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And Having Done All, Stand



by Mrs. Paul E. King

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Deleesa Moran cast one last look at herself in the full length mirror then she stepped out into the hallway where the sunlight, streaming in from all angles of the ceiling to floor windows, almost blinded her. She paused briefly to look around her, noting the shiny-clean windows and the beautifully cleaned rooms on either side of the hallway. She liked working for the Winthrops; their house was so beautiful and lovely. She felt, sometimes, that

cleaning for them was only a dream. But when her work was finished and her muscles ached and her legs and feet were tired, she knew she was not dreaming.

She smiled now; a pleased smile. When the Winthrops came home shortly, they would find the house in total order and beautiful cleanliness.

The knowledge of knowing that it was her tiny but hardworking hands that had brought about the order and put the shine on the furniture and pushed the vacuum cleaner over the thickly-carpeted floors until not a foot print or a speck of dirt showed, rewarded her richly with a satisfaction she couldn't define or describe. Her mother had taught her well, stating that anything worth doing was worth doing right. She had heeded the advice and followed it carefully, having received years of hands-on, at-home training under her mother's loving but sharp scrutiny and watchfulness and gentle instruction.

Deleesa put the stained and soiled polish cloths in a bucket designated for them in the closet next to the washer and dryer in the laundry room, ready for washing whenever Mrs. Winthrop chose. Then she let herself out a side door, being careful to lock it securely behind her, and got into the Volkswagen and drove away.

She would stop in and see how the Turnquets were doing, she decided. A quick visit and a prayer would cheer them up, she knew. It took such a little bit to make them happy and thankful. Too, they may need something from the grocery store, and since the full length mirror in the Winthrop home had revealed that she wasn't actually dirty by her many hours of cleaning and dusting and polishing, she planned to run whatever errands were needed for them.

Mrs. Turnquet saw her before she had driven up the driveway, even. She waved to her from the front porch, where she was sitting in one of the rocking chairs.

"Oh, my dear, dear girl," the elderly woman said, as Deleesa came up the porch steps to where Mrs. Turnquet was now waiting for her. "I asked our kind Heavenly Father to send someone here today; Eli's out of his medicine."

"I'll go get his prescription filled, Mrs. Turniquet. And if you need anything else, I'll go and get it for you. I felt I should stop in and check on you on my way home from work. You see, my dear, the Lord works on both ends. This is most wonderful and amazing to me," Deleesa said, with happy tears in her eyes.

"You are still working for the Winthropps then?" Mrs. Turniquet questioned softly.

"Yes, I am. I feel the Lord opened the job up for me."

"Oh, my dear child, you'll never know how much I pray for you. Your mother told me sometime ago how Mrs. Winthrop tried to break you down. I'm proud of you, Deleesa. I'm sure it's not been easy for you."

Deleesa smiled. "With Christ in full control of one's life, following Him and abiding by His precepts isn't hard, Mrs. Turniquet; it's pure delight. And a joy. The secret lies in being fully and completely possessed by God and with God and in taking your stand from the beginning. One must be consistent -- constantly,"

A smile twisted the corners of the elderly woman's mouth. "You have learned a most valuable lesson," she said. "I am thankful to hear you say what you have just said. And I have never doubted that you'd 'stand tall' for the Lord in whatever you did, Deleesa. You have proven your devotion and love for the Lord, and all who know you know that it is real and genuine. Still, it can be a bit of a trial when one is pressured to give in and to break over."

"Remember when I entered Magnolia High, Mrs. Turniquet?"

The elderly woman nodded. "You were the only Christian there, I believe," she commented.

"There were sixteen of us, I learned after some time, who professed to love the Lord. But I was the only Christian in my class that year. As you know, I was reared in a Christian home. The Bible and prayer was our daily spiritual food. Every morning after breakfast we feasted on heavenly manna. This set the tone for our day; each of us was fortified to meet the onslaughts of the devil with a fresh anointing from God.

"I was sheltered from wicked and worldly influences since all of my life revolved around the church and her saints. I loved my church people; I felt safe and secure and good in their presence. They helped to pray me through at an altar of prayer, and after I was saved and sanctified wholly, they helped to nurture me. This is as God intended a spiritual church to be.

"My entrance into Magnolia High was an eye-opener for me. I guess you might say I experienced 'culture shock,' for I had never before been thrust in among a group of teens who were so arrogant and unmannerly and impolite and brash and brazen. I was shocked. From childhood, we were taught to reply to a query with either a 'yes, Ma'am; no, Ma'am' or a 'yes, sir; no sir.' We were never allowed to be impolite, unmannerly or unkind. Nor were we allowed to be boisterous and noisy. We were brought up to reverence, revere, and honor God. In fact, God was the center of our lives.

"Like I just said, Magnolia High students gave me a shock: God's name was not honored and revered: it was used only as a curse word. I shed many tears over hearing that wonderful name thus used and abused and trampled down, Mrs. Turniquet. Frankly, my heart was broken to pieces over it. And one day, when a girl in my class was defaming and maligning His Holy and precious name in my presence, I rebuked her, saying tearfully, 'Don't! Please don't do that. I love the One whose name you are using as a curse word: He's my Lord and Savior, and He's the truest and best and dearest Friend I've ever had.'

"At first, she was shocked and speechless. Then she said, 'Who do you think you are? I guess I can do as I please; this is a free country. And, now, I'll give you a lesson on just how well I can swear and curse.' And she started in to the most vicious and cruel diatribe I'd ever heard against God, using His name in vain over and over again and again. I had no idea that one of my own sex could stoop so low.

"I placed my hand on her shoulder; tears were running down my cheeks by this time. Calling her name, I said brokenly, 'Just think of it; someday God's going to judge you! It's sinful to take God's name in vain. Please don't do it. Please!'

"She turned pale, like she was suddenly frightened. Seeing the tears on my face, she turned and started walking away. Then she pivoted about-face and said apologetically, 'I . . . I'm sorry.'

"That was the beginning of taking a firm stand for Jesus Christ. Another time, one of the boys was determined that I was going to go to one of their parties, which an equal amount of girls and boys had in their homes from time to time. They knew my stand against alcoholic beverages, smoking and drugs, even though I hadn't said anything to them about these things at the time.

"Arlan, the boy, came up to me that certain day and said, 'Hey, Deleesa, I hear you and the young people from your church have get-togethers at different homes once in a while; how about coming to my house next Friday night? I don't go to your church, but some of the kids and I have a get together night too. We have fun. Real fun.'

"I thanked him graciously, and declined kindly. You see, I overheard him tell filthy stories when the teacher wasn't in the room, and I saw him smoking numerous times. Too, those who went to these get-togethers told in school what went on there. And, always, someone from the group would laugh and tell how they were alone at the house and that they had a 'blast', since Arlan's parents were gone and they could do as they pleased.

"Arlan became angry when I declined; he tried to cajole me for a time then he accused me of thinking I was better than he. Of course, he knew his accusation was false. I told him what the Bible said about abstaining from the very appearance of evil, and how a Christian had no desire whatever for the world and its wicked ways and its evil doings.

"He shrugged his shoulders then scowled at me and said, 'Someday I'll trip you up. I'll prove that you're just like everybody else, instead of being Miss Goody Good all the time and trying to put the rest of us on a guilt trip for the things we do and which you don't do.'

"I told him it was God's Holy Spirit making him feel uncomfortable over his sins and what he was doing, and not I. He pointed his finger at me and said it was I and not God, adding that until I arrived at Magnolia High they didn't care what they said or did."

Mrs. Turniquet smiled; tears slid silently down her cheeks. "Jesus said, 'Ye are the light of the world. . . .' Ye are the salt of the earth. . . .' I'm sure God is making you as salt and a light in the Winthrop home as well as in

Magnolia High. I shall continue praying for you, dear child, that God will give you 'fruit' for His kingdom -- the salvation of souls."

"Thank you kindly, Mrs. Turniquet. I really do appreciate this. The thing that gave me courage beyond myself and in spite of my extreme timidity, was the scripture verse the Lord gave me one morning, very early, as I was on my knees in prayer before leaving for school. It's found in Ephesians 6:13: 'Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.'

"I felt God saying kindly and gently to me that if I wanted to please Him and to keep His smile, then I must stand boldly for Jesus. At first, my shy nature made me tremble and shiver. I quoted the verse over again and again. Then I felt Divine help; I was strengthened by the Lord, within my being. The first time of taking my stand was the hardest. That initial victory was wonderful and glorious, however; it gave me the courage and the strength I needed for standing up for Jesus each and every time ailer that. And Mrs. Winthrop was no exception. Just recently, she told me she admired me greatly. I feel the Lord is working in that home. And now, if you will get me that prescription number, or Mr. Turniquet's empty bottle with the number on it, I'll get it refilled for him. And what about groceries?"

Tears flowed down Mrs. Turniquets' face as Deleesa headed for the drug store. "Use her, Lord, mightily, for the salvation of souls," she prayed, watching till the little, very old Volkswagen disappeared out of sight.