

EXIT FROM ADMONITION

Ken came home drinking that night. His mother sensed it the moment he came in the door, and she lost no time in letting him know she was aware of it. That was her greatest fault. His indulging was not so serious that it warranted reproach the moment he entered. After all, he did not go madly about the house leaving destruction in his path. On the contrary, with the exception of his sullen mood, no difference in his behaviour was noticeable, and his mother's nagging at a time like this didn't help matters in the least. Her favorite comment on the subject was: "My son, drinking. I'd rather not see you at all than see you like this."

For a long time Ken had been reminding himself that someday he would take her complaining seriously and he was in that sort of mood tonight; consequently, after her usual comment, he picked his hat off the chair where he had thrown it and turned toward the door. As he opened it he looked back over his shoulder. "All right mother," he said slowly, "if that's what you want."

She stood immobile, disbelief on her face. Not until the door had closed quietly behind him did she fully realize what had happened. Even then she refused to believe that he had actually gone. "He won't stay away from home long," she thought. And yet he had never gone this far before. In the past whatever remarks she had made had apparently been ignored.

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Ken drove along in the car he had bought after he had joined the Alcoholics Anonymous. It was a nice, new car. Something he could not afford while he had been squandering his money on liquor.

As he drove through his home town, he was thinking of that night three years ago when he had walked out of his home. "Of course, Mother did have cause to worry," he thought. It was doing no harm then, but maybe she knew what harm it might lead to, for he himself was well aware of what it had led to those last few months before he had reformed. "Well, at least she didn't see me while I was like that, and that is what she wanted isn't it?" he muttered.

"Should I apologize?" he thought. "After all she didn't have the right attitude. I wouldn't want her to be glad to see me just because I don't drink any more. Ho, I won't tell her. I'll see how she reacts first."

Suddenly he began to feel a great feeling of anticipation as he drew nearer home. He had not seen or heard from the family for three years. They hadn't even known where

he had been.

He turned, at a higher speed than he had intended down the street where his parents lived. Familiar objects met his eyes. It felt good to be back after so long an absence.

As he drew nearer, thoughts of doubt crossed his mind. What if they wouldn't welcome him? What if they wouldn't be happy to see him?

His thoughts were cut short, as he pulled in the driveway, by the sight of a purple wreath on the front door.

"Oh, God, no," he whispered. Water began to form in his eyes and his legs felt weak as he ran up the walk. He was met at the door by his aged father.

"You're too late son," he said.

—VOYAGE PRECHE—

A la suite de graves mésententes avec la direction du Collège, je fis de déchirants adieux aux amis (es) et le train me conduisit à la maison où un comité sous la direction de mon père m'attendait. Une brève lecture de la lettre du Rév. Père Recteur l'avait préparé à mon arrivée imprévue.

Entre le premier et le dernier mot du discours de mon père qui finissait ainsi: "Et si ça ne fait pas, tu pourras toujours te trouver un emploi pour la ville" l'occasion de me justifier ne me fut guère accordée.

Inutile de dire que la première semaine fut remplie au point que je ne savais plus où mettre la tête. Ce n'était que dîners avec conférences à la suite d'un déjeuner-causerie prévu pour 8.15h. chaque matin où mon père (le conférencier) discutait de l'indiscipline et du peu de sérieux de la jeunesse moderne . . . La pression atmosphérique ne diminua pas pendant toute la première semaine. Ce n'est qu'après dix jours, que le tout retomba à l'état normal.

Ma famille au complet se chargea de supporter les dires de mon père au point de gêner même mes moments les plus intimes. Le peu de temps libres que mes conférenciers m'ont laissé, fut occupé par quelques rares sorties privées.

A mon retour, je méditai sur la grandeur de la sagesse de Saint Thomas et je pris la ferme résolution de me soumettre aux directives des autorités compétentes . . .