

## CONRAD ROSEN

"I want a man to go over there to see if he can get any news," said a German officer, pointing in the direction of the enemy's line.

For a moment no one responded. They knew what it meant; they knew it was almost sure death for a man to crawl across that mud and water to the enemy's lines, and they also knew that in that opposite trench was an American battalion waiting for the first opportunity to draw German blood. Suddenly one man spoke. "I'll go, Sir, I've been pretty lucky and I guess I'll come back. When do I start?"

"Thank you Rosen. It is best that you go at once. Find out how many men are in that trench and report to me as soon as you return. Got a revolver?"

"Yes Sir," replied the German soldier showing the officer his gun, "this is my luck piece. My little son, the night before I left, put his name on it, and I believe made it lucky."

"Alright over you go," said the officer a few minutes later as he helped the soldier over the top of the trench.

It is some years later: Our scene is in a little home in Germany—the home of Rosen.

"Mother do you know what day this is?" Rosen's son asked his toil-worn mother

"Ah, yes, Conrad, I do. It is the anniversary of your father's death. Oh how we have suffered since then; and all because of some brutal American. Your father never killed anyone; and that's what makes it worse. It is terrible."

"It is, Mother, just think, perhaps that man is living happy in luxury, while we are suffering untold misery. He doesn't deserve to live," cried the son in anger.

"You're right," answered the woman. "It drives me almost crazy when I think of it; he lives." She stopped, a thought seemed to strike the poor grief-crazed woman; suddenly she grasped her son.

"Conrad! Conrad! I see him, he lives in luxuries, you must avenge your father's death. Go, Go."

The young man looked at his mother. "You don't know what you are saying mother dear."

"Yes I do, your father loved me, he loved you, and he would want you to avenge his death."



"But mother that would be a sin, it isn't right." The son's words had some effect on the mother. "Perhaps you are right. We'll not speak of it again," she said and bowed her head.

The subject was never mentioned again in the German home, but the words of the mother never faded from the mind of the son. Not that he wished to remember them, but they forced themselves upon him, and it was after his mother's death that the thought burned his soul the most. All about him brought memories of his father and the wish of his dead mother. So much did the familiar scenes of his home and country torment him that he finally decided to go to Canada, where he thought he could forget all.

So it is that we find Conrad Rosen, some years later, at the head of a department in a large furniture manufacturing firm in Toronto, Canada. For the first few years he had found life difficult. The misery he experienced at home seemed to follow him and for a time he felt that his life was doomed to misfortune. But after a time, when he became accustomed to the people, he began to enjoy life. His greatest happiness was perhaps in the fact that he had learned to forget.

One day as he was diligently working in the factory, he was told the manager wished to see him.

"Hello, Rosen, sit down," greeted the manager, John Woodsworth, "How long have you been with us?"

"Almost since I came from Europe, three years and eight months ago," replied Rosen.

"Yes. Do you like the work?"

"I do, Sir. I like it very much," replied Rosen.

"Well, I'm glad to hear that, for I have a proposition to make. We are opening up a branch in Western United States, and I want you to go there as foreman of our factory; of course you won't have to go till next year. Now what do you say?"

Rosen's face lit up with joy, at last life was opening new portals to him. Foreman of a factory, could he believe it?"

"I don't know what to say. I would certainly like it, if you think I am able to fill the position."

"I haven't a doubt about your capability, and I think you would be the man for the new branch. However, it rests with yourself. Now think it over. Say,



how about coming to my house tomorrow night and we will talk it over?"

"Thanks very much, Mr. Woodsworth, I will," replied Rosen.

The following night Rosen was at his employer's house at the appointed hour, and was admitted by the manager himself.

"Everybody is away," he said "so I have to attend the door myself. Come into my office. Well, what have you done? Have you come to a decision? You know I am not rushing you, but I must send word to the head office if I have a man ready for the new position."

"I've been thinking it over, Mr. Woodsworth, and have decided, with your consent, to accept."

"That's fine, Conrad," said the man with a smile, "I am glad you've accepted, and I know you will be able to get along when you go to the States. You've made friends here and you'll be able to do the same in the West."

Rosen and Woodsworth talked about their firm's business for over an hour. Finally, Woodsworth looking at his watch exclaimed, "By George! I almost forgot I had an appointment. Wait a couple of minutes till I get ready and I'll be with you."

But before Woodsworth could leave the room his office door opened, and in rushed a young lady.

"Oh I am sorry, Dad," she exclaimed, "I thought you were alone."

"That's alright dear, come in a moment, and meet my young friend, Mr. Rosen—Conrad Rosen."

"How do you do, Mr. Rosen. I've often heard Dad speak of you; he is sending you to the United States, isn't he?"

"Yes, Miss Woodsworth, your father has been very kind to me, and he helped me a lot since I came to Canada," said Rosen.

"I don't want to hear any more about that Conrad, you've helped yourself. Now wait a few minutes for me. Evelyn will entertain you till I am ready."

"Sure Dad. Come on into the living room, Mr. Rosen, away from this old office. Dad will be dressed in a few minutes."

"I hope he never gets dressed," thought Conrad, as he followed his employer's daughter out of the office, for he was at once attracted by the girl's beauty. Whether



or not Woodsworth forgot about Rosen, he did not return for him, and so it was some time later when Rosen left after this first visit to the Woodsworth home.

Nor was this the last visit; and it was not always business that took him there, for a strong friendship had developed between Evelyn and Conrad—a friendship that Woodsworth liked to see. He realized in Rosen a fine young man, a man of whom he would be proud some day, and a man he would like for a son-in-law.

Days grew into weeks, weeks into months, and proportionally grew the friendship. With the friendship, came happiness. Conrad had learned to forget and forgive. For once Dame Fortune smiled on him. Evelyn had promised to be his wife, but she wished him to see her father, and so it is that one night we find Rosen waiting the arrival of his employer in the latter's study.

"Good-night, Rosen, I didn't think that I had an appointment with you," said Woodsworth when he entered the study.

"You didn't Sir, but I have one with you."

"I suppose it's about that job in California."

"Yes, Sir, I want an assistant."

"Whom do you want?" asked Woodsworth.

"Your daughter," blurted Rosen.

"At last you've done it!" cried Woodsworth, as he grasped Conrad's hand.

"I've been waiting for a long time for you to do this, and you've done it like a man."

"Thanks a million times, Mr. Woodsworth, you have made me very happy," returned Rosen.

"Don't say a word. Now sit down and let me talk to you like a son, my first son." The man's face changed and his tone changed. I have a story, Conrad, I want to tell you. It's going to be hard, but it's going to help me a lot. It happened some years ago during the war. Those terrible days! I was a coward then and didn't want to fight, war was a great fear to me. For a time I dodged it, but was finally forced to go—that's why I'm living in Canada. I could never go South to my home. I went to France, but the closer I got to the enemy the greater grew my terror. I did my best to conceal it, and was to a certain extent successful. But one night I was ordered to go over the top and have a look around. God, but I was scared! No one knew my terror. I was about to



refuse, but my buddy, who knew my trouble, persuaded me to go; so I summed up enough courage and crawled over the trench and into no man's land. I had gone about two hundred yards when I saw an enemy coming towards me. He was preparing to draw his revolver, I thought. In an instant we were face to face. 'Why doesn't he shoot,' I wondered. Instead he held up one hand. I was crazy with fear, in a moment I shot him. A hero shot by a coward. Oh God, I'll never forget the look of pity in his eyes as he lay dying."

"I'm sorry for you, Mr. Woodsworth, but try to forget," consoled Rosen.

"I am trying, Conrad. But promise you'll never tell Evelyn. She doesn't know her father was a coward."

"No, Sir, I couldn't."

"Here," said Woodsworth, groping in a drawer in his desk, "is the gun he held. I rarely look at it. There's something written on it. Be careful, it's loaded just as I took it from him." He passed the gun to Rosen, who rose to receive it. Immediately Conrad's face changed.

"My name—Oh God! It was my father you killed," he cried in terror. For a moment he was in a daze. The words of his mother came back, they tortured him. Here before him was the man who killed his father, the man who caused his mother's sorrow, hardship, death. His mother! His father! He looked at the gun. Would he kill his father's slayer. Shoot him with the same gun and bullet that might have ended his life on the field of war? But who was this man? The man who had helped him, who had given him his daughter, who had made him happy. He couldn't.

Rosen dropped the gun to the floor and sank into a chair.

"I can't, I can't," he cried in anguish.

"What is it. What's the trouble?" exclaimed the excited Woodsworth.

"I can't tell you all. That was my father who refused to shoot you. He promised my mother he would never shoot a man till he was forced. That promise was sacred, he died for it. Oh miserable life where is thy love! One moment has dashed aside all my happiness, my only happiness."

Woodsworth was dumb; words failed him. What should he do?



Rosen rose, and in silence slowly walked to the door.  
 "Where are you going?" asked Woodsworth.

"I—I do not know. I am going away, away to forget.  
 It would be hell to live near the man, whom I knew, killed  
 my father. It was not you, Mr. Woodsworth, but another,  
 yet you would always remind me of him. You, it was  
 who helped me and taught me the only happiness I  
 ever knew. Good-bye.

"What about Evelyn, Conrad?" pleaded the broken-  
 hearted man.

"I must leave her too, for we could never be happy.  
 You may tell her I am gone. Farewell, Sir."

Woodsworth buried his head in his hands as Rosen  
 passed out of his home and life forever.

J.L.C. '30

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### DAWN

The fiery horseman of the sun  
 In golden phaeton renews  
 With gallant steeds his daily run  
 Dispelling drop by drop the dews.  
 These silv'ry drops, Aurora's tears,  
 Reflect the first, faint flush of Dawn;  
 Phosphor, the morning star, appears  
 More dim, more faint and soon is gone.  
 Orion slain by Dian's dart  
 Grows paler, while before him flee  
 Her nymphs in scattered route apart,  
 And glimmer o'er the shining sea.  
 The sun climbs up o'er hills and towers  
 Awaking flocks and folks and flowers.

W.A.R. '31

