

# THE CRUCIFIXION: The Story of Calvary

By LEONID ANDREYEV

**T**HE moon had risen already when Jesus prepared to go to the Mount of Olives, where he had spent all his last nights. But he tarried, for some inexplicable reason, and the disciples, ready to start, were hurrying him then he said suddenly:

"He that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his script; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

For I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me. And he was reckoned among the transgressors."

The disciples were surprised and looked at one another in confusion. Peter replies:

"Lord, we have two swords here." He looked searching into their faces, lowered his head, and said softly:

"It is enough."

The steps of the disciples resounded loudly in the narrow streets, and the disciples were frightened by the sounds of their own footsteps; on the white wall, illuminated by the moon, their black shadows appeared—and they were frightened by their own shadows. Thus they passed in silence through Jerusalem, which was absorbed in sleep, and now they came out of the gates of the city, and in the valley, full of fantastic, motionless shadows, the stream of Cedron appeared before them. Now they were frightened by everything. From time to time they looked back at Jerusalem, all white in the moonlight, and they spoke to one another about the fear that had passed; and those who walked in the rear heard, in fragments, the soft words of Jesus. He spoke about their forsaking him.

In the garden they paused soon after they had entered it. The majority of them remained there, and, speaking softly, began to make ready for their sleep, outspreading their cloaks over the transparent embroidery of the shadows and the moonlight. Jesus, tormented with uneasiness, and four of his disciples went further into the depth of the garden. There they seated themselves on the ground, which had not yet cooled off from the heat of the day, and while Jesus was silent, Peter and John lazily exchanged words almost devoid of any meaning. Suddenly Jesus rose quickly.

"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me," he said and departed hastily to the grove and soon disappeared amid its motionless shades and light.

"Where did he go?" said John, lifting himself on his elbow. Peter turned his head in the direction of Jesus and answered fatiguedly:

"I do not know."

And he yawned again loudly, then threw himself on his back and became silent. The others also became silent, and their motionless bodies were soon absorbed into the sound sleep of fatigue. Through his heavy slumber Peter saw vaguely something white bending over, some one's voice resounded and died away, leaving no trace in his dimmed consciousness.

"Simon, are you sleeping?"

And he slept again, and again some soft voice reached his ear and died away without leaving any trace.

"You could not watch with me even one hour?"

"Oh, Master! If you only knew how sleepy I am," he thought in his slumber, but it seemed to him that he said it aloud. And he slept again. And a long time seemed to have passed, when suddenly the figure of Jesus appeared near him, and a loud, rousing voice instantly awakened him and the others:

"You are still sleeping and resting? It is ended, the hour has come—the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of the sinners."

The disciples quickly sprang to their feet, confusedly seizing their cloaks and trembling from the cold of the sudden awakening. Through the thicket of the trees a multitude of warriors and temple servants was seen approaching, noisily, illuminating their way with torches. And from the other side the disciples came running, quivering with cold, their sleepy faces frightened; and not yet understanding what was going on, they asked hastily:

"What is it? Who are these people with torches?"

Thomas, pale faced, his mustaches in disorder, his teeth chattering from chilliness, said to Peter: "They have evidently come after us."

Now a multitude of warriors surrounded them, and the smoky, quivering light of the torches drove away somewhere the soft light of the moon. In front of the warriors walked quickly Judas Iscariot, and sharply turning his quick eye, he was searching for Jesus. He found him, rested for an instant his look upon his tall, slender figure, and quickly whispered to the priests:

"Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he. Take him and lead him outwards. Lead him cautiously, so that you hear!"

Then he quickly moved to Jesus, who waited for him in silence, and he directed his straight, sharp look, like a knife, into his calm, darkened eyes.

"Hail, Master!" he said loudly, charging his words or usual greeting with a strange and stern meaning.

But Jesus was silent, and the disciples looked at the traitor with horror, not understanding how the soul of a man could contain so much evil. Iscariot threw a rapid glance at their confused ranks, noticed their quiver, which was about to turn into a loud, trembling fear, noticed their pallor, their senseless smiles, the drowsy movements of their hands, which seemed as though fettered in iron at the shoulders—and a mortal sorrow began to burn in his heart, akin to the sorrow Christ had experienced before. Outstretching himself into a hundred ringing, sobbing strings, he rushed over to Jesus and kissed his cold cheek tenderly. He kissed it so softly, so tenderly, with such painful love and sorrow, that if Jesus had been a flower upon a thin stalk he would not have shaken from this kiss and would not have dropped the pearly dew from his pure petals.

"Judas," said Jesus, and with the lighting of his look he illuminated that monstrous heap of



one corner of the room to the other; and as he did not cry out and did not resist, it seemed at times that it was not a live man, but a soft doll with bones and without blood.

... And suddenly all became silent.

"What is this? Why are they quieted suddenly? Have they guessed suddenly?"

In an instant Judas' head was filled with the roar and shout of thousands of infuriated thoughts. Have they guessed? Do they understand now that he is the very best of men? It is so simple, so clear. What are they doing there now? They kneel before him and weep softly, kissing his feet. Now he will come out here, and they will follow him meekly, crawling after him, here—to Judas—he will come out victorious, a Man, a Master of Truth, a God.

"Who is deceiving Judas? Who is right?"

But no. The noise and the shouting were resumed. They were beating him again. They did not guess, they did not understand, and they beat him more harshly, more painfully. And the bonfires were burning to the end, covered with ashes, and the smoke was just as transparent blue as the air, and the sky just as bright as the moon. Day was setting in.

"What is that sun?" asked Judas.

Now everything became bright, began to flash, grow young and the smoke was no longer blue but pink. The sun was rising.

"What is the sun?" asked Judas.

When the hammer was raised to nail the left hand of Jesus to the wood, Judas closed his eyes—he did not breathe, he did not see anything he did not live—he only listened. Then the iron struck the iron with a thud, and then followed dull, short, low blows—he heard how the sharp nail was entering the soft wood.

One hand. It was not too late yet.

The other hand. It was still not too late yet.

One foot, the other foot—is it possible that all was ended? He opened his eyes irresolutely and saw how the cross was lifted and placed in a hole. How how the hands of Jesus contracted convulsively, and how they relaxed painfully, and how the wounds were growing larger.

The hands were stretching, stretching, they became thin, white, dislocated at the shoulders, and the wounds under the nails turned redder—seen as though the hands would tear soon.

But everything stopped. Only ribs were moving, lifted by quick, deep breathing.

On the top of the earth stood the cross, and upon it Jesus, crucified.

The horror and the dreams of Iscariot had been realized—he rose and looked about him with a cold glance. And suddenly Iscariot saw as clearly as his terrible victory, also its ominous uncertainty. What if the people should suddenly understand? It was not too late as yet. Jesus was still alive. There he was calling with his sorrowful eyes.

What was it that prevented the thin covering obstructing the eyes of the people from bursting? And suddenly they would understand. Suddenly they would all move forward, in a stern mass of men, women and children—silently, without any outcry, and they would wipe out the soldiers, sink them in their own blood, tear out of the earth the accursed cross, and the hands of those who would remain among the living would lift high over the crown of the earth the free Jesus! Hosannah! Hosannah!

When Jesus was led away Peter, who had hidden himself behind the trees, came out and followed his Master in the distance. Noticing another man in front of him, who walked silently, he thought that it was John, and he called him softly:

"John, is that you?"

"And is that you, Peter?" answered the other, pausing, and by the voice Peter recognized the Traitor. "Peter, why did you not run away together with the others?"

Peter stopped and said with contempt:

"Leave me, Satan!"

Judas began to laugh, and paying no further attention to Peter, he went farther, there where the torches were flashing dimly and where the clanking of the weapons mingled with the footsteps. Peter followed him cautiously, and thus they entered the court of the high priest almost simultaneously and mingled in the crowd of the priests who were warming themselves at the bonfires. Judas warmed his bony hands morosely at the bonfire and heard how Peter said loudly somewhere behind him:

"No, I do not know him."

But it was evident that they were insisting there that he was one of the disciples of Jesus. Peter repeated still louder, "But I do not understand what you are saying."

Without turning around, and smiling involuntarily, Judas shook his head affirmatively and muttered:

"That's right, Peter! Do not give up your place near Jesus to anybody."

And he did not see how the frightened Peter walked away from the courtyard. And from that night until the very death of Jesus Judas did not see a single one of the disciples of Jesus near him, and amid all that multitude there were only two, inseparable until death, strangely bound together by sufferings—he who had been betrayed by Judas, and Judas Iscariot, the Traitor, left the earth.

All night Judas was dangling upon the tree like some monstrous fruit over Jerusalem; and the wind turned his face now toward the city, now toward the desert, as though it wanted to show Judas both to the city and to the desert.

## DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

"The doctor says I must quit smoking. One lung is nearly gone."

"Oh, dear, John. Can't you hold out until we get enough coupons for that dining-room rug?"

## PRUDENT ENJOYMENT.

"Have you had any trouble with your automobile rides, Mrs. Jones?"

"No; indeed; we make it a point to keep always near enough to a trolley line to get home."

Those mules had a current attached to them by a genial idiot of a driver in order to put a little heat into their lagging footsteps and when they got the second shock they kicked the driver into the canal, dragged the boat into the lock-keeper's house, and committed suicide by drowning.

Electricity Real! Philosopher's Stone. Professor Soddy makes the assertion boldly that it is only a question of application to change lead into gold.

God created the coquette as soon as he had made the fool.—Victor Hugo.

## COMBINED TO DO NOTHING

Southern Statesman Tells Good Story of Two Darkies Who Met at Henhouse Door.

A southern representative who lives in a small village says that one night not long ago, hearing a noise somewhere in the neighborhood of his henhouse, he arose and, under cover of a board fence, crept to the place. He could presently make out a dark form, apparently trying to force the henhouse door. Just then another dusky shape rounded the corner and there was consternation.

"Who dat?" one demanded in a frightened voice.

"Me. Who dat?" was the trembling reply.

"Me. What yo' doin' hangin' round Tom's henhouse dis time ob night?"

"Nuffin'. Nuffin' tall. What yo' doin'?"

"Nuffin'. Ah ain't doin' nuffin', neider."

"Well, den, le's do hit, toggeder?"

"And I have always been sorry that I fel called upon to interfere in so interesting a thing as 'doin' nuffin' toggeder,'" the representative concluded with a smile.

## HOW TO TREAT PIMPLES AND BLACKHEADS

For pimples and blackheads the following is a most effective and economical treatment: Gently smear the affected parts with Cuticura Ointment, on the end of the finger, but do not rub. Wash off the Cuticura Ointment in five minutes with Cuticura Soap and hot water and continue bathing for some minutes. This treatment is best on rising and retiring. At other times use Cuticura Soap freely for the toilet and bath, to assist in preventing inflammation, irritation and clogging of the pores, the common cause of pimples, blackheads, redness and roughness, yellow, oily, mottled and other unwholesome conditions of the skin.

Cuticura Soap and Ointment sold throughout the world. Sample of each free, with 32-pc. Skin Book. Address post-card "Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston"—Adv.

## HARD TEST.

Fred Poor of the supply department of the postoffice has been commuting this winter between here and a town just north of Lawrence. One day, wearied from a late business engagement the night before, he fell asleep in the seat and was in sound slumber when the train passed the bridge in sight of the falls at Lawrence. An enthusiastic fellow-passenger, going over the road for the first time, was so interested at the sight of the splashing water that he thought it a pity the young man should be deprived of the opportunity to witness the scene. And so he awakened. Poor out of sound sleep that he might behold it. Considering that he had seen the falls twice daily for months, it required a rare sense of amiability to look pleased. But he did so.

Rising in His Profession.

How is your son getting along—I mean the musical one, who went to New York city to seek his fortune?" asked the village parson at Hobokon of one of his parishioners, a widowed mother of a family of boys.

"Fine, sir, thank you," replied the old dame. "I had a postal card from him sayin' as how he is conductin' now."

"Indeed, that is excellent news. And what band is he conducting?"

"He didn't say, sir, except that it's on the Bell Line, somewhere around the river front."

Important to Mothers. Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the signature of *Chas H. Fletcher*.

In Use For Over 30 Years.

Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria.

## VARIETY.

"Aren't you ever going to give me my answer? I've been to see you full twenty times."

"Why don't you try coming sober for a change?"

## A DIAGNOSIS.

She—at the bargains they sold some very cheap things today.

He—They evidently sold you.

She's a bright girl who can snatch an eligible man from a designing widow.

Judas had long selected a place where he would kill himself after the death of Jesus. It was on a mountain, high above Jerusalem, and there stood only one tree, bent, half decayed and tossed by the wind, which tore it on all sides. One of its crooked branches was outstretched toward Jerusalem, as if blessing or threatening it, and Judas chose that branch for fastening the noose upon it. Within two days Jesus of Nazareth and Judas Iscariot, the Traitor, left the earth.

Judas was dangling upon the tree like some monstrous fruit over Jerusalem; and the wind turned his face now toward the city, now toward the desert, as though it wanted to show Judas both to the city and to the desert.

Training Down Daddy.

Ethel—I declare, Elsie, how well your father looks. He belongs to that downtown business men's gymnasium, doesn't he?

Elsie—Not daddy. Dad's more up to date than that. Mother and we girls talked him into joining Miss Martin's tango classes, and the improvement has been simply wonderful.

Bad for Dentists.

"How are those two young men who went into partnership as dentists getting on?"

"Rather badly. Somehow they don't seem to pull together."

PUTNAM FADELESS DYES

Color more goods brighter and faster colors than any other dye. One 10c package colors all fibers.

WRITE FOR FREE booklet, calendar, blotters, etc.

MONROE DRUG COMPANY, Quincy, Ill.

READERS

of this paper desiring to buy anything advertised in its columns should insist upon having what they ask for, refusing all substitutes or imitations.

## THOUSANDS OF AVAILABLE HOMESTEADS

Western Canada's Homestead Area Being Increased.

The great rush for homesteads whenever a reservation is opened by the U. S. government reveals the fact that there is a great desire on the part of the American people to get land. The fact that tens of thousands are on hand at every opening, and only a few hundred homesteads are available shows that the available agricultural lands which are in the gift of the government are rapidly diminishing. In addition to this agricultural lands that are of proved value have advanced in price to such an extent that it becomes a serious question to the