



Maud Hart and Delos Wheeler
Lovelace Family Papers.

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"Keeper!" The Master was wheedling now. "This is a copying for which I should have better than even papyrus from Hulah. Not copper!" He made a face. "I won't try to use that hard stuff. But parchment! Unhaired, washed, rewashed, stretched and rubbed smooth with pumice. And the separate skins sewn hairside to hairside and fleshside to fleshside to blend the tints."

Jared sighed. "We're out of fine parchment, Master. And with the Roman trouble, most of the traders are staying off the roads. But I can't ask you to put this aside again..."

"The Overseer," the old Master said, "Went into the world outside when we ran short of supplies. You stand here in his place."

Jared had never considered the possibility that he might go into the world outside. But it was true that the Overseer had occasionally done so. Now perhaps he must, and the prospect both thrilled and repelled him.

make it impossible for scrolls like that to reach us."

"The Overseer," the old Master said, "Had permission to go into the world outside. You stand here in his place." He was still wheedling.

Jared had never faced up to the possibility that he, too, might go into the world outside. Now perhaps he must, ^{and} The prospect both thrilled and repelled him. Of course all sorts of goods had to be hunted in this Roman-made scarcity. But by him, who had never been out of sight of the Community?

Well, he had been in the desert. The Chaste one's intercession had made him free to go a long way into the desert. And learn! ^{had called him} Brothers told him he had become a desert liar-in-wait. And he was able to find cover in next to nothing--a trough, a billow, almost any shadow. Where many would have been easily spotted, he had safely watched unsuspecting caravans, Roman patrols and bandits ^{as well as} ~~and over and over~~ the usual jumble of travellers.

But go into the world outside? Deal there with Temple priests, merchants, innkeepers, beggars, robbers and thieves? And worse, with the gnawing temptations he had managed to subdue in the desert? How subdue them in the strange world outside?

And yet, he told himself, it would be a thing indeed to deal with the whole lot of bullies, tricksters, bandits, dogs-in-the-manger who, he had been told, crowded the world outside. Especially Romans and more especially Temple usurers. Lucky that there was also the priestly school at Jamnia where money was money was honestly weighed and usury was never met.

~~"I never thought of going into the world outside," he said. But perhaps it is put upon me.~~ I shall speak to the Priest of Aaron," *he said.*

The Priest of Aaron was startled. Jared need not ask permission to do what the Overseer had done regularly.

"But of course," the old man said. He spoke easily because no decision was needed. It had been made long before. "Go as often as you wish. Never feel you must speak of it again."

Jared found the Chaste One on his rock but this time not wrapped in his commentary. He was looking soberly across the desert.

"I am to go into the world outside," Jared said. "The Priest of Aaron permits." *it.*

"I know."

"I shall go to Jerusalem and ^{perhaps to} Jamnia, surely, and maybe farther."

"Into the very pit! Well, each of us must do his duty."

"When they made me Keeper, I asked your blessing. Will you bless me against this going?"

"I bless you every day, whether you ask or not, whether I see you or not."

Jared knelt. It was late afternoon and the wind out of the west felt cold on his back.

"May the Lord keep baseness from your heart! If you stumble in the iniquity of the flesh, may his righteousness cleanse you."

Jared turned back to the Mall. This time, when he reached

X it, he did not run. He was not on fire to begin his new duty. He went on slowly, puzzling over this blessing, so different from the earlier one.

X But on the day before his journey started, excitement put the puzzle out of his mind. He was again on the sunny rock, this time to ask if there was anything -- anything -- he could do in the world outside for one who deserved everything.

X Nothing, the Chaste One told him contentedly, except to return safe ~~and~~ sound. He described the country Jared would see, told him what honored landmarks to look for.

"Also," the Chaste One said, "Do not go far ^{on} your first day."

"I'll be starting early. I could go well past Jerusalem."

"Stop early. Your first taste of the world outside will help when you ~~think how~~ to prepare for the second and third."

"There is the inn at Netophah on the Incense road. Or if that too near even for a first day?"

"Netophah is far enough. Speak of me to the innkeeper or, if he is gone, to his son."

"You knew the innkeeper?"

"We met in a pass below Jerusalem. A falling rock had broken his leg. He said he would never forget."

Jared thought back. When he came to the Community the Chaste One, even then, had been snow white. And the rock would ~~have~~ fallen before the Chaste One joined the Brotherhood. And in a

lonely place where only the brave and merciful stopped to help.

"The son of the son of the innkeeper should never forget," he said.

---X---

W.A.M.

There are versions of these last
two papers I like better and
can send you, I think. While
the chapter ended with
the blessing.

GILBERT
Superior
25% COTTON

you
"You mean ~~they~~ killed that little old man?"

X "It was his own fault. If he ^{had} dodged he'd just have got a lesson. And if he hadn't had a head like an eggshell it probably wouldn't have busted."

the
"Well!" the Centurion said, "Get them moving." He looked away across ^{the desert and then back to the wall where} to the Brothers, ~~clustered around a fallen figure.~~ ^{still stood.}

"Fall, IN!" the Optio said, almost choking over the two words. Hadn't he known how it would be? "Forward, MARCH!"

This time the Century did not need to go cautiously around by the ^{Salt Sea} shore. It headed north. On its left, too far away to show in much detail, a line of pocked cliffs rose.

"Column! Half Right! MARCH!" the Optio said. "Route Step! MARCH!" His voice was under better control but he almost choked again when the Century, permitted to talk, began to gossip. He knew what they were jabbering about. Oh, he knew!

* * * * *

X Imperial Rome required each legionnaire below centurion rank to carry two spears. Buy them as he must buy ^{all} armor, arms and gear out of his yearly three hundred denarii which, also, must pay for gaturnalis. One spear was heavier and could serve, happily, as a club now and then.

n
X The pompous, fluttery, dedicated Overseer did not move after the Optio's club drapped him. The few Brothers who went hesitantly to his side froze when they saw that aid would be useless, and after the [≡] twenty marched away nothing moved for ~~at~~ a

time except ^a creeping red nimbus crowning the still, meager form
and this soon clotted to fix for a little the shocking ^{asymmetry} ~~symmetry~~
of the white old head.

Violent death came almost never to the Community in its
nearly deathlike setting. When Jared came down from his lookout
the Brothers seemed to be waiting for the Overseer himself to tell
x them what to do. They looked anxiously at Jared who said, "Wait!"
x and went ~~up to the Tower~~ to report what had happened to the Priest
x of Aaron. ^{what had happened} That old man first covered his eyes and sat in silence but
then he told Jared that all must proceed as prescribed ^{after} ~~for~~ any
x death. Jared ^{returned} ~~descended~~ to the Brothers and he and another lifted
the corpse and carried it gently to its last lustral bath.

Led by the Priest of Aaron and the others of the Fifteen, ^a
x mournful procession ^{followed} carried the Overseer to the windblown burying
ground. After prayers and chants all stood in mournful silence while
the body, purified by lustration, shrunken by embalming and clothed
x in fresh st garments was placed in his shallow grave on a ledge cut
into the side wall. Reverently, optimistically, head and feet were
oriented for easy entrance into Paradise. On the way back the Brothers
whispered:

"He will be missed."

"Who can take his place?"

"How he did drive us!"

For a few days it seemed as though that driving had not been
x needed. The Community ran on momentum. Or because everyone did what ^{they felt}

the Overseer would have ordered if he had been there. But on the eve of the Sabbath the Priest of Aaron summoned the Fifteen. They must, at least, set aside a new Awakener.

They did. No one even suggested a new Overseer. He was not one to be replaced like a cracked jar. But after much discussion they did summon Jared.

"Among many duties," the Priest of Aaron said, "the Overseer had charge of the Library and Scriptorium."

Jared nodded. He was aware of that. *but he had to acknowledge that he shall*

"You shall now be responsible for the same treasures," the Priest of Aaron said. "You shall be our Keeper of the Scrolls."

He gave a little sigh which unconsciously revealed his relief at being able to shift such responsibility to young, strong shoulders.

Keeper of the Scrolls!

Jared knew what he had heard but he still doubted. So far as he saw his only qualification for the honor was that he had gone to the treasures of the Library and the intimacy of the Scriptorium as often as he had been permitted. *could justify*

"Well," he said slowly, "I'll do my best."

"You have our confidence," the Priest of Aaron said and the others of the Fifteen nodded and the Priest of Aaron raised a hand in blessing over Jared's head and he took that for permission to leave. *He was on fire to leave.*

"I thank you," he said and turned, again confused, and

NOT COLORED

got out to the Mall and hurried off to find the Chaste One. He found him, where else, on the sunny rock. But he was not able immediately to tell his story. The Chaste One had something of his own to tell.

"The commentary grows," he said on catching sight of his longtime ward. "The seed is good. Here is the seed. Listen!"

With nothing but the will of God shall a man be concerned.

Faced with such gentle enthusiasm, Jared put his own arresting news aside.

"It is very good. Where does it come from?"

"Where but from one of our own psalms?" The Chaste One shook his head in mild rebuke at such forgetfulness. "But you did not come to talk about my commentary."

"To thank you! I am straight from the Fifteen. I could not come fast enough. They have made me the Keeper of the Scrolls."

"They choose well."

"Only because of you."

"You earned the choice. You are our best."

"Because you guided me. Guide me still."

"You are past my guidance. Go to your new duty. I can see it fills your mind."

"Give me your blessing," Jared said and knelt, the sun hot on his back.

"May the Lord keep the fruits of holiness on your lips," the Chaste One said and a slow smile brightened his mouth.

Warmed by more than the sun Jared walked until he

reached the Mall. Then he could not keep from running. He was, indeed, bent on taking over his new duties.

Th_e Discipline enjoined silence during working hours but even Brothers whose consciences bruised easily saw no grave disobedience in a nod, wink, shrug, lift of evey^lrows, pursing of lips, change of gait, carriage or mi^on, all of which could be meaningful without a word uttered.

As Jared hurried, this sort of dialogue spread the news of his promotion and when he climbed to the Library the fiery ears of the young new Brother there said that he had heard. And lest this one now in Authority, but lately scarcely better than himself, question his diligence he continued intent before the narrow shelves rising from floor to ceiling. Not looking up or sidewise he dusted, rearranged and straightened papyrus, copper and leather rolls and adjusted the tags sewn to exposed ends, little flags from which to read at a glance the subject of each.

The Library attendant was required to keep scrolls on readiness. He must also see that, being returned, none was torn or smudged or, if it was, was properly repaired. He must make sure that every returned scroll was properly rolled since a crease made papyrus or leather much more illegible. If more shelves were needed he must build them, and he must maintain the supply of ink and pens and, of course, keep everything neat and tidy.

Th_e Overseer had regularly inspected for all this and now, preparing to do the same, Jared unexpectedly found himself resisting an impulse to clear his throat in imitation of the ~~Overseer's sputter against slipshod work or any other nonsense.~~

7 Overseer's sputter against slipshod work or any other nonsense.

Happily, he recalled advice from the Chaste One:

Whoever holds his tongue may be saved from both boasting and a show of his ignorance.

And he began his inspection in sedate silence.

In a corner he noticed fragments of a jar broken by the Roman who had killed the Overseer. The innerface of these, an inviting surface for writing, bore fresh letters. This Attendant did not mean to remain an attendant. He aspired to be, like the Masters, learned, and was already well along on his alphabet.

Confronted with such ^{ambitious} ~~frugal~~ use of the Optio's potsherds it was not easy to keep silent. But the Overseer would scarcely have ~~praised~~ ^{not much to praise} openly what was, after all, merely the normal effort at self-improvement expected of all Brothers. So Jared only gave a half smile of approval and, ^{guiding} ~~gnawing~~ himself on precedent, said nothing.

The Library, the Community's only second floor room, was not much more than a sizeable, airy storeroom but its scrolls made it precious. The much larger Scriptorium below was long and lofty and its floor a serene counterpoint of grey and white marble blocks. Its western balcony invited the breezes that flowed ~~xxxxx~~ each afternoon from the Great Sea and on its other sides windows were both ventilators and frames for the panoramas of Nature. This the Masters' long day was shortened by tranquility, coolness and vistas of Moab's dreaming peaks and the sometimes sunlit and golden, sometimes shadowed and ^{inscrutable} ~~bewitching~~, desert.

25% COTTON

sputter against slipshod work or any other nonsense.

Jared hesitated at the Scriptorium entrance. Before promotion he would not have entered except by direction of the Overseer or ^{the} invitation of a Master. An ordinary Brother, having no business in the place reserved for the learned, would not have been turned away, but before the day ended the Overseer would have warned him to walk wide thereafter and not risk disturbing his betters. Now, of course, it was Jared's duty to enter. The Overseer had not gone a day without giving those in the Scriptorium opportunity to request whatever seemed required or desired of that was only to have reed pens sharpened or the ink thinned or thickened. Now Jared must do what he could to ease the labor of those who worked, it might be said, almost in the very Presence, probing for such veiled truths as had been revealed earlier to Prophets and, by grace, might today be made clearer to this select few who were trying to live in a purity equal to that of the Prophets. When he did enter it was with a humbling awareness of his own shortcomings.

The Masters, however, showed no such low opinion of the new Keeper. As his sandals broke their silence they looked up in smiling welcome, then glanced around to alert any who might have missed ^{the} this arrival. But smiling was not enough for this young Brother now become one in Authority. Honor paid Jared was, in a manner, ^{own} theirs. Might he not have been the son of a son of any of them? They got up from the mats that had coddled their old knees while they knelt to read, or write or meditate before the long low tables. And this rising was all the more meaningful

because some of them, once down, got up only with considerable creaking. But up they ^{rose} came, whitebearded except for a few who were still unseasonably brownish, blackish or reddish, and came
X forward in their robes (~~drifting snow-topped at random with~~
X ~~varicolored autumn leaves~~) and closed around Jared, nodding their full approval of this younger Brother, ~~now almost one of the Fifteen but only this morning on the lowest rung of the Community ladder.~~ *now almost one of the Fifteen*

They returned to their tables still smiling. These smiles, ^{sketch} however, were different, saying ~~now~~ that the Masters
X could take no more time from their scrolls. ^{These} That, as of course
X the new ^{Master} understood, counted up to more than even so excellent a promotion.

For two or three days more the roomful continued to look up and smile at the clip of Jared's sandals but then it only smiled over shoulders, without really looking away from *the work spread on* the tables.

Jared came every day, as the Overseer had, making himself available for any request. This, also, enabled him to make sure the Attendant did not spend so much time on his shards and alphabet that he neglected the bronze inkwells and terra cotta vases for pens, set between each pair of tables.

* * * * *

The reading, copying and study of the scrolls went on. Some were old and worn, some mint fresh. A few were made of copper

but copper was ^{expensive and} so new in Palestine ^{as a surface} for writing that many were unfamiliar with it and a few older Masters refused to use it. In addition ~~it was scarce and so expensive.~~ Some were of papyrus which was cheap. Most were of parchment which cost ~~in~~ between and was in all ways best.

A copper scroll was a single strip, long or short. Parchment and papyrus scrolls were of three or four up to a dozen or more sections sewn together. Parchment was ^{made from} the expertly prepared skins of unborn or new-born lambs, goats or calves, papyrus ^{was} thin, peeled strips of reed layed side by side and another layer crosswise. These were pounded to set the natural adhesive, rubbed smooth with an ivory spatula or a shell with the proper surface, then dried. The finished papyrus sheet was grade one to nine but only the first four grades were considered suitable for writing. ~~The inferior grades had many uses but the nines were chiefly for wrapping.~~ The best papyrus was ^{made of reeds a little above} said to come from reeds out of Lake Hulah, a shallow little water above the Sea of Galilee. Dissidents, however, plumped for papyrus from Egypt.

Worn out scrolls were painstakingly, and expertly, copied onto new blanks when the subject matter was sufficiently valuable, each new letter so like the old ^{one} that the likeness was astounding. The rules for copying, for all writing, were fixed except, of course, for copper scrolls when some rules, as will be obvious, ~~did not apply.~~ Each

~~Penmen were of two schools. One used a firmly pointed reed. The other frayed the reed-end to brush letters on, painter style. Ink was soot or carbon mixed with oil. The attendant prepared carbon cakes for brushmen, filled inkwells for the others.~~

~~The rules for copying, for all writing, were fixed. Each sewn~~

07
X
07

Step
the
line

long
finger
the

Each section must have the same number of columns reading from left to right. Each column must have no less than forty-eight lines, no more than sixty. Each line must have thirty letters but some letters were wide, some narrow, so an extra one or two was allowed.

Oldsters hung letters from guide lines as their fathers and grandfathers had. Younger Masters set letters between two lines, a new style hardly a hundred years old. Both wrote with a precision and beauty which made Jared marvel as he walked along the long low tables.

Erasures and corrections (~~carried out to a margin~~) were permitted and ^{then} took time on copper. Water washed out mistakes on papyrus and parchment but sometimes disintegrated brittle, thin papyrus. Corrections were interlined ^{or} ~~as well as~~ put on a margin.

Penmen ^{were} ~~divided~~ into two schools. One used a firmly sharpened reed. The other frayed his reed and brushed letters on, painter fashion. Ink was soot or carbon mixed with oil or water. The attendant made carbon cakes for brushmen, filled inkwells for the others.

And what were these Brothers in their purity reading, writing and studying? Always the Law handed down by great Moses. Often the Prophets. Sometimes great David's glorious psalms or later imitations. Now and then the stories of Job, Ruth, Esther, Tobit and others. From time to time the history of the People, told and retold by proud chroniclers. And, naturally, the Brothers' own commentaries on nearly everything under the sun.

The Masters maintained a tranquil mood, ~~throughout each day~~. But this did not mean tranquil acceptance of hindrances to their work. They were quick to protest bothers and all the more quick as Jared's daily visits indicated that this new Keeper could be induced to put

the most unsatisfactory condition to rights.

* * * * *

Unannounced in any formal fashion, Jared's position did slowly change until he was looked on as one of the Fifteen in all but name. He would have been content to stay one of his Ten. For a while he continued to stand with his group when the Brotherhood formed for the evening meal. Even more than before, this was the most rewarding hour of his day. Lustration over, his body cool under white garments which smelled clean and sweet, he waited with the others in a calming silence, his day's work finished, his mind untroubled.

As often as not his mind dwelt on the Community's psalms. He had missed the line around which the Chaste One was shaping his commentary but he did not miss many. He accepted as truth what the Community's oldsters said, that the psalms of the Temple were not a patch on theirs. All the world knew, the oldsters insisted, that many, many Temple psalms were written for selfish reasons by a little clique of priests and leaders of the Leavite choirs there.

Great David had first established these choirs and he was still set down as composer of every Temple psalm although no one explained how he could have been so prolific a poet while he was general, king and Temple planner. But choirmasters were forever popping up with a new:

Meditation of David.

Harp Song of David.

Song of David After Doves in Distant Terebinths.

Song of David After Lilies in the Fields.

These pop-ups, critical Brothers insisted, were in fact written for bribes from rich men wanting forgiveness. Naturally, forgiveness seemed more likely when a psalm linked the briber with Israel's greatest more or less forgiven sinner.

The bribes stirred up the greediest competition. A ^{Temple} choir-master filched a good line or so from a rival's psalm and coaxed away his singers and musicians. Not, of course, a whole chorus or all seven harps or all six lyres. It was enough to coax just one of the best.

At the Community, psalms were composed for the love of the Lord. And it was snatches of such psalms that ran through waiting Jared's tired but tranquil mind.

With an offering of the lips will I bless Him.

On his steadfast love I shall lean all the day.

In His hands is the uprightness of my heart.

The faithfulness of God is the rock I tread.

01
cut?
(Jared's next advancement was as unexpected and as casual as his first.)
as David
On one evening he was recalling psalms, comfortably aware that ^{most of} his Ten were also trying to keep their minds on holy things, when the Fifteen passed on its way to the head of the line and the hand of Priest of Aaron fell on Jared's shoulder and drew him along.

"Come sit with us, Jared."

The line of Brothers was staggered. Though no one made a sound the suddenly straightened shoulders and the quickly lifted heads, betrayed their amazement. Such an elevation, almost to membership among the Fifteen, had never been made in this manner before. Nor had so young a Brother ever been set among those in authority.

Jared sat with the Fifteen thereafter. But for him the chief consequence was that the meal took on a deeper significance. His work increased but that was another matter. He felt a sharper purpose in the evening ritual. The Priest of Aaron's blessing held a holier note, the psalm singing a richer meaning. The spare meal, itself, was no more filling but enormously more satisfying.

In truth, of course, nothing was really changed unless you counted the lamps used when darkness fell early enough to make them necessary. These grew steadily fewer because the Priest of Aaron complained that their brightness hurt his eyes. After a number of such complaints a Brother recalled that his grandfather had complained similarly and then had gone blind.

There was, however, Jared's increased work load. He continued to be called the Keeper of the Scrolls but more and more he picked up duties that had been the Overseer's. Not all! An aged Brother who would shortly lay in the cemetery began to keep it tidy. Heber gave more leisure hours to the oasis, so that Jared needed to find almost no other help for the farmer. But he stood forward regularly now at the hour of Assignments which followed the First Ritual. The grounds and buildings became his care and in the Library and Scriptorium he did as much or more than his predecessor.

WOTTOO

Use it

any reasonable amount ~~was~~
"Keeper!" one Master said when they all had learned they would not be refused anything. "Is there no good Hulah papyrus? Must I use this sleezy stuff out of Egypt?"

Jared examined it. The stuff was unmistakably out of Egypt, fourth grade at best.

X ~~negative~~ "Egyptians never make the first grade," he said, "But as long as Rome stays in Palestine you may have to use worse."

"Not on what I am copying," the Master said. "The Overseer set me at it. It is a great writing and deserves better."

Jared looked at the old, worn, scroll on the table. Once he, too, had kept the Library in order and he would have sworn there was no roll there that he could not identify by some detail. Color! Knife marks on its roller which, more than likely, he himself had cut! Its little flag! Scent! However alike the all seemed at first glance every one had its oddity. Its own marshy sourness of papyrus. Its own special odor of long gone heat if of copper. And each parchment roll had its own astringency. But looking hard he discovered no familiarity at all.

"Now what is this?" he said.

"For a time I thought it was so worn that it amounted to nothing."

"But now it does?"

"It is out of Egypt, but not really Egypt. Ethiopia, rather! But Alexandria sent it to us."

Alexandria explained a little. Alexandria would not send a valueless scroll. Alexandria's Community had been old in wisdom when ~~this one by the Salt Sea began.~~

"Keep it."

one
when this~~xxx~~ by the Salt Sea began.

"Keeper!" the Master said, and his tone made it plain that he knew he was reporting a wonder, "This is a new writing about Enoch."

Jared was awed. He would have been by any new Writing about Cain's eldest~~st~~ son who had, by faith, been trans~~mark~~^{lated} into Heaven. Who, the Book said, had walked with the Lord and then was not for the Lord took him. And the Book of Jubilee told more. How Enoch had ~~xxx~~ brought back from Heaven the secrets of writing, of numbers, of the stars and, to Noah especially, the secret of remedies. And how, in Heaven, he had seen the march of the sun and moon and the glorious parade of beings from all ten celestial realms. He had seen the phoenix of perfect beauty, the seraphim which have six wings and the cherubim which never sleep. He had seen the Guardians, each having a whole people in his charge. Michael had change of Israel^{as}, Jared well knew. Hadn't he prayed to Michael in the desert?

"Mighty Michael! Give..."

"Keeper!" the Master said. He was openly wheedling. "This is a copying for which I should have better than papyrus. Not Copper!" He made a face. "I won't try to use that hard stuff. But not even papyrus from Hulah. Parchment! Unhaired, washed, rewashed, stretched and rubbed smooth with pumice. And the separate skins sewn hairside to hairside and fleshside to flesh side to better blend adjoining tints."

"But we haven't such a parchment," Jared said. "The Romans

Alexandria, the Chaste One had told Jared, long before this one, by the Dead Sea.

The Master nodded and his face began to flush in the excitement of his discovery.

"Jared, this is a new writing about Enoch."

"No!" A new writing about Enoch could be a portent. Everyone knew of Cain's oldest son who had by faith been translated into heaven. The Book said that he had walked with the Lord and then was not for the Lord took him. And the Book of Jubilees told how he had come back for a little and had handed on to men the secret of writing, of numbers and of the stars and, especially, to Noah the secret of herbal remedies. In Heaven he had seen the march of the sun and moon and the glorious parade of celestial beings from all ten realms -- among many the phoenix, of perfect beauty, the seraphim, which have six wings; the cherubim, which never sleep, and the Guardians, each of whom has a whole people in his charge.

Israel had Michael as Jared knew for a very good reason. His throat filled with worship of Michael to whom he had prayed often as he walked himself to exhaustion in the desert.

"Mighty Michael! Help me to find the strength I need! Help me, the least of all whom you guard!"

"I ought to have the new leather scroll soon, Jared," the Master said.

It was Jared's turn to flush because of a bursting realization ^{burst upon him} that he might be going into the world outside before the week was out, even sooner, and not in some vague, remote future as had seemed probable when the Priest of Aaron said that of course the Keeper could leave the Community

whenever needful. The Brotherhood stores would not likely turn up even one unused scroll of leather.

When he had first heard the Priest of Aaron's offhand permission it had meant nothing much beyond a dim prospect of again meeting up with Romans. Now it was a great warning shout to prepare for challenges more dangerous than any Romans. He had been conscious of these challenges before but they had never seemed dangerous. They had been too improbable, only dangers born in a dream, bogies that vanished if you rolled over.

Now they were almost at his throat and did not go away. With only a few days, or less, to prepare he might have to deal with priests, merchants, robbers, beggars, innkeepers, farmers and what not. The same gossips who had alleged those Temple scandals had described this bullying, thieving, murdering, tricky, dog-in-the-manger crew. But there was still more. He would face anew the cloud of temptations which, with Michael's aid, he had got rid of in the desert. Could he get rid of them in the world outside?

"Wait until I look around and, if I find nothing, until I speak with the Fifteen," he said. "I'll be as fast as I can. I'll start now."

As he set off he resolved to speak with more than the Fifteen. More than their permission was going to be required and a onetime lier-in-wait, although now nearly a saint, would be the best one to supply it. The Chaste One, before giving himself up to holy meditation, must have travelled ~~afkax~~ far as well as often in the world outside.

* * * * *

overriding
"You mean ^{you} ~~they~~ killed that little old man?"

"It was his own fault. If he had dodged he'd just have got a lesson. And if he hadn't had a head like an eggshell it probably wouldn't have busted."

x "Well," the Centurion said, "Get them moving. ^u He looked across to the Brothers, clustered around a fallen figure."

"Fall, IN!" the Optio said, almost choking over the two words. Hadn't he known how it would be? "Forward, MARCH!"

This time the Century did not need to go cautiously around by the shore. It headed north. On its left, too far away to show in much detail, a line of pocked cliffs rose.

"Column! Half Right! MARCH!" the Optio said. "Route Step! MARCH!" His voice was under better control but he almost choked again when the Century, permitted to talk, began to gossip. He knew what they were jabbering about. Oh, he knew!

* * * * *

Imperial Rome required each legionnaire below centurion rank to carry two spears. Buy them as he must buy armor, arms and gear out of his yearly three hundred denarii which, also, must pay for saturnalias. One spear was heavier and could serve, happily, as a club now and then.

x The pompous, fluttery, dedicated Overseer did not move after the Optio's club dropped him. The few Brothers who went hesitantly to his side froze when they saw that aid would be useless, and after the twenty marched away nothing moved for ~~ax~~ a

GILBERT

time except a creeping red nimbus crowning the still, meager form
and this soon clotted to fix for a little the shocking ^{asymmetry} ~~symmetry~~
of the white old head.

Violent death came almost never to the Community in its
nearly deathlike setting. When Jared came down from his lookout
the Brothers seemed to be waiting for the Overseer himself to tell
them what to do. They looked anxiously at Jared who said, "Wait!"

to report to the Priest of Aaron what had
and went ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~
happened.

~~xxxxxx~~ That old man first covered his eyes and sat in silence but
then he told Jared that all must proceed as prescribed ~~for~~ ^{after} any
death. Jared ~~descended~~ ^{returned} to the Brothers and he and another lifted
the corpse and carried it gently to its last lustral bath.

Led by the Priest of Aaron and the others of the Fifteen a
mournful procession ~~carried~~ ^{Followed} the Overseer to the windblown burying
ground. After prayers and chants all stood in mournful silence while
the body, purified by lustration, shrunken by embalming and clothed
in fresh ~~garments~~ ^{its} was placed in ~~the~~ shallow grave on a ledge cut
into the side wall. Reverently, optimistically, head and feet were
oriented for easy entrance into Paradise. ~~On~~ [¶] On the way back the Brothers
whispered:

"He will be missed."

"Who can take his place?"

"How he did drive us!"

For a few days it seemed as though that driving had not been
needed. The Community ran on momentum. Or because everyone did what ~~h~~ ^h ~~2~~ ² ~~f~~ ^f ~~o~~ ^o ~~l~~ ^l

the Overseer would have ordered if he had been there. But on the eve of the Sabbath the Priest of Aaron summoned the Fifteen. They must, at least, set aside a new Awakener.

They did. No one even suggested a new Overseer. He was not one to be replaced like a cracked jar. But after ~~much~~ discussion they did summon Jared.

"Among many duties," the Priest of Aaron said, "the Overseer had charge of the Library and Scriptorium."

Jared ~~nodded~~ bent his head to acknowledge that he was aware of this. ~~He was aware of this.~~ shall

"You ~~will~~ now be responsible for the same treasures," the Priest of Aaron said. "You shall be our Keeper of the Scrolls."

He gave a little sigh which ~~un~~ unconsciously revealed his relief at being able to shift such responsibility to young, strong shoulders.

Keeper of the Scrolls!

Jared knew what he had heard but he still doubted. ~~Soxx~~ ^{As best as he} could judge,

~~his~~ his only qualification for ^{this} the honor was that he had gone to the treasures of the Library and the intimacy of the Scriptorium as often as he had been permitted.

"Well," he said slowly, "I'll do my best."

"You have our confidence," the Priest of Aaron said and the others of the Fifteen nodded and the Priest of Aaron raised a hand in blessing over Jared's head and he took that for permission to leave. ~~He was on fire to leave.~~

"I thank you," he said and turned, ~~xxxxxx~~ and

44



Imperial Rome required each legionnaire below centurion rank to carry two spears, — buy them as he had to buy all armor, arms and gear out of his yearly three hundred denarii which also had to pay for the annual saturnalia. One spear was heavier, and ^{could} ~~to~~ serve happily as a club now and then.

91 The pompous, fluttery, dedicated Overseer ^{had} ~~did~~ not move ^{no} after the Optio's blow dropped him on the Mall. The few Brothers who went hesitantly to his side froze when they saw that aid would be useless and after the twenty marched off nothing had moved for a time except the creeping ^{red} nimbus crowning the ^{dark} still, meager form and this quickly clotted to fix for a little the shocking asymmetry of the white old head.

Death had not come ~~so often~~ ^{so often} to the Community set in a nearly deathlike region. Violent death came almost never except when some Brother grew careless on the precipitate cliffs. In any form death was a taboo ^{and} so mysteriously sundering ^{as the wall} that the stark rows of tumuli were cut off from the living Community ^{by} ~~by~~ a wall and the Discipline said that ^{this} the wall was never to be crossed. But all did cross, long after the Century had got out of sight, to stand in mournful silence while the Overseer, shrunken by embalming, purified by lustrations, and clothed in holy white, was layed on a narrow ledge chopped into one side of a shallow grave, head and feet optimistically oriented for easiest advance after resurrection to that Paradise in which ^{where} bliss would be eternal.

"On the way back someone tried to recall the last time a Brother had met with fatal violence."

"There was an earthquake," Heber said, "It cracked the cistern by the dyers' room. I remember a story of somebody

cut off the

adds nothing



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The ~~peeps~~ ^{peeps}, fluttery, dedicated Overseer ~~did~~ ^{had} not moved after the Optio's ^{club} blow dropped him on the Mall. The few Brothers who went hesitantly to his side froze when they saw that aid would be useless and after the twenty marched off nothing had moved for a time, except the creeping ^{red} nimbus crowning the ~~still~~ ^{dark}, meager form and this quickly clotted to fix for a little the shocking asymmetry of the white old head.

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could
no
cut off
The
address

a chance to insert a good line or two. you might consult old story version when Jared speaks of commentary.

got out to the Mall and hurried off to find the Chaste One. He found him^{??} where else^{??} on the sunny rock. But he was not able immediately to tell his story. The Chaste One had something of his own to tell.

"The commentary grows," he said, on catching sight of his longtime ward. "The seed is good. Here is the seed. Listen!"

With nothing but the will of God shall a man be concerned.

Faced with such gentle enthusiasm, Jared put his own arresting news aside.

"It is very good. Where does it come from?"

"Where but from one of our own psalms?" The Chaste One shook his head in mild rebuke at such forgetfulness. "But you did not come to talk about my commentary."

"To thank you! I am straight from the Fifteen. I could not come fast enough. They have made me the Keeper of the Scrolls."

"They choose well."

"Only because of you."

"You earned the choice. You are our best."

"Because you guided me. Guide me still."

"You are past my guidance. Go to your new duty. I can see it fills your mind."

"Give me your blessing," Jared said and knelt, the sun hot on his back.

"May the Lord keep the fruits of holiness on your lips," the Chaste One said and a slow smile brightened his mouth.

Warmed by more than the sun Jared walked until he

least, set aside a new Awakener. They did. No one even suggested a new Overseer. He was not to be replaced like a cracked bowl. But after much discussion they did summon Jared.

"Among many duties," the Priest of Aaron said, "~~The Overseer~~ ^{Brother Guel} had charge of the Library and Scriptorium. You, Jared, will now be responsible for their treasure. You shall be our Keeper of the Scrolls in place of Brother Guel."

Brother Guel! For the first time in his life and, officially, the last, Jared heard the Overseer's name. But Keeper of the Scrolls! When his chief qualification was only that he had gone into the Library or Scriptorium ~~because~~ ^{because} the Chaste One smoothed the way? How could he be fit to have charge of the Community's chief possession!

Yet there was still more.

"You will also have authority," the Priest of Aaron said, "As the Overseer had, to go when necessary into the world outside."

Jared could not believe his own ears. Go into the world outside! Of course leather, papyrus, parchment and many things had to be hunted down in this Roman made time of scarcity. But by him, who had never been away from the Community?

Well, that wasn't quite true. He had been in the desert. ^{And} Because the Chaste One had got him leave he had gone a long way. In fact, Jared reflected, he had become a good desert liar-in-wait. He could find cover in a trough, behind a billow, almost under a shadow and unseen watch unsuspecting caravans, Romans or other bandits pass.

But go into the world outside? Deal there with guileful Temple priests, crafty merchants, robbers, thieves, beggars who often were not beggars at all, greedy innkeepers, dog-in-the-manger farmers withholding a drink from deep wells? All these and more? Face the cloudy temptations, desires and appetites he had only just managed to get rid of in the desert? How could he rid himself of them in the world outside? He was aghast merely at the thought that he would have

reached the Mall. Then he could not keep from running. He was, indeed, bent on taking over his new duties.

X X X X X X X X
The Discipline enjoined silence during working hours but even Brothers whose consciences bruised easily saw no grave disobedience in a nod, wink, shrug, lift of eyebrows, pursing of lips, change of gait, carriage or mien, all of which could be meaningful without a word uttered.

x As Jared hurried this sort of dialogue spread the news of his promotion and when he climbed to the Library the fiery ears of the young new Brother there said that he had heard. And lest this one now in Authority, but lately scarcely better than himself, question his diligence he continued intent before the narrow shelves rising from floor to ceiling. Not looking up or sidewise he dusted, rearranged and straightened papyrus, copper and leather rolls and adjusted the tags sewn to exposed ends, little flags from which to read at a glance the subject of each.

x The Library attendant was required to keep scrolls on readiness. He must also see that, being returned, none was torn or smudged or, if it was, was properly repaired. He must make ~~sure~~ sure that every returned scroll was properly rolled since a crease made papyrus or leather much more illegible. If more shelves were needed he must build them, and he must maintain the supply of ink and pens and, of course, keep everything neat and tidy.

2 The Overseer had regularly inspected for all this and now, preparing to do the same, Jared unexpectedly found himself resisting an impulse to clear his throat in imitation of the

~~Overseer's coughing and clearing his throat in imitation of the~~

Please, return when you are through with it.

"I have begun a Commentary, Jared", the old man said as though they had parted only moments before, instead of months.

"I have in mind a commentary such as the great teachers and Scribes love to compose. I mean to make it around our psalm which begins, 'With nothing but the will of God shall a man be concerned.'"

to be used in
your title, on
page 47 of
attached copy.

"You start with a noble psalm," Jared said.

"The first line contains, it seems to me, everything," the Chaste One said, sighing. "But the commentary is difficult. To write a commentary worthy of the psalm is not easy."

Jared did not hurry to answer. The Chaste One did not really need encouragement. He was the Community's most self-sufficient Brother, lost most of the time in reverie. His talk now was no more than an audible expression of contented thought.

"I do not mean to suggest to you how to write a commentary," Jared said with a smile. "But it seems to me a good way would be to set down the first line and go on from there with the explanation.

"It is almost the most beautiful line ever written," the Chaste One said, and quoted it again:

"With nothing but the will of God shall a man be concerned."

Jared repeated the words gravely, as he often had, all his life long--in the Community, on his travels, during the siege--and the Chaste One continued as though he had felt the need of just such an encouragement as Jared unconsciously had given.

"With nothing but the will of God shall a man be concerned."

BOND

SUPERASE

The second floor Library was not much more than a sizeable, airy storeroom but its scrolls made it precious. The much larger Scriptorium below was striking in itself, impressively long and lofty and its floor a serene counterpoint of gray and white blocks. Its western balcony invited ~~the~~ the breezes that flowed over from the Great Sea and on its other sides high windows served as both ventilators and as frames for an endless panorama of Nature. So the Masters' long day was shortened by calming coolness, relieving light and inspiring vistas of Moab's dreaming peaks and the sometimes sunlit and golden, sometimes shadowed and witching desert.

At the door of the Scriptorium Jared was humbly reluctant to enter. Before promotion he would have been reluctant even to show himself. An ordinary Brother, with no slightest business in a place set apart for the most learned, would not have been turned away but before the day was over the Overseer, depend on it, would have warned the culprit to walk wide thereafter and not risk disturbing his betters.

Now, of course, it was Jared's duty to enter. The Overseer had not gone a day without giving all here opportunity to request what they required or desired, if that was only to improve the nibs on badly whittled reed pens or to do something about ink that was too thick and clotted or too thin and running. Now Jared must do what he could to temper the labor of these who worked, you might say, in the very Presence, probing for such veiled truths as had been revealed earlier to patriarchs and prophets and today might, by grace, be revealed to this select few trying to live in like purity.

The Scriptorium was the place for such revelations

no like purity existed anywhere else except, perhaps, in other Communities. How could it exist even in the Temple at Jerusalem? no matter how loudly the cry of holy-holy was raised there? Oh, you found many good priests in the Temple. Many! But wasn't the whole besmirched by the evil part whose scandals were gossiped about endlessly by travellers stopping overnight with the Brotherhood, often because they had so much juicy gossip?

By gossip logic the reliability of every new tale of scandal was attested by old tales the truth of which no one denied. Thus, a century earlier, a Temple faction and the then Governor Pontius Pilate and the Tetrarch of Galilee indubitably had conspired to crucify a Nazarene innocent of any crime but preaching on matters that disturbed the faction.

Well, if you accepted the old story how could you reject the new one concerning a clique of Temple priests and masters of the Levite choirs which daily chanted psalms there?

This chanting went back a thousand years. Great David had begun it and he was still named as author of nearly every psalm even though common sense had to ask how such a busy poet could have found time for such glorious wars, or anything else. Choirmasters were forever popping up with a new:

Meditation of David.

Mighty Praise of David.

Harp Song of David.

Song of Ascent by David (who indeed had, barefooted, wept all the way up the Ascent of the Olivets to tell the Lord about rebellious Absalom and traitorous Ahitopel)

Song of David, after Doves in Distant Terebinths.

Song of David, after Lilies in the Fields.

More likely these had been written by some choirmaster in the clique for some priest and he had been enlisted by some rich man who hoped that something so special would win him forgiveness for sins. Of course forgiveness would be more likely if linked with the name of Israel's greatest forgiven sinner.

Gossip said that the clique had gotten richer than rich because of enormous bribes. A bribe first to the priest, always the chief gainer, then to the choirmaster, then to the chief singer, then perhaps to a musician or two, and finally some cut to all the rest of the choir.

Gossip said that within the clique the size of the bribes had incited a greedy, no-holds-barred competition. A choirmaster unhesitatingly eavesdropped on a rival rehearsal to fetch notable lines from a new psalm. He hired away a popular chief singer, or the best musicians. Not of course a whole section of harps, lyres, flutes or cymbals, not all seven harpists, nor all six lyres, nor all the flutes and cymbals. It was enough to lure a section's first ~~musician~~ ^{chair,} or at most ~~the~~ its several best players. Cymbalists were bribed often. The cymbal section gave the beat on which the joyful, exultant chanting depended and the loss of the best cymbalist, or two or three, could make the difference between a ragged choir of no help to any rich man and one so gloriously in time that the richest fought under the table so its sure help.

This gossip of a clique of priests and choirmasters had died out of late. The Roman aggression left no room for small evils like bribery. But more likely tales of the blight

of the aggression itself were spreading as fast as any orthorox scandal. The latest concerned the recent murder of the good High Priest Ananus, which made the Brotherhood mournfully recall the ottal purity of the ancient Temple when Zadok had been High Priest and great David had ruled. Ananus, also, had been a priest of total purity. He had been slain by lustful, malevolent Simon of Giora but of course Rom shared Simon's guilt. Except for the aggression Simon would not have been loosed in J_urusalem.

* * * * *

It was reverence for the Masters' purity in contrast to alleged blemishes of priests of the Temple and his own certain faults that made Jared slow to enter the Scriptorium, but no such low notion of their new Keeper bothered the Masters. They smiled up from the reed mats coddling their old knees as they knelt to read or write before long low tables. Then such a half measure as a smile seemed not enough to show their approval of this young Brother who might have been the son of the son of any of them. Perhaps, also, they thought to show full confidence in so new a One in Authority who only yesterday had stood on the lowest rung of the Community ladder. They arose. White-robed, and white-bearded except for a few still brownish, blackish ^{or} and reddish, they moved forward like a gantle slow slide that has here and there picked up a handful of last autumn's oak leaves.

Having extended enough of a welcome, they got back quickly to the scrolls spread along the low brick and plaster tops of their long tables. Their visitor, of course, would agree that their work counted up to far more than even a new Keeper.

Some scrolls, crowded with angular writing, were old

and worn. The writing on all was divided into short columns of irregular lines, the right margin even, the left ragged although usually containing the same number of letters. Small stands stood between each two tables. On the stands the Attendant that morning had set replenished terra cotta or bronze inkwells and vases of reed pens frayed out for brushing letters, painter style or with firm nibs for lining in letters. For brushmen the Attendant had left cakes of carbon on little trays. Ink as well as carbon was, of course, black.

Here a Master was poring over his scroll, searching out the heart of its message. Others were copying onto fresh scrolls what had become illegible in an old one, or were setting down an exegesis of some ancient wisdom.

It goes without saying that every Master took pride in continuing to work in tranquil acceptance of good or bad. But just the same, walking as the Overseer had among the kneeling old men, Jared discovered that few held back a complaint if it was deemed meritorious.

"Keeper!" one said. "It is known to all that the only good papyrus is made of reeds from Lake Hulah. But, look!" He lifted gnarled, indignant hands above the ten or a dozen sections of varying width sewn into one long panel and spread on his table. "Is this of Hulah?"

Indeed it was not and the shoddy stuff embarrassed Jared even though it surely had arrived in the Community long before his selection as sole responsible purchases for the Scriptorium. All papyrus was made according to the same rules. Reeds were peeled into thin strips, the strips were laid close and horizontally, a second layer was laid perpendicularly on top and the double thickness hammered, rubbed with an ivory spatula or smooth shell, then dried. The end product, however,

xlgkzkxanzkknkngzfranzax

Please, please return. For ~~the~~ 35th year
to have part, at least, a new Short Book

But with all the words of his mouth shall he be pleased.

He shall not desire anything which he did not command,

But to the statutes of God shall he look always."

"Shall I try a commentary on so great a psalm, Jared?" he asked. "Or is it too much for a man so humble as I? Perhaps it should have been written by Hillel; or Johanen now should write it."

Jared was too wary of the Chaste One's not too guileless tactics to answer innocently. An hour-long discussion might follow if he said either that the Chaste One was exactly the one for such a commentary or that it did, truly, call for a greater mind.

"A commentary by Hillel would be by Hillel," he said. "And one by Johanen would be by Johanen. But you can always be proud of one by the Chaste One."

"The Psalm encourages me," the Chaste One said. He measured out more of the golden words:

"I will sing with knowledge,

And all my music shall be for the glory of God;

My lyre and harp shall be for his holy, fixed order.

And the flute of my lips I will raise

In his just circle."

His eyes closed and his lips continued to move but no sound came. He was now composing his commentary, repeating a line of the psalm, shaping, revising his exegesis, until he had exactly

This we have used in
the new book.

might be anything from a nearly silken, even, unbroken surface to a sleazy porosity defying the best penmen. And this panel which had brought on the Master's complaint doubly defied.

"That can't be from Hulah," Jared agreed. "More likely it's from Egypy and meant only for wrapping."

"Egyptians seldom take the pains needed for good papyrus and only Hulah reeds have the natural paste that binds hammered strips into a smooth, lasting sheet."

"Some caravan master may have misunderstood," Jared said. "And of course for a year the aggression has pade papyrus, everything, scarce. But we must have better than that. Not first grade, perhaps, but fourth or fifth. This isn't even seventh. It is hardly a sleazy eighth."

"Every letter I try to make either clots or blots."

The rules for writing on papyrus were as fixed as for making it. Each scroll must contain the same number of columns throughout its length. This held even the sheets sewn together might sometimes be wide and sometimes narrow. Each column must contain not less than forth-eight and not more than sixty lines. A line, with few exceptions, must contain exactly thirty letters. Nothing was written until horizontal guides had been drawn with a stylus. Older Masters hung each line on such a guide. Younger ones set their lines between two guides. A knife made erasures but, comparatively easy on leather or copper, erasures were tricky on papyrus which was easily torn. Water sometimes washed out a mistake but if the ink had dried it was safer to set a mistake off with dots above and below or to interline a correction or carry it out to a margin.

Naturally, among Masters now back at workwhile Jared

Jared moved solicitously among them, none had begun his day without a lustration. A holy washing preceded every activity. No one in the Community and certainly no Master, ended a day without murmuring "Done with prayer and in praise of the God of Deliverance," whereupon all within hearing said, "Amen! Amen!"

The scrolls over which the Masters bent were, for the most part, papyrus. Lamb and goat skin parchments while more lasting were costly and harder to come by. Scrolls could be bought at the Temple in Jerusalem but because the Brotherhood ~~disputed~~ rejected the purity there and because any payment not in Temple shekels was discounted usuriously and even Temple shekels were likely to be ruled lightweight when mint new a payer paid two prices for what the Temple sold him. But scrolls could be bought also at a priestly school in Jamnia, between Jerusalem and the Great Sea and the purity of Jamnia's priests was undoubted and none demanded Temple shekels or called a Brotherhood coin lightweight.

And what were these select, holy few reading and writing? Whatever made plain the past, interpreted the present or prophesied the future. Sometimes they studied their own commentaries but more often the Law handed down from Moses, the major prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekial, the former prophets, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, the minor prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel, Obadiah and Jonah, and finally of course the Writings, Psalms, Proverbs, the miracle you might call it of Daniel, the Sing of Songs, the tales of Job, Ruth, Ezra and Nehemiah, and lastly eventhough they were pretty much Kings retold, the Chronicles.

Jared was nearly sure that he knew every unrolled scroll. The color of papyrus or leather, the askew knife marks on handmade rollers, the little flags, even letters on an unrolled section, any of these could be almost positive identification. Once he, too, had been the Librarian Attendant and then he had not just put scrolls away, taken them out, opened creases, and dusted and mended. He had read and reread. Every scroll that his hands had ever held trailed its own faint, faint redolence. This was less than drifted off a wind long after it had blown across a mown field, less than Jared had caught in the desert when he became aware of a caravan still miles away. Papyrus scrolls gave off a pungent shadow of musk, leather something astringent, but each gave off its own and he was familiar with each difference.

He was surprised, then, stopping behind a Master, to detect nothing familiar about the scrollstiffly spread along the low brick and plaster table top.

The Master looked up, frowning in thought.

"The Overseer gave this to me days ago, so worn I couldn't make head or tail of it. I put it aside but after the Romans -- after -- I got it out and now I have managed to see that it is very much worth reading, and I want to make a fresh copy, but of leather. The worth of this is worth leather."

"I'll look around," Jared said. "But what makes this so worthy?"

"It is a writing up from out of Egypt. But not really Egypt--Ethiopia. Friends in that distant strange place sent it to Brothers in Egypt and they sent it to us."

"From Alexandria?" A Community had been established in

35

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Violent death almost never came to the Community in its nearly deathlike setting. When Jared came down from his lookout the Brothers seemed to be waiting for the Overseer himself to tell them what to do. They looked anxiously at Jared, who said "Wait," and went to report to the Priest of Aaron. The old man covered his eyes and sat in silence for a long moment. When he raised his head, his seamed face was older than time and his faded eyes were bright with tears, but his voice was calm and suddenly strong as he told Jared that all must proceed as after any other death. Jared returned to the Brothers and he and another lifted the corpse and carried it gently to its last ^{ceremonial} lustral bath.

Late that afternoon, led by the Priest of Aaron and the others of the Fifteen, a ^{solemn} mournful procession carried the Overseer to the windblown burying ground. After prayers and chants, all stood in mournful silence while the body, purified by water and clothed in fresh garments, was placed in its shallow grave on a ledge cut into the side wall. Reverently, optimistically, head and feet were oriented for easy entrance into Paradise. On the way back, the Brothers whispered:

"He will be missed."

"Who can take his place?"

"How he did drive us!"

For a few days, it seemed as though that driving had not been needed. The Community ran on momentum, or because everyone did what he felt the Overseer would have ordered if he had been there. But on the eve of the Sabbath, the Priest of Aaron summoned the Fifteen. They must, at least, appoint a new Awakener for the ^{next} coming seven days.

They did. No one even suggested a new Overseer. He was not one to be replaced like a cracked jar. The Priest of Aaron, who seemed in this time of trouble to have regained some of his old gift of leadership, ruled that ^{for the time being,} ~~work assignments~~ ^{choreS would be assigned} would be given out and their execution supervised by the remaining members of the Fifteen in weekly rotation. ~~But after much discussion, they did summon Jared~~ Fifteen in weekly rotation. But it was felt that ~~one~~ permanent assignment should be made without delay, and after much discussion, the group summoned Jared.

"Among many duties," the Priest of Aaron said, "Brother Guel had charge of the Library and Scriptorium. You, Jared, will now be responsible for their treasure. You shall be our Keeper of the Scrolls in place of Brother Guel."

He gave a little sigh that revealed his relief at being able to shift such responsibility to young, strong shoulders.

I never heard the Overseer's name before, thought Jared irrelevantly, in the midst of his astonishment and joy. To be Keeper of the Scrolls! He knew what he had heard, but he doubted his own ears. As far as he saw, his only qualification for this honor was that he loved the treasures of the Library and the intimacy of the Scriptorium and had gone to them as often as he had been permitted.

"I will do my best, Priest of Aaron," he said slowly.

"You have our confidence," the Priest of Aaron replied, and the others of the Fifteen nodded. The Priest of Aaron raised a hand in blessing over Jared's head, and he took that for permission to leave. He was on fire to leave.

"I thank you," he blurted out. Then he turned and hurried from the Assembly Hall in search of the Chaste One. He found him...where else?...on the sunny rock. But ~~XXXXXX~~ he was not able to tell his story immediately. The Chaste One had something of his own to tell.

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"You earned the choice. You are our best."

"Because you guided me. Guide me still."

"You are past my guidance. Go to your new duty. I can see it fills your mind."

"Give me your blessing," Jared said and knelt, the sun hot on his back."

"May the Lord keep the fruits of holiness on your lips," the Chaste One said, and a slow smile brightened his mouth.

Warmed by more than the sun Jared walked until he reached the courtyard. Then he could not keep from running.

The Discipline enjoined silence during working hours except in cases of the gravest necessity, but even Brothers whose consciences bruised easily saw no serious grave disobedience in a nod, wink, shrug, lifting of eyebrows, pursing of lips, pointing of finger or change of gait, all of which could be meaningful without a word uttered.

This sort of dialogue was already spreading the news of Jared's promotion, and when he climbed to the Library the fiery ears of the young Brother there said that he knew. And lest this one now in authority, though lately no better than himself, question his diligence he continued intent before the narrow shelves rising from floor to ceiling. Not looking up or sidewise, he dusted, rearranged and straightened the palls of papyrus, leather, copper and parchment and adjusted the tags sewn to exposed ends, little flags from which to read at a glance the subject of each.

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The Library attendant was required to keep scrolls in readiness, properly rolled to prevent creasing, and to repair tears and smudges. When more shelves were needed, he built them. He maintained the supply of ink and pens and, of course, kept everything neat and tidy.

Jared had done all these tasks for the Overseer's inspection, and now, preparing to make his own first inspection, he ^{had to resist} ~~found himself resisting~~ an impulse to clear his throat in imitation of the oldman's sputter. As he made his rounds in sedate silence, he noticed in a corner fragments of a jar broken by the Roman who had killed the Overseer. The inner faces of these, an inviting surface for writing, bore fresh letters. This attendant aspired to learning just as Jared had, and was practicing his alphabet. This is a good boy, Jared thought. I'll try to help him in the evenings, though I'll never be a teacher like the Chaste One. Finding everything in perfect order, apart from the little pile of potsherds, he clapped the young man on the shoulder, smiled and nodded approval, and turned to leave.

The Library, the Community's only second floor room, was not much more than a sizeable, airy storeroom, though its scrolls made it precious. The much larger Scriptorium below was long and lofty, its floor a serene counterpoint of grey and white marble blocks. A verandah at its western end invited the afternoon breezes, and on its other sides high windows served both as ventilators and as frames for the panorama of nature. Thus the Masters' long day was shortened by tranquility, coolness, and vistas of Moab's dreaming peaks and the sometimes sunlit and golden, sometimes shadowed and inscrutable desert.

Jared hesitated at the Scriptorium entrance. Before today, he would not have entered except by the direction of the Overseer or the invitation of a Master. An ordinary Brother, having no business in the place reserved for the learned, would not have been turned away, but before the day ended, ~~the~~ Overseer would have warned him not to risk disturbing his betters. Now, of course, it was Jared's duty to enter. The Overseer had not gone a day without giving those

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in the Scrip~~terium~~ the opportunity to request what they required or desired, if that was only to improve the nibs on badly whittled reed pens or to do something about ink that was too thick and clotted or too thin and runny. Now Jared must do all he could to ease the labor of those who worked, it might be said, almost in the very Presence, probing for such veiled truths as had been revealed earlier to patriarchs and prophets and might still be revealed to this select few trying to live in like purity. ~~XX~~ When he did enter, it was with a humbling awareness of his own shortcomings.

The Masters, however, showed no such low opinion of the new Keeper. As his sandals broke their silence they looked up in smiling welcome, then glanced around to alert any who might have missed the arrival. But smiling was not enough for this young Brother now become one in authority. Honor paid Jared was, in a manner, their own. Might he not have been the son of a son of any one of them? They got up from the mats that had coddled their old knees while they knelt to read or write before the long, ~~low tables~~ topped with plaster and brick. Some of them, once down, got up only with considerable creaking. But up they rose, white bearded except for a few who were still unseasonably brownish, blackish or reddish. They came forward in their robes (drifting snow topped at random with varicolored autumn leaves) and closed around Jared, nodding their full approval. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

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For two or three days more, the roomful continued to look up and smile at the clip of Jared's sandals, but as the days turned into weeks and the weeks into months, his quiet presence was taken for granted.

The reading, study and copying of the Scrolls went on, and as Jared walked among the kneeling oldmen, he marvelled at the beauty and precision of their work.

The Scrolls over which the Masters bent were of the most part papyrus, made from thin, peeled strips of reed that had been woven together, pounded to set their natural adhesive, rubbed smooth with an ivory spatula or a smooth shell and then dried. Finished papyrus sheet was graded one through nine, but only

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the first four grades were considered suitable for writing. Some were of parchment, expertly prepared from the skins of unborn or newborn lambs, goats or calves

the first four grades were considered suitable for writing. The best papyrus was said to come from reeds out of Lake Hulah, a shallow little body of water above the Sea of Galilee. Some Scrolls were of parchment, expertly prepared from the skins of unborn or newborn lambs, goats or calves, more beautiful and more durable than even the best papyrus, but costlier, too. A few were made of copper, but copper was the most expensive of all, and was so new as a surface for writing that the oldest Masters refused to use it. A copper scroll was a single strip, long or short. Parchment and papyrus scrolls were made of sections

Some of the copyists lined in letters with a firm nib dipped in ink made of soot or carbon mixed with oil. Others carefully frayed their reed pens to make brushes, and painted their letters, using water and a solid cake of carbon.

Nothing was written until horizontal guidelines had been drawn with a stylus.

The oldest Masters drew or painted each row of letters below a single guideline; younger ones liked to set each row between two guides. But although individual variations in technique were permitted, the rules for copying ~~were~~ had been fixed

for generations. Each strip of copper, each sewn section of papyrus or parchment must have the same number of columns; each column must have no less than forty-eight lines, no more than sixty; each line must have thirty letters.

Margins were even on the right, ragged on the left. Corrections were allowed, because the Community's supplies were too precious and too hard to replenish to be wasted. Erasures could be made on copper and parchment with a sharp knife, with water on papyrus; but if the ink had dried hard on a papyrus scroll and the copyist was afraid it would tear, he set off the mistake with dots above and below and interlined the correction or carried it out to the margin.

The Masters were craftsmen as well as scholars. They delighted in fine materials and were outraged by shoddy ones. And they soon found out that the new young Keeper was a far easier mark for complaints than the old Overseer had been.

"Keeper! It is known to all that the only good papyrus is made of reeds from

Lake Fulah. But look!" Gnarled, indignant hands would hold up a section of sleazy, porous stuff for Jared's inspection. "Is this of Hulah?" Every letter I try to make either clots or blots."

And Jared would agree. "That can't be from Hulah. More likely it's from Egypt, and only meant for wrapping."

"Those Egyptians don't take the pains to make good papyrus. And it's the natural paste in the Hulah reeds that gives you a nice smooth sheet."

"Some caravan master must have misunderstood. And everything is getting ~~scarce now. But we must have better than that in the storeroom.~~ And scarce now. But we still have better than that - second or third grade, if not first. I'll get you a fresh sheet from the storeroom, Master."

Supplies were dwindling and it had been months since the last caravan had come along the Incense Road. But there would be enough to get on with for some time, Jared decided as the summer moved along and the harvest time drew near.

~~For Jared,~~

Even so, he would have liked to see the storeroom piled high with sheets of grade one papyrus, and the finest parchment, and the brightest copper for those who liked it.

For Jared, nothing was too good for the Masters and for the treasures of faith and wisdom with which they worked.

Jared still stood with his Ten at the morning ritual and again when the Brothers gathered in the courtyard before the evening meal. Even more than before, that was the most rewarding hour of his day. Ceremonial bathing over, his body cool under white garments that smelled clean and sweet, he waited with the others in a calming silence, his day's work finished, his mind untroubled.

Often, his mind dwelt on the Community's psalms. He had missed the line around which the Chaste One was shaping his new commentary, but he did not miss many. And he believed what the Community's oldsters always said, that

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their psalms were holier and more beautiful than those written by the choirmasters at the Temple in Jerusalem. Great David's own psalms were the finest of all, of course. But Great David had been dead a thousand years, and the Temple Choirmasters were still popping up with new psalms that bore his name: Meditation of David, Harp Song of David, Song of David After Doves in Distant Terebinths, all commissioned by rich men seeking forgiveness for their sins and desirous of basking in the reflected glory of Israel's greatest poet, soldier and king. The commissions were huge, it was said, and stirred up the greediest competition. A temple choirmaster would think nothing of filching a good line or two from a rival's psalm, ^{or} ~~and~~ hiring away his best singers and musicians.

At the Community, psalms were ^{composed} ~~written~~ for the love of the Lord. And it was snatches of these psalms that ran through Jared's tired but tranquil mind:

With an offering of the lips will I bless him.

On his steadfast love I shall lean all the day.

In his hands is the uprightness of my heart.

The faithfulness of God is the rock I tread.

Jared's next advancement was as unexpected and casual as his first. One evening, as he was standing with his Ten, the Fifteen ^{their} passed on ~~its~~ way into the Assembly Hall and the hand of the Priest of Aaron fell on his shoulder and drew him along.

"Come sit with us, Jared."

The line of Brothers was staggered. Though no one made a sound, the suddenly straightened shoulders and quickly lifted heads betrayed their amazement. Such ~~an elevation, almost to membership among the Fifteen~~ an elevation had never been made in this manner before. Nor had so young a Brother ever been set among those in authority.

Jared sat with the Fifteen thereafter, and the evening ritual took on a deeper significance. The Priest of Aaron's blessing held a holier note, the psalm singing a richer meaning. The spare meal, itself, was no more filling but enormously more satisfying.

In truth, of course, nothing changed that winter except the number of lamps that were lit when darkness fell early enough to make them necessary. These grew steadily fewer because the Priest of Aaron complained that their brightness hurt his eyes. One Brother recalled that his grandfather had complained similarly, and then had gone blind.

There was, however, Jared's increased workload. He was still called the Keeper of the Scrolls, but more and more he ^{picked up} ~~assumed~~ all the duties that had been the Overseer's. He stood forward regularly now to make assignments after the first ritual, and the grounds and all the buildings were in his care.

~~Occasionally a lookout on the tower roof sighted a flash of breastplates far off in the desert, but no Romans came near the Community. From the occasional traveler who sought shelter for a night, the Brothers learned that the legions were~~

From the occasional traveler who sought shelter for a night, the Brothers learned that the legions were still battling rebel bands throughout the south. But no Romans came near the Community, although ^{Sometimes} ~~occasionally~~ a lookout on the tower roof sighted a flash of breastplates far off in the desert.

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More than a year had passed since the Overseer's death when one day a Master beckoned urgently to Jared as he entered the Scriptorium.

"Keeper! Look at this!"

Jared would have sworn that he could identify every scroll in the Library at a glance - from the color of papyrus or leather, the knife marks on the handmade roller which, more than likely, he himself had cut, the little flags, a few characteristic letters on an unrolled section. In the days when he had worked in the Library, he had not just put scrolls away, taken them out, opened creases, dusted and mended. He had read and reread. Every scroll that his hands had ever

held trailed its ^{faint, faint} own redolence. Its own marshy sourness if of papyrus. Its own special odor of long gone heat if of copper. Its own astringency if of parchment. 44

He was surprised, then, to detect nothing familiar about the old, worn scroll stiffly spread along the low brick and plaster table top.

"Where did you find this one?"

"The old Overseer gave it to me last year, so worn I couldn't make head or tail of it. I put it aside after the Romans - after - and somehow, I had others to work on and never went back to it. But now I have managed to see that it is very much worth reading, and I want to copy it on parchment."

"Where did the Overseer find it, do you know?"

"~~XXXX~~ A caravan master brought it to him. It is a writing up from out of Egypt. But not really ~~Egypt~~ - Ethiopia. Friends in that distant, strange place sent it to Brothers in ~~Egypt~~ and they sent it to us."

"From Alexandria?" Alexandria's Community, Jared knew, had been old in widdom when this one by the Salt Sea began.

The master nodded, and his face began to flush in the excitement of his discovery.

"Jared, this is a new writing about ~~XXXXXX~~ Enoch."

"No!" A new writing about Enoch could be a portent. Everyone knew of ~~XXXXXX~~ the patriarch ~~XXXXXX~~ Enoch, a man so godly that he had been translated into Heaven, and of how he had come back for a little and handed on to men the secrets of writing, of numbers, of the stars, and especially to Noah, the secret of herbal remedies. In Heaven he had seen the march of the sun and moon and the glorious parade of celestial beings from all ten realms.- He had seen the phoenix of perfect beauty, the seraphim which have six wings, the cherubim which never sleep. He had seen the Guardians, each having a whole people in his charge. Jared's throat filled as he remembered how he had prayed in the desert to Michael, guardian of Israel. *thinkings of all these wonders,*

"Mighty Michael! Give...