

THE EASTER LILY—A SYMBOL

Beauty exquisite to the eye
Is the Lily of Eastertide;
No tint of blemish to deface
Its cool appearance and its grace.

Of loveliness supreme is it
So beauteous and infinite,
So fragile and so pure and fair,
Essence that is beyond compare.

—B. F. '52

TOMORROW, THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION

A cold wet mist beat against my unshaven face and seeped into my threadbare suit coat as I trudged wearily through the muddy field. Some little distance ahead of me a bright light darted through a thick hedge. As I approached the hedge, I could see the outline of a large house behind it. Could I get a cup of hot tea to expel the cold and dampness which was penetrating my very bones? Perhaps a soft mound of hay awaited me in the adjoining barn. Or would there be the same old oft-repeated answer, "We don't cater to bums?"

As I entered the porch I tramped heavily to unburden my soggy boots. My first knock brought no response. The hullabaloo of children laughing and squabbling reigned supreme. A second and louder knock brought a hush to the household, and a deep voice boomed out, "Come right in, the door's open."

I pushed the door half way in and stood surveying the many upturned faces. Little chins sagged and big eyes protruded. My hand remained on the doorknob as I awaited that old rebuff. For a moment the silence was deafening, then the mother, seated at one end of the long table helping a little tot with his lessons, rose, and very quietly placed her chair before the fire. "You must be frozen. Sit up to the fire and get dried off a bit," she said. Was I dreaming, or was it really true that someone cared whether I was cold?

"Yes, please, I would like to feel a little heat. Would you be kind enough to make me a cup of hot tea, and I'll be on my way?"

"Sure, I'll make you a cup of tea. We have some coffee if you would like that better."

As I sat gulping down the hot tea, and devouring tasty biscuits, the childrens' play gained momentum. Occasionally, a little one disengaged herself from the group and sidled up along the wall, either to get a better look at me, or to evaluate the biscuit situation.

Having finished my generous meal, I returned to the fire side. "Care to roll a cigarette?" the father asked, offering me his "makings".

I had just dropped the butt into the fireplace, when that same voice boomed out, "Time for the Rosary, children;" and they all lined up before the table to be given their beads. Turning to me, the father explained, "We say the Rosary at this time every evening."

After a little jockeying for positions, all the children found places to kneel, and the mother began the prayer, with the youngest, about two, sitting on the chair before her.

My thoughts drifted back to the happy home I had left just fifteen years previously. I felt in my pocket for what was left of my old pair of beads. It was years since I had used them, but yet I always carried them with me, and with great care, did I shift them from one pair of pants to the other. If you were to ask me why I carried them, I am afraid I could not tell you. Perhaps they helped in some small way to fill that spiritual vacuum I experienced; or perhaps they were the last link reminding me of my own happy childhood.

The Rosary sparkled onward, the mother leading with her eyes closed and the words, impregnated with love and sincerity, floated forth. The little one, growing restless, had struggled down from the chair, and began to visit among the prayers, fingering a pair of beads here and squatting on a pair of heels there, bringing forth a loving caress, or a muffled chuckle.

Here was the real happiness I had once known. Here was God in the midst of them. I squeezed my beads more tightly, and listened to the Litanies. "Comforter of the afflicted, pray for us. Refuge of sinners, pray for us." The mother added as the closing words, "Tomorrow is Easter Sunday, let us ask God tonight to help us all to live better, Amen."

I took the beads from my pocket and slowly blessed myself, and felt much warmer. I stood up, took one last look at the happy group, and prepared to go. "You can't go out on a night like this, sir," said the father; "We have lots of room for you, and you are welcome to spend the night with us."

"I would appreciate that. Just throw a couple of old coats on the floor and I'll curl up here for the night, if you don't mind."

"Take him up to the little room, Jack," said the mother. I followed Jack up the narrow stairs and into the little room. There was the bed all made up, and white sheets, too. "I'm too grimy to get in there, Jack." "Go on," he replied, "and have a good sleep for yourself. I'll help the little woman with the wash, Monday."

I did not fall asleep easily, although I was very tired. My thoughts kept returning to the kindness of these people, to the Rosary, and to the happy days of my youth. Many thoughts labored through my mind that night. Why, and where had I taken the wrong turn? Did I have the strength and the courage to retrace my steps and find the right turn? I tossed and turned, but the answers did not come. I could sneak into the back of the Church tomorrow morning. How wonderful it would be to offer up Mass again!

I guess real tough men don't cry. Well, I wasn't so tough, but I was happy, and tomorrow was the Feast of the Resurrection!

—Emmett Roche '53

FINIS

The face was tired and kind and sweet,
And nails were driven through hands and feet.
He raised His eyes to God in Heaven,
And Prayed that they would be forgiven.

The day wore on—the pain increased,
And Mary's weeping never ceased.
She saw her Son so dear and good
Shed every drop of His precious blood.

She saw Him die by frenzied hand,
A Martyr for the sins of man.

—DAVID KENNEDY '52