

heavenly banquet, and should derive therefrom abundant fruit for their sanctification.

'And this wish of the Council is in entire agreement with that desire wherewith Christ our Lord was inflamed, when He instituted this divine Sacrament. For He Himself more than once, and in no ambiguous terms, pointed out the necessity of eating His Flesh, and drinking His Blood, especially in these words: "This is the bread that cometh down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead; he that eateth this bread shall live for ever" (John vi., 59). Now, from this comparison of the food of angels with bread and with the manna, it was easily to be understood by His disciples that, as the body is daily nourished with bread, and as the Hebrews were daily nourished with manna in the desert, so the Christian soul might daily partake of this heavenly bread and be refreshed thereby.

'Moreover, the desire of Jesus Christ and of the Church that all the faithful should daily approach the sacred banquet is directed chiefly to this end, that the faithful, being united to God by means of the Sacrament, may thence derive strength to resist their sensual passions, to cleanse themselves from the stains of daily faults, and to avoid those graver sins to which human frailty is liable; so that its primary purpose is not that the honor and reverence due to our Lord may be safeguarded, or that the Sacrament may serve as a reward of virtue bestowed on the recipients. Hence the holy Council of Trent calls the Eucharist, "the antidote whereby we are delivered from daily faults and preserved from deadly sins" (Sess. 13, ch. 2).'

The Storyteller

OUT OF THE DESERT

Mrs. Graham awoke from a pleasant slumber, looked once around her, closed her eyes and shuddered. All her pretty life had been passed amid scenes of beauty, where roses bloomed always, and the sun shone, and merry voices prattled like brooks in the wildwood. Her eyes had avoided the unlovely things of life; her feet had tripped on velvet; many servants had smoothed the roughness out of life, and a wealthy husband had travelled about the earth for scenes and climates suited to the delicate body and amiable whims of the woman he loved. Her beautiful children loved her; her friends were legion, youth still abode with her; and yet Fate had suddenly whisked them all away from her feeble hands, and had landed her in the desert of Arizona, the only place where for a time death might be held at bay, the wise medical men declared.

In the dry climate of the desert there was a chance that her broken health might mend. Every other place refused to receive her except to die, and Lily Graham with all the strength of her spoiled nature was determined to cheat death. Never would she have set foot in this desolate place but for the persistent declaration of the specialist that the Arizona desert around Tucson held her one chance of safety. She was failing so fast then that a week's delay might deprive her even of that chance. She must depart within the hour, with all speed; and, for a wonder, she caught from his tone, her husband's distress, and other signs, the necessity for quick submission. Everything was abandoned in the flight. Her bright world faded in a night, as if it had never been; and the desert, simple, gray, infinite, and terrible, swallowed her like a monster.

No pen could follow the changes of feeling and thought in such a mind after such a disaster, and give them proper expression. From the palace she had stepped to the sanatorium, from the company of princes to that of the maimed and the disfigured. There had been no time to engage a house and servants, the hotels would not receive such a patient, so there was nothing left but the general institution for the time being. As it would be only for a brief stay, she even urged upon her husband the fitness of the place, and sent him

back home to look after the children. In utter despair, in black despondency, she felt that nothing worse could happen to her, alone and solitary. She was almost at the bottom of the abyss. The experience was something like death itself, which deprives us of everything. Being a pious woman in a frivolous way—that is, she had never thought anything about it, simply following the usual forms,—she prayed a little for speedy deliverance from her situation.

Her one strength was the certainty that the Arizona air would cure her, with some criticism for the doctors who were unable to recommend a more respectable place than a desert. She looked at it the first day with contempt, and never looked again intentionally. Her chief duty was to breathe the healing air; so she breathed and read, and ate and drank mechanically. Once in a while she wondered why such things could happen, why her life had vanished, what was the meaning of the life around her. But there were no answers to such speculations. Sleep soothed her with forgetfulness, and at every waking she shuddered at the thought of what was out there beyond her. It was the desert. Occasionally Sister Thomassina shut out that view, as she did on this occasion. Mrs. Graham did not like her special attendant, who was inclined to conversation; and liked to chirrup to her patients. Mrs. Graham disliked chirruping, unless ordered by herself from an exclusive chirruper. Sister Thomassina had used her skill on all sorts of people, and had probably just come from cheering up a dying person. What a terrible thought! So she closed her eyes again, to shut out the desert and the thought together.

Sister Thomassina had just discussed Mrs. Graham's case with the medical man, and had decided that something must be done to lift her out of the darkness in which the poor creature lived.

'Even if I have to quarrel with her; and that would be almost a sin, she is so beautiful, so gentle, and yet so hopeless,' the Sister observed to her superior.

'I can suggest a better way than that,' said the superior. 'She has been here a full week,—all the time you need to spoil a patient. Just leave her for a day to Sister Clare, and she will wake up to the situation.'

'I don't think she would notice the change. Certainly she would make no complaint about it. No: she is of the kind that will die without saying a word, so horrified is she at the calamity which has happened to her.'

The superior made a gesture of despair and went her way. All patients had their whims, and methods of dealing with whims were a useless discussion.

Sister Thomassina looked down on the sleeping Mrs. Graham, rearranged her covering, and said soothingly:

'You should not be so timid about looking at the desert. One should always try to find the sweet in the bitter. Easy enough to find the bitter in the sweet; not so easy to do the other, and yet it's there. I found it so, and many others besides. Some think the sweetness which comes out of bitterness is the best.'

Mrs. Graham opened her eyes with something like scorn in their blue depths, but she smiled at the Sister's persistence.

'One must find a philosophy to suit circumstances,' she said. 'When all is darkness, the last match becomes priceless. I am not afraid to look at the desert, but I am not attracted. Like my life, there is nothing in it.'

'Happy for you, indeed,' said the Sister, 'if your life has as much in it as the desert. If you can give as much to man as this gray plain gives every day your life may well be called happy and rich.'

A trifle provoked, Mrs. Graham sat up on her couch and looked out over the dry expanse, glistening under the afternoon sun. Miles away rose a noble range of mountains, majestic as giant kings of the hoary past turned to stone. They seemed to be seated there like watchers of the desert. On the plain between were visible the roofs and spires of a little city, and a road ran out of it toward the sanatorium—a road which crossed a stream, and had a border of trees large enough to defy the whirling dust of the deserts. Bits of green dotted the gray waste. Close at hand was the

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