

The Free Press Short Story

THE LAMP IN THE WINDOW

By O. G. HERRMANN

"LOOK, Ted! Martin's lamp is burning!" Theodore Brooks looked up the hill to the place where, between the trees, gleamed a bit of yellow light.

"Guess he is going every night, Lynn. Martin's a good chap but queer—awfully queer."

"People say," continued the girl, "every time Martin's lamp burns in his window he is praying for somebody in trouble."

"Probably he got more coppers on hand than his cap full," commented Theodore rather flippantly.

"They were going home toward the winter night, from a long hike that had taken them miles around the shore of Mirror Lake in the Indian Hills. Lynn Sweden and Theodore Brooks were sweethearts, and the wedding date was already set for the coming June. Lynn was the daughter of Weston's banker and Theodore was a young civil engineer.

"Say, Ted, let's go up and call on Martin. I've never been there. We are both cold."

"No sooner said than done," agreed the young man gaily. "Certainly I don't want my future wife to freeze with Martin's cabin only a stone's throw away. Right this way, please!"

Covered with snow and overlaid with moonlight, Martin Dorrner's mountain cabin was an inviting picture. For over thirty years he had lived alone in the Indian Hills three miles from Weston, a friendly hermit.

"Good evening," Theodore greeted the white-haired, stooped man who answered his knock. "Miss Gledman, here, and I were walking, and—"

With a gesture that spoke of breeding and courtesy unlooked for in one of his station, the old man cut off all further explanation. "Come in. You are very welcome. The night is cold and my fire is warm. The blessing of the Lord be upon you as you enter my house to-night."

Somewhat abashed and a little ashamed of their motive, the young people stepped into the room where a cheerful fire burned on the hearth. Under other circumstances and on other lips the quaint benediction would have tempted a smile; but coming from the old hermit, it carried a simplicity and dignity entirely in keeping with the place.

Martin followed them into the room. "If you will be seated here by the fire, I shall have a cup of chocolate for you in a few minutes."

Lynn protested. "Oh no, Mr. Dorrner! Please don't bother."

"It is a long time since anyone has called me by my last name," answered the hermit, busying himself with the chocolate. "Sometimes I am in danger of forgetting it myself. To all who come to the Indian Hills I am just Martin and I like it that way."

The young people looked about the room. The fireplace was a great, rough stone affair built by an artist's hand. The furniture was durable but comfortable. By the window stood a comfortable, exquisitely wrought mahogany table and beside it an old-fashioned rocking chair. On the table was the lamp, brass bawled and with a white porcelain shade. Under it lay an open Bible and on the wall opposite the rocker hung a beautiful copy of Hofmann's "Christ in Gethsemane." A faint reflection from the lamp fell on the picture, touching into relief the figure of the praying Christ.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" said Martin softly as he caught their glance. "I think the artist himself must have believed very much in prayer to have put so much into his picture. What tremendous things the Master wrought by prayer!"

The old hermit paused for a moment in his task of stirring the sugar and crumbled chocolate. The flickering fire sharply outlined the time-worn but still rugged figure the hand that trembled ever so slightly. Something from afar off seemed to live in the old eyes, something of a common life, the spirit of the praying Christ of the picture.

"The young people felt the strange mood of the man. When a few moments later they were sipping the hot chocolate, Theodore said, almost with an effort, "Martin, do you really believe so much in prayer? Folks say that—that you—the lamp—"

"That Martin's lamp burns in the window whenever he is praying for some one in trouble?" completed the old man, kindly. "Well, it is true. There is so much trouble in the world that money and law and advice, and even sometimes the doctor cannot help; but prayer can. For over thirty years I've been praying here. It never fails. Maybe not now but some day you, too, will understand."

Lynn rose. "We really must be going, Martin," she said. "It's been so good of you to take us in and we do appreciate it." She walked over to the table. "The lamp—will it burn all night?"

"Yes," responded the old hermit simply. "For there is a mother who is poor and she has a sick child. The lamp burns for them to-night."

After a moment of silence, Theodore put out his hand. "Good night, Martin, and many thanks."

He was withdrawing his hand but the hermit held it. "It may be only an old man's whim," he said, "but in thirty years none have left this house with-

out the blessing of the Lord." In the shadow of the great picture, then, the old hermit in words of childlike simplicity thanked God for his visitors and prayed his guidance upon their going.

Late the next evening in his office, Theodore Brooks and Chief Engineer Matthews were bending over long columns of figures and spacious blue prints. Outside a mad storm was whirling through the air, wearing great drifts of snow along the streets. It had broken only about an hour earlier, coming at the close of a glorious sunny winter day.

"Some stunt for the weather man to play," growled Theodore.

"It's the way of the Indian Hills," laughed Matthews, "and it will mean a day off for us to-morrow."

A knock sounded at the door and Matthews hastened to open it.

"Is Mr. Ted here?" A lad about twelve years old, wearing high laced boots, knitted helmet cap, and a leather coat stepped inside.

"The young man jumped up as he heard the voice of his landlady's son. "Billy, what are you doing out in this storm?"

"Ma made me come. She tried to call you, but I guess the line's down. A lady left a note for you this afternoon, and when you didn't come, Ma kind o' thought maybe you ought to have it."

Theodore recognized the writing at once. The note was from Lynn. "Come on in, Billy," he said, "and sit down. Maybe I can go back with you in a little bit."

"No, thanks," answered the lad. "Ma said I shouldn't stay. She doesn't like to be alone when it storms like this. Nuthin' to be afraid of but you know how girls are." With that tribute to his own sophistication, William Holt turned back into the snow.

Matthews laughed heartily. "Billy's opinion about the fair sex seems quite pronounced."

"It's just twelve," replied Theodore, as he ripped open the envelope, "and he hasn't gotten over his contempt for girls—Good heaven, what's this?" he interrupted himself as he glanced at the message. "Listen, Matthews, here's trouble."

From the note he read: "It's too nice to stay in, Ted, and I'm going out skating on Mirror Lake to-night. It will be great out there in the moonlight. I know you're busy but maybe you can come out later and we'll walk in together. If you don't find me on the ice, I'll be at Martin's cabin."

"Lynn's out there on the lake!" "Take it easy," said Matthews. "She's probably at the cabin by now. The only awkward thing is you can't get out there in the snow."

"I'll get out there some way, and if she is with Martin she's safe. But Lynn's a daring skater and never stays near the shore. She probably tried to cross the lake as usual. If she did and the storm caught her—"

Theodore stuffed the letter into his pocket, grabbed his hat and coat, and started for the door.

"Just a minute!" Matthews' voice, clear, decisive, stopped him. "If you're going out there, I'm with you. This is no one-man job. We've hit hard places together before this; we'll do it now."

"The car can make it I think," said Theodore.

Twenty minutes later two men were driving the light car into the very teeth of the pitiless storm that blew out of the Indian Hills. At last they saw a yellow beam of light touch the road ahead. "Martin's lamp! Martin's lamp!" shouted Theodore in Matthews' ear.

"Thank God we're at the cabin!" They forced the car off the road and among the trees where it might have been wrecked. "It's our way to Martin's door. The old hermit had evidently seen them coming and the door opened as they reached it. Before Martin could speak, Theodore's voice cut in. "Is she here?"

Martin shook his head. "I have seen nothing of her since she came, early in the evening."

Matthews looked at his companion and saw the misery of death in Theodore's eyes. "Steady, my boy, steady," he said; "don't let yourself go. You'll need all your strength and wits to-night. Let's go."

The old hermit's voice stopped them. "How will you go, and what will you do? I knew you would come and I prepared for you. Here is a rope and a lantern. Hang the lantern in a tree by the shore. Tie yourselves together with the rope. You cannot afford to lose each other. My guess is you will find the girl about a mile out—but you will find her, and alive."

Matthews looked at the old man with a puzzled expression. Martin pointed to the lamp in the window and said quietly, "Your young friend will understand. I would go with you but I would only be a hindrance. I can do more good here when you return."

Out on the lake, Lynn, lured by the beauty of the early night, rejoiced in the strength of her youth and the glory of the shimmering lake. Joyously she started away from the shore to the far-

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Term Report of the Pupils of Acton Continuation School

Standing and Marks of All Pupils in the Various Forms as Made During the Term Ending in December

Table with columns for Form I, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, Art, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores in various subjects.

Table with columns for Form II, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form III, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form IV, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form V, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form VI, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form VII, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form VIII, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form IX, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form X, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form XI, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form XII, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form XIII, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

Table with columns for Form XIV, Subjects (Algebra, Geometry, Botany, etc.), and Marks. Lists names of students and their scores.

CHEWING GUM BRINGS PROSPERITY TO HONDURAS

Were the old-time buccannere to revisit their former hunting grounds in the Spanish Main they would, like Rip Van Winkle, rub their eyes and wonder just where they were. British Honduras, in particular, would cause them some wonderment. The country was noted from earliest times for its mahogany and logwoods and now it also supplies the foundation for one of America's popular pastimes, chewing gum. The gum comes from the Sapodilla tree and goes by the name of chicle, of which Canada took some 64,000 pounds last year—quite a lot of chewing. Aeroplanes roar overhead and motor cars honk their way through the streets. The natives, instead of appearing in their traditional clothes, are seen all dressed up in cotton and silk piece-goods, the latest in millinery and jewelry, while the male speckles go round in the latest finery of the haberdashers. The revival of the mahogany trade has brought about a measure of good times with consequent increase in buying power. Bananas and grapefruit are also exported, all of the bananas going to the United States last year while Canada took approximately 31 per cent of the grapefruit. Canada is the chief supplier of rubber-stamped canvas boots and shoes, a position she regained last year from the Straits Settlements, and supplies also butter, cement, canned fish, flour, hardware, hosiery, bottled pork, bacon and ham, medicines and drugs; iron and steel nails; condensed milk, sweetened and unswetened; powdered milk; refined sugar; dressed lumber; much of which reaches British Honduras in vessels of the Canadian National Steamships, direct service being maintained between Canada and British Honduras via Kingston, Jamaica, with the C. N. S. "Connector" plying between Kingston and Belize, British Honduras.

NOT RESPECTABLE "Did you notice that Mrs. 'Awkins had a black eye last Saturday night?" "Yes, I did! An' er' husband not due 'ome for another week! I don't call it respectable, I don't!"

Man is a poetical animal and delights in fiction.—Hazlitt.

Persian Balm creates lovely complexions. Velvety smooth. Cools and relieves the skin. Makes it delightfully soft-textured. Alluringly fragrant. Delightful to use. Swiftly absorbed by the tissues, imparting that elusive charm so distinctive of the dainty woman. Persian Balm protects the delicate skin. Preserves and enhances the loveliest complexion. Every discriminating woman should use this silvery lotion. It is unrivalled as a flawless aid to beauty.

Advertisement for Groves' laxative Bromo Quinine. Includes text: 'at the FIRST SIGN of a COLD take Groves' Laxative BROMO QUININE'. Also features an illustration of a man and a woman sitting at a table with a chessboard.

Advertisement for 'Filling in Time until 7 o'clock'. Text: 'With the supper dishes cleared away, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Banks sit down each Wednesday evening to a rollicking game of checkers. Really they are just filling in time until their son, John makes his weekly long distance call from a far-away city—a few minutes after 7 when Night Rates are in effect.' Includes a small circular logo.

Large advertisement for 'The Free Press Offers You A Great Subscription Bargain that SAVES YOU MONEY and gives you year-long enjoyment'. Includes a coupon for selecting 3 magazines for \$3.00. Lists magazines: Maclean's, Current Thought, Chatelaine, Pictorial Review, Canadian, National Home Monthly, National, Canadian Horticulture and Home Magazine. Includes a coupon for mailing the selection.