

## A RAND IS EVER UPRIGHT

"I am off to Montreal in the morning," whispered Jack Rand, as he drew his little gray mother to him, and lightly kissed her care-worn brow.

"I shall not forget your advice, mother, but you must remember that to be in a position to care for you properly, to make you comfortable in this dear little home, and to give Austin a chance in life is my fondest desire. And yet 'tis hard to leave you and brother."

Two hearts were almost breaking as son slowly released himself from mother's embrace.

The call of the great city had come to him, but be it ever said to the credit of Jack Rand, his was a call of duty and self-sacrifice, not a mere response to the glamour and gaiety of city life.

"But Montreal of all places, my child," went on the mother. "If you must go, oh, why not to some other place? I have such a terrible dread of that city. Do you not remember the story I have so often told you, of how little brother Fred was lost there? You were but a baby then, dear, and Fred was only seven years old—and such a beautiful child! Your father had to go on a business trip to Montreal, and of course he must take 'the pride of his heart' with him. I remember it all so well——. They left me one July morning, happy in the anticipation of their trip, but your father soon after came back a broken-hearted man. He had taken Freddie along one morning to view a military parade, and, in some manner, I know not how, our boy strayed away and could not be found. Your good father never forgot it, Jack, and in a few short months he, too, was taken from me. That is why I would rather you were going to some other city to work."

"But, mother dear, I could not be sure of such employment in any other place. As I told you before, through the kindness of my present employer, I am to enter the employ of the Tuplin Manufacturing Company of Montreal, at a much larger salary than I could ever hope to obtain here."

"Jack," responded his mother, "you shall have your wish, and also my blessing. But, dear son, whatever you do keep to the straight and narrow path. Follow in your dear father's footsteps and remember 'A Rand is ever upright' is our motto."

"Thanks, mother, I shall not forget. Come now, wipe away the tears, for through time all shall be righted and I shall come back home to leave you no more. So cheer up, mother, and let us all be happy in each other's company for the remaining time. You go to rest now, while I slip over to Mary's home and tell her the news."

Let it be said here that Mary, Jack's fiancée, also assented reluctantly to Jack's action, but comforted her lover by promising to keep him posted on the plight of his loved ones during his absence.

"Yes, Jack, I shall write you often" she said, "and shall keep nothing from you." Do not forget to write regularly to your mother and—

"To you of course" interrupted Jack, and with a fond good-bye he took his leave, while Mary looked sorrowfully after her retreating lover.

Jack Rand was a young and handsome man of some twenty summers, honest and upright. He, with his widowed mother and brother, lived in a small cottage in a far away town of Western Canada. None seemed more happy than this little group, for all three were pure and simple souls, and their abode was a haven of peace. But though such was the case, Jack Rand felt that he must do something to relieve the position in which his young brother found himself, for since early childhood Austin Rand was a cripple, and, as he thought, a burden to his family. Doctors had said that young Rand could be cured, but that it would necessitate his removal to Montreal and an expenditure of some three thousand dollars. Where was the money to be obtained? The best physician in all the land must be had, and had quickly. And Jack made up his mind.

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Burr-r-r-r-r came the buzz of the telephone to the ear of the chief of Number 4 Station, Montreal.

"Hello" growled the Chief.

"Robbery First National Bank" came over the wires, and a few minutes later Montreal's police were on the scene.

A young man—none other than poor Jack Rand, dazedly staring at the blasted open door of a safe, and the body of the night watchman, riddled with bullets, met their gaze. The contents of the safe were untouched.



"Hi, there! remained a little too close to the charge, eh?" said one of the officers, as he clapped hand-cuffs on the unfortunate man.

"I can remember nothing" was Rand's only plea at the preliminary trial next morning. The one topic of the people was the murder of the First National Bank janitor. Is Rand Guilty? was the question asked by everybody. Surely not, for Rand had made a name for himself since he had come to Montreal, as an honest and upright man. He had gained numerous friends, among whom was Milton Elkton, a respected citizen of Sorel, a friend indebted to Jack for a favour done him some short time previous, and Elkton had not forgotten.

Jack had made a confidant of Mr. Elkton, telling him all, of his beloved mother, his fiancée and of his one object in leaving home—to aid his invalid brother. Elkton made a return to his young friend by employing the services of the best lawyer available. So, on the day of the trial, Jack Rand is seated in a crowded courtroom, with Elkton's lawyer for his defence and the case in on.

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Back in Western Canada a little gray-haired mother and loving son are praying, praying as if their very hearts would break. "Father" the mother prays, "he is all I have. All I have in the world. He is not guilty. My Jack, oh! He is not, he cannot be. Father help him, save him!"

The sole comforter of the little group is Mary Wright who, too, cannot, dare not believe that Jack is guilty. But yet what would any man not do for——No. She spurns the thought as unworthy of her.

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The case for the crown is opened by Attorney General Robb, who, after a lengthy speech concludes as follows: "Gentlemen, let us further take into consideration the fact that the prisoner has been in Montreal for only a short time, and, moreover, that his main idea in coming here, as we learned from the witness, Elkton, was to earn money sufficient for an operation which his brother must undergo. Is it not possible and even very probable that, in order to secure the money, he performed the robbery and was forced to commit murder? Gentlemen, the

evidence as you have it is strongly against the prisoner. Do not be moved by the heart-rending appeal which will be made to you on behalf of the prisoner, for peace and order must be maintained, and you must not fail to do your duty."

A hush fell over the assembled throng. What if Rand were guilty? For though all present, especially the mothers and fathers, felt for the youthful prisoner, justice is justice and must be meted out.

"Gentlemen of the jury" then began the prisoner's counsel "there is one trait in the character of a man that must claim the admiration of all and that is self-sacrifice. And I ask you, gentlemen, if you would expect a man who has toiled and worked for a mother and a crippled brother to be guilty of such a dastardly deed? According to the testimony, we find that somebody had been dragged along the floor of the bank to a position in front of the safe. What will explain that? The watchman's clothes did not bear signs of having been brushed along the floor, but the condition of the prisoner's clothes would seem to show that he had been knocked unconscious, and dragged to this position before the safe, where later he must have revived, leaving him in the dazed condition in which he was found. Does it not seem possible that the murderer or murderers attempted to cover up their tracks by felling the prisoner, and dragging him along to the safe, and have we not learned from the police witnesses today that they received a phone call from a person who would not reveal his identity? Think of it.

"Look at that young man whose sacrifice for his people has caused him to be branded as a criminal. Look and judge for yourselves that he is not guilty. He has all the traits of a true son, kind, loving and sacrificing. From Mr. Elkton, the prisoner's closest friend, I have learned that both the mother and the late father of the prisoner had ever impressed on their children the necessity of leading an upright life, so much so that they took every opportunity to make them live up to the family motto: 'A Rand is Ever Upright.'"

Then, fixing his gaze upon the prisoner, he repeated in a louder tone; "A Rand is Ever Upright."

Suddenly Jack Rand's eye lit up with a new light and, as one coming out of a trance he shouted:

"Eh, what's that—yes—that's right—'A Rand is



Ever Upright'—who?—what?—where am I?" as he slowly passed his hand over his eyes.

"My mother, where is she? Who hit me?—yes—yes—now I remember."

Howard, his lawyer, led him on: "Yes, yes, tell us what you remember."

"Some time after I came to Montreal", began Rand, "I found it necessary to work until late at night. About twelve o'clock, one moonlight night, I put away the books, and was proceeding to my rooms, when, passing along one of the business sections of the city, I saw two suspicious-looking men saunter along by the First National Bank. I asked myself what could their object be, for I had an abhorrence of one type of criminal, and that was a burglar. I moved closer to the building, and was careful lest the miscreants should become aware of my presence. I saw that one was attempting to force an entrance into the east end of the building. I then decided to retreat and report to the police, but I evidently was being observed by the other robber, and, before I could flee, I had received a blow on the head, and I knew no more, till now I find myself here—what does this all mean?"

He gazed around the hushed assembly and then buried his head in his arms.

"Now, gentlemen," continued lawyer Howard, "I have no more to say for I feel that my deductions have been proven."

The jury was out for twenty minutes, and, amid the joy of those present, the prisoner was greeted with the words, "Not Guilty."

Jack Rand was showered with congratulations, but all he could say was:

"How shall I ever repay that lawyer"

"Mr. Howard" Jack said, a few minutes later, "I do not know that I can ever repay you for the great service you have done me. How glad my mother would be to meet you. Will you not come back with me that she might thank you?"

"Brace up, my son" said the lawyer. "I worked for you as I never did before. Why, I know not. But, come along with me and see my wife and family. I need a vacation, and shall like nothing better than to see your mother."

A few days later they arrived at Jack Rand's home.

Words are inadequate to describe the scene, for mother, son and fiancée vied with each other in welcoming Jack, thanking the lawyer, and thanking their God.

"Oh Jack" Mary cried as she embraced him. "I knew things would be righted. Now you must tell me all about it."

Mrs. Rand cried with joy as she shook the hand of lawyer Howard.

"Oh how shall I thank you? Thank you and God that I have my son preserved. How happy must be the mother of such a son as you are!"

"Mrs. Rand, I do not remember my mother" said the young man. "Both father and mother must have died when I was very young, for I remember neither. But on the day of my marriage my guardian gave me a locket containing her picture," and, taking it from his pocket he handed it to Mrs. Rand.

"My God" exclaimed she, dropping the locket and advancing to the young man before her. "Fred, my son, my long lost son, I am your mother. Do you not recognize this to be my picture?"

"Mother" cried Frederick Rand (for this was his real name) folding her in his arms.

The Montreal Star on the following day came out with the headings: "Jack Rand is acquitted and almost before the trial is over, a death-bed confession is received from the noted criminal Bill Yegg, alias Carl, Penk, Jamsen, confessing to the hold-up and murder of the night watchman of the First National Bank." "Passing footsteps frighten him away before collecting booty." "Noted lawyer turns out to be accused man's brother."

What a happy group sits around the supper table of the Rands that evening. Mrs. Rand, happy in the company of her three sons and new daughter, for Jack lost no time in getting married, since mother, as the lawyer suggested, must not be without a companion one day longer. Little Austin is oh! so happy, for he is to go back with lawyer Fred, as he calls him, to see the great specialist. Fred Rand is happy for he has found his mother whom he had not known before. At the close of the repast, the Rands, now reunited, offer thanks to God, for things have been righted and the motto, "A Rand is Ever Upright" preserved.

—A.A.F. '27.