



"I took her in my arms and held her."

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY
OF A MAN WHO WAS WITH HIS WHOLE
HEART A PRIEST AND WITH HIS WHOLE
STRENGTH A SOLDIER OF THE CHURCH MIL-
ITANT.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

- *"I took her in my arms and held her."*
- *"Many waters shall not wash out love," said Eleanor.*
- *He stared into the smoldering fire.*
- *"Look!" he said, and Miles swung about toward the ridge behind.*
- *"I got behind a turn and fired as a man came on alone."*
- *"I reckon I shall have to ask you not pick any more of those roses," a voice said.*
- *"You see, the boat is very new and clean, Miss," he was saying.*
- *I felt myself pulled by two pairs of hands.*

THE BISHOP'S SILENCE

The Bishop was walking across the fields to afternoon service. It was a hot July day, and he walked slowly—for there was plenty of time—with his eyes fixed on the far-off, shimmering sea. That minstrel of heat, the locust, hidden somewhere in the shade of burning herbage, pulled a long, clear, vibrating bow across his violin, and the sound fell lazily on the still air—the only sound on earth except a soft crackle under the Bishop's feet. Suddenly the erect, iron-gray head plunged madly forward, and then, with a frantic effort and a parabola or two, recovered itself, while from the tall grass by the side of the path gurgled up a high, soft, ecstatic squeal. The Bishop, his face flushed with the stumble and the heat and a touch of indignation besides, straightened himself with dignity and felt for his hat, while his eyes followed a wriggling cord that lay on the ground, up to a small brown fist. A burnished head, gleaming in the sunshine like the gilded ball on a church steeple, rose suddenly out of the waves of dry grass, and a pink-ginghamed figure, radiant with joy and good-will, confronted him. The Bishop's temper, roughly waked up by the unwilling and unepiscopal war-dance just executed, fell back into its chains.

"Did you tie that string across the path?"

"Yes," The shining head nodded. "Too bad you didn't fell 'way down. I'm sorry. But you kicked awf'ly."

"Oh! I did, did I?" asked the Bishop. "You're an unrepentant young sinner. Suppose I'd broken my leg?"

The head nodded again. "Oh, we'd have patzed you up," she said cheerfully. "Don't worry. Trust in God."

The Bishop jumped. "My child," he said, "who says that to you?"

"Aunt Basha." The innocent eyes faced him without a sign of embarrassment. "Aunt Basha's my old black mammy. Do you know her? All her name's longer'n that. I can say it." Then with careful, slow enunciation, "Bathsheba Salina Mosina Angelica Preston."

"Is that your little bit of name too?" the Bishop asked, "Are you a Preston?"

"Why, of course." The child opened her gray eyes wide. "Don't you know my name? I'm Eleanor. Eleanor Gray Preston."

For a moment again the locust had it all to himself. High and insistent, his steady note sounded across the hot, still world. The Bishop looked down at the gray eyes gazing upward wonderingly, and through a mist of years other eyes smiled at him. Eleanor Gray – the world is small, the life of it persistent; generations repeat themselves, and each is young but once. He put his hand under the child's chin and turned up the baby face.

"Ah!" said he – if that may stand for the sound that stood for the Bishop's reverie. "Ah! Whom were you named for, Eleanor Gray?"

"For my own muvver." Eleanor wriggled her chin from the big hand and looked at him with dignity. She did not like to be touched by strangers. Again the voices stopped and the locust sang two notes and stopped also, as if suddenly awed.

"Your mother," repeated the Bishop, "your mother! I hope you are worthy of the name."

"Yes, I am," said Eleanor heartily. "Bug's on your shoulder, Bishop! For de Lawd's sake!" she squealed excitedly, in delicious high notes that a prima donna might envy; then caught the fat grasshopper from the black clerical coat, and stood holding it, lips compressed and the joy of adventure dancing in her eyes. The Bishop took out his watch and looked at it, as Eleanor, her soul on the grasshopper, opened her fist and flung its squirming contents, with delicious horror, yards away. Half an hour yet to service and only five minutes' walk to the little church of Saint Peter's-by-the-Sea.

"Will you sit down and talk to me, Eleanor Gray?" he asked, gravely.

"Oh, yes, if there's time," assented Eleanor, "but you mustn't be late to church, Bishop. That's naughty."

"I think there's time. How do you know who I am, Eleanor?"

"Dick told me."

The Bishop had walked away from the throbbing sunshine into the green-black shadows of a tree, and seated himself with a boyish lightness in piquant contrast with his gray-haired dignity – a light-

ness that meant athletic years. Eleanor bent down the branch of a great bush that faced him and sat on it as if a bird had poised there. She smiled as their eyes met, and began to hum an air softly. The startled Bishop slowly made out a likeness to the words of the old hymn that begins

Am I a soldier of the Cross,
A follower of the Lamb?

Sweetly and reverently she sang it, over and over, with a difference.

Am I shoulder of a hoss,
A quarter of a lamb?

sang Eleanor.

The Bishop exploded into a great laugh that drowned the music.

"Aunt Basha taught you that, too, didn't she?" he asked, and off he went into another deep-toned peal.

"I thought you'd like that, 'cause it's a hymn and you're a Bishop," said Eleanor, approvingly. Her effort was evidently meeting with appreciation. "You can talk to me now, I'm here." She settled herself like a Brownie, elbows on knees, her chin in the hollows of small, lean hands, and gazed at him unflinchingly.

"Thank you," said the Bishop, sobering at once, but laughter still in his eyes. "Will you be kind enough to tell me then, Eleanor, who is Dick?"

Eleanor looked astonished, "You don't know anybody much, do you?" and there was gentle pity in her voice. "Why, Dick, he's—why, he's—why, you see, he's my friend. I don't know his uvver names, but Mr. Fielding, he's Dick's favver."

"Oh!" said the Bishop with comprehension. "Dick Fielding. Then Dick is my friend, too. And people that are friends to the same peo-

ple should be friends to each other—that's geometry, Eleanor, though it's possibly not life."

"Huh?" Eleanor stared, puzzled.

"Will you be friends with me, Eleanor Gray? I knew your mother a long time ago, when she was Eleanor Gray." Eleanor yawned frankly. That might be true, but it did not appear to her remarkable or interesting. The deep voice went on, with a moment's interval. "Where is your mother? Is she here?"

Eleanor laughed. "Oh, no," she said. "Don't you know? What a funny man you are—you know such a few things. My muvver's up in heaven. She went when I was a baby, long, *long* ago. I reckon she must have flewed," she added, reflectively, raising clear eyes to the pale, heat-worn sky that gleamed through the branches.

The Bishop's big hands went up to his face suddenly, and the strong fingers clasped tensely above his forehead. Between his wrists one could see that his mouth was set in a hard line. "Dead!" he said. "And I never knew it."

Eleanor dug a small russet heel unconcernedly into the ground. "Naughty, naughty, naughty little grasshopper," she began to chant, addressing an unconscious insect near the heel. "Don't you go and crawl up on the Bishop. No, just don't you. 'Cause if you do, oh, naughty grasshopper, I'll scrunch you!" with a vicious snap on the "scrunch."

The Bishop lowered his hands and looked at her. "I'm not being very interesting, Eleanor, am I?"

"Not very," Eleanor admitted. "Couldn't you be some more int'rstin'?"

"I'll try," said the Bishop. "But be careful not to hurt the poor grasshopper. Because, you know, some people say that if he is a good grasshopper for a long time, then when he dies his little soul will go into a better body—perhaps a butterfly's body next time."

Eleanor caught the thought instantly. "And if he's a good butterfly, then what'll he be? A hummin'-bird? Let's kill him quick, and see him turn into a butterfly."

"Oh, no, Eleanor, you can't force the situation. He has to live out his little grasshopper life the best that he can, before he's good enough to be a butterfly. If you kill him now you might send him backward. He might turn into what he was before—a poor little blind worm perhaps."

"Oh, my Lawd!" said Eleanor.

The Bishop was still a moment, and then repeated, quietly:

Slay not the meanest creature, lest thou slay

Some humble soul upon its upward way.

"Oughtn't to talk to yourself," Eleanor shook her head disapprovingly. "'Tisn't so very polite. Is that true about the grasshopper, Bishop, or is it a whopper?"

The Bishop thought for a moment. "I don't know, Eleanor," he answered, gently.

"You don't know so very much, do you?" inquired Eleanor, not as despising but as wondering, sympathizing with ignorance.

"Very little," the Bishop agreed. "And I've tried to learn, all my life"—his gaze wandered off reflectively.

"Too bad," said Eleanor. "Maybe you'll learn some time."

"Maybe," said the Bishop and smiled, and suddenly she sprang to her feet, and shook her finger at him.

"I'm afraid," she said, "I'm very much afraid you're a naughty boy."

The Bishop looked up at the small, motherly face, bewildered. "Wh—why?" he stammered.

"Do you know what you're bein'? You're bein' late to church!"

The Bishop sprang up too, at that, and looked at his watch quickly. "Not late yet, but I'll walk along. Where are you going, waif? Aren't you in charge of anybody?"

"Huh?" inquired Eleanor, her head cocked sideways.

"Whom did you come out with?"

"Madge and Dick, but they're off there," nodding toward the wood behind them. "Madge is cryin'. She wouldn't let me pound Dick for makin' her, so I went away."

"Who is Madge?"

Eleanor, drifting beside him through the sunshine like a rose-leaf on the wind, stopped short. "Why, Bishop, don't you know even Madge? Funny Bishop! Madge is my sister—she's grown up. Dick made her cry, but I think he wasn't much naughty, 'cause she would *not* let me pound him. She put her arms right around him."

"Oh!" said the Bishop, and there was silence for a moment. "You mustn't tell me any more about Madge and Dick, I think, Eleanor."

"All right, my lamb!" Eleanor assented, cheerfully, and conversation flagged.

"How old are you, Eleanor Gray?"

"Six, praise de Lawd!"

The Bishop considered deeply for a moment, then his face cleared.

"Their angels do always behold the face of my Father," and he smiled. "I say it too, praise the Lord that she is six."

"Madge is lots more'n that," the soft little voice, with its gay, courageous inflection, went on. "She's twenty. Isn't that old? You aren't much different of that, are you?" and the heavy, cropped, straight gold mass of her hair swung sideways as she turned her face up to scrutinize the tall Bishop.

He smiled down at her. "Only thirty years different. I'm fifty, Eleanor."

"Oh!" said Eleanor, trying to grasp the problem. Then with a sigh she gave it up, and threw herself on the strength of maturity. "Is fifty older'n twenty?" she asked.

More than once as they went side by side on the narrow foot-path across the field the Bishop put out his hand to hold the little brown one near it, but each time the child floated from his touch, and he

smiled at the unconscious dignity, the womanly reserve of the frank and friendly little lady. "Thus far and no farther," he thought, with the quick perception of character that was part of his power. But the Bishop was as unconscious as the child of his own charm, of the magnetism in him that drew hearts his way. Only once had it ever failed, and that was the only time he had cared. But this time it was working fast as they walked and talked together quietly, and when they reached the open door that led from the fields into the little robing-room of Saint Peter's, Eleanor had met her Waterloo. Being six, it was easy to say so, and she did it with directness, yet without at all losing the dignity that was breeding, that had come to her from generations, and that she knew of as little as she knew the names of her bones. Three steps led to the robing-room, and Eleanor flew to the top and turned, the childish figure in its worn pink cotton dress facing the tall powerful one in sober black broadcloth.

"I love you," she said. "I'll kiss you," and the long, strong little arms were around his neck, and it seemed to the Bishop as if a kiss that had never been given came to him now from the lips of the child of the woman he had loved. As he put her down gently, from the belfry above tolled suddenly a sweet, rolling note for service.

When the Bishop came out from church the "peace that passeth understanding" was over him. The beautiful old words that to churchmen are dear as their mothers' faces, haunting as the voices that make home, held him yet in the last echo of their music. Peace seemed, too, to lie across the world, worn with the day's heat, where the shadows were stretching in lengthening, cooling lines. And there at the vestry step, where Eleanor had stood an hour before, was Dick Fielding, waiting for him, with as unhappy a face as an eldest scion, the heir to millions, well loved, and well brought up, and wonderfully unspoiled, ever carried about a country-side. The Bishop was staying at the Fieldings'. He nodded and swung past Dick, with a look from the tail of his eye that said: "Come along." Dick came, and silently the two turned into the path of the fields. The scowl on Dick's dark face deepened as they walked, and that was all there was by way of conversation for some time. Finally:

"You don't know about it, do you, Bishop?" he asked.

"A very little, my boy," the Bishop answered.

Dick was on the defensive in a moment. "My father told you— you agree with him?"

"Your father has told me nothing. I only came last night, remember. I know that you made Madge cry, and that Eleanor wasn't allowed to punish you."

The boyish face cleared a little, and he laughed. "That little rat! Has she been talking? It's all right if it's only to you, but Madge will have to cork her up." Then anxiety and unhappiness seized Dick's buoyant soul again. "Bishop, let me talk to you, will you please? I'm knocked up about this, for there's never been trouble between my father and me before, and I can't give in. I know I'm right—I'd be a cad to give in, and I wouldn't if I could. If you would only see your way to talking to the governor, Bishop! He'll listen to you when he'd throw any other chap out of the house."

"Tell me the whole story if you can, Dick, I don't understand, you see."

"I suppose it will sound rather commonplace to you," said Dick, humbly, "but it means everything to me. I—I'm engaged to Madge Preston. I've known her for a year, and been engaged half of it, and I ought to know my own mind by now. But father has simply set his forefeet and won't hear of it. Won't even let me talk to him about it."

Dick's hands went into his pockets and his head drooped, and his big figure lagged pathetically. The Bishop put his hand on the young man's shoulder, and left it there as they walked slowly on, but he said nothing.

"It's her father, you know," Dick went on. "Such rot, to hold a girl responsible for her ancestors! Isn't it rot, now? Father says they're a bad stock, dissipated and arrogant and spendthrift and shiftless and weak—oh, and a lot more! He's not stingy with his adjectives, bless you! Picture to yourself Madge being dissipated and arrogant and— have you seen Madge?" he interrupted himself.

The Bishop shook his head. "Eleanor made an attempt on my life with a string across the path, to-day. We were friends over that."

"She's a winning little rat," said Dick, smiling absent-mindedly, "but nothing to Madge. You'll understand when you see Madge

how I couldn't give her up. And it isn't so much that—my feeling for her—though that's enough in all conscience, but picture to yourself, if you please, a man going to a girl and saying: 'I'm obliged to give you up, because my father threatens to disinherit me and kick me out of the business. He objects because your father's a poor lot.' That's a nice line of conduct to map out for your only son. Yet that's practically what my father wishes me to do. But he's brought me up a gentleman, by George," said Dick straightening himself, "and it's too late to ask me to be a beastly cad. Besides that," and voice and figure drooped to despondency again, "I just can't give her up."

The Bishop's keen eyes were on the troubled face, and in their depths lurked a kindly shade of amusement. He could see stubborn old Dick Fielding in stubborn young Dick Fielding so plainly. Dick the elder had been his friend for forty years. But he said nothing. It was better to let the boy talk himself out a bit. In a moment Dick began again.

"Can't see why the governor's so keen against Colonel Preston, anyway. He's lost his money and made a mess of his life, and I rather fancy he drinks too much. But he's the sort of man you can't help being proud of—bad clothes and vices and all—handsome and charming and thorough-bred—and father must know it. His children love him—he can't be such a brute as the governor says. Anyway, I don't want to marry the Colonel—what's the use of rowing about the Colonel?" inquired Dick, desperately.

The Bishop asked a question now: "How many children are there?"

"Only Madge and Eleanor. They're here with their cousins, the Vails, summers. Two or three died between those two, I believe. Lucky, perhaps, for the family has been awfully hard up. Lived on in their big old place, in Maryland, with no money at all. I've an idea Madge's mother wasn't so sorry to die—had a hard life of it with the fascinating Colonel." The Bishop's hand dropped from the boy's shoulder, and shut tightly. "But that has nothing to do with my marrying Madge," Dick went on.

"No," said the Bishop, shortly.

"And you see," said Dick, slipping to another tangent, "it's not the money I'm keenest about, though of course I want that too, but it's father. You believe I think more of my father than of his money, don't you? We've been good friends all my life, and he's such a crackerjack old fellow. I'd hate to get along without him." Dick sighed, from his boots up—almost six feet. "Couldn't you give him a dressing down, Bishop? Make him see reason?" He looked anxiously up the three inches that the Bishop towered above him.

At ten o'clock the next morning Richard Fielding, owner of the great Fielding Foundries, strolled out on his wide piazza, which, luxurious in deep wicker chairs and Japanese rugs and light, cool furniture, looked under scarlet and white awnings, across long boxes of geraniums and vines, out to the sparkling Atlantic. The Bishop, a friendly light coming into his thoughtful eyes, took his cigar from his lips and glanced up at his friend. Mr. Fielding kicked a hassock aside, moved a table between them, and settled himself in another chair, and with the scratch of a match, but without a word spoken, they entered into the companionship which had been a life-long joy to both.

"Father and the Bishop are having a song and dance without words," Dick was pleased sometimes to say, and felt that he hit it off. The breeze carried the scent of the tobacco in intermittent waves of fragrance, and on the air floated delicately that subtle message of peace, prosperity, and leisure which is part of the mission of a good cigar. The pleasantness of the wide, cool piazza, with its flowers and vines and gay awnings; the charm of the summer morning, not yet dulled by wear and tear of the day; the steady, deliberate dash of the waves on the beach below; the play and shimmer of the big, quiet water, stretching out to the edge of the world; all this filled their minds, rested their souls. There was no need for words. The Bishop sighed comfortably as he pushed his great shoulders back against the cool wicker of the chair and swung one long leg across the other. Fielding, chin up and lips rounded to let out a cloud of smoke, rested his hand, cigar between the fingers, on the table, and gazed at him satisfied. This was the man, after Dick, dearest to him in the world. Into which peaceful Eden stole at this point the serpent, and, as is usual, in the shape of woman. Little Eleanor, long-legged, slim, fresh as a flower in her crisp, faded pink dress, came