the swift, implacable hand of death. With her had gone light, faith and courage. Mary Alice alipped into binck waters.

Again she heard the diatter of stones; along the path. Horse and rider were returning from the direction of the lodge. Pootsteps, low voices and a dim, wavering illumination on the canvas walls of her cabin told Mary Alice of the presence of man carrying a lantern. She all sounds had disappearside commanded an imobstructed view rim of the gorge.

Only for an instant did he maintain his intent posture; then swiftly, quietly, she saw him alip out of his seat and into the sisle. Another moment and he emerged from the chapel. Mary Alice ran forward. "Don!" ahe called shining on her face, chokingly.

He threw her one look. The flerce intentness on his face did not break. He might have been unaware of her identity. "Don't stop me!" he cried. With a few long strides he began to slide down over the edge of the trail. Mary Alice gased at him in horror. 'Don, what are you doing? You can't get down that way!" to you." and the loud scolding of an agitated

He was already a score of feet below. squirrel woke her finally. It was Easter aliding carefully, holding on to projecting roots and rocks. Grimly he gestured across the chasm. "Look! There! She ran down the path to the lodge Where the falls go over! I've got to reach her quick!"

Mary Alice looked and saw a grayginghamed figure with silvery hair stream-She was late. The long table under ing over her shoulders crouched on the edge of the chasm gazing down into the whirling pool of water fifty feet below. 'It's the old lady the ranger saved

ant fir that spread over and breakfasted hurriedly, speaking to last night! She's going to throw herself seeing look of one who lives in the open. | lapel of his jacket. Why, Donald was ed of bringing their message of peace to mountains he was building up a new Mary Alice was only twenty-two, but others; the little stone chapel was the life. How careful, how sure he was, but embodiment of his dream. "Sleep well, how reckless and how swift! She dis-Miss Paring?" he asked, genially. Mary cerned now that which he meant to do. Alice thought there was something more Once down in the canon he would meet she asked herself in the darkness with than appeared in his question. She de- the well-worn path through the gorge Mr. Mason had built there a short steep way of ascent to the head of the falls. strong rungs of a fitted ladder alternating with steps cut out of the face of the "Well, yes." She suddenly smiled. Mary Alice was charming when she

Donald was down now. He ran a short miled. "I heard all sorts of noises, and distance along the path, then took the once, very late, I thought I smelled first rungs of the ascent in a mighty leap and was up like a cat. Mary Alice, He hesitated, then smiled, too. "You however, had not stopped to watch the have a good nose. Just a whiff did blow last rapid stage of his course. She was down the canon here. I wouldn't want already taking the longer, safer way, you to be uneasy about it. There was running down the path from the chapel.

a fire-six miles up- a small one. A When she at last came up to them. cabin was burned when an oil lamp ex-Donald was drawing the bent little figure ploded. The ranger's station is not far back out of the sight of the water to the away; the ranger got there in stime to shelter of a great, moss-grown rock. He keep it from apreading. He is young, was talking to her soothingly. Mary Alice caught the tenderness in his voice.

The expression on that worn, bewildered old face then pierced her heart. had a lot of trouble, lost her only So forlorn, so weeful and so weary!

"You'd better 'a let me do it." she

was out. The boy did all he could to "I've no home any longer. No place to quiet her and finally came for me. I'm go, nobody to look after." an old friend of hers and persuaded her. Nobody to look after! That was what to let us bring her here. She's in my was hurting her, the darling. cabin now, asleep,, I hope. I'm telling could look after me," said Mary Alice, you this. Miss Faring, to account for venturing near and laying a loving hand what you heard in the night. It isn't on her shoulder. A look flashed between

her eyes and Donald's Her heart began

"Thank you, Mr Mason," said Marp to sing madly, The faded blue eyes searched hers "You're only sayin' that. You can't mean vanished. "Poor, unhappy, homeless old " ...

"But I do." answered Mary Alice gently. "My mother died and my home is so empty. I need some one just like

steps without answering. Go- to an protecting hold. Her shoulders straight-She scrambled up the precipitous path brushed back her gray locks. Her eyes leading out of the canon and past the never left the girl's face. "I thank you chapel, averting her eyes from the sight

give the faintest start, bend forward and and beautiful dignity. "I-I-" Speech RECORD CANADIAN stare out of the window, which on that failed her.

The three of them stood in a close of the head of the falls and the upper group that was to be close forever. Through every channel between, love and understanding flowed. Buddenly, from the chapel above, ineffably sweet, floated down the strains of the Easter hymn.

'Christ Is Risen!" "Oh, listen" oried Mary Alloe, light

SPOILING IT ALL

The fortune-teller couldn't see a sweet eart in the offing, but it was desirable keep a customer. "Ha!" said she, her eyes on the crystal

'I see a tall man. He's going to propose "Dark." fluttered the excited ellent. "Yes," said the fortuneteller, "dark,

A BAD GIVEAWAY

will have to be."

The traveller exiced the Pullman porter what was his average tip.

"A dollar," replied the porter. The gentleman handed him a dollar, and as the porter pocketed the bill, he added: "Thank you, sah, but you is the

IT'S AN ADVANTAGE

first gentleman to come up to the aver-

"The worm is always regarded as a rather miserable creature." a naturalist tells us "but actually it has no need of than ever before. Silver production pity at all." For one thing, it can always totalled 22,683,032 fine ounces, valued at make both ends meet.



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MINERAL PRODUCTION

Burpassing all previous records, Canada's mineral production during 1937 reached a value of \$456,793,260 compared with \$361,010,372 in 1936, a gain of \$94,-873,000, or 26 per cent. New high output levels were established for gold, copper nickel, lead, sinc, the platinum metals and selenium, tellurium, ashestos, sali sulphur, nepheline syenite, sodium sul-

phate, natural gas and crude petroleum Gold led the mineral parade in 1937. with a production of 4,095,872 fine ounces valued at \$143314,561 compared with 3,748,028 fine ounces worth \$131,293,421 in 1936. Ontario accounted for 63 per cent, of last year's output, and was followed by Quebec with 17.6 per cent., British Columbia with 12.3 per cent., and Manitoba and Saskatchewan with 5.6 per cent. Several gold mines came into production during the year and development work and mill construction are being pushed ahead rapidly on other properties in the gold-bearing-areas of the Dominion. It is interesting to note that between 16 and 20 per cent, of the 1937 gold production was contributed by mines which are primarily base metal Copper production totalling 531,041,878

pounds valued at \$69,049,734 was a record representing an increase of 26 per cent in quantity and 75 per cent, in value. Nickel production valued at \$59,507,176 was 32 per cent, higher than in 1936, while lead and zinc at :21,013,404 and \$18,157,894 respectivelyy, were higher \$10,180,371, a gain of 23.7 per cent. in quantity and 23 per cent, in value. The output of platinum metals was worth \$9,933,709 compared with \$7,803,806 in

Coal production stood at 15,775,432 tons compared with 15,229,182, output of crude petroleum at 2,978,268 barrels was double that of 1936, while natural gas production was 29,599,198,000 cubic feet, a gain of 5.3 per cent. The production of non-metallic min-

erals, other than fuels, had a value of \$22,482,620 in 1937, an increase of 34 per cent. Asbestos production totalled 410,026 tons compared with 301,287, while the output of gypsum amounted to 1,-042,329 tons, an increase of 25 per cent Salt totalled 459,027 tons against 391,316 tons in 1936. Other important industrial minerals included feldspar, nepheline syenite, graphite, mica, magnesitic-dolomite, sodium sulphate, iron oxides, lithium minerals, tale and soapstone, rock wool, sulphur, quartz, diatomite, and silica brick.

Reflecting the improvement in the construction industry, the production o structural materials such as brick, lime cement and stone had a value of \$34,401, 669 compared with \$25,770,741 in 1936.

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TEA



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The state of the s

CONQUER ENGLAND IN 1588]

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