Brittain reached the end of the lane just as the school bus halted with its customary wheeze to pick him up. How he hated the hour-long drive each morning and afternoon. Nothing would ever be the same anymore for him, he was sure. Pineridge had been home to him for all the years of his natural life. Even yet, all of his best friends were still there.
Six months! he thought. Six boring and dreary months, he thought, trying to evade Aileena's eyes as he started down the aisle.

"I saved the seat beside me, Brittain."

It was useless. Aileena's voice, so sweetly-soft and welcoming, seemed to plead with him.

"Thanks," he said as he sat down. "You needn't have saved me a seat. But I do think it's very kind of you. And I appreciate it, too."

Aileena looked like Brittain's words had stung her. "I . . . I do hope you don't think I'm . . . bold and . . . and forward," she stuttered "It's just that my heart goes out for you. You . . . look so . . . unhappy."

"I am unhappy," Brittain admitted truthfully. "If I'd had my way, I'd still be back in Pineridge where all my friends are. But children can't choose where one's father works."

"True," Aileena answered. "But children can accept one's change with a sanctified grace and with courage They can purpose to rise above their own disappointments and be sweet and pleasant while doing it. Remember, it was an even more radical change for your parents to make."

Brittain lowered his armload of books to his legs, holding them to keep them from sliding to the floor. "It's easy to talk when one hasn't experienced the trauma of moving and of leaving all of one's friends behind," he said, glancing out of the window.

"I know what it's like," Aileena remarked.

Brittain gave her a quick once-over.

"That's right," she said softly. "I'm a transplant. Maybe Stoker isn't like Ravensville was; no two places ever are exactly alike. But anywhere can be Heaven on earth if Jesus is there. And since my folks and I are saved and sanctified Christians, well, we brought Jesus to Stoker with us. So, to us, that makes Stoker a very pleasant place for living. One of your biggest problems is Gaff."
Brittain jerked about-face and looked Aileena in the eyes. "What makes you say that?" he asked, incredulous.

"You don't have to have perfect vision to see how you're carrying a chip on your shoulder since she gave you the brush off, Brittain. It's as bright as daylight."

He felt his cheeks flushing with embarrassment. Or was it all only embarrassment? he wondered, suddenly.

"Take something very kindly from me, please Brittain," she was saying in a tone of voice so low that he strained to hear her. He was sure he didn't want other ears to hear. He turned toward her.

"I was hurt, too, when I came here. One of the boys from church, who professed to love the Lord with all of his heart, wanted to date me. At first, I refused, feeling that I should like to know him better -- by personal observation."

Brittain was all ears now. And, strange as it seemed to him, he felt perfectly at ease listening to Aileena.

"We began dating," she said. "Church, and the little Hamburger Delight; those sort of places. He wanted to go steady. I told him no, I wasn't ready for that. The following Wednesday evening, instead of picking me up for church as he had said he'd do, my parents and I saw him driving around town with Merri Lou. And they've been going together ever since.

"It hurt me at first," she admitted softly, "because I liked the young man. But it helped me greatly. In fact, it helped me more than it hurt me. I prayed more and sought God's will constantly for my life. And, too, through it, I realized just how precious and wonderful Holiness of heart and life was. I had no jealousy or envy whatever for Merri Lou! This revelation was a great blessing to me!"

Brittain listened in shocked silence. The bus wheezed to another halt and Gaff got on, laughing and beaming up into Rod Brenninger's ruggedly-handsome face.
Brittain tried to act like he hadn't seen her. But that was impossible. Gaff brushed past him with a cheery, "Hi there," then slid into a seat behind him, followed by Rod.

Deep inside, Brittain was seething with anger and jealousy. Until Rod came along, he had had no competition. None whatever. It had been all open field and uphill toward happiness and bliss for him. Then the props were knocked out from beneath him: Rod had done it. From almost his first day at school, it had happened. And he, Brittain, hadn't had the least bit of warning. He wasn't prepared. It was all so very sudden. Gaff, who professed to be a Christian, dropped him like a hot potato and began dating a non-professor. A nonChristian!

"I know you hurt," Aileena's voice reached through to him again. "But it's how you feel inside that matters. If there's no jealousy and no anger or resentment toward Rod, thank the Lord for this, Brittain. And seek God's face diligently to find His will for you and for your life."

He squirmed in his seat. No anger or jealousy! And, no resentment toward Rod! Whew! That was some order. He felt his cheeks burning like hot coals had touched them. He felt convicted! And condemned, too. Oh, he had been professing to be saved and fully sanctified, to be sure. But the pressure was on, when Rod was "transplanted" from Carbondale to Stoker, another member of a family whose father was transferred to this latest, newest, most modern plant by his superiors.

Aileena's words smote his heart like a dart had been thrust through him. Until Rod came along, he had smooth sailing. No trouble whatever in his heart. No known, exposed trouble, that is. Frequently, in family worship, he had heard his father call his name out to God in prayer, asking Him to make him, Brittain, a stalwart, godly and wholly upright young man. "If there is anything within any heart, Father, anything that cannot enter Heaven," his father had prayed, "reveal it. Expose it, if necessary." The words, uttered with such fervency and such pleading, suddenly, now, repeated themselves over and over in Brittain's mind. It was like a broken record, he thought, feeling miserable. His holy and very observant father had, no doubt, sensed that the awful nature of carnality and inbred sin was not crucified; that it was still very much alive and that it needed the Divine eradication and total purging of the Holy Ghost and fire.
Many past scenes flashed through his mind. Altar scenes. He had sought to be sanctified for several months. No lack of cleansing power on God's part. Ah, no! The blame all had to revert back to him, he realized. Self hated to die; to relinquish all its rights, its decisions, plans, wishes and ideas. The entire package. One night, at the altar, a well-meaning man came up to him and said, "Young man, you're going to have to take it by faith. Do you believe the blood of Jesus can sanctify you?"

"Yes, I believe that," Brittain remembered having answered, wiping tears from his eyes.

"Do you believe He can sanctify you now?" the questioner -- "helper" had queried, smiling into his face. "Well, yes, I believe He can. . . ."

"Then take it by faith. You're sanctified wholly. Glory to God!"

He remembered having gotten up from the altar as the man continued shouting, "You're sanctified. Sanctified."

He had looked at his father, who remained upon his knees, weeping.

At home, around the dinner table, his dad said kindly, "Son, you will be the first one to know that the work is done. God's Spirit will witness to your heart. Go clear to the bottom. The carnal nature's a shrewd and subtle thing. It will sneak away into a comer of your heart and try to hide and cover up. But one day, and at a time when least expected, it will rear its ugly head and assert itself. You will know, then, who has had the mastery. Pray on until you die, Brittain!"

He had gone to his room after the meal and prayed. But the "Take it by faith" remark had stuck. After all, he had reasoned, without faith one could not please God. Even the scripture had said that.

And now, now... He hung his head in shame and guilt.

"Did I say the wrong thing?" Aileena asked softly and kindly. "I haven't meant to hurt you, Brittain. . . ."

"No. No, Aileena, you didn't say the wrong thing; you said the right thing. And you haven't hurt me. God's Holy Spirit, so faithful and tender, has
exposed the real me. I'm carnal, Aileena. Oh, so carnal. The old nature within me has never died; it is very much alive. I hate Rod. I'm jealous and envious of him. And I have a deep-seated resentment for him. I have a dangerously explosive enemy within. A traitor, if you please."

Aileena gasped. "Oh, Brittain," she said quickly, "if you hate, you're classed with the murderers. You'll have to repent of this and ask God for Christ's sake to forgive you. No murderer will enter into Heaven."

"Nor any jealousy or anger and envy, either," he said, feeling weak with fear. God had exposed his carnality; He had laid it bare before him.

He looked at Aileena. There were tears in her eyes. "I . . . I'll be praying for you," she said emphatically. "Don't stop until you know you're crucified, Brittain. As you already know, the carnal mind is enmity toward God. It is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, the Bible tells us."

"I know. How well I know this, Aileena! Thanks for helping God to get it exposed. I know what I must do now, and where I must begin. By God's grace, I'm going to do it. Just as soon as I get home from school. This time, I'm going to go to the bottom."

Aileena looked at Brittain. He meant business, she saw. Determination was written visibly upon his face. Soon there would be a shout in the camp; Brittain's shout of complete deliverance and total victory.