



A Saloonkeeper's Daughter Saved

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“And a certain woman, . . . when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, if I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.” (Mark 5:25-28)

My parents were Roman Catholics, Mother being French and Father Irish. I was kept away from Protestants entirely, not even being allowed to play with our neighbor children unless of the same faith. This made me very bitter against the Protestants. I loved the world and its pleasures. My being a Catholic made it possible for me to attend theaters, play cards, dance, drink wine and other liquors, without its being counted a sin. I traveled much about the world and saw much of life. My father was a saloon-keeper and one of the richest men in Detroit, Mich. He never withheld money or pleasure from me in any respect. When I was about the age of sixteen, my oldest sister died of consumption. A year later my only sister left was taken to meet her God. I was the only child left. My parents loved me very dearly. The custom of the Catholic Church is to give one daughter to the church, usually the oldest. My mother had withheld her daughters. The priest told her that the death of my sister was a punishment sent from God because she had done so, and that our only salvation depended on their giving me to the nunnery as a nun, which would mean separation from home, friends, and the world for life; in reality, it meant death. Even my parents could not see me anymore, dead or alive, after I took the black veil. It meant a sacrifice to me, but in order to save my parents I was willing to go. So I entered the convent walls.

Shameful Discoveries

While there I saw many things I would not dare to print. I found twenty sisters in a dungeon, lying on huddles of straw, without covering, and getting only bread and water to live on. I was fortunate enough to plan the escape of one from the dungeon and saw her gain her freedom one year before I myself made my escape. I was severely punished one time for looking around in forbidden places. I chanced to run upon a priest in the convent, and I found that he had a secret passage from his home to the convent, underground. I was amazed. He was angry at my discovery. He showed me another part of the convent, taking me downstairs, hanging me up by my wrists till my toes just touched the floor. My arms were pulled out of their sockets and the lining of my lungs was torn, and every cord in my limbs were strained, making them crooked to this day. I was left in this position for more than an hour, while the inmates marched in to see me. I was then taken down, and not being able to walk, was carried to my room, where I lay for over a month, suffering intensely. They also showed me a lime pit where they threw the bodies of innocent babes, and told me that if I ever told what I had discovered they would throw me there, also. I was then shown the rack-room, where if we did not obey we should be stretched. How I longed to be free from the awful life that was staring me in the face!

One sister in the chapel impressed me very much. I wondered why she was always praying there from six in the morning till six in the evening. She told me that because she was disobedient to the priest he had put her eyes out and that her life's work was to pray in the chapel those hours. She was fed on bread and water. Oh, how my heart went out to her, but I could do nothing! I made up my mind to make my escape.

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I was soon to go home to see my parents, having a few more times to go before I took the black veil. I had the white veil, which made a full-fledged sister. I had also taken the blue veil and could teach school as a sister. Remember that my parents were to be saved at any cost, so I was to be a black-veiled nun, or a cloister nun, meaning about the same thing; both having the same duties. The visiting sister made preparations for me to go.

I tried not to seem overanxious, but could hardly contain myself. I arrived home about two o'clock and visited with my parents about an hour, and then asked permission of Sister Francis to go to my room. It was granted. My mother always left my room just as I had it arranged. I entered my room, locked the door, and pulled the dresser and everything that was of any weight against it. By this time I was exhausted and excited and, breaking down, began to scream, "Don't make me go back! Don't make me go back!" The sister ran upstairs calling out what it would mean for her to go back without me. My father heard the noise and came running to see what the matter was. He asked me to let him in, but I would not. He then went for our family physician, and the sister telephoned for the priest to come at once. When he came in he asked if I had told anything. I answered, "No, Father." Mother pleaded for me to be left at home for six months. The doctor said if I went back death would follow, so I was granted six months. I was sick and sad and wished to die before the six months were up.

Providence Interfering

I used to sit at the window during the evening and watch the crowds pass to and fro. One night my attention was arrested by singing under the window and, looking down, I saw a little group of people called the Volunteers of America. They stood singing about Jesus and His power to save. It touched my heart. The shine on the

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face, the ring in the voice, seemed genuine. I continued to listen, and growing more interested, ventured out on the street-corner to be nearer them. I then followed them to their hall, listening to their testimonies and their songs. I was then twenty years old and had never read the Bible. One night they said there was only “one mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus Christ.” I began to wonder about my old teaching, about Virgin Mary, the Holy Apostles, Peter, Paul, and the other saints who were mediators between Jesus and me. God was talking to my heart, but I did not realize it then. He still kept knocking. Glory to His precious name!

I want you to notice that it was a sin to go to a Protestant church or false place of worship, as the catalogues of sins said. I began to wonder what punishment would be placed upon me for listening to the Bible, the Word of God. I grew anxious, fearing the priest as every true Catholic does. I made confession to the priest, telling him I had been to the Volunteers of America. He asked me if I believed anything they said. I answered, “Some I do, and some I do not.” He threatened to send me to the convent at once, but I pleaded, and he told me my penance would be to fast one week, drinking only water. I was sad in one way, but was still free to listen to the singing on the street-corner. I had almost ten hours of prayer to repeat each day, during the week. I arose early in the morning, did my penance of prayer, and then waited for the evening to come so as to hear about Jesus and His power to save from sin—that we could have peace and joy in our hearts continually and that if we died any time, day or night, all would be well with our souls. My heart longed for peace, but did not know the way to the blessed feet of Jesus. I groped in the dark day after day. My week ended. I returned to my Father Confessor, told him I had done my penance, but would never come again until I was satisfied in my own heart about these things.

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God had talked to me during my week of fasting. Praise His precious name! I see it now, but did not understand it at that time. The Holy Spirit was convicting me of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come. I continued on some weeks unable to yield to the Spirit of God, afraid to drop my old profession for fear that I should not obtain the peace of God and I should be doomed for eternity. Oh, the agony of soul! But God came to me on the night of March 18, 1905. I want to say right here that where there are honest souls, God will dig them out and bring them the light. I was under such deep conviction it seemed impossible to wait until the evening service. It was the longest day of my life. Hell seemed to stare me in the face. I waited for them to come upon the street as usual. I wondered how long they would be taking the offering. I took a good handful of money out of the cash register and threw it upon the drum and followed them to the hall.

Gloriously Saved

They started the service with that beautiful song, "What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus." I broke down immediately and, lifting my hands, cried out that I could not wait until the close of the meeting to be saved. I ran to the front of the hall and fell on my knees at the altar. The people gathered around me. Oh, how I struggled to be free! But I did not know how to come to Jesus. I began to pray to the Virgin Mary and other saints to intercede for me. They tried to explain to me that Jesus alone was all I needed to confess to, but all grew darker and darker to me, but I was in earnest. When God sees an earnest soul groping in the dark, He will come to his relief. The light began to dawn upon my soul, and I saw Jesus crucified for me individually. My sins loomed up before me, and I confessed and repented to Jesus alone, and joy and

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peace flooded my soul, and His Spirit witnessed with my spirit that I was “born again.” All seemed clear to me.

I was anxious for my parents at once. Like every new convert, I wanted to witness for my Savior, who had done so much for me. It was twelve o'clock when I got home, and, running into the house, I aroused my parents, telling them that Jesus had forgiven all my sins and filled my heart with love. I had always been very self-willed, had a high temper, and was never controlled except in the convent, then only through fear of punishment. But now all was broken, and I felt only love and compassion for my people, who were in such gross darkness. I tried to explain it, but this was impossible. They said I was crazy and called a doctor, who examined my eyeballs, as doctors always do when making an examination for insanity. He said I was not insane, but only excited and nervous, owing to my life in the convent. He told them to humor me, and I would get over it soon.

The Detroit Free Press came out in the morning with a cartoon of me marching with the Salvation Army, and telling that the daughter of a prominent saloon-keeper and a Roman Catholic had joined the Salvation Army. This was a terrible blow to my father, who was a very proud man. He, feeling that it was excitement, allowed me to continue in my new found faith.

Persecution's Flame

I purchased three new Bibles, giving my mother and grandmother each one, keeping one for myself. I went upon the street-corner with the Volunteers, standing in front of my father's saloon, and there witnessed for Jesus. I began reading my Bible at once, so eager was I to learn of God, and continued to go on the street.

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My father would stand it as long as possible and then would roll up his sleeves and take me off the street, kicking me every step of the way to my room. I tell you God had put such a love in my heart that I felt no resentment, only love, and every kick made me love my parents that much more. This continued a number of weeks. The priest came every day, trying to persuade me to give up my foolish notions. But God had done a work in my heart that would stand the test. As a last resort they shut me up in my room, feeding me upon one loaf of bread and a pitcher of water a day, my father bringing it to me in the morning, but my mother never coming near. Every morning he would ask me if I would recant. I would give my answer, "No." I kept reading my Bible. On the eleventh morning he came as usual. I had read a blessed passage of Scripture in Isaiah: "Your bread shall not fail and your water shall be sure." I asked Father to listen a minute until I read one verse. He listened; then he turned to me, telling me to come out, that he would never raise his finger towards me again. As we were coming downstairs, Mother grew angry and excited and phoned for the priest to come at once. He came and commanded my parents to turn me out at once, telling them their only salvation depended upon immediate obedience. Remember he previously told them that their only salvation was that I should give my life to the convent. ("Consistency, thou art a jewel.") My parents loved me, and loved me still. Separation was hard for us all. But the priest must be obeyed, and heaven must be gained at any cost.

I went upstairs to pack my trunk, not knowing where to go or what to do. Never having worked a day in my life, I made preparation to leave my home and loved ones. While I was packing my trunk the phone rang. The Captain's wife called me, telling me God showed her at family prayer that I was in trouble and needed a friend. I answered her that I was packing to leave home, but did not

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know where to go. I was told to come over, because they had fixed a room that morning for me. "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." God had made a way for me. So I left home, Mother not even saying good-bye to me, her only living child.

Father gave me fifty dollars, telling me to let him know if I was ever in need. I went and worked under the Volunteers of America, selling papers, collecting money in saloons in my own home city. God always lets us prove ourselves at home first. There was not one saloon-keeper who censured me, but all told me to go ahead, that I was on the right track.

I suffered much at the hands of the Catholics while in that city. One night a man held a revolver against my temple, threatening to blow my brains out. God had taken all fear out of my heart. I told the man to go ahead, that I would soon be with Jesus. My girl associates would come and point their fingers at me. God gave me grace to bear it all for Him. Another time the Catholics pounded me until I could not see, and it was over two weeks before I was presentable to anyone. Leaving Detroit, I wrote my mother my address in Chicago, telling her any time she needed me I would come to her. I was followed, and my every move was watched by Catholics. They tried hard to catch me alone. God always protected me. I wrote home every week to my precious parents, telling how God was taking care of me and keeping me from the sins of the world, never once mentioning their treatment towards me. They never answered me, but God kept me sweet and tender towards them, my love growing deeper for them every day.

Afflicted In Body

Moving to Omaha, I was stricken down with illness caused by the kicks received at home and the cruel treatment received at the convent. I was operated on in Omaha, three times, this leaving me weak, especially my lungs which were terribly affected. One lung was entirely gone, and the other had a spot the size of a dollar.

I thought my life about to go out, but God spared me. One Sunday morning, I went to a holiness mission and heard of a higher life and the deeper things of God. My heart being open to all the truth, I realized the need of more of God. I went to the altar, there consecrated my all, giving up worldly dress, gold, diamonds, lodges, and everything that drew my mind from my blessed Jesus. The woman who went with me rejected the light and went down, and today lives in sin. We never stand still—it is forward or backward. God helped me. Praise His name! I was more than a conqueror “through him that loved me and gave himself for me.”

Of course, this changed my life entirely. I did not feel led to go into saloons for money to carry on God's work, so I was not wanted any more by the Volunteers. I was again turned out of a home for standing for the truth, this time with only a dollar to move my trunk, get a room, and live until a position was found. The mission workers wanted to care for me, but I, like Jonah, tried to run away from God, by paying my fare to Tarshish, going to work as bookkeeper in a box-factory. The girls kept holding on to God for me, and God swept away my position from me. My will was brought into subjection again to God, and oh, how I worked for my Savior who had done so much for me!

After being away from home over two years, I received a telegram calling me home, my mother being in very poor health. On arriving home, I found that my precious mother had read the Bible

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through twice. She told me it was not so much what she had read that convinced her of the truth, but my life while home the first few months after my conversion, showing it is not the Bible the world is reading but the lives of the professed Christians. I endeavored to point her to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and I had the joy of seeing her enter into rest with Jesus.

She left behind her this testimony in the presence of the priest, that for fifty years she had prayed on her prayer-beads, going to confession, but never finding any relief until now, and that only through the blood of Jesus she was made clean. Turning to me, she told me not to let the Catholics touch her after death. As soon as life was gone, the priest tried to shove me out of the room and take possession, but I stood firm. He then called for a basin of water, washing his hands of her blood, as Pilate did Jesus. He then walked out, forbidding my father to follow my mother to her last resting-place, and would not permit her to be buried beside her two precious girls who had gone on before. She was a heretic now, because she had accepted Jesus as her Savior. After being in the city eighteen years, I had to ask strangers to carry my mother to her grave. This almost broke my heart; only one person went with me to see her laid away. But there was joy in heaven because one sinner had repented and accepted Jesus.

Mother had left me a large sum of money, but the will was broken by my father and the priest, who testified that I had influenced her. I could have won the suit, but I let them take the money, knowing God would care for me. "If they take away thy coat, give them thy cloak also." Only one thing I asked for, and that was the Bible my mother had read, but my father clung to it because it was the last thing she had handled. He loved her dearly in spite of the priest. Priests can rule by fear, but they cannot take love out of

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the heart. I again came west, but I had to hide for eight weeks before I dared to leave the city. The Catholics watched me and were bound to have me. I fled from one town to another until I reached Oklahoma. They traced me there. It being a new country, there were no laws yet, and they were warned to leave on the next train or the results would be disastrous. God always raised up friends for me and supplied my every need. I returned to Lincoln, my health being very bad by this time. I doctored with the very best physicians and specialists, but to no avail. I seemed to grow worse. Finding no relief, I would change doctors. At last, one specialist told me that I could not live over a month unless I could be operated on, and that he would hold out no hope of my ever coming through, being so weak.

Wonderfully Healed

I began to look around for someone who knew the worth of prayer and had faith for healing. I could find no one who trusted absolutely in God. A woman told me of some people who were having such wonderful healings in a humble mission on Twelfth Street, always following the preaching of the Word. I went at once, and they laid their hands upon me, praying the prayer of faith, and God's marvelous healing power went all through me. One of the worst cases in Lincoln that the doctors had given up was healed by God. I had consumption, fibrous tumors, heart-trouble, nervousness, and stomach trouble. God healed me, and I give Him all the glory. The devil contested my healing, but I held to the promises of God. I was taken with hemorrhages of the lungs, bringing me very low. I still held on to the promise and shouted victory, and I wanted them to know that I had it, telling them if I could not speak and they saw me move my fingers I had the victory. God honored my faith at once, healing me instantly. And I arose, went into the mission and led the singing.

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Again, I was stricken with paralysis, my entire right side being perfectly helpless. I was not able to move or speak. The saints prayed for me. God indeed touched me, and healed me instantly.

I was hungry for more of God, and listened to His word. I began to tarry at the feet of Jesus. Oh, how sweet it was! Oh, the joy there is in knowing all is well with our souls! I find there is much land ahead to be possessed, and I am going on to take new heights I have never attained. And I mean to let my light shine, warning men and women to get ready to meet their God. I am writing this, not that men may read about my persecutions, hardships or trials, but to show the power of God to save one who, looked at from the natural, could see no way of escape for either body or soul. But the all-wise God looked down into the dark convent and saw an honest soul, who, if light dawned upon her, would walk in it. He made a way of escape for me. Praise His precious name!

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