



Maud Hart and Delos Wheeler
Lovelace Family Papers.

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Miriam
said Jared's chest
wound is side of
stomach
next section
44

Miriam that is
where I changed
D's Numidian
light on his chest
to Colton, meet
back to room
+ words

Jared from Jamnia
follows Colton's visit to Tammar.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Barely outside Jamnia, but too far away to return, Jared had regretted his hasty departure from the summer-house. He should have waited for full darkness. Patrols were swarming on all sides.

The reports of the guards at Amos's house had alerted them, he thought, watching from a cluster of rocks. He was pinned among the rocks until only late stars lighted the shadowy desert world.

He had counted on setting off then at a lope which would cover miles before dawn but enemies were still around and he did more hiding than loping--behind bushes, in trees, among more rocks. He was still nearer Jamnia than he liked when morning came.

Threatened then by daylight as well as by enemies, he wondered whether his arms were adequate. He wished that he had the tested gear, mostly stripped from slain enemies, which he had abandoned in Jerusalem. Perhaps he ought to lie

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omit

only
 in wait for a bandit with a shield and a stout corselet! But both would not save him if he was overtaken by a full patrol. Better, he decided finally, to depend on the weapons he already had and on the greater speed and agility possible with so little.

He tested his javelin, decided it was off balance and weighted its shaft with a slim splint, hoping to insure truer flight, and he gave his dagger a needle-point and his sword a keener edge on a limestone out-cropping which hid him while he whetted. ~~He threw away the robe Heth had given him.~~

Then he advanced by rough paths between villages, all so insignificant that even in Israel's long history they

only had acquired no importance. He passed Bethlehem. That was important. Great David had been born there and, Jared remembered, tardily, Eben revered it, ^{though} Eben's Anointed was linked with Bethlehem but Jared could not recall how or why. He came to Beth-basi, another historically insignificant place, but a caravan trail ran through it, south toward Netophah.

If he had not been advancing with his usual stealthy skill, Jared might have been captured below Beth-basi, but he heard in time the drumming of hooves and was hidden behind bushes when five horsemen trotted southward along the trail.

Four Numidians and Cotta!

Jared's mouth seemed to hurt afresh. He would be long forgetting that blow and Cotta's red-lipped, untanned face.

44 ←

From his concealment he watched the Numidians scornfully. They were willing fighters, but too headlong, trying to win by clamor and confusion more than by prowess. He did not look at Cotta with scorn; he looked with remembered anger but also with respect. Cotta would not rely on clamor and confusion. Whoever defeated Cotta would earn his victory.

"But why is he riding south with so small a detachment and at this hour?"

Jared gave his own query two negative answers. Cotta was not, he was sure, riding against the Community; not with four auxiliaries. He was not on his own hunt for prisoners escaped from the Hinnom Valley Compound; a Primus Pilus would direct the entire hunt, not be trying to run down this or that fugitive. But might he be going to the Inn at Netophah?

The third guess hit home. Jared remained as still, behind his bushes, as a stalking wolf, but his pulse and heart leaped.

Cotta was going to Tamar! Cotta had heard of Tamar!

The wonder was that he had not heard earlier.

When the five horsemen disappeared behind the waves of sand, Jared left his bushes and followed, keeping well off the caravan trail, in case they looked back. Since he was on foot, he lost ground steadily and when, at last, he came within sight of Netophah, the countryside was empty of men and horses.

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Virginia

copy only this

Paragraph

waves

desert

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45

begin here
 → The Inn loomed alone on its desolate hill.

Jared dropped down in what scanty cover he could find. There were now no trees and hardly any bushes, ^{but a small} only a few stunted shrubs on which small white snails fed until picked off by migrating swallows and quail. There was a ravine ^{ravine and on the east} pitching toward the Dead Sea and, all about, in addition to purple chips, there were limestone fragments, some as big as a man's head, broken off by wind and time from a nearby out-cropping. Shrubs, ravine and out-cropping hid him, yet gave him a view of the Inn's north and east walls. *omit*

omit
 Where was Cotta now, Jared wondered? Where were the Numidians? He waited and watched, so still that swallows dashed in, now and then, for snails from the shrubs which helped to hide him. *See next page.* *End here*

End here
 He watched, he even slept by snatches. The sun sloped into the western sky and, at last, a horseman came into view, riding along the eastern wall of the Inn, from the direction of the ^{Inn's} main southern gate, from which he must have issued. Tamar, far from keeping Cotta out ^{must have} ~~made him~~ welcome. He would not have stayed so long. Cotta had, in truth, gone to the Inn and, in truth, Tamar had welcomed him! He would not otherwise have stayed so long. ^{otherwise. She knew how to speed an} ~~unwelcome guest.~~ Jared's smouldering eyes followed the tall, ^{arrogant} erect figure as the Primus Pilus rode unsuspectingly past Jared's ^{his own}

~~hiding place and rode on and dwindled to become a dwarf rider
on a dwarf horse.~~

Then, most unexpectedly, because he had been so intent on Cotta, Jared heard a wild, "Lu-ah-lu ah-lu ah-lu!" behind him. Spinning toward the sound, he saw a Numidian horseman ^{toward him.} pounding down, shrieking, flailing his sword, the brown man rode headlong in his favorite tactic of clamor and confusion, ~~to overwhelm before his victim could decide whether to run or to fight, and, if fight, which weapon to reach for first.~~ Jared scrambled from his ~~hiding-place.~~ ^{upright.}

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He had time to seize and hurl his javelin, He cocked his arm, aimed and cast, but the shaft was still not balanced or the horse had faltered or the rider swayed. The javelin missed.

Now ^{he} Jared did not have time to draw his sword. He ~~had no more than a scant instant to do merely whatever he could, according to a rule learned at Jerusalem.~~ ^{he could. If he had learned} ~~rule learned at Jerusalem.~~ ^{in the siege that a fight}

The months at Jerusalem had taught him that in a fight there is usually a best way and perhaps one or two more that are good enough. Jerusalem had also taught him, however, that now and then there is no time for best or even for good enough. Then you just attempted whatever seemed least impossible.

The javelin cast had advanced his left foot in a long stride, his right foot remaining back. In that pose, the not

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wholly impossible attempt seemed to be to swing down, continuing the rhythmic pattern, clamp both hands on a fragment of limestone, swing up and let fly. He did this as the Numidian flailed his sword and the horse thundered past. The pattern ended in a desperate backward leap which threw Jared to the ground.

Asprawl, he rolled to gain a momentum which helped him to his feet, and now he did have time to draw his sword. He had time to spare. The headlong Numidian was unhorsed and crumpled on the sand, the right side of his face smashed and streaming red. The limestone fragment, its own velocity augmented by that of the galloping horse, had met and cut off the "Lu ah-lu ah-lu ah-lu!" in full shriek.

The Numidian seemed to be losing not only blood but color. As Jared bent over the brown body, he noted that it blended more and more with the lighter sand which cushioned it.

The horse had stopped obediently after its rider fell. Now it came back, stepping daintily among the chips and fragments. Jared patted its heaving flank and, after a shudder at the unfamiliar hand, it accepted authority and nuzzled its new master.

Jared looked around, his almost impossible escape from horse and flailing sword making him once more alert.

Down from the north, but still a good distance away,

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46

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SUPERFINE BOND

a horseman was coming at a gallop. Drawn by the "lu ah-lu. . ." or by the flurry of the Numidian's charge and fall, or both, Cotta was returning.

Jared measured the Numidian's corselet with his eye, unlaced it, put it on and decided it was better than nothing. There was plenty of armhole room and that was important. If the armholes had been small they would have cramped him when he thrust or swung, but they gave ample play. He picked up the Numidian's light round shield and was well satisfied. He had fought with a Numidian shield before, and had learned that it needed to be tilted to slip blows that otherwise would cut through the wooden frame, faced only with hardened leather. But it had a good hand-grip which made it manageable. He took the dead man's javelin, probably at least as accurate as his own which had missed.

Jared looked dubiously at the nuzzling horse. He had become somewhat at home on horseback during his journeys away from the Community, but it was not a position from which he would choose to fight. Cotta would have the advantage. The Legions fought on foot but their senior officers were mounted for marching and fought on horseback when it seemed expedient. There was little chance that Cotta would dismount and meet him in the deep, clinging sand.

Well, Jared decided, somehow he must make his native

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only

desert serve him, even on horseback. He settled the saddle-cloth and vaulted to the animal's back, grimacing when it sagged briefly under his weight. The beast was tired, of course, but it would be trained for battle. All Imperial auxiliary troops fought mounted, and a Numidian's horse was especially trained, for the Numidians were Rome's best cavalry.

Remembering his sprawl and roll, Jared felt to make sure that his dagger was still in his girdle and would come out easily. He was, he reflected, as ready for Cotta as he could make himself.

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While still far off, Cotta had surmised what had happened. The four Numidians had flushed a covey of runaways. Unable to capture them and return in time, as ordered, they had sent a messenger to explain and the messenger had flushed another runaway and had tried to capture him single-handed.

Galloping closer, Cotta saw with exultation who the other runaway was. Slowly, he drew his heavy sword, his blood running hot, and not only because Titus would be pleased. With Jared captured and vanished into the Circus Maximus, Tamar was more likely to forget him and turn to someone near.

Titus's order to take the Jew alive was, of course, a handicap. Cotta slaved down and, Gotta glanced with exasperation at the dead Numidian. He must have recognized the tall, black-bearded adversary seen

SUPERASE BOND

25% COTTON FIBER

so often on Jerusalem's walls; and he must also have ^{glimpsed} recognized in the north the horse and armor of his Primus Pilus. The fool should have waited. For two, the capture would have been easy.

Even as things stood, however, it should not be difficult. Jared, he noted, had pre-empted ^{some of the} the Numidian's ~~gear and his horse,~~ horse, shield and corselet, but the horse had just ended a

Virginia
End here

hard, hot desert ride while his had been resting and was freshly watered and fed. And, Cotta thought with satisfaction, ^{End here}

he wore his own, familiar, far stronger gear. ^{He pulled his mount to a stop just short of the Numidian's body. Jared and his horse were} He scanned the horizon. The other Numidians were not

in sight but he did not need them, nor any help. He rode forward confidently.

^{omit} a few steps back on the other side. ^{Cotta studied his opponent, his hampered lips tight in his narrow face. (Cotta said.)}

"I am under orders to take you alive," he called.

"Yield, ^{now, and you'll save yourself a cracked head.} Then you will return to the Compound without wounds

or a cracked head," ^{omit} ^{would}

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"And afterwards the Circus?" Jared asked, presenting the point of his own sword.

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"You cannot hope to win with a tired horse and such armor," Cotta said. "My cuirass is metal and my shield will out-last yours twice over and I am helmetted besides. Even the luck of the gods would not let you beat me. And more Numidians will be along soon, to make us four to your one."

"I saw your Numidians at Beth-basi, but you missed

omit

49a

seeing me," Jared said, hoping the taunt might make Cotta reckless. "Are you sure they will be along soon? This one, I think, was a messenger, to report that the others are delayed."

"That is my guess, too," Cotta said. "But you are still sure to lose." ⁹⁷ ~~He had his narrow red lips tight in his hands~~ And, walking his horse around the dead ~~fall~~ Numidian, he advanced on Jared. ~~End insert~~

On horseback, you cannot control a fight as well as you can on foot. Your mount may misunderstand an involuntary tug on the reins, or it may become unexpectedly skittish, even uncontrollable before an enemy's lunging sword or thrusting spear. Fighting a foe on foot, you can guess how far the man's two legs will take him, but a horseman can move disconcerting lengths, merely by making his animal sidestep, caracole, advance or back up. A fighter on horseback is wise to move in slowly. Cotta moved in slowly and with care.

Jared also proceeded with caution. He was aware of the hazards of this kind of fighting and knew he was less skilled than Cotta in coping with them. He was relieved when his tired horse proved to be, at least, obedient.

He circled away from Cotta's sword and struck at the big shield and then thrust powerfully beneath it. ~~He had the longer sword.~~ Cotta's cuirass fended the thrust and he hammered the Numidian shield, but Jared, ~~kept that tilted and~~ ^{Knowing from the siege how the Numidians tilted their smaller shields to slide a sword point or edge,} kept his tilted. ~~now~~

insert 49

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omit

omit

begin here
~~took some of the bite out of Cotta's blows, and now and then~~
 his own sword was able to break the rhythm of the Roman's
 attack. Once, it reached Cotta's head, but the helmet turned
 it.

omit
 The horses caracoled and drew apart, breaking off the
 round, ~~and~~ ^{then} Jared used the breathing space to estimate the
 situation. His longer sword was only a minor advantage, if
 any. It was also a weaker weapon, likely to snap if Cotta's
 sword struck it up near the haft. Cotta on the other hand
 had proved his boast; his armor was much better. His horse,
 also, was fresh and could sustain a long contest better than
 the Numidian's beast.

→ Cotta came on again, his ~~short heavy~~ sword still
 making Jared's shield its chief target. It struck like a
 hammer pounding an anvil, blow after solid blow, in such
 continuous battering that Jared seldom found himself in a
 position to deliver a return blow.

Well, Cotta could not keep this up long, Jared thought.
 But Cotta did not need to keep it up long. ^{The} Jared's shield
 would not long withstand such battering. It was meant to
 parry javelins and the like, but only occasional sword blows,
 because Numidians fought a running fight in which sword blows
 were few.

But of course a running fight demanded a horse capable

of running and run Jared's horse could not. If his shield was cut up, he would be wide open for the cracked head Cotta had promised.

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

Relying on Cotta's admission that he must not kill, Jared moved in closer, inviting Cotta's blows in the hope of tiring him, but continuing to keep his shield tilted so that the Roman sword ^{seldom} never, or almost never, fell on it squarely.

Unexpectedly, Cotta aimed a savage blow at the throat of Jared's mount. He would gain about as much by unhorsing Jared as by breaking his shield. Jared, however, managed the right counter-blow. As the two-edged sword swung up, ^{Jared} he thrust at Cotta's ribs. He missed, but he made Cotta miss, and the danger of exposing himself kept the Primus Pilus from trying again to disable the horse.

Even so, Jared found his mount an increasing liability. Its fatigue grew more marked and it offered a more and more sluggish response to a heel, tug, ^{or} command. Cotta's horse, on the other hand, remained strongly alert to its rider's guiding hands and feet, particularly feet, because Cotta's

hands, like Jared's, were so occupied with shield and sword that they could be used seldom on the reins. Obediently, knowingly, Cotta's mount kept moving in, forcing Jared's mount to give way.

The horses again broke apart. Once more Jared had time to catch his breath and estimate. His own ~~disadvantages~~ ^{strength} were as obvious as ever, but Cotta seemed to be tiring, a little. The Primus Pilus was, after all, ^{considerably older} Jared reflected ~~thankfully, years older.~~ ^{than himself.}

When the next attack came, Jared realized that its pattern was different. Cotta was keeping more completely behind his big shield, and attempting fewer blows. Every blow now, however, was savage, and suddenly Jared was sure. No matter what Titus had ordered, Cotta was trying to kill him.

What had changed Cotta, Jared did not know. Perhaps he had realized the advantage Jared had ^{because of his youth,} ~~in his tireless,~~ unquenchable youth. Perhaps, now, he saw that if this strange inconclusive fight in the middle of the desert went on much longer, he might come down to less than even terms with his adversary. (Perhaps he had been seized by an overpowering impulse to clear, once and for all, his road to Tamar.

The order from Titus could be dealt with. Jared's prowess was well known. A Primus Pilus would be forgiven for

killing so formidable an enemy when he resisted capture.

Jared felt now a rage to match Cotta's savagery. He would not be killed! He must live; He had pledges to fulfill. New power surged through ^{him} every muscle and sinew, even while he felt that his horse, like the Numidian's shield, was ready to collapse. He must, he told himself, make the desert aid him. He looked swiftly ^{around} about through the whirling sand, and thought that he saw what he required.

^{Jared for the first time used a spur.}
Jamming his knees into his horse, to urge it into one ^{His horse leaped} last effort, he crowded forward and Cotta's horse gave way-- only a little, but enough. Its surprised rump backed up against a sharp corner of the limestone out-cropping and the animal shied and half-reared.

Cotta was momentarily unbalanced. Jared hurled his shield at Cotta's head, clapped both hands on Cotta's shield, slid off his horse and dragged the Roman along. The Primus Pilus tried to resist the dead weight, but his knees could not keep their grip on his own mount, and the arm clasp of his shield prevented him from jerking free. He could only slide helplessly and fall with Jared to the sand.

The two men twisted, turned and writhed. Cotta was unable to bring his sword arm into play and was made more helpless by his own shield. Jared felt furiously for his dagger while his weight pinned Cotta down and his other hand

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groped for Cotta's throat and found it.

"Drop your sword," ~~he gasped.~~ "Drop it!"

Cotta was filled with helpless wrath. He had had the Numidian shield all but in pieces. What had made his mount shy and rear? He must let go his sword or be choked, and a dead Primus Pilus could never square accounts.

He relaxed his sword grip, relaxed his whole body under his triumphant enemy but his eyes were piercingly sharp, looking for a chance.

Jared, his weight still pinning his adversary, got out his dagger and set the needle point against Cotta's throat.

"Loose your shield!"

Cotta slowly undid the clasp.

Keeping his dagger at Cotta's throat, Jared pushed the shield clear, drew Cotta's own dagger and tossed it beyond the shield, ~~then slid over the sand until he sat behind the Roman's head.~~ *after a pause he spoke in a flat voice.*

"I do not mean to kill you," he said, ~~after a pause,~~
~~his voice flat.~~ *he said.*

"If you did," Cotta said defiantly, "half of the Tenth Legion would be on your trail for killing a Primus Pilus."

"They might never find my trail."

"Try to hide it," Cotta challenged. "My Numidians will

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be along any time now. And from the beginning the Inn has been watching. That gatekeeper has seen enough of this to recognize us both. Others have, too."

Neither man mentioned Tamar, but both thought of her.

"I never intended to kill you," Jared said. "Not even while we fought, if I could avoid it. I intended only to buy time with your life."

"Buy time?"

"I need ^{it} ~~until tomorrow~~ for certain business."

~~There was~~ ~~than~~ ~~spoken~~
After a long pause, Cotta ~~asked~~ "What is it you wish from me?"

"Your hand in security for a full day. I have more faith in your pledge than in Titus's. You would not break it. I want only one day."

"And after that?"

"After that, what happens to me will never be laid at your door."

Cotta pondered. What choice did he have? The pledge was better than a dagger through his throat. Tomorrow he must go to the Community and there was small chance that he would find the monk there. Jared would, much more probably, be elsewhere. ~~He felt suddenly sure for~~

He remembered Tamar's ^{emotion} strained answer when he asked her about travelling to distant cities. She had talked

of them, she had said. Talked with whom?

55 / 2

I have thought of them and talked of them . . .

He had been right when he decided, after leaving the Inn, that she had talked of them with Jared!

Even with a day's headstart, the two would not be hard to follow. From ^{Jerusalem} ~~the Community~~, he could send patrols

started cheap reached at the Community he would put his Pilus Prior in charge and pursue them himself.
~~in pursuit,~~ to find them and keep them in sight. Thinking of Tamar's proud head, the promise of her

voice, the softness of her shoulders when he had touched them, he rebelled against yielding her for even a little time, but he had no choice. He was lucky that Jared did not know of the clue ^{Tamar} she unwittingly had given.

Begin here → Jared pricked Cotta's throat. "I have little time."

"I will give you my hand," Cotta said, slowly.

"Say it so that you will be bound."

Holding the dagger with his left hand, Jared thrust his right forward to meet Cotta's.

visent SSA here
 "A Roman hand in security," Cotta said, and they gripped.

and Jared shoved his dagger back into his girdle, leaped to his feet and motioned toward Cotta's weapons and shield.

"They are yours again."

Cotta sat up, touched his throat and found a little blood.

"If you had pressed harder," he said, "you might have

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been asking security of a dead man."

"I knew how hard I was pressing," Jared said, ~~and~~
~~picked up his sword and clapped his hands.~~

His mount and Cotta's had found a little shade under
the out-cropping and were standing together in the mute
companionship of ~~idle~~ horses, the tired one propping its head
on the neck of the other. ~~The hand-clap drew the animals~~
~~apart and Cotta's came slowly toward him, Jared's following,~~
~~wearily.~~

Cotta ~~got to his feet,~~ found his weapons and shield
and the blanket from which he had been pulled. He put that
back. Jared did the same for his own horse. The two men,
each by his own mount, looked at each other.

"I believe I could kill you now," Cotta said. "You
were beaten until my horse backed into that damned out-cropping."

Jared could not help remembering Eben's confidence in
his tricks, and he almost smiled at the ~~success of his~~
~~stragem~~ and the help he had made his familiar desert give.

"Titus's order is still in your way," he ~~reminded~~
~~Gotta,~~ "And now your pledge allows me until tomorrow at this
hour."

He stepped back ~~so that his horse did not interfere~~
~~with his shadow.~~ ~~He~~ ~~motioned~~ ~~for~~ ~~Cotta~~ ~~to~~ ~~look~~ ~~at~~ ~~their~~

"See! It falls eastward and just a little south and
shadows. ¶" Tomorrow, when they fall as you see
them now, you are free to seize me if you
can find me." ¶ "I'll find you."

is a little longer than I am. Tomorrow, when your own shadow is a little longer than you are, you may seize me, you or your men, and still keep your pledge."

"If we have found you," Cotta said.

"If you have found me," Jared said.

omit
And we will find you, Cotta thought. As soon as the business at the Community was completed, he would put the Masada attack into Julius Celsus's ^{efficient} hands.

^{Cotta} He mounted and struck his horse with a heel and it set off at a trot in the direction of Beth-basi.

Jared turned in the opposite direction. Cotta, looking over his shoulder, halted to watch him. When he rode under the east wall of the Inn, Cotta moved on his blanket as though to follow, but finally shook his reins to set his horse in motion without changing direction.

A cry came out of the west, faint but familiar. "Lu ah-lu ah-lu ah-lu!" He pulled his horse down to a walk until three shrieking horsemen caught up with him. Then all continued toward Beth-basi, although three or four times Cotta looked over his shoulder.

but
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

Outside Jamnia, ~~but~~ too far away to return, Jared had regretted not waiting in the warehouse for ~~full~~ darkness. Patrols were swarming, and they pinned him down until close to midnight. He had counted on setting off at a lope which would cover miles before dawn but he did less loping than ~~hiding~~ ^{and sleeping --} behind bushes, among rocks-- and when morning came he was still nearer Jamnia than he liked.

see insert 4/4

in insert 4/4

Threatened then by daylight as well as by enemies, he ~~whether his arms were adequate~~ ^{wondered}. He wished that he ~~had~~ ^{had} tested ~~his javelin and weighted it with a splint for truer flight and gave his dagger a better point and his sword a better edge on a limestone outcropping which hid him while he whetted. Then he advanced by faint~~ ^{needle --} ^{KEENLY} ^{rough} paths from village to village, all so insignificant that even in Israel's long history only one had acquired any importance.

Bethlehem was important. Great David had been born there and, Jared remembered, Eben revered it, though Jared could not recall why. He came to Beth-basi, insignificant except for the Incense Road, and if he had not been advancing stealthily he might have had trouble there. But he heard hooves in time and was ^{safely} behind bushes when five horsemen trotted ~~through and southward~~ ^{along the} trail.

End here

End here

Cotta and four Numidians! Jared's mouth hurt afresh. Cotta was ~~not, for sure,~~ ^{certainly not} riding against the Community with ^{only} four auxiliaries. Nor, with so few, ^{he} was ~~not~~ on his own hunt for prisoners escaped from Hinnom. The third guess, however, hit home and Jared's pulse ^{his} and heart leaped. Cotta was going to Netophah! ^{He was going to Tamar!}

4/4

When the five horsemen disappeared below the billowing sand Jared followed but on foot, ⁱⁿ lost ground so that when he came in sight of Netophah the desert was empty. The inn loomed alone on its desolate hill. He was not close enough to see the fresh trail that led away, but he did not miss the one that had halted at the small gate and then had gone around the well, so he took what cover he could find.

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omit

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omit

- 46 - 11

the 2nd to

desolate hill. He did not go close enough to pick out the trail which led leading to the small gate, but the one leading away, westward, was closer and plain. Four horses ^{the tracks} ~~so~~ ^{had left} the fifth rider would still be at the inn. ^{it would be 20 hrs. or more} ~~Gotta~~ ^(a Roman Primus Pileus out) Tamar could not very well keep Gotta out. ^{Tamar, he told himself could not very well keep a} Jared worked back to a ravine and turned lie-in-wait.

Under stunted bushes on which little white snails fed until they fed swallows and migrating quail, he watched ^{He lay so quietly that soon the} birds swooped ^{at last} ~~until the~~ ~~snatching~~ ~~in~~ fearlessly. He dozed on snatches but was awake when a horseman rode around the eastern base of Netophah's hill. It was Gotta. ~~At~~ Tamar, far from keeping him out must have made him welcome. He would not have stayed so long ^{otherwise} if she had not. She knew how to speed an unwelcome guest.

Angry, even though ^{he knew that} his last meeting with Tamar scarcely justified anger, Jared watched the tall, ~~erect~~ horseman ride north until his angry gaze was drawn by a wild shriek. He spun. Another horseman was pounding along the lip of the ravine, flailing his sword and ^{like} ~~up-~~ah-ling in the favorite Numidian tactic of clamor and confusion.

Jared scrambled to his feet, cocked his arm, aimed and ~~cast~~ cast. But the javelin still was not balanced or the headlong horse veered or its rider swayed. The javelin missed. And now Jared had no more than the scant instant which permitted ^{him to do merely} ~~whatever he could.~~

Again Begin here

He had learned in the siege that a fight often allowed time to choose the best of several ways, each good enough, but that now and then it allowed no time at all and you could only choose the least impossible. The javelin cast had ended with him striding widely, left foot advanced, right far back. And the least impossible seemed to be to continue in ^{rhythm} ~~rythm~~, as a strong dancer holds to his pattern at Succoth ~~despite~~ ^{always} boisterous celebrants. He

-46a

He brought his feet together, swung down, clamped both hands on a chunk of stone, swung up and let fly as flailing Numidian and pounding horse came in. Then he leaped desperately aside, sprawled, ^{and} rolled to begin a new ~~rythm~~ ^{rhythm} which got him to his feet and now ^{he} had time to draw his sword. Time to spare! The chunk had ~~met~~ and cut off the lu-ab-lu in full shriek.

omit
 Relieved of its load the horse had slowed and now came docilely back stepping daintily through the desert debris. Jared patted its heaving side. It shuddered briefly at the unfamiliar hand but then, wheedled by the even more unfamiliar kindness, *omit*
 nuzzled the owner of the hand.

*insert
 Put
 insert 46a here*

Jared remembered Cotta and looked around ~~for him~~. He was coming fast but was still so far off that Jared had time to unfasten the ^{dead} Numidian's corselet and put it on. It was a snug fit but loose at the armholes and would not cramp his swing. He picked up the Numidian's ^{which was round and light, unlike the Roman's massive shield,} shield and liked its handgrip. He took the ~~dead~~ ^{dead} man's ^{his} javelin, at least as accurate as his own, and looked

dubiously at the nuzzling horse. He had become at home ~~on a horse~~ ^{back} but it was not where he ~~best~~ liked to fight. If he did not, ^{to do} however, he would be at ~~a~~ ^{great} disadvantage. ^{But} There was no chance that Cotta, ^{skilled in this} would dismount to fight on foot in sliding sand.

Well, horseback it will have to be.

He leaped astride the blanketed barrel of the beast, ^{grinning} and grimaced as his weight caused his mount to shuffle. ~~It had put in a hard day already, and might respond slowly, if Cotta forced a fight.~~
^{It was tired, of course, but it would be, but it had been trained for battles.}

Remembering his sprawl Jared felt to make sure ^{that} of his dagger and ~~that it would not stick~~. ^{was still in his girdle.} He was, he decided, as ready ^{for Cotta} as he could make himself.

Meanwhile Cotta, riding toward his fourth Numidian, was

antagonist . . . x x x x x x x

Meanwhile Cotta, riding toward his fourth Numidian

^{was} guessing what had become of the other three and deciding, regretfully, that they were not likely to be any immediate help. All four, he concluded, had flushed some runaways and, unable to bring the prizes back in time as ordered had sent one of their own number to explain. That one, made audacious on his own lu-ah-luing, had run into a solitary prize and had tried to take it singlehanded and win a decoration for himself.

Close enough to recognize the solitary prize, Cotta grew hot at the thought that, captured and on the way to the Circus Maximus, this big swarthy Jew would no longer clutter up Netophah. Tamar would feel free to talk of Cyprus and Spain and points north south east and west.

Getting Jared on his way to the Circus would not, of course, be easy. Cotta thought ^{freed} in exasperation ^{at} of the slain Numidian. If the fool had waited, they could have together taken Jared and hardly known they'd been in a fight. Still, even now, Jared should not be too tough. He had only somebodyelse's armor and a tired nag and must, himself, be tired. And he faced a fresh man on a horse not only twice as good but rested, watered and fed.

If Jared had any sense he wouldn't even try to fight. But remembering events of the siege Cotta doubted that ^{the Jew} Jared would ~~would~~ show any sense. Still, it was worth a try. He pulled his mount to a halt just short of the dead Numidian. Jared and his nag were a few steps back on the other side.

"Titus has ordered that you be taken alive." Cotta tried ~~to~~ for as reasonable a tone as he could manage against such a trouble-maker. "Give up and you'll save yourself a cracked head."

"A cracked head wouldn't be much good in the Circus, would

it." Jared ~~was~~ ^{is} sober, as usual, but laughter would not have made his derision more plain, and Cotta's hope grew less and he heeled his horse to start it toward a spot from which he could freely attack.

"Your nag is tired; you can't get away. And somebody ^{else's} armor won't do you much good."

"The only good I want is to be let alone."

How could I tell Titus I'd let you alone, even if I wanted to? Besides, more Numidians will be along. Can you fight a swarm?"

"Swarm? I was lying in wait at Bethpasi. I saw only four Numidians. You must have sent them away from Netophah. If they captured runaways afoot they'll be slow returning."

here put in sent 49 attacked

Cotta gave up hope. He had sidled inconspicuously ^{around} alongside the dead Numidian. Now he spurred hard. Jared, just as also inconspicuously, had tried to keep his mount facing their enemy and he thought he saw a shot at Cotta's ribs. He thrust as Cotta came in but the latter's shield turned the thrust and Cotta hammered Jared's shield. ^{Knowing from the siege} Almost every Jerusalemite had seen how the Numidians tilted ~~is~~ their smaller shields to slide a sword point or edge, and Jared tilted, although the shield took a ^{crucial} battering. Cotta dragged a spur along his horse's flank to move the animal closer and Jared swung at Cotta's helmet.

attached with force for the attached head Cotta had pushed

A fight on horseback depends too much on the horse ^{is not always} and a horse ~~isn't~~ ^{isn't} to be depended on. If he resents a spur, or turns skittish, or takes fright at an enemy's shifting weapon he may make an unpredictable sidestep, caracole or backstep and spoil ^{the} most ^{skilful} carefully calculated blow. Cotta's horse, now under the pain of the spur, suddenly gave way and Jared's sword cut through air. ~~But~~

In the same instant ^{Jared} Cotta felt his own horse falter. Its ~~brief~~ ^{brief} quickness ~~was~~ ^{was} not last much longer. He ~~must~~ ^{must} now ~~quit~~ ^{quit}. And he ~~know~~ ^{know} he was less skilled than Cotta in this kind of fighting. He must try to ~~win~~ ^{win} quietly.

brief liveliness would not last much longer, ~~so~~ ^{he} must win quickly ^{or he would lose.}

Cotta's horse had stopped with his hind legs unsteadily poised on the crest of a dune and any farther retreat might slide them down the slope, or even send ~~him~~ ^{them} sprawling.

Jared for the first time used a spur and at the sudden stab his mount shot ahead and reared, its front hooves briefly pawing like the hands of a wild boxer. And Cotta's mount gave way ^{again} and slid and Cotta lost his balance and his sword.

Jared's horse dropped back on all fours, so close to the enemy that Jared dropped shield and sword, grabbed Cotta's shield in both hands and the two men ^{fell} tumbled and tangled on the sand. Weapons were useless, and Cotta, ~~moreover~~, had only one hand because his left arm was still ~~thrust~~ into the slots of his shield. Jared had both free and as he rolled on top of Cotta's shield he snatched Cotta's fallen sword and set the edge against Cotta's neck.

Cotta went limp in rage and humiliation. He had ^{been} ~~almost~~ winning. He had hammered Jared's shield almost in two. But now he was close to having his throat cut.

"I'll kill you if I must," Jared said.

"And ~~six~~ six thousand legionnaires will hunt you down,"

"They'll have to find me."

"My Numidians will show ^{them} ^{and} the way. The Inn has ^{no doubt} been watching. Someone there will point out your trail."

Jared did not doubt it. Pursuit in ^{start} revenge for a slain Cotta would ~~start~~ in a few hours and would ~~certainly~~ be stubborn. But Cotta might hold ~~it~~ ^{pursuit} up in exchange for his life, and Jared ^{bitterly} ~~did~~ ^{needed} want a little more free time.

"Will you ^{Delay} hold back the hunt if I let you live?"

"Hold it back?"

^{Delay it}

2052H
55a

"Just until tomorrow."

"Tomorrow?"

"Just one full day. Your hand in security on it. And no tricks."

"And after that?"

"After that, ^{let} ~~if you~~ ~~six thousand~~ ~~can~~ hunt me down,"

if you can.

Cotta decided that he could give a satisfactory explanation to Titus. Titus knew the crazy turns that a fight on horseback could take. And he, Cotta, was pretty sure he knew where to look tomorrow for Jared. The hunt would ~~start with~~ pick up Jared's trail either at the Community or at the Inn where there had been, already, some talk, ~~the~~ ^{suddenly} was ^{sure}, of faroff cities.

omit

two

"All right," he said.

"Pledge it."

"My hand in security."

Insert SS.
a

"The hand of a Roman ~~pilus primus?~~ ^{p primus pilus?}"

"The hand and pledge of the Primus Pilus Cotta." ^{They gripped and}

Jared rolled off Cotta's shield, and handed back Cotta's sword, and Cotta got up and touched his throat and saw blood on his fingers.

"You came close to asking a dead man's hand in security."

"You keep a sharp sword."

Their horses were standing together companionably, the tired head of one drooping over ^{the} other's withers. Cotta clapped his hands and they drew apart and the ^{two} ~~two~~ men went to them and settled their blankets.

omit

omit

"I still could kill you in fair fight," Cotta said. "I had you fading until your damned horse walked on two legs."

Jared found his own sword, and shield and looked the latter over and concluded it was better than nothing.

"Until tomorrow at this hour," he said.

"Let's get it straight," Cotts ^{said} ~~said~~ and motioned for Jared to look at their shadows. "Tomorrow, when they fall as you see them ~~w~~ now, I'm ^{am} free to seize you."

"If you can find me."

"I'll find you."

Cotta mounted and his three Numidians, with two prisoners and Lu-ah-lued plodding before them, rode into view, and Cotta turned toward them with a last look at Jared and Jared knew why Cotta's I'll find you had been so confident. A pledge not to seize did not include a promise not to send out trackers. ~~Fixers~~ These Numidians would, in all likelihood, be the first, ~~of~~. He shrugged and mounted and rode slowly around Netophah's hill. ~~Before that cut off his view to the north he had one last glimpse of Cotta and his Numidians. All four were looking back and Cotta was pointing.~~

1 > * * * * * x x

Slide space Memo to Merian. In the next section Tamar dresses a wound ~~across the ribs~~, Jared has. Jared calls it "just a cut across the ribs". Will you put that into the fight as a spot that seems good to you?

Tamar

and Jared had both free. He got his dagger out

as he moved on

~~hand on Cotta's right wrist, twisted and got on top of Cotta's shield~~

~~and then got a hand on Cotta's throat.~~

set the point against

Cotta

~~Cotta twisted. He had been winning, but now he was about to~~

~~be choked to death, and a dead man could never square the account.~~

"I'll kill you if I must," Jared said.

"And ten thousand legionnaires will hunt you down."

"They'll have to find me."

"My Numidians will be on your trail. The Inn has been watching. Someone there will point out the way you went."

~~Jared did not know why he did not kill. This was because~~ His mouth had been battered by this Roman who would also

It is a cliff
or down a cliff

58

144
541

CHAPTER TWENTY

When Jared came to the great gate, it opened almost as swiftly as it had for the Primus Pilus. Interest in the fight below the hill, which they had been breathlessly watching, impelled the gate men. Obal waited inside, a finger gliding nervously over his pate, as he tried to estimate how the outcome of the contest would affect his own fortunes. The watch dogs barked wildly but subsided as Jared rode in.

All the servants were gathered in the courtyard. Tamar stood quietly, the ~~sun~~ sun beating down on her hair. A half dozen travellers, drawn out of their alcoves by the excitement, stared at Jared's strange figure. Drenched with sweat, bleeding through the slashes Cotta had made in his corselet, hair and beard tangled, garments torn, Jared dismounted and handed the reins to Obal.

"This horse is to be rubbed down, watered and fed," he said.

Obal opened his small mouth but closed it again, when Tamar addressed Jared in the voice of the mistress of the Inn: "He will attend to the horse at once. But you have wounds which need attention. Come with me."

She led the way through the kitchen to her own apartment, and when they were inside, and the door closed, she flung herself upon him.

"Jared!" ~~she cried.~~ "I thought you would not come. I did not believe you when you said you would come back. Oh, how happy I am!"

She was sobbing against him. Jared did not speak or move. At last she felt his stony unresponsiveness and looked up and her arms fell away.

"Your wound!" she said, and wiped the tears from her cheeks with her hands. "Forgive me that I forgot."

He is angry, she thought, because of Cotta's visit.

"It is just a cut across the ribs," Jared said. But Tamar unbuckled the corselet and eased it off with murmurs of concern. She cried out softly at the sight of a clotted streak along his left side, dark red in places but in others brown and yellow where it had taken color from the leather.

She ran into the inner room and returned with basin, water, cloths and a small sandalwood box. Gently, she set about cleaning the wound, ~~and~~ spreading salve and

600
SUPERASE 8070

~~"This is the best of salves," she said. "One of the caravans brings it. Doesn't it have a good sting?"~~

→ When she had completed the bandage, she rested her face for a fleeting moment against his bare chest, then ~~she~~ drew away and looked up at him, ~~her eyes filled with tenderness.~~

"You might have been killed," she said, but Jared did not answer.

It is certainly because of the Roman, she thought, and asked, her voice hardening: "Why didn't you kill him?"

"Cotta? Did he offend you? When he rode north, I was sure he had been in the Inn."

"We served him a meal. He did not offend but it would have been better if you had killed him."

"I demanded his hand in security, instead," Jared said.

"You believe, then, that he will let us get away, you and I?" ~~me?~~

Jared's black eyes were unfathomable.

He was thinking that he had known the truth about himself as soon as he heard, in Jamnia, that the towers had fallen. All through the journey, after he joined Eben and the women, he had been doubtful, uncertain, confused. His mind had seethed with plans and fantasies: himself and Tamar safely at sea . . . living together in a distant city . . . wrapped in each other's arms. All these had dissolved, when Johanan's ~~the~~

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messenger arrived, as dreams do when one awakens. The cursing, his banishment, he saw clearly, had not freed him from the Scrolls. They were still his charge, his mission, his imperative. This duty had been laid upon him by someone more powerful even than the Priest of Aaron. His heart trembled. By Jehovah.

"My compact with Cotta," he said, "will leave me free only until this time tomorrow. I am going to the Community. You know that it is in danger from the Romans who are going to Masada, ^{and} I must protect the Scrolls."

Tamar did not point out that he was no longer Keeper of the Scrolls. Her intuition told her that, in some way, he felt that he still was.

"Will there be fighting?" she asked.

"I do not know."

"Well, you have come through many fights. You will come through this one, and when it is over and the Scrolls are safe you can come back to me." ~~And now that lingering~~ ^{her voice held} ~~music,~~ and she wound her arms around him, and he could remember ecstasy. . . although dimly, as he had remembered anger when he saw Cotta passing.

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

The mighty testament was as loud in his ears as though

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the whole Brotherhood had shouted it.

"I shall not come back," he said.

Tamar pulled away. "Why ^{are you here then?} did you come here?" she asked.

"I had to tell you. It was right that I should tell you."

She turned around. She was fighting, he could see, for control. After a moment, she shook back her showering hair in a gesture he remembered, ^{had always loved.}

"Jared," she said in a low tone, "if you will come back, there will never be anyone but you."

This was as close as he would ever come to knowing what had passed between herself and Cotta or ^{at times} what might pass. It did not matter. Tamar, Tamar! ~~he thought.~~ Do not humble yourself. You have given me joy that I will carry to my death--if it is to be death.

He reached out and touched her hair ^{and}

"I must be to you as one who has died," he said, and ~~he put on his corselet and~~ turned to the door. She did not speak again, ~~nor look around.~~

x x x x o-o-o asterisks x x x x

Riding the dead Numidian's horse toward the Community, Jared looked off, over the billowing sands, and felt their inconstancy, now a hill and now a valley, now here and now

here
put in
insert
62.

bring

0-0-0
Riding the ⁰⁻⁰⁻⁰ ~~Amidant's~~ ~~late~~ ~~travels~~ ~~to~~ ~~Community~~,
I had looked ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~relaxing~~ ~~secret~~, ~~and~~ ~~felt~~ 320
their ~~inconstancy~~, ~~now~~ - ~~hell~~ ~~and~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~, ~~now~~ ~~here~~ ~~and~~ ~~now~~

there, never the same when you looked again as they had been
when you looked before.

He had been like that, he thought. Well, that was
over. He knew now to what he must be true.

58

Jared's talk with Tamar after first meeting

"Why didn't you kill him?" Tamar said. "He'd have killed you if he could."

"I took a day that I need instead. He gave me his hand in security."

"A day? ~~What for?~~ ^{we} Can you surely get beyond pursuit in a day."

Jared's resigned hands poured all opportunity of escape, all hope of it, all thought of it over the inn courtyard. Since his last meeting with Tamar ~~his~~ his mind had been full of fantasies-- he and Tamar safe at sea--in on ~~after~~ ^{the mind} another of a dozen far-off cities --in each other's arms--but now ~~it~~ ^{it} was clear. He must go back to the Brotherhood. The cursing and banishment had not freed him of the Scrolls. That responsibility ~~had been~~ ^{still} layed upon him. The Chaste one had said it. ~~With nothing but the~~ ^{With nothing but the} will of god shall a man be concerned. The affirmation was so strong that he was almost sure he heard the Chaste One utter it.

"I need the day to protect the Scrolls."

"You and I ~~perhaps~~ could find a ship in a day."

"I ~~know~~ ^{know} the protection of the Scrolls has been layed upon me."

"Did you come here to tell me nothing more than that?"

He had wanted to see her once more, and with Cotta's promise, which was a threat, to ~~find~~ ^{run down} him, he had know this would be his last opportunity.

"Titus has commanded Cotta to seize me. I may need to let him ~~exchange~~ ^{to go it} in exchange for the ~~safety~~ ^{the community and} of the Scrolls. This may be my last ~~opportunity~~ ^{this chance} to see you."

"You won't try to escape with me to Cyprus or Crete or Alexandria or farther?"

"I dare not even think of it."

Jared remembered Heth saying ~~that~~ ^{That} the very Ark, ~~Moses had~~ brought out of Egypt stood in the Holy of Holies."

"It stands there no more," he said.

"What?" Eben said.

Jared told him what Heth ~~had~~ said and the Chaste One, too, ~~had~~ said.

"It surely does not, now," Eben said. "If Babylonian pillagers missed it, this Roman torch will not."

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"You know that just before you met Cotta he was here again."

"I know."

"He told me he is able to retire from the legions whenever he chooses. He is a lonely man. He needs someone to make his retirement pleasant."

"I think he would make a good companion."

Tamar put her hands to her cheeks and the familiar gesture reminded him of so much pleasure shared by them that he could just keep from taking her into his arms. Hands at cheeks she looked at him, waiting.

"Jared. If you will go away with me now, there will never be anyone else. There never has been since we met, and there never will be." *Jared's eyes beseeched her.*

She had not ever come that close to letting him know what had passed between her and the inn's guest, especially Cotta, and he wished she hadn't.

Tamar! Tamar! Tamar! You need not say this to me. You have given me joy that I shall carry all my life. I shall carry it to my death, whenever death comes.

She continued to wait, fingers pressing her cheeks white.

"I have had the protection of the Scrolls layed on me. I must go."

Her hands dropped to her sides and she did not speak again and when he took his horse from Obal she turned her back.

* * * * *

omit
insert
62
this is insert
62

after

omit

Eben's Journey to Bethel
and back

— 1 —

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Palestine was full of hill towns, from Galilee through Samaria and deep into Judea. ⁹ Bethel--Beth-el, House of God, where the Lord spoke to Jacob--was a hill town. It stood almost three thousand feet above the Great Sea.

In Eben's time ^{at} Bethel was small and of little consequence, but legends ^{it} made it plain that the town once had been great. Abraham had built an altar there and had pitched his tent nearby. Jacob had wrestled, and had ~~worsted~~, an angel in Bethel. When the Tribes first came out of Egypt, Bethel had been a resting place for the Ark. Bethel once had had its own king. Before ~~græt~~ David had established Jerusalem as the preferred place of sacrifice, it had had a famous altar. And near Bethel rose the palm tree, under which Deborah the judge had anciently sat.

Standing beneath the palm, ~~that afternoon~~, dusty, sweat-stained, and at least several pounds lighter than when he had left Abigail for the dark start of his journey, Eben was proud to be a son of Bethel. ^{He} ~~Its~~ period of greatness was

omit
 long since ended. Assyria had battered its walls, and Babylon had carried the Tribes into captivity, but when the stubborn Benjaminites had returned to their ancestors' empty land, they were still proud, and so were their descendants. omit

begin
 here → Eben wondered if the Holy Spirit had not guided Elias to use Bethel as a hiding place for the Writing. Certainly no better one could have been picked if he, Eben, was to recover it. He knew Bethel as a man knows--he remembered the previous night and gave a quick, happy laugh--as a man knows his own wife. Everything looked familiar, although the houses seemed smaller than he had remembered them.

omit
Perhaps because I have seen such great ones--palaces, even--in Jerusalem.

From where he stood he could see the land which had once belonged to his father, and he thought of his parents, and of his grandfather whose heart would have been moved by this errand.

He
 Eben drew out Elias's map and studied it.

underline
 "The palm tree is marked by a leaf," Elias had said.

There was the leaf and a line ran, Eben felt sure, past the Asaph's dye works to a cave south of town. South of town there were two likely caves. He Eben had rescued lambs from both of them.

The intervening pastures were deserted and he went to

- 3 -

the first cave. Nothing! Cautiously, for it was near the ^{Damascus} and exposed to the eyes of every traveler, main road, he went to the second. It had a pinched entrance and its gloomy tunnel twisted far back. He followed the tunnel and came to a crack, ^{such a shelf as the one on which he had Jared} the only possible hiding place along the ^{had lameless.} way. ^{(through dust and rubble and at the very back} His fingers crept, groped and closed on a hard cylinder, wrapped, by the feel, in linen. He let go and slowly withdrew his hand.

Eben had concentrated so intensely on his search that until his fingers touched the cylinder he had felt no emotion ^{about it.} at all. Now, ^{a wind of resonance flung him against the tunnel} however, the meaning of what he had found stirred up ^{and he} such a wind of awareness that he fell against the cave wall. He leaned there, shaken, his hands hot and wet, his legs weak, his mind confused.

He did not know what the Writing was; Elias had not ^{said. But he} told him. ^{was so great that Elias had risked great peril to get it} But it had been brought, all the way, from Rome to Jerusalem and those who had sent it must have believed it great. ^(go to next page - 3a) Now it was in his charge. Now he, out of all the Christians in Palestine, was entrusted with keeping it safe, and getting it into suitable holy hands.

omit

Eben was not sure he was equal to so great a task. He continued to lean against the cave wall until his legs felt strong again. Then he dried one hot hand on his thigh and put it back into the crack and closed it firmly upon the hidden cylinder.

His hand brought out a round affair, no longer than Abigail's forearm and not so big. He turned back the linen wrapping enough to see that the cylinder was made of copper. The ends were capped and the caps twisted tight. It was not nearly so big as similar cylinders, holding sections of the Book, which were unrolled and read in synagogues every Sabbath. Still, its very lack of size was meaningful. So small a cylinder must hold a Writing of quality since it did not have quantity, and yet had been considered worth sending so great a distance.

He was tempted to carry it back to the daylight and open it. But he was able to read very little, even in his own language, and the Writing almost certainly would be in Greek or, since it came from Rome, in the language of the Romans. Best leave the precious mystery be until Jamnia. Amos would know how to deal with Writings in cylinders.

^{He carried} Eben rewrapped the linen and turned the cylinder over and over in thought. To get it safely to Jamnia would not be easy. Not that it would ^{have} any value ^{for} to robbers. A Writing would not bring even a few mites in a thieves' market. Holy scrolls were scattered all over Jerusalem and no one bothered to pick them up. But who was going to tell robbers that a copper cylinder so carefully ^{capped} sealed did not hold gold or even jewels?

+

He drew from his girdle a cord which he had brought for this purpose from Jamnia; Abigail had found it for him. He tied the cord around the cylinder and looped the cord around his neck so that the slender column hung down his back, beneath his robe. ^{TAPACIOUS} Now it was safe, except for a careful search, and to make such a search robbers must first catch him.

He was afire to start the return journey but he knew that he must not. This busy afternoon would be dangerous for travel. Besides, to be fresh and wary in the hours ahead, he must sleep. ^{He ate a little of the food Abigail had} Abigail had also given him food for the journey, but the finding of the Writing had left him with ^{and} no desire to eat. He stretched out, with a sigh, in the dimness of the cave. ^{But he}

o-o-o

Eben stirred in bewilderment when the soft hands of ^{his wife} Abigail, who had come ^{into his dreams} to him in his dreaming sleep, suddenly became rough fetters, one on each wrist and ankle. ^{He woke to find} He awoke to find ^{that} that two legionnaires were half-carrying, half-dragging him from the shadowy recesses where he had lain down to rest. They hauled him to the ^{cave's} entrance of the cave and ^{and} dropped him. ^{Those}

"You call that treasure?" ^a said a derisive voice, ^{said}.

"There wasn't any treasure in there."

"I told you we weren't in Jerusalem." ^{you won't} find treasure now in every blasted little hole. ^{find} find treasure now in every blasted little hole."

Flat on his back, Eben blinked at the ~~abrupt~~ change from gloom to bright ~~afternoon~~ sunlight and stared up into a confusion of horses's legs and Roman horsemen.

He felt sick, ~~at heart~~. What had he done wrong? How had he managed so badly that he had been captured before the Writing had been in his care for an hour? To be sure, it was hidden; but ~~the Romans~~ ^{never failed to} searched everyone.

End here

O, Holy Spirit, ^{help} guide me.

End here

The two who had found him went to their waiting ^{captors} horses. There were four men, ^{with a mounted} and the whole patrol ^{at} looked ^{looking} down at him with the humorless, almost inhuman curiosity ^{with} which he had noted before when Romans ^{usually} looked at non-Romans. Eben found it hard to tell one Roman from another. All, at ^{see} first glance, were alike and indistinguishable. These four were all thick and dark and all had the big Roman nose; also, all were legionnaires and therefore dangerous to any Jew.

One of them, slanting his spear at the angle which would enable him to run Eben through if he tried to escape, ^{spoke} asked amiably enough:

"What are you doing here?"

Eben concealed overpowering relief. The question told that he had not been recognized as a possible Compound runaway. He rubbed his eyes and gaped, remembering advice he had had from Jared.

see p. 11

If they catch you off guard, don't try to outwit them.
Let them think you are harmless, even an idiot. They may let
the idiot go, after a little teasing. Or you may think of
something.

"Stick him, Corbulo," one of the others said. "A Roman does himself a favor everytime he sticks a Jew."

Corbulo ~~did not act on the advice x~~

~~he~~ he looked down at the sunny-haired young man and repeated his question.

"I am on an errand for Johanen Ben Zakki who has the holy school in Jamnia," Eben said haltingly, as though barely able to collect what few wits he owned. Johanen's name might help. "Johanen," he went on, "has had Titus's hand in security."

"What is your errand?"

Eben could think of nothing better than the truth.

"I came for a Writing," he said, sitting up.

He still did not act bright. Just a young fellow simple enough to trust a Roman. Sure that, in any case, he would be searched, he pulled the cylinder around into sight.

"Here it is. It is just a scroll."

"Just a scroll!" said the Roman who had wanted Eben

stuck. "Hidden! Kept in a copper cylinder! And still just a scroll?"

Corbulo reached for the cylinder, pulled down the linen wrapping, twisted off a cap, shook out the scroll, shook the cylinder, found nothing.

"It really is just a scroll," he said. "In Greek, by the looks of it. But I cannot read Greek."

~~His comrades indicated that they could not, either.~~

~~"I saw one like it, cylinder and all, in a synagogue we burned,"~~ Corbulo went on. "Jerusalem is full of such stuff, worth nothing except to a teacher like this Johanen; *and* ~~he~~ who has the favor of Titus."

Eben offered a silent, fervent thanks to Titus because of his favor and to Corbulo who respected it.

"Be sure nothing is hidden in the bottom," said one of the three.

Corbulo again found nothing.

"Jewels might be stuck inside with pitch."

Corbulo tilted the cylinder to allow the light to enter, shook his head. He put the scroll back into the cylinder, twisted the cap back on and replaced the linen, the unconscious act of a disciplined soldier making everything neat.

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"Finish off Empty-head and let ~~us~~^{>5} get going," said the one who had wanted Eben killed. "They ~~will~~^{will} be catching up with us."

"Why should I finish him off?" Corbulo said. "His master is close to one who has had the hand of Titus, so you might say this messenger has had it. ~~Anyway,~~^{and} he looks harmless."

"Lop off one of ~~his~~^a hands, at least. What Jew is harmless? Leave both his hands and he will be lopping off your hand some day."

only

begin here

Eben sat motionless. You could not run away from four horsemen; moreover, the growing sounds of hooves told him that more were approaching. Let them lop off a hand! Then they would ride on and he would build a fire and sear the stump and still get the Writing delivered. ~~But first he must get the writing back!~~

Corbulo raised his spear to a harmless carry and, when ~~when~~ his blood-thirsty comrade drew his sword, put his horse between Eben and injury. ~~And Eben heard another horse stopping, but he could not see the rider.~~

"You can't go riding ~~through~~^{all around} Judea, Samaria and Galilee killing Jews," ~~he~~^{Corbulo} said. "The fighting is over, except, they say, for an attack on Masada. If you want to kill Jews, go to Masada. But leave this boy alone." He tossed the cylinder and Eben caught it and got it hidden, ~~he was afraid,~~^{he feared,} faster than a stupid countryman would have. ~~Fortunately~~

"Why should not this youth be let alone?" a woman's ~~voice~~^{voice} ~~asked~~^{asked} ~~for the approaching cavalry~~^{was paying small attention to her for the approaching cavalry} ~~was upon them.~~ "Whom should they leave alone?"

voice asked.

Eben, still sitting before the cave, could not see the speaker but he knew her. He had heard her voice only once and it was not as beautiful as the voice which had bade him farewell last night in the summer house, but he had not forgotten it. ~~The blood-thirsty legionnaire hissed.~~

~~"Now you have cracked the pot!"~~ ^{we've busted} ~~the bloodthirsty~~ ^{we've}

~~legionnaire hissed to Corbulo, "You've wasted so much time~~ ^{they've} ~~on this Jew that they have caught up."~~ ^{caught up and we haven't done what we were told to.}

Eben leaped to his feet. The ~~favor of the Princess Berenice was too valuable to let her catch him impolitely~~ ^{should not} slouching on the ground.

She was on horseback and exquisite, wearing a cape of heavy ^{purple} silk over a loose ^{white} blouse and ^{gold} Persian ^{style} trousers tucked into calf-high soft boots. Trailing her, were eight bearers with a litter, in case their mistress desired to rest from the saddle. Behind, in a column of twos, were a hundred mounted men. Their commander rode close behind the Princess.

"Well, well!" Catching sight of Eben she gave the clear little ^{bawdy} laugh that he also remembered. Amused, detached, observant, she was just as she had been in front of the Tower of Miriamme, and it was plain that she recognized him. Eben froze. His ~~first~~ four captors had thought him only a

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dull countryman, but all these Romans must have been in the
 siege. Among so many, some must certainly see in him the
 big fighter who had stood at Jared's back, and many must have known
~~been engaged in the hunt for men escaped from the Compound.~~ ^{the} ~~remnants~~
~~She moved her horse toward him and Eben's blue~~
~~Eben's blue eyes appealed to her, sparkling hazel~~
~~eyes spoke to her.~~
 ones. You also are a Jew, although an Herodian. Do not
betray me.

The Princess ^{addressed} ~~moved her horse close to~~ Corbulo.

^{anyone want to kill a}
 "Why should it be necessary to order that this harm-
 less shepherd, ^{?"} ~~be let alone? Who proposed anything else?"~~

Shepherd! Eben was flooded with gratitude.

Corbulo drew respectfully erect.

"One of the men was baiting him, Princess." He would
 not report a comrade whose help he might need in the next melee.

"You were sent ahead," the Commander said, "not to
 bait Jews but to find a place where the troop might rest."

"This cave and the level space in front of it seemed
 a likely place, but then the men wanted to look inside for
 treasure."

The Princess addressed the Commander. "I have changed
 my mind," she said. "I shall not stop now, short of Shiloh."

^{End here}
~~He~~ sourly waved the troop forward. With a black look
 at the four who had found Eben, he told them to ride on ahead,
 as an advance point. If you run into an ambush, his look said,

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blame yourselves! If it had not been for you, everyone would be having a rest!

He took a position at the rear of his column and as that passed on, the Princess reined her horse close to Eben, ^{and} ~~smiled teasingly~~ ^{she said.}
 "You leaped from the Tower of Miriamme," she said and smiled teasingly.

→ Eben blushed at memory of the unclothed aftermath of the jump.

"And you are the one who pulled Simon's beard," she ^{said.} ~~went on.~~ ^{Said} "You were with a comrade, a Brother from the Dead Sea Community." Her smile, as on the earlier day, was personal and inviting. "Tell me, why are you here?"

Eben decided that the Princess Berenice would not wish to harm the Writing so he told her his errand. He did not, however, tell of last night's great event.

Berenice heard him through, leaning toward him from her saddle. ^{The drifting SCENT grew stronger.} ~~He caught the scent of perfume, and the tender texture of her lips.~~ ^{made} Even though her litter bearers waited a short distance away, she ^{managed} ~~managed~~ to make herself and Eben ^{seem} ~~seem~~ alone.

"You do not need to return to Jamnia at once, do you?" she asked. ^{she said.}

"I have promised to be there as soon as I can," Eben said.

— () —

"Couldn't you journey north a little, perhaps as far as Shiloh? I am spending the night there. I am sure your adventures would amuse me." He would amuse her too, and delight her, her eyes said.

If Eben had blushed before, he grew scarlet now. He could make a good pretense of stupidity, and about women he did not need to pretend innocence. But he could not manage enough stupidity or innocence to offer a convincing misreading of what Berenice had in mind. ^{End here} There was nothing to do but tell the whole truth, even at the risk of incurring her resentment which might mean more than a lopped hand. He had less chance of running now than when the patrol had seized him. A hundred Roman javelins were up the trail.

"Princess," he said soberly, "may I tell you the truth?"

"I hear so little of the truth that I might like it."

"Then I will keep back nothing."

"What is all this that you will not keep back?"

Berenice again leaned down from her saddle, interested but impatient.

"Princess!" Eben said. "I am twice pledged to return to Jamnia quickly. First, to show the Writing I have found, to scholars. Second, to rejoin my bride. I left her in our bridal chamber last night to come here."

The Princess Berenice straightened in her saddle, but

not growing tall in royal condemnation, not seeming to lose any of her curves and promises. Her delicate face was as blank as polished marble. She looked away. Then her laugh sounded, clear, bright and unabashed.

"In my day I have had much good wine," she said. "I would be selfish if I cried out against being denied a glass of new, untested vintage." Her laugh rang again. "Go to Jamnia. Take your Writing. ^{Freddie with} Rejoin your bride. And may the God of our people guard you all the way."

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begin h. 12

The route ran downhill and Eben, walking briskly, with the Writing safe between his shoulders blades and Abigail in his heart, saw a wide valley ahead. The bed of a dry brook twisted through it. This was the Valley of the Smiths. No man remained ^{there} in the valley to explain the name. All had been driven off by Romans and bandits. But Eben did not need an explanation. He had often heard ^{the true one} it read from the Book, and he remembered *it*.

Shortely he discovered that someone else remembered. He had left his circuituous path to drink from a spring, and in ~~doing~~ ^{busy Damascus road,} so had crossed the main road out of Bethel, the one used by travelers whose bodyguards made fear unnecessary. Returning, he saw a large mounted party approaching. When he was satisfied this was not made up either of Romans or bandits,

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he did not hide, only stepped aside to let it pass. The leader, however, signalled "Halt!" to the bearers of the closed litter following him and to the score of mercenary riders bringing up the rear. *He approached Eben.*

"I am Ehi ben Rosh of Meggido, ~~in the north~~, but just now out of Bethel," he said. He was a thin, spindle-shanked old man, richly dressed, and so sure that a shabby young man on foot could not be important that he did not wait for Eben to introduce himself. "Do you belong in this valley?"

While Eben was saying he did not, the curtains of the litter parted to allow an ear and an eye to poke out.

"Then I do not suppose you know whether there is still gold in the ~~the~~ sands?" Ehi said.

Not
"I ~~do not believe~~ there is a grain," Eben said and laughed. "Once I came with friends and searched."

"You do know that once there was gold?"
But when
"Long ago ~~men~~ took it out and smiths worked it into jewelry, which is why Charashim is called the Valley of the Smiths."

"You ~~are~~ sure all the gold is gone?"

We
"My ~~friends and~~ I searched with an old gold hunter, He ~~told us where and how~~, but we found nothing."

"I was told the same thing yesterday," Ehi said. "But I did not want to pass without inquiring." *if doesn't hurt to ask twice.*

- 3 -

The curtains of the litter parted wider and the eye ^{a girl of} ~~eighteen years or so~~ looked out, ~~Dimly Eben was aware that~~ and ear grew into the face of a girl of eighteen or so. Eben's mind was full of Abigail but dimly he knew he had seen the face before.

"Need we

"Do we need to stop so long, my husband?" ~~she asked.~~

^{Abigail before} "Now we will not reach Beroth until dark."

"We'll

"We will be all right," Ehi said, and his tone added that anyone able to hire twenty mercenaries did not need to hurry, or worry either.

^{He spoke with all expansiveness} "My wife, Dinah," he said, in a confidential boast, ^{complacence of a man who has got a wife half his age.} and the name confirmed to Eben why her face was familiar. ^{Now Eben knew why the pretty face was familiar,} Out here! In this abandoned valley! The girl he would have married if his parents had lived! So this was what had happened to her! [¶] Dinah laughed self-consciously.

"And he is Eben, ^{ben} the son of Eleazer of Bethel," ^{she} Dinah said, ~~said, laughing self-consciously.~~

"Eben?" Ehi repeated. The name meant something to ^{Ehi} him, as his wife's face had to Eben, but he was less interested in "who" than "how."

"How do you know that?" he asked.

"He is of Bethel, ^{too,} just as I am," Dinah said. "Oh, you know!" She shook her head in exasperation.

^{"You mean}

"Not the one who was too poor to complete the betrothal contract?" Ehi looked at Eben's worn sandals and dusty robe and nodded. "I see," he said.

— 4 —

and added, "I see," ^{Dinah said,}

"And you, Eben," ^{Are you married?"} Dinah asked.

Eben said he was, but he checked an exultant, "Just yesterday." He did not wish to share his joy with this couple.

^{"Who is she?"}
~~"Whom did you marry?"~~ she asked. Not, her glance to Ehi added, such a girl as he had ^{found.} ~~found.~~ ^{"She is of}

~~"I took a wife in Jamnia,"~~ Eben said. He would not say that he had married the daughter of Amos, the scholar, ^{seem} A shepherd without sheep of his own would ^{boast} too much if he said ~~his wife was Amos's daughter.~~ ^{that.}

"We thought of living in Jamnia," Ehi said, "when the Romans began to harry our land. But then we heard it was being taken over by a school for priests. We have decided to go to the sea coast, where there will not be so much crowding."

"We are going to live in Ashkelon," Dinah said.

"Living in Ashkelon is almost like living in Alexandria, people say. We are going to build a big house, are we not, my husband?"

"A suitable house," ~~she said.~~

~~_____~~

~~_____~~

~~_____~~

~~_____~~

"Now let us push along," Ehi said, and Dinah said, graciously, "Goodby, Eben."

- 5 -

"Eben?" Ehi ^{repeated} exclaimed, ^{as though suddenly it} and now the name meant more than he could readily credit. "They talk of an Eben who fought at Jerusalem. You couldn't be that one!"

"Who did not fight at Jerusalem?"

"Business kept me away,"

"I was not able to," Ehi said.

Poor old spindle-shanks, Eben thought. He wouldn't have lasted long there. ^{↑ Dinah's eyes widened.}

"Are you really that Eben?" [↑] Dinah asked, her eyes widening. "The one who fought beside Jared, the monk? That Eben?"

Ehi marked his wife's admiration but he managed a look of indifference.

"Well, now that ^{fighting is over for all of us,} it is all over," he said, "I hope we ^{and let's hope we all can} can all get back to where we were." ^{get back to business as usual.}

Dinah would have lingered, but Ehi nodded coolly in farewell to Eben who had stepped a little farther off the road, and Ehi trotted his horse and the litter followed and the mercenaries followed the litter.

Well into ^{the} Charashim valley, where the ~~dry~~ brook-bed widened, ^{hopped} and came close to the road, Ehi got off his horse. He knelt and ^{picked up a handful} seemed to be picking up sand, looking, and picking ^{another} up more. The litter and the mercenaries passed him. He picked up a dozen handful before, throwing the last one away, he mounted and hurried in pursuit of his party.

x x x x x x x x x

- 6 -

x ^ ^ o-o-o x ^ ^ ^

Shortly
 Toward evening, Eben came to a dip in the trail and saw a ^{short, stocky} man, hiding but not really hidden, in the brush alongside. Eben slowed and the man looked out beseechingly and Eben recognized ^{Simon's follower,} the short, stocky follower of Simon who had waved a Temple candlestick on the Tower of Miriamme, ^{the Mouse,} ^(that piece of the Temple's great golden vine) He still had his treasure, Else what was in the bundle beside him, wrapped in a ^{sack} dirty cloth? He gave a timid greeting and Eben, never one to reject a friendly overture, nodded. ^{called out.}

"What has brought you this way?" he asked. "And what are you doing here all by yourself?"

"With every man ready to steal that," the ^{Mouse} man said, nodding toward his bundle, "can I travel with ⁱⁿ a company?"

"Where are you going? What is your name?"

The trouble on the man's face deepened.

"As for my name, everyone calls me Candlestick.

"Where I am going, is nowhere. How can I go anywhere--with that?" He nodded toward the bundle again.

"So you still have the Temple ornament?"

"I thought it would mean everything I had wanted all my life," ^{the Mouse} Candlestick said. "A house, land, a family, but instead it drags me down. It is too heavy to carry, too much wealth to show." His look deepened to utter misery and his

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^{poured out in}
 confession became a freshet of words, ~~such as pours out when~~
~~a man's heart is too full.~~

"I never should have taken it. I never should have
^{joined}
~~gone into~~ Simon's band. Would you believe this? Before the
 Romans came, I was of a mind to become a priest at the Temple.
 I was unblemished, so why not? I joined with Simon because
 I wanted to pay the Romans back for what they had done in
 Galilee."

"And save the Temple?" Eben asked.

~~The Mass~~
 Candlestick nodded.

"The first time Simon set us to pillaging, I could
 not believe my ears. But after you once have robbed, with a
 hundred other robbers, you go on robbing without thinking much
 about it. And when ^{he took us to pillage} we came to the robbery of the Temple, I
^{hacked this piece of golden vine off the}
~~had a good reason. By then I was afraid.~~
^{Holy of Holies for by then, I was afraid.}
 Shocked by so free a confession of such a crime,

^{omit}
 Eben did not speak.

Candlestick explained. "I was afraid of what Simon
^{some day}
 was leading us into. I thought that with a gold candlestick
 I could go where nobody knew me, and cut it up, bit by bit,
 and take a wife and live on the bits all the rest of my life."

Cut up, bit by bit, what had been one of the Temple's
 glories? Eben's back crawled.

"After Simon left us on Miriamme ⁷ to go into his tunnel,

I hid until night. Then, when the Romans were all asleep, I stole across Hinnom Valley, taking the ^{golden vine} candlestick, of course."

"You did not get very far," Eben said. "You have had a night and a day and here you are, only at the edge of Jamnia."

"^{Gold} The candlestick is heavy and every so often I had to hide. You cannot let strangers see you carrying a thing like this."

"You let me see you."

"I recognized you. Besides, I cannot hide any more."

"You do need help," Eben said.

"How does a man go about cutting up such a great, holy thing?" Candlestick asked.

Eben ^{could not answer, he} had been horrified at the suggestion of cutting up the treasure. The proposal that he advise on how to do it, took his breath away.

"Look!" ^{The Moss} Candlestick snatched off the cloth and the ^{fragment of golden vine} great ornament gleamed. "I polish it every day," he said, proudly. Then his head drooped. "But I am still afraid. It is not merely thieves and Romans that I am afraid of. Friends of the Temple may discover what I am carrying and when they see, they may misunderstand. They may think I am as bad as Simon. And that is not all."

No, that is not all.

9

"There is still another fear that rides me every moment," Candlestick said. ^{The mouse broke off and his head drooped,}

"I think I know," Eben said, ^{There was still the} pityingly. ^{dead justice of the Lord,} It did not take a very wise man to understand that one who had once hoped to be a Temple priest could not steal an ornament from God's own Temple and not fear God's justice.

"What shall I do?" ^{The mouse} Candlestick rewrapped his treasure and hugged it. "I am not just poor. I have nothing at all. Take this from me and I have not a penny to buy bread. Would ^{the Lord} God deny a man bread?"

Eben had the answer to that. Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink. It was in the sayings of Jesus. But before he had a chance to answer, ^{the mouse} Candlestick spoke again.

"I know you follow this new Messiah, the one who is said to have risen from the dead, but I ask about the God of Israel. Would he deny me bread? Would one Temple ornament mean that much to him?" ^{At all at once Eben had the solution.}

"Come with me," Eben said and ^{he} laughed and held out his hand.

^{The mouse's face glowed,} Candlestick's suddenly glowing face was an admission that he had hoped for Eben's help.

"Where are we going?"

"To the home of Amos. You know Amos?" ^{the scholar?}

10
 "Who has joined Johanen at Jamnia? I have heard of him."

a holy man,
 "He is ~~one of our holiest men,~~" Eben said. ~~"Not the kind of Scribe who is full of evasions, not one of those Pharisees who feel themselves above other men, not a Sadducee ready to mock everything. He will have the explanations you want."~~

The Mouse
 Candlestick's glow faded.

"Amos will never bother with a man like me," he said. "You do not know how many have looked down on me. I will just take my--thing--and go."

"Why, Amos is my father-in-law," Eben said. "I can bring a friend to him any time I like. Come along," he urged cheerfully.

the Mouse
 "I will bury this first," Candlestick said. "How can I go before *one like* Amos with this Temple treasure I have stolen?"

"Bring it!" Eben urged. "Bring it! Is it too heavy? Here, give it to me. I will carry it the rest of the way to Jamnia."

the Mouse
 "I will carry it," Candlestick said. He hoisted the bundle to his shoulder. It no longer seemed heavy at all. He took big strides and only now and then needed to shift the wrapped gold from one shoulder to the other. He trotted along like a contented dog.

But, Eben reminded himself, this man had been running and hiding for more than a day and a night; and probably he was hungry.

"Let us rest off the road where we won't be seen,"
^{he} Eben said. "I have a little bread and cheese."

^{The Mouse} Candlestick nodded happily and they found some bushes ^{and}
 Eben looked thoughtfully at his companion.

^{Mouse} "Candlestick," he said, "what is your real name?"

^{Mouse} "Candlestick. Everybody calls me ^{the Mouse} Candlestick."

"Well, I am not going to call you ^{the Mouse} Candlestick any longer. I cannot bring you to Amos as ^{the Mouse} Candlestick."

^{the Mouse} "That's right," Candlestick said. He sat in sober thought.

"My true name is Reuben," ~~he said at last.~~

"Good!" Eben said and dipped into his girdle and divided what Abigail had given him. "Eat with appetite, Reuben."

Eben's journey
D's cut version

Palestine was full of hill towns, all the way from Galilee down through Samaria and deep, deep into Judea. Bethel was a hill town -- Beth-el, house of God. It stood almost three thousand feet above the Great Sea. In Eben's day it was small but legend wreathed in a garland of great events. Abraham had pitched his tent there and there had built an altar. There Jacob had ^{was espied} wrestled with, and worsted, an angel and had spoken with the Lord. After the Tribes came out of Egypt it had been a resting place for the Ark. Once it had had its own king. Before Great David established Jerusalem as the place of worship its altar, Abraham's, of course, had been famous.

And when Eben returned it still boasted the palm tree under which ~~the judge~~ Deborah had anciently sat in judgement.

At least several pounds lighter, he had hurried so, than when he had left his drowsy bride, Eben looked around and was proud to be a man of Bethel although the town did seem, since Jerusalem, oddly smaller and, if it had been any town save Bethel, insignificant. ~~Though~~ But of course the Holy Spirit would not have led Elias to hide his Writing in an insignificant place.

Eben drew out Elias's map. The palm tree is marked by a leaf. A line was drawn south from what had to be the leaf through the town and ended where Elias had scrawled cave. Eben knew Bethel as a man knows--remembering last night he gave a big, happy laugh--his own wife. Near Elias's scrawl were two caves. Eben had nighted flocks in both.

The first, shallow, widemouthed and with no nooks or crannies, gave up -- nothing. Warily, because it was near the Damascus Road and exposed to ~~the eye of~~ every traveller, he went to the other. It had a pinched entrance and a gloomy, narrow tunnel twisting far back. He followed the tunnel and came to such a shelf as the one on which he and Jared had layed Elias and his fingers

One Simon of Giora.

A fat shouldered, cross-grained man whose beard seemed so much weathered, greasy stubbl. He was always surrounded by a small, silent group of guards.

to pick them up. But who was going to tell robbers that a copper cylinder so carefully capped did not hold something of ^{value} great worth?

He unravelled ~~his~~ enough of his robe to make a cord and tied the cord ~~around~~ the cylinder and made a loop for his neck so that the slim barrel hung down his back beneath ^{the cloak.} robe and tunic. Now, ^{it was} except for a rapacious search, ^{and to make} it was safe and before they made such a search ^{robbers must first} plunderers had to catch him.

He grew hot to start back to Abigail, but the busy day, time road would be dangerous. Besides, if he was to keep fresh and alert in the hours ahead he must sleep. He ate a little of the food Abigail had given him and stretched out in the ~~safe~~ dimness of the tunnel, then sat up in bewilderment when the soft fingers of his wife who had come ^{into his} dream became rough on his wrists and ankles.

Two legionnaires were half carrying, half dragging him from where he had layed down to the cave entrance. There they dropped him.

"You ^{can} see this treasure?" one said.

"There wasn't any treasure anywhere in there," the other said.

"You can't hope to find Jerusalem in every blasted little hole," the first said.

Flat on his back, ^{Too} to entangled among military boots to bolt, Eben blinked and tried for ^a servile manner that in no way matched his mood. The Writing had been in his hand little more than minutes and already he was captured! To be sure it was hidden. But Romans searched from top to toe and took everything.

O, Holy Spirit, help me.

~~The two who had found him made up half of his captors, all mounted and all looking him over with the humorless, almost inhuman curiosity with which Romans usually looked at non-Romans. One, ~~stankinx~~~~

5 A

The two who had seized him made up half of his captors. They ^{went to} climbed back on horses ^{had been holding for them and} that the other pair ^{had held and} three of the four looked down at their prisoner with humorless, almost unhuman speculation. It was the look ~~that~~ legionnaires usually gave to any non-Roman prisoner. It said that he was a puzzling animal, clearly so inferior that he did not deserve ~~to be treated as a Roman,~~ ^{to be treated as a Roman,} yet so nearly human that he could hardly be dealt with out of hand as they would have dealt with a dog, ~~or a horse.~~ The fourth, the leader of the patrol, seemed to be tincturing his speculation with an amount of, almost, kindness. ^{Nevertheless he had a slanted spear at an angle which would enable him to run Eben through if he tried to escape}

"What are you doing here?" he said.

The question indicated that, at least, Eben had not been recognized as a Compound ^{runaway} escapee and, recalling advice he had had from Jared, he rubbed his eyes and gaped sillily, ^{foolishly.}

Make them think you're harmless, even stupid. Sometimes they let the stupid ones go after a little teasing.

"Stick him, Corbulo," one of the others said. "A Roman does all Romans a favor when he sticks a Jew."

Corbulo, ^{however,} looked along his slanted spear and waited ^{amicably} ~~patiently~~ for Eben's answer.

"I ^{am} on an errand for Johanan Ben Zakki of Jamnia's holy school," Eben ^{spoke} ~~said~~ slowly, ^{as though to} remembering that much overtaxed his mind.

"What, ^{is the} errand?"

"I came for this," Eben pulled the cylinder into sight, trying to be just a simple fellow ^(period) who would trust a Roman ^{for that} he knew concealment ~~would have been pointless~~ ^{pointless} Romans always searched thoroughly. "It's a scroll," he said.

"A scroll?" The Roman who had wanted Eben stuck cried out in doubt.

- 6 -

Corbulo ^{put aside his spear,} reached for the cylinder, twisted ^{off} a cap ~~off~~ and drew out ^a parchment ~~roll~~.

"Jerusalem is full of this junk," he said. "I saw the same sort all over Jerusalem. ^{the city. It's worth nothing} It isn't worth a penny except, maybe, to a teacher like this Johanen; and he has the favor of Titus."

Eben offered silent thanks to Titus for his favor and to Corbulo for honoring it.

"Nothing hidden inside?" ~~said one of the three.~~

Corbulo looked and shook his head.

"A ~~Jewel~~ might be stuck on the bottom with pitch."

Corbulo tilted the cylinder to catch the light and shook his head again and restored the ^{parchment} scroll and twisted the cap back on,

the unconscious act of a disciplined soldier ^{making everything} ~~making things neat, and~~ ~~crossed the container back down to Eben.~~

insert 6

~~"Then finish Empty head and let's get cracking," said the one who had wanted Eben stuck. "They'll be catching up with us."~~

omit

"Why finish him?" Corbulo said. "This Johanen has had the hand of Titus; so, you might say, his messenger has it. And he looks harmless."

"What Jew is harmless? Lop off a hand, at least. Leave him both and some day he'll be lopping off yours." ^{End here.}

End here

Eben set his teeth. You didn't run away from four horsemen. Moreover, the sound of hooves said more were approaching. Let them lop off a hand. When they rode on he would build a fire and sear the stump and still get the Writing back to Jamnia. ^{delivered}

omit

omit

When the bloodthirsty Roman drew his sword Corbulo put his horse before Eben.

"You can't ride all around Judea killing Jews! The fighting is over except, they say, for a hit at Masada. If you're so hot to

kill Jews volunteer for Masada."

Eben got the cylinder into hiding faster, he feared, than a stupid peasant would have.

"^{Who is} ~~Why should anyone~~ ^{now} ~~be~~ ^{now} so hot, to kill a Jew?"

A woman's voice had asked the question and Eben, still sitting, knew the voice although he could not see its owner.

"Now we've busted the pot," the blood thirsty legionnaire hissed. "We've wasted so much time they've caught up and we haven't done what we were told to."

Eben scrambled to his feet. The favor of the Princess Berenice might be valuable. She should not catch him impolitely slouching on the ground.

She rode up, an exquisite ^{miniature.} ~~pizzurax~~ Her heavy purple silk cape nearly hid soft boots that came half way up to her knees, and the gold Persian-style trousers tucked into the boots, and a loose, opennecked white linen blouse. But she had been careful not to hide the little ~~crystak~~ smelling bottle hanging from a silver chain between her rounded, firm, rouged breasts. That was a hollowed half mooncriss-crossed with silver threads. It hung where its contents were warmed and made volatile and even as far off as he was politely careful to place himself Eben caught the drifting scent.

Trailing Berenice, in case she desired to rest from the saddle, were eight bearers with a litter. Behind, in a column of twos, a hundred soldiers rode. Their commander rode just behind the Princess.

"Well, Well!" she said and gave her clear little always somehow bawdy laugh and Eben knew she had recognized him. She looked at Corbulo.

"Why should anyone want to kill a harmless shepherd?"

State Court pay L 468
with nothing but the bill
I had had a number
checked.

9A

Shepherd! Eben did not understand why he was being protected but gratitude swept him.

"One of us was just baiting this muttonhead," Corbulo said, protecting a comrade ~~was~~ ^{he} might need in the next melee.

"You were sent ahead," the Commander said, "to find a good place for the troop to take a breather, not to bait Jews."

"This seemed about right. But then we saw the cave and two went inside."

Corbulo let it go at that, If he added that the two had gone in looking for liars in wait instead of plunder ~~and~~ he might be snagged in a lie. But if the Commander assumed his patrol leader had looked after the safety of the troop, let him. A good mark never hurt, even when it hadn't been earned.

"Really, I'd just as soon keep on to Shiloh," Berenice said.

begin here
9A

begin here.

The Commander waved the four ahead. His sour look told them that if they were ambushed they would have only themselves to blame. If they hadn't dredged up this worthless shepherd to catch the Princess's eye the whole troop probably would be settling down to its proper rest. He spurred back to tighten up the grumbling column.

2nd edit
9A

Berenice reined close to Eben. ^a

(insert 9A)

"You leaped off Miriamne," she said, ^{her voice} ~~her smile~~ was teasing. ~~but~~ ^{her face} sober.

end here

Eben blushed, more at the memory of nakedness than at the double entendre which her sobriety ^{modestly} ~~modestly~~ disclaimed.

"And you pulled Simon's beard and you and a big black Salt Sea Brother escaped from the Compound. But how do you now get way up here?"

She smiled and, as on their previous meeting, the smile was personal and inviting.

~~truth~~
truth

Able to think of nothing better than the ~~truth~~ truth, Eben told of his mission and the Writing.

Berenice leaned from her saddle. The litterbearers were only a short distance away but she made herself and Eben seem, somehow, alone. The drifting scent grew stronger.

"Do you need to race back to Jamnia?"

"I am promised to be there as soon as I can."

"I'll spend the night at Shiloh. Come along. You need a rest before the long return to Jamnia."

Eben had successfully pretended stupidity with the patrol, and his innocence, at least up to a point, was obvious. But he could not pretend enough of either stupidity or innocence to convince Berenice that he did not see what she had in mind. ^{begin here} He squared his shoulders. There was nothing for it but to tell of his marriage, even though he risked more than one lopped hand.

"Princess," he said, "I am twice pledged to hurry back to Jamnia. First to show the Writing to scholars. Second to rejoin my bride. I left her after my wedding night to come here."

Berenice's delicate face grew blank, ^{she looked away,} and then her bright, bawdy laugh rippled.

"In my day I have had ^{much} good wine, ~~all I wanted,~~" she said. ~~looking away,~~ "So should I cry over being denied one ~~more~~ glass of a new vintage?" Her laugh ~~rippled~~ rippled again. "Go to Jamnia. Take your Writing. Frolic ^{and} with your bride. And may the God of our people guard you ~~every step of the way.~~"

The way seldom ran up hill and Eben, with the Writing safe between his shoulder blades and Abigail in his heart, walked briskly along a byroad toward a wide valley where a brook twisted. This was the Valley of The Smiths. No one remained in the valley to explain

the name; all had been driven off by Romans or bandits; but Eben did not need an explanation. He had often heard the true one and remembered.

Someone else remembered. Turning aside from his inconspicuous path, made safe by much cover, Eben had to cross the ~~the~~ busy ^{when about to} Damascus Road and/re~~cross~~~~ing~~ was blocked by a big party of travellers. He gave them the right of way, but the leader signalled "Halt!" to the bearers of a closed litter and to a score of mercenary guards bringing up the rear.

"I am Ehi ben Rosh of Meggido, but just now out of Bethel," he said. He was spindleshanked and about fifteen years older than Eben. And he was so sure that a shabby young foot traveller could not be important that he did not wait for Eben to introduce himself. "Do you know this valley?"

While Eben was saying he did not, the litter's curtains parted for an ear and an eye.

"Then I suppose you don't know whether there is still gold in this brook, and around it?"

"Not a grain," Eben said and laughed. "Once I came with friends and searched."

"You do know that once there was gold?"

"But men took it out long ago, and smiths made it into jewelry; which is why Charashim is ~~called~~ ^{said} the Valley of The Smiths."

"You're sure all the gold is out?"

"My friends and I searched ^{where} ~~with~~ an old gold hunter told us to but we found nothing."

"I was told the same thing yesterday, but it doesn't hurt to ask twice."

The litter's curtains parted wider and a girl of ~~eighteen~~ ^{or so} looked out. Eben's mind was full of Abigail but had clearance enough to tell himself he had seen this face before.

"~~Had~~ we stop so long, my husband," the girl said. "Now we ^{need}"

Aijalon
may not reach ~~Barak~~ before dark."

"We'll be all right," Ehi said and his tone added that when you could afford twenty mercenaries you didn't need to hurry, or worry either.

"My wife, Dinah," he said, ^{he spoke} to Eben with the expansive unthinking complacence of a ~~shortsighted~~ man who has got a wife ^{one} nearly half his own age.

~~And~~ Now Eben knew why the ~~Thazazax~~ pretty face was familiar.

"And he is Eben ben Eleazer," Dinah said and laughed self consciously.

"Eben?" Ehi said. The name meant something to him as his wife's face meant something to Eben.

"How do you know?" he said.

"He is of Bethel, too. Oh!" Dinah added impatiently, "You know?"

"You mean the one who was too poor to complete the betrothal contract?"

Ehi looked at Eben's dusty sandals and worn robe, ~~and nodded.~~

"And you, Eben! Are you married?" Dinah said.

The question was unmistakably condescending. It seemed to take for granted that a young man too poor to complete one betrothal contract must have taken on his second try a ^{so} bride herself ~~xxx~~ poor that she would have accepted the poorest contract.

Eben said he was but checked an exultant "Just yesterday!" He did not care to share his joy with these two.

"Who was she?" Dinah said, and her glance toward her husband added, not such a wife as you've found.

"She is of Jamnia," Eben said. He would not say that he had

married the daughter of the scholar, Amos. A sheepless shepherd would seem boastful who said his wife was Amos's daughter.

"We thought of living in Jamnia because the Romans have harried so many other places," Ehi said. "But it's so ^{packed} jammed because of its school, that we've decided on the sea coast farther south where we'll be less crowded."

"We are going to live in Askelon," Dinah said. "Living in Askelon will be almost as civilized as living in Alexandria, people say. We are going to build a big house, Eben."

"Eben!" Ehi said, as though, suddenly, the name meant more. "There was an Eben who fought at Jerusalem. You couldn't be that one?"

"Who didn't fight at Jerusalem?"

"Business kept me away," Ehi said.

"I've often wondered if that Eben was the one I knew," Dinah said. "The one who fought with Jared, the monk?" Her eyes widened.

"Well, now that fighting is over for all of us," Ehi said. "And let's hope we all can get back to business as usual."

He almost neglected to nod farewell, the details of marshalling his party and the litterbearers and the supply animals were so much on his mind. But they all were finally lined up and en route, but so slowly that for some distance Eben, ~~xxxxxx~~ back on his by-road, kept them in sight.

Well into the valley, where the brook widened, Ehi ~~got~~ hopped off his horse and knelt and picked up a handful of sand, and another. The litter and mercenaries passed on. Ehi picked up a dozen ~~or so~~ handfuls before, throwing the last one away, he mounted and hurried after his party.

Finally out of sight, Ehi's party left the broad Damascus road ~~briefly~~ empty. On his n_earby, little, inconspicuous trail Eben came on a man hiding in underbrush and for a wary moment slowed. But then he stepped out again b_ecause so clumsy a skulker could not be a dangerous liar in wait.

And this one wasn't. He stammered in recognition of the approaching traveller and stumbled into the clear. Simon's Toady! *Morse*. And lugging a thing wrapped in dirty sackcloth as though it wasn't worth better covering.

"Well what brings you here?" Eben said. "And all alone?"

"Dare I travel in company when every man might try to steal that?" the Toady said and nodded toward his bundle.

"You're still hanging onto that?" Eben said and his mouth twisted at such sacrilege.

To have broken the piece of vine off the door of the Holy of Holies was the ~~greatest of sins~~. But to keep it and so continue a defiance of the Lord was even greater.

"I thought it would mean evetything I have wanted all my life," the Toady said.

Eben's headshake said he did not understand. Who would defy the Lord, even if "everything" m_eant wealth, power and --his heart lifted--such a bride as ^{he} had?

"I n_ever should have taken it," the Toady said. "I never should have joined Simon's band. Would you believe that once I was almost a p_riest of the Temple? I could have been. I was fit, unbl_emished."

The Toady straightened, challenging Eben to discover a bl_emish.

"I joined Simon b_ecause I thought that while fighting the Romans I'd have ~~every~~ ^{the} right to end my poverty. But the first time Simon had us pillage, I couldn't sleep."

Ebi's
~~Wood's~~ party had ridden out of sight and the

The Damas cus Road was empty again when Eben, on his nearby
littler trail, came to heavy brush in which a crouching man did not
try to keep hidden when he recognized.

Crouching in heavy brush who did not
keep hidden ~~at~~ once he recognized the
the approaching travellers

He stood for a little, ~~as though~~ thinking back to sleepless nights and then shrugged.

"If you do a thing often enough, no matter what, after a while it doesn't bother your sleep at all. And when Simon took us to pillage the Temple he said that whoever didn't help would be given over to the Romans."

And wasn't even Roman captivity, Eben thought, better than the unbearable weight of the knowledge that you've plundered the Lord's own house?

"I hacked a piece of the vine off the Holy of Holies to help me get clear of Simon," the Toady said, ~~mournfully~~. "And keep me alive from then on. I didn't take such a much. Just enough to let me nick off a little bit whenever I had to."

A little bit, and another and another, from so great a glory! Eben's back crawled.

"After Simon deserted me on Marianne I know Romans would rob me, first chance. Or even these Simon deserted with me. That same night I got into Hinnom Valley. But the next morning I was sure everyone who had seen me with this would be telling everyone else. So ever since I've kept out of sight."

Eben ~~pictured~~ the Toady skulking clumsily from tree to rock to ravine to bush and now and then scuttling over the Damascus Road or some other almost as wide and pitied him.

"Look!"

The Toady snatched off the sackcloth and the fragment of golden vine shone.

I make it more beautiful every day. But still I am afraid. Someone will take it from me. And even that is not the worst."

"No, even that is not the worst," Eben said.

There was still the dread justice of the Lord.

"What can I do?" the Toady said and rewrapped his treasure and hugged it.

~~Eben had an answer. Take no thought for what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, the Anointed had said.~~

Eben had an answer. Take no thought, the Anointed had said, for your life, for what ye shall drink ...nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.

But before he could say this, the Toady spoke again.

"Does the God of Israel deny me bread? Would this small piece of the Temple mean that much to the Lord?"

Eben, all of a sudden, had the solution.

"Come with me," he said.

"Where?"

"To Amos. You know of Amos?"

"I passed him once. He greeted me. But of course I couldn't bother the likes of him by answering."

"You'd not have bothered Amos. And you'll not now."

"You don't know how many have turned their backs on me. I'll not trouble Amos. I'll just take this and go."

"Amos is my wife's father. I can bring a friend to my wife's father. Come along."

"I'll bury this first. How can I go before one like Amos with a thing like this?"

"Bring it! Bring it! Amos will want to see it if he is to advise you about it. Is it too heavy? Here, I'll carry it."

"I will carry it," the Toady said. He started off with big strides, only now and then shifting the weight. He hardly seemed burdened at all.

But, Eben reminded himself, the man must be hungry with all his running and hiding and worrying.

"Here are bushes to cover us from Romans or other robbers." he said.
Anxix "And I have bread, cheese and a few figs."

The Toady turned aside instantly and, Eben thought, a man who did that must be not just hungry but empty.

"What is your name?" he said as they ate. "What they called you in Jerusalem was no name. But you must have a real one."

"Oh, I have," the Toady said, then hesitated. "But it is one a man like me has no right to. Simon's crew never stopped laughing after they heard it."

"I'll not laugh. Let me hear it."

Eben spoke to lift the Toady's spirits. His own had soared as he journeyed toward Jamina and Abigail, and he wanted his companion's to soar also.

"It is Joshua," the Toady said.

"You are named for a great man of valor!"

Indeed the Toady's spirits should soar. He had, of course, no Abigail to lift them. But so close a tie with great Joshua ought to be enough.

"I am anything but a man of valor."

"You could be."

Toady Joshua sat in spiritless silence, his face drooping with the misery of lifelong cowardice.

"Put your mind to it. You have eaten with appetite. Tell yourself you are full of great Joshua's courage."

The new Joshua managed a half smile.

"Now we march again. The sooner you talk with Amos the sooner you'll know how to be a Joshua."

* * * * *

12

Jared's return to the
community
a note to Tamar about the
prayer.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

The dead Numidian's horse had been ^{fed and watered} rested and it set off briskly after descending Netophah's hill. Too briskly, Jared decided; he had best go slowly enough to keep an eye out and he pulled ⁱⁿ his mount ^{and there was a watch of the} into an amble, so that the prodigious, interlocked, distorted shadow of himself and the horse ^{drifting} barely drifted ahead of reality across the desert.

Jared thought of the next day, when Cotta's shadow would fall eastward and a little to the north and become a little longer than its owner, and Cotta might seize him and still keep his pledge.

I have much to do before then.

Behind him, the sun was setting; the sands were blindingly golden. ^{At the Community, the Brothers would be} ^{preparing themselves, with prayer and lustral baths and clean garments, for} prostrate in prayer. Jared shrank from thinking of them. He had known in Jamnia what he must do. He had had the strength to relinquish Tamar. But until now he had not ^{truly} tasted the humiliation of returning to the Brotherhood.

the ceremonial supper.

He remembered the fearful curses with which he had been cast out and he could not conquer ^{resentment.} anger. This was not a proper mood for meeting the Priest of Aaron to ask--plead, if need be, or beg--permission to hide the Scrolls from the Romans. He felt a furious determination to hide them, regardless of how the aged Leader reacted to his request; some of the men would follow him. But he knew that he must not and would not incite a rebellion.

The difficulties of obtaining permission were enormous. He had broken his vow. He had been barred from the Brotherhood, and no expelled and cursed member had ever returned, within Jared's knowledge. No longer a Son of Light, he would not be allowed a lustral bath, or even to wash his hands in the purifying water, as a Brother ^{should} must do before he touched the sacred documents stored in the Library. According to the Book of Rules, Jared would be unfit, not only to handle the Scrolls, but even to speak to or direct the Brothers.

Humbleness, contrition were what he needed! And he did in his heart feel unworthy. The burden of guilt was still on his back. If it were not for his sin, he would be in the Library now, the Keeper of the Scrolls, with the natural duty of keeping them safe. Now a new Keeper might already have been appointed, but perhaps not ^{because of} the Priest of Aaron ^{is} made a habit of procrastination. In any case, Jared felt complete

- 14 -

conviction that he was the one for the present task. No one else had his intimate knowledge of the Scrolls. No one else ~~had a plan ready for hiding them;~~ ^{he had formulated it in every detail on the way to Beth-basi.} No one among the innocent Brothers could cope with the Romans, as could he who had fought them.

He caught the briny smell of the Dead Sea and knew he was nearing the Community and dismounted and turned his horse loose. ^{the beast was not found by some desert traveler,} If ~~it was found,~~ ^{the scent of sweet water in the reservoirs would draw it to} he would not be suspected; a Numidian rider would be sought. If it was not found, the beast would end up at the Community, ~~drawn by the scent of water there.~~

^{was better off} He himself would be safer henceforward on foot. The hunt for the Compound runaways might well have included a patrol ordered here, on the chance that he would return. On horseback, he would be sighted; afoot, in the gathering twilight, he could melt into the Community unseen, and thereafter be no more conspicuous than any Brother. He must, of course, rid himself of his weapons ^{and armor and he threw them,} and the Numidian's cuirass and shield, and he threw them into a gully, ^{and tossed sand over them.}

He saw ahead the familiar, low, stone buildings, the Assembly Hall, and the beloved Library, rising above the others, and he went forward slowly, bracing himself to meet whatever must be met. Approaching the Water Tower, his steps quickened, for he saw the fragile figure of the Chaste One, meditating ^{walking slowly from his} against his chosen rock. ^{found his rock toward his} own quarters -- ^{no doubt to prepare for the} evening meal. Jared began to run and the old man turned at the sound of swift feet.

15 A

The old man looked up at the sound of swift sandals, ^{behind} ~~the~~ ^{hurry,} Brothers were expected to walk sedately.

"Jared!" His clear, high voice overflowed with love. "Jared! You have come back. I knew you would. Ours is not a full Brotherhood without you."

He did not ^{seem} appear to recall the expulsion, but Jared felt sure he had not forgotten it, however much the shadows of age might have dimmed his memory. He looked with love and reverence into the sweet old face, filled with its tiny brown cracks.

"Yes, I have returned," he said. On an impulse, he added, "And I need your aid."

"My aid? How can you need my aid? But you shall have it, of course."

"I must be permitted before the Priest of Aaron," Jared said. "I doubt that he will allow me to approach him except after intercession and no ordinary intercessor will suffice. But if you ask, he will not be able to refuse." Jared paused, trying to decide how much of his errand to reveal. Time was of great concern. "I must see him at once," he went on. "The Romans are coming, and the Scrolls must be hidden."

"And you are the one to do that, Jared," the Chaste One said. After a moment's thought, he ^{spoke emphatically,} added, "No matter what

omit

16

has happened." And he nodded slowly, as the old are likely to nod when remembering profound sorrow.

"Tell him I beg in all humility to be allowed to do this."

"I will tell him."

They walked ^{on} together toward the main courtyard, and the Chaste One turned to Jared with a confidential smile.

"I am still working out the commentary on the psalm, 'With nothing but the will of God shall a man be concerned.' I am almost finished and I desire your opinion."

The last thing you need is the opinion of such as I, Jared thought bitterly, but to confess that would distress his old mentor so he said only: "I shall be honored to hear what you have written."

"Written?" The small cry was a transparent attempt at a modest denial that any commentary of his could be worthy of a costly scroll. "Why, I have written nothing! But every line is clearly in my mind where I have written and rewritten them a hundred times."

"When it is finished, the Brotherhood's best copyist must take it down," Jared said gravely. "Meanwhile, at the first opportunity, you must recite to me all that is ready."

→ They reached the Assembly Hall, and the Chaste One lifted a feathery finger in blessing and set off alone, ^{serenely} happily, for the quarters of the Priest of Aaron.

~~found~~
 Jared ~~sat down, uninvited, upon~~ a bench near the
 entrance to the Hall ~~and sat down.~~

Across the Dead Sea, dusk was enveloping the purple
 Hills of Moab. It purpled the white robes of the Brothers
 who had begun to gather for supper, forming silently into
 their groups of ten. ~~The~~

omit
 All, of course, had bathed and changed into clean
 white tunics, robes and sandals. Dirty though he was, Jared
 thought, bruised, torn, nearly naked, the chief difference
 between them and himself was not in the immaculate whiteness
 of their clothing but in their peaceful hearts, cleansed by
 prayer, as was required before this meal.

→ The growing line soon reached him and, despite the
 dimming light, ~~all~~ ^{most} recognized the tall, gaunt figure ~~on the~~
~~bench.~~ ^{- bruised, torn and nearly naked -}

sitting on the bench. There were startled looks and astonished gasps from
 the younger and less disciplined Brothers. The older ones,
 merely averted their glances, and a few did not see him for
 they stood with closed eyes, their lips still murmuring prayers.

End here
 No one spoke. Even if Jared had still been one of them,
 no one would have spoken; silence was enjoined at this hour. ~~But~~

But formerly there would have been some welcoming smiles or
 other indications of affection. ~~Now every Brother must pretend~~
~~that the nearby bench was empty.~~

Jared remembered their faces after the cursing. They

18

had ~~shown~~ shock, disillusionment, outrage at his betrayal of his office. He dreaded looking at them now, but his pose did not reveal it. He sat solidly, with firmly planted feet, his ~~short~~ black beard upthrust.

The shadows grew deeper. Candles were lighted within the Hall but still the line of Brothers did not pass inside. They awaited the ruling Fifteen--Fourteen, if a new Keeper of the Scrolls had not yet been appointed. That august body had not appeared, and neither had the Chaste One.

He was, Jared reflected, still trying to persuade the Priest of Aaron to see him. Doubtless they were trapped in a discussion to which the rest of the Fifteen--^{or}Fourteen--had been hastily summoned. The old Leader, probably, could not make up his mind. ~~He was unable, these days, to make decisions with his former vigor.~~ Yet, sometimes, at the urging of some force he once had had, he could act swiftly--as when he took charge of the cursing against Jared. If only, Jared thought, he could have such a renewal now!

The silence among the waiting Tens was broken by a ~~stir~~ hesitant shuffle and the Numidian's horse straggled into sight, made a relieved fluttering noise and trotted up and nudged Jared's chest.

"You are later than I expected, friend," Jared said, himself relieved. "But you are here; that is enough."

omit

omit

He stood up, went to the nearest Brother and took the man's sleeve.

"Care for this animal," he said softly. "It will not be counted against you. Give him all the water he will drink, but at first only a swallow or two at a time. Then grain. And tether him in a place protected from the night wind."

The Brother did not try to draw his sleeve free. He did not speak, but he nodded, and led the horse away.

Jared returned to his bench, and felt a little lightening of the weight on his heart. In spite of his disgrace, the old bond with the men still existed. He was still one who could be trusted and obeyed.

At last the Fifteen--now, Jared observed with relief, fourteen only--took their accustomed place at the head of the column. He saw the snowy-bearded Priest of Aaron and started to his feet, but the Chaste One's frail hand waved him back.

begin here → ~~The line moved into the Assembly Hall, and the door~~
→ closed, shutting Jared out. He waited in the lonely dark. Inside, there was silence for a time. The waiters would be bringing in the loaves and the wine; the Priest of Aaron would be blessing them. At last came a chorus of voices--the Brothers giving thanks to the Lord.

20

A subdued clatter of bowls was followed by faint odors which reminded Jared that he had not eaten since the day before. ^{but} He was too tense to feel hunger, ~~but~~ he was very thirsty and went to a well, designated for ordinary purposes, and drank and hurried back to the bench. He wished ^{only to be} to stay ~~near the Assembly Hall door, able to go inside at once,~~ ^{called} when the summons came. ^{stop} It was essential that he be allowed to start his work, ~~tonight.~~

Sounds of clatter again told that the meal was ended. Now, Jared thought, the Priest of Aaron would go to his podium and the rest of the Fourteen to their dais, and the Priest of Aaron probably would communicate the reason for Jared's return. The Brothers then would be allowed to speak, ~~in turn,~~ but after that the ruling group and the Priest of Aaron would decide. Jared listened for a time to the murmur of voices and at last went over and put an ear to the door.

He recognized the Priest of Aaron's still resonant tones. There was no precedent, he was declaring, for dealing with an expelled Keeper of the Scrolls who returned ~~in defiance of the Discipline~~ and demanded to be given charge again of the Community's great treasure.

Jared heard the high clear voice of the Chaste One.

"Our Jared," the Chaste One said, "is not demanding. He begs this permission."

"But who can say it is not a trick?" The Priest of Aaron, Jared was sure, was clutching his long beard. "Jared's resourceful ways are known, and often we have admired them. But now? Consider! An accursed and expelled member of the Community--a black sinner--returns with a warning. If we believe, perhaps that will be what he wishes because, believing, we once more allow him the solace of the Brotherhood."

"He has not asked such solace," the Chaste One pointed out. "He asks only to be allowed to hide the Scrolls."

"But he is no longer Keeper of the Scrolls," the Priest of Aaron said, triumphant because now the argument could go round and round again, and soon bedtime would come, and they could all sleep and be fresh to take up the problem in the morning.

Jared shook his head in fierce perplexity. How cope with this vast skill at procrastination which the Priest of Aaron had developed? He was too adroit to be tricked into a mistake of commission if one of omission could be achieved.

He will not order me stoned into the desert, Jared thought, although that would be the proper course if he does not believe my story. No. He hopes that, if no action is taken, I will go away of my own volition. Well, I will not! And Jared returned to his bench and sat down doggedly and resumed his waiting.

Use this
in paper
writing
class.

21 A

The door opened ~~at last~~ and a line of men marched out, their white robes pale in the darkness. Jared jumped to his feet, but ^{these were only the TENS. The fourteen} ~~the Fourteen~~ had stayed behind--for further discussion, ^{no doubt.} of course. He stared yearningly at the passing Brothers. Now

someone certainly must speak! All must be affected by the news they had heard--that the Scrolls were in peril as, for that matter, they were, themselves. But the Tens moved in their

customary order and at their usual calm pace, and, ~~if there~~ ^{He could not, of course, see their faces. If there was agitation} ~~was agitation among them, it was not apparent.~~ Most of the ^{among them} ~~he had no way of knowing it.~~ The men ~~scattered to their cells and caves,~~ to sleep. A few,

wrapped in thick robes, walked in meditation along the colonnades. ^{and Jared sat down on his bench again see 21 B.}

End here

Jared wished for the robe Heth had given him, which he had abandoned on the desert. The night was cold, and it grew colder, and time rolled on, and from inside the Hall came only sounds of weary protest, delay and importunity.

Someone came noiselessly and dropped a bulky bundle onto his chilly knees.

"Put that on, warm yourself. And you may safely eat the food even though you are no longer one of us. It has not been blessed, it is not sacred food."

Jared recognized the voice. On his previous return to the Community, it had summoned him to a general assembly.

"Thank you, my friend," he said.

21 A

"I hope," the Novice said in a low tone, "that the decision will favor you. If it does, I shall hear your summons at once."

He slipped away.

Jared unrolled the bundle and found a robe and put it on and was left with something wrapped in cloth. He opened the cloth and found food, a piece of lamb and bread, and began to eat, suddenly famished.

Deep night now covered the stone buildings scattered along the shore of the silent sea. Sleep seemed to have claimed the place, although fireflies of candlelight flickered in caves where various ones of the appointed Tenth were reading the sacred writings. Candlelight came too from inside the Hall, along with faint weary voices.

The stars told Jared that midnight had passed. It was the day in which the Romans would come. He needed every hour, every moment for his task, and he realized with despair that they were passing . . .

So suddenly that he did not have time to be surprised, Jared found that he could pray again and he prayed. He did not prostrate himself; he was no longer a Son of Light. But Jehovah still reigned, and any sinner might pray to Jehovah. He did not pray for himself, only for the Scrolls. Braced on his bench, black beard thrusting up toward where he had been

told Omnipotence dwelt, feet planted as though they had taken root, he prayed, he implored to be allowed to direct the hiding of the Scrolls.

After that, he waited with more peace, although time and the voices rolled on.

A running figure passed the Watch Tower and Jared sprang up. It approached the Assembly Hall and when candlelight from within touched the runner's face, Jared cried out: "Alvan!"

It was the Brother who had been sent to Jerusalem with the Master to whom he had assigned the Isaiah copying.

"Jared!" Alvan exclaimed. Plainly, he had not heard of the expulsion, and his voice showed relief at encountering one of the Community who usually seemed to know what do do.

"Where is your companion?" Jared asked.

"The Master copyist was killed by the Romans on the morning after they took the towers. What a terrible day! But the Lord is good, and I escaped to bring the warning." He paused and peered close. "Why are you out of bed so late? But how glad I am that you are! Is it enough that I tell you, or ought I to arouse the leader?"

"He is awake. He is in the Assembly Hall. But what is your news?"

"A whole Cohort sets out from Jerusalem early tomorrow--

all cut out - by daddy in his version, too.

no, it is now today. They plan to destroy the Community, I hear. The Primus Pilus Cotta leads the Cohort and a Pilus Prior named Celsus is second in command. It is the Fourth Cohort of the Tenth Legion."

"Go and tell the Priest of Aaron," Jared said, and they walked together to the door, and Alvan knocked and was admitted.

Jared pushed the door ajar, and listened.

"Even though two tell it, this story is not reasonable," the Priest of Aaron cried when Alvan had finished. "Why should Titus order the destruction of our Community?"

Alvan repeated the rumor that all Jewish groups were to be dispersed.

"Bandit groups, yes." The Priest of Aaron admitted so much. "But through all this war we have never done anyone any harm. We have been here two hundred years without harming anyone."

"Titus must know that some of the Brotherhood fought at Jerusalem," the Superintendent of the Community said.

"But only to save the Temple!"

"Let us hear again what Jared told the Chaste One," a new voice proposed. Jared recognized one of the three senior priests.

The Chaste One urged a different course.

WISA
"Jared must be allowed to speak for himself," he said.

"Well, perhaps," the Priest of Aaron said; but then he added, "However. . ." and paused, ready to reduce the "However" to chips and the chips to splinters.

Although it was against the Rules to speak before a Brother finished speaking--above all, when the Brother was the Priest of Aaron--the Chaste One interrupted.

"Let us call Jared," he insisted. ~~said~~.

The Priest of Aaron yielded stiffly.

"Let the former Keeper of the Scrolls be called," he said and the Chaste One came proudly to the door.

Jared faced the Priest of Aaron in a room that was almost dark. The few candles had been carefully placed not to hurt the eyes of the old man who was blinking painfully, but nevertheless made a figure of authority, standing erect with his white beard cascading down a snowy robe.

"Now you may tell us your story," he said.

"Alvan has told my story," Jared said, "but he has not presented my plea. The Scrolls which the Community has held precious ~~over so many~~ ~~years~~ years must be hidden from the Romans. I have thought how this may be done, and I ask permission to put the Brothers to the task."

The Leader drew himself up.

"Why should we give this permission to one who has been

cursed into the outer darkness?"

"Because," Jared cried, "sinner though I am, I am able to do this thing, and I do not know anyone else in the Community who can. Titus sends soldiers to destroy our buildings, and they will destroy the Scrolls also. I beseech you to grant me permission to hide them, and, when they are hidden, to help the Brothers get away."

The Priest of Aaron started. "Get away? What do you mean? Why should the Sons of Light run from the Romans?"

Jared was appalled. He should not have introduced a new subject for debate.

"Then I speak only of the Scrolls," he answered quickly. He stepped closer and looked intently into the blinking eyes. "There is no~~x~~ time for more talk," ~~he cried,~~
 "The decision must be made!"

The Priest of Aaron stroked his beard and looked around, lids fluttering. The Chaste One nodded. Several of the Fourteen nodded, and unexpectedly the Leader's resistance collapsed.

"You are not one, Jared, to advise us wrongly," he said, ^{was} his tone almost benign. And he closed his eyes against the torturing lights, and held out a hand, and a senior priest took it and led him out.

Unbelievably, he had yielded the Scrolls into the hands of an accursed one.

o-o-o

When the rest of the Fourteen and a smiling Chaste One had followed the Priest of Aaron, Jared burst out into the courtyard and, in the darkness there, shouted with all his voice.

"Up!" ~~he~~ shouted. "Up, this is Jared! Up, every Brother! There is work to be done." On every side, in cells and caves, answering sounds

began and grew, as men rolled over, ~~came~~ awake on their pallets, sat up, reached for robes and sandals and scrambled to their feet.

"Come, every Brother!" Jared shouted. "There is work! Tonight, we save the Scrolls."

In a few cells, ~~up in a few caves,~~ ^{and} more fireflies glowed as cautious Brothers lighted candles to help them toward the voice. Some men advanced at a sleepy stagger, others came at a walk, or ran. The Novice reached Jared first of all.

A knot of men around Jared became a crowd, finally filling the courtyard, and the crowd began to mumble, and murmur.

"Jared!" "It is truly Jared!"

"Jared says he has work for us."

"He always did have work for us."

"And who else would shout us up in the dead of night?"

"It is Jared!"
Jared is shouting.
"It is that
awakened
Jared. He
is really
up
again.
Then
it is
not
just
the
scrolls
that
are
being
saved.
It is
Jared.
He
is
the
one
who
has
been
calling
us
up.

No one asked if he, an accursed and expelled Brother, had the right to call them up. Perhaps they assumed the Priest of Aaron had recalled the cursing and expulsion, perhaps they were willing to follow him no matter what their Leader had or had not done. A willing Brotherhood waited under a lightless sky for his instructions.

They did not wait without lights for long. Someone came from the kitchen with a smokily flaming torch, set afire at the hearth from coals kept all night under a blanket of ashes.

"Light!" someone called, parodying, as the Brothers often did among themselves, that other Light which they were taught to believe was the mainspring of their days.

"Light!"

"Light!"

"Light!"

The cry spread and more torches flamed smokily and Jared nodded in satisfaction. Now he could see to pick his men. He knew which he wanted for each task, and what each task would be. He had thought it all out as he walked from Jamnia to Netophah, and from Netophah to the Community, and as he sat on the bench.

First, he told them all what must be done, if ~~their~~ ~~treasures,~~ the Scrolls, were not to be destroyed. Then he

I omitted this.

beckoned.

"You!" he said. "You will watch for the coming of the Romans. And you will help, and you, and you, and you . . ." He beckoned to twenty in all.

He returned to his first choice. "You, yourself, will be the most distant watcher. Station the others between you and the Community. Signal when the Romans come into sight. Let the signal be sent from man to man. Let the nearest watcher stand on the Watch Tower. Let him whistle from there."

The chosen twenty ran off.

"Now," Jared said, "I want pitch from the Dead Sea shore. It has served for centuries to hold bricks and stones in our walls. Now it will serve to seal treasures more precious than walls. Gather it. Heat it. It must run freely, but do not let it get so hot that it will burn or even scorch."

He chose his pitchmen and they raced down to the shore.

"Those of you who are potters," Jared said, "have been treading clay and kneading it and turning it on the wheel for days, against the time of the new harvest. Empty the old, firm grain jars and put what grain we have left into the untested new ones. Bring the old jars to the Library. Bring the good, old, water jars, also."

He had delayed until almost the last the selection of

potters.

He smiled at the two master

the men he now chose most carefully.

"Go to the Library," he told these. "Bring linen. Tear up your robes, if need be. Roll every Scroll tight, and wrap it in linen. Divide the wrapped Scrolls into piles, a pile for each jar. When the pitch is warm and running freely, let jars be brought. Put the Scrolls into them and pour pitch over the covers."

He had not yet called the youngest and most agile Brothers. He called them out now, one by one.

"Yours is the most important work of all," he said. "You must find caves in which to hide the jars. High caves are best. Let each be one that a man would pass without seeing it. Let each be hard to reach, and dry. Look for stains made by trickling water from past rains. We do not want our Scrolls in caves which will flood in the former or latter season."

When he had sent off the cave-finders, Jared went to the Library and watched the rolling and wrapping. He went to the Watch Tower and gave further instructions to the man who was to whistle. He returned to the remaining unassigned Brothers, and beckoned them.

By now the last few stars were winking out, and there was a gray band of light along the east.

"It is almost morning," ^{he said, "That} Jared told the men who waited

6

for him. "That is good for what you are to do. Make the Community look exactly as it looked yesterday and the day before and all the days before that. When the Romans come, everything must be in its place. Nothing must seem to have been changed, moved, taken away. Otherwise they will think that we have hidden treasure and will search."

Pitch-men, jar-men, signalmen, Scroll crew, cave finders and those making the grounds look as they always had looked--he drove them all while the band of gray widened and a pallid light spread over the world.

The light helped the cave finders most. Such hiding places as they sought were not easy to locate. There were caves all around, but not many high up, not many almost sure to be missed by passersby, not many with small mouths to discourage the curious, nor so deep that, once inside, a man would be slow to squirm farther, because why risk the scorpions which delighted in deep dark caves?

The Priest of Aaron ^{and others of the fourteen who had} still slept. ~~Others of the leaders~~ ^{been sleeping came out. They} had wakened and come out, but they offered no aid; they knew Jared needed none. Only the Chaste One, who slept as little as he ate, had remained awake from the beginning, meditating and watching the strange proceedings of the night.

Jared paused beside him, and the Chaste One looked to the east. The gray band had turned to gold-shot rose, and the

sun was emerging in all its radiance over the dual Salt Sea.

7ms vt
7a

sun was emerging in all its radiance over the dull Dead Sea.

"An offering of the lips, my son," the Chaste One said gently and prostrated himself, as workers all around were doing, and Jared, too, fell to the ground.

What is the point?
be sure you have
this...

o-o-o

By the time the sun had reached its zenith, everything was done. The Scrolls were in the jars and the jars hidden in caves along the shores and hills. In the Library, old worthless Scrolls had been scattered along the shelves and tables to make them look as though they had never held more. The new, newly filled grain jars had been put, a few here, a few there, so that the Romans would not find too many in one place and grow suspicious. All unused pitch had been taken back to the shore and the shore made to look as though none had been removed. The hands of the pitch-men had been cleaned, and soiled clothing washed or hidden away or, if too soiled, burned. A few jars had been broken in the haste with which men worked but these shards were thrown among older shards of which always there were many, some old, some new, so that the few added were not conspicuous. One or two unnatural paths had been worn up to the caves, and these paths were brushed clean lest a Roman say, "Look! Follow this and see what it leads to."

The heat of the day was upon them, and the Brothers

- 8 -

were resting in the cool of the colonnade. This was not according to their custom but the Priest of Aaron had directed it. He and the rest of the Fourteen and the Chaste One sat on nearby benches.

The Brothers kept looking toward Jared as though for guidance. Even the Members of the Fourteen, except for the Priest of Aaron, looked. At last a Brother said: "What do we do now?" And another asked: "What will the Romans do when they come?" And another inquired: "Shouldn't they be here now?"

Jared looked toward the Priest of Aaron, but he said nothing. The Chaste One was listening with bright interest. Jared said: "I think you might all, now, slip away into the hills, and the deserts. Drift away in small groups, in different directions. The Romans would think you had heard they were coming and fled precipitately. They would not suspect you had taken time to hide anything. Take provisions, of course, and water and warm cloaks."

"What will the Romans do ^{when they get} here?" ~~the Superintendent of~~
~~Some one else~~
 the Community asked.

"They will have orders, I think, to destroy this place. They will set fire to the roofs but the stone buildings will not burn. When the Romans are gone from Palestine, you can come back and rebuild."

- 9 -

"Many of us," an older Brother said, "will be dead by then."

"Many will be dead before then," Jared said, "for the Romans will search the hills and the desert. But some may get away."

"Where would we wait out the years?" the Novice asked.

"Does it matter?" Jared asked, ~~in return.~~ "Jehovah is everywhere. But those who are going should go at once. Any moment now, we may hear the whistle from the Watch Tower which will tell us that the Romans are coming. Perhaps the Fourteen should go first, and let the rest aid them."

The Priest of Aaron rose.

"No," he ^{said,} announced. "We will all stay here."

~~Jared did not answer.~~

"I told you, Jared," ~~the old Leader went on,~~ "that you could hide the Scrolls. But you may not break up the Community, not send the Sons of Light out into the darkness of the world." He paused and his look softened. "I do not say that you may not be right, but this is something we should talk over. I will call a general meeting."

"There is no time," Jared said. "And you are all in great danger."

"I understand that," the Priest of Aaron said.

"However. . ." And again he began to reduce the 'however' to

-10-

chips and the chips to splinters.

No one interrupted and, when at last he paused, there was still silence. To everyone's surprise, the Chaste One broke it.

"As for me," he ^{said} announced, "I shall stay here."

The unexpected decision seemed to shock the Priest of Aaron into some awareness of the peril that faced them all.

"But you are the one of all of us who should be saved!" he cried.

"I shall stay," the Chaste One said. "The old cannot run from the Romans. They cannot hide and sleep on rocks and eat scorpions."

"You are right," the Leader said. He tugged at his beard and looked at the old comrade with whom he had shared his noviciate and all the long years in which he had risen to his present eminence. They had lived from youth to old age together in this sheltered place.

"You are right," he repeated, "and I shall stay with you. The younger Brothers may go, if they wish. They may survive and somewhere keep our Order alive. In any case, the Scrolls are safely hidden."

On these words, ~~from the Watch Tower,~~ a high clear whistle sounded, from the Watch Tower.

Voices stopped. Hearts seemed to stop in the breasts

Insert 10

— 11 —

of some of those who had never seen a Roman. Again the Brothers looked toward Jared who rose to his feet.

"Those who are going away," he said, "should get their food and cloaks with speed, but go slowly into the hills, as though on leisurely errands. The rest of us will go about our usual duties. Let each man do what he would normally be doing at this hour. Grind grain, make pottery, tend the fires. Move quietly and work in your usual silence."

"I shall work on my commentary," the Chaste One said and walked toward his favorite rock.

Jared's Return to the Community 12

The dead Numidian's rested and watered horse set off briskly below Netophah's hill. Too briskly, Jared decided; they had best go slowly the better to watch for enemies. He pulled his mount down to an amble and the prodigious, interlocked shadow of rider and horse drifted ahead of reality across the desert.

Jared thought of the next day when Cotta's shadow would become a little longer than its owner and Cotta could seize him and still keep his pledge. He found it harder to think of the Brotherhood. He had known in Jamnia what he must do and at Netophah he had ^{found} had the strength to relinquish Tamarm but now he ^{shrank} ~~shrank~~ ~~xxx~~ from the humiliation of returning to the Community where he must ask the Priest of Aaron --plead ^{with him, beg} ~~if need be, beg~~ -- for permission to hide the Scrolls. He must ask, no matter what reception he had ^{received.} ~~from the Priest of Aaron.~~ He had been ^{driven} ~~driven~~ ~~xxx~~ from the Brotherhood. No cursed and expelled member had ever been taken back.

Guilt was heavy upon him. If he had not broken his vows he would be in the Library. Now a new Keeper might already have been named, although the Priest of Aaron made such a habit of procrastination.

But no new Keeper, he was sure, had a plan ready for hiding the Scrolls. Among all the other Brothers, almost all untravelled and inexperienced, none could deal with the Romans as craftily as one who had fought them.

He caught the smell of brine, bitumen and scum and came in sight of the Salt Sea and turned his horse loose. If the beast was not found by some desert traveller the scent of sweet water in the reservoirs would draw it to the Community. He, himself, was better off afoot. ^{Cotta's spies,} Hunters for Compound runaways, so likely to be drawn ^{near} ~~also~~ to the Community could hardly miss a man on horseback, but a solitary walker who knew how to use the desert billows was not likely to be ^{even seen} ~~detected~~. He threw away his weapons and armor to make himself more truly a harmless desert walker if hunters did come on him and ~~went~~ ^{planned}

Look up the matter
of the 14 -
was raised with me

at supper 15,

1st waiter
2nd waiter
3rd waiter

4th waiter
5th waiter
6th waiter

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

Podium

14 is

14 is

14 is

only

Jared began to run

forward ~~xxxxxx~~ until he saw the Chaste One against his favorite rock. Then affection made him run, ~~and the old man turned~~

omit

The Chaste One broke off his meditation at the sound of swift feet; Brothers were expected to approach sedately.

"Jared!" His soft cry overflowed with love. "Jared! You are back! The Brotherhood is not complete without you."

have come

He did not seem to recall the cursing and expulsion but looking into the wise old face, crisscrossed with the tiny cracks of age, Jared was sure they had not been forgotten.

"I have returned," he said, "I need your help."

On an impulse he added

"You have it, Jared. You have it, of course."

"I must speak with the Priest of Aaron. He does not even

might refuse to

he cannot

see one who has been cast out. But if you ask, can he refuse?

and I must

Romans are coming and will surely destroy the Scrolls unless we hide them." ~~and here.~~

"Of course we must hide them. And who beside you is as able to do it." ~~His~~ [?] ~~crisscrossed~~ ^{The} crisscrossed, fluted and fissured masterpiece brightened. "And now you can tell us exactly how. And I shall see that the Priest of Aaron permits."

He got to his feet, slowly but not needing Jared's outstretched hand and, as though having disposed of a small problem he now felt free to turn to a great one, he looked at Jared in sober concern.

"My commentary goes ahead hardly at all, Jared. What have I to say that it does not, itself, say? With nothing but the will of Go, shall a man be concerned.

omit

"Any writing on such a subject will not go ahead fast."

"Writing?" The small cry denied that a single word had been set down. "How could I write while the thought was imperfect. My mind has turned words over and over but to have written would be to ~~xxxxx~~ soil pure parchment or papyrus."

- 187A

Jared found a ~~bench~~ ^{bench} outside the Hall.

They ~~had~~ come to the Assembly Hall and the Chaste One gestured for Jared to wait and went in, seeking the Priest of Aaron. Jared found a bench. Around him, silent and unrecognizing as they had never ~~been~~ ^{saw} him before, the Brothers were gathering for the evening meal with none of the wordless clamor -- nods, winks, shrugs, lifted eyebrows, pursed lips, hand signs, change of gait and mien -- which earlier would have added up to the exciting news that their Keeper was home again. Their Keeper had been expelled and ~~no~~ ^{every} Brother ~~dared~~ ^{must} pretend that the nearby bench was empty. Jared pretended just as determinedly that the white robes all around him were only thickening shadows.

The silence continued until broken by slow hooves and the Numidian's horse ambled into sight and up to Jared, whinnying its relief.

"I know you would wind up here," Jared whispered and led the animal to water, and fed ~~her~~ ^{her} and rubbed ~~her~~ ^{her} down.

When he returned to his bench the Fifteen were forming. No, Jared counted, only Fourteen. A new Keeper had not been named and he took that for a good omen. He would have approached the Priest of Aaron ~~but~~ ^{but} the Chaste One ~~saved~~ ^{waved} him off, ~~and~~ ^{and} the Brothers ~~all~~ ^{line 2} moved ~~sludgy~~ ^{sludgy} into the Assembly Hall ~~and the door~~ ^{and the door} ~~were here~~

Jared went back to his bench in growing darkness. He could hear nothing but he knew that silent Brothers were bowing for the blessing of the Priest of Aaron, ~~so soft a blessing that he, also, was as good as silent.~~ ^{now they were silent} ~~The silence continued, and continued.~~ ^{trying to hear}

The Priest of Aaron must have gone to the podium, must have told why Jared had returned, and others must have spoken, each in his proper turn, but no sound came through the closed door.

Jared could not wait ~~any~~ longer. He put an ear to the door crack.

"Di, any expelled Brother ever come back demanding..." someone was saying.

Then the Chaste One interrupted gently.

omit
copy only this
omit

501

~~"But Our Jared does not demand. He begs most humbly."~~ omit

"But might it not be only that so black a sinner wishes to return to the comfort of the Community?"

That had been the voice of the Priest ofn Aaron and Jared ^{could} picture him ^{clutching} ^{white} ~~was sure~~ he had ^{clutched} his long beard in confusion. Jared returned to his bench and presently

The door opened and white robes straggled out, Jared looked for the Priest of Aaron but only the Tens emerged. The Fifteen was staying inside, Now, Jared told himself in dismay. the dialogue would run on and on and the Priest of Aaron would avoid any decision.

Insert 21. A small bundle dropped at Jared's feet.

"You need a robe. And the food wrapped inside."

Jared never knew which Brother has risked punishment but he said thanks and wrapped himself against the evening chill and ate and suddenly famished. From time to time the silence inside the Hall was broken by faint sounds of importunity, protest, and warning and the last of the Tens scattered to cells and caves and sleep or reading or-- a few-- to walking meditation, and the stars said that midnight had passed,

The next day would surely bring the Romans, The minutes needed to hide the Scrolls were running away.

So suddenly that he did not have time to be surprised, Jared found himself praying, as he had not been able to pray for so long. Not prostrate as the Discipline directed; He was not now under the

discipline. On his knees, hands humbly clasped, head bent, his flesh taking on the pattern of the hard pavement, his dark face upraised toward where Omniscience dwelt. Inside the Hall the murmur of voices ran on.

As suddenly as he had knelt, Jared leaped to his feet and pushed the door of the Assembly Hal open and went in and found the

omit
Insert 21
3 parts

omit
to help him
Scar face
or Regalini
his

Begin here

22. He found the

Priest of Aaron somewhere along another of his procrastinations. At the beginning, perhaps, a quarter through, midway, nearly finished. It ~~was~~ impossible to say.

He stopped ~~when Jared entered~~ and the others of the Fifteen turned and stared.

"Well, ~~now~~," one of the others said, "Jared is here. Let him tell his own story."

Will ~~Even though he does~~ ^{his own telling} tell the story himself, will that make it any more reasonable?" The Priest of Aaron said. "What will Rome gain by tearing down the Community?" ~~But... however... it~~

"But..." the Priest of Aaron said, then added, "However," and looked away, ~~thinking~~ ^{on through searching} how to reduce ~~the~~ ^{his} word to splinters and the splinters to chips and so, once more, ~~escape~~ ^{escape} a decision.

"Let Jared speak," another of ~~the Fifteen~~ said and ~~all~~ the rest nodded in ~~relieved~~ ^{the} hope that ~~if Jared spoke he~~ would take on ~~the~~ responsibility for the decision with which they ~~all~~ had been wrestling so long and ~~so~~ unsuccessfully.

"But..." the Priest of Aaron said again.

"It is right that Jared should speak," the Fifteen chorused and ~~axxx~~ the Priest of Aaron at last exhibited the others' ~~relieved~~ hope.

"Well, then, ~~let~~ the former Keeper of the Scrolls speak," he said.

The room was murky. In the beginning only a few candles had been lighted, ~~because~~ ^{for} more would have hurt the eyes of the Priest of Aaron and now half of these ~~had~~ ^{few} guttered out. The Fifteen, ~~on~~ their benches, were grayish blurs ~~against~~ ^{on} their ~~darker~~ ^{featureless} wall. Only the Priest of Aaron ~~was~~ ^{at the podium was} reasonably distinct. Jared was a bigger blur.

"The Scrolls must be hidden, ~~from the Romans,~~ ^{Jared} he said. "They ~~will~~ ^{Romans} be here tomorrow, though I do not know when tomorrow. Even if they do nothing against us they are ~~almost~~ sure to destroy the

Scrolls. To them papyrus and parchment mean ~~nothing~~ more than a fire to cook a meal, to warm their bones, to make them merry."

"But if this is so important a task, why should it be entrusted to ~~you~~ ^{me} who ~~have~~ ^{has} been cursed into out~~er~~ ^{er} darkness?"

The Priest of Aaron, ^{as though} ~~already~~ ^{reopened} relenting permission to Jared, now seemed eager to ~~begin~~ ^{reopen} the endless dialogue.

"~~Because~~ ^U I have, ~~I think,~~ thought out hid~~ling~~ ^{ling} places."

The Priest of Aaron stroked his beard, his eyelids fluttering ~~as they~~ ^{as} caught a faint beam of light. ~~But several others nodded in approval.~~ The Chaste One nodded, and under the weight of so much ~~dissent~~ ^{assent} the Priest of Aaron's ~~devotion~~ ^{zeal} to procrastination crumbled.

"You are not the one to wrong us, ~~Jared,~~ ^{stet} ~~he said.~~ "Do what you believe best."

His gesture, as though handing the Scrolls back into the care of their former Keeper, was benign, but as ~~he~~ ^{stet} reached for a hand to lead him ~~into the dark outdoors~~ he seemed helpless.

~~The Chaste One held out a helping hand, and the others of the Fifteen arose to leave. But Jared raced ahead, and he was first through the door and outside he shouted, at the top of his big voice,~~ ^{roared}

"Up, Brothers!" ~~he shouted.~~ ^{shouted} "Up! There is work, Up, every one of you."

"Jared is calling!" someone cried out of the ~~night~~ ^{darkness} and ~~then~~ near and far others cried out. "It is that Awakener, Jared. He is calling us again."

"With his trumpet?" ~~someone called.~~

"Trumpet or not trumpet, it is Jared."

Figures erupted ~~everywhere.~~ ^{if we who} The cry that Jared, ~~was calling~~ ^{of} ~~echoed~~ ^{echoed} went from ~~nearby buildings~~ across the plateau to the most distant caves and in them Brothers rolled off pallets, came awake, stood up, reached

for garments and scrambled out ~~the cave entrances~~ and down the cliffs, ^{and}
Everywhere Brothers came on at a sleepy stagger, then a stumbling
walk and at last ran. No, in the cold ~~and~~ waning darkness they
raced ~~near~~ and made a knot around Jared, ~~and~~ then a crowd and the
crowd began to shout. *cried out*

"Jared!"

"It is truly Jared."

"He says he has work ^{for us} ~~for us~~!"

"When didn't Jared have work?"

"When did Jared have anything but work?"

"Who else would shout us awake out of a sound sleep?"

*And Jared's hand came up as if "Love even better. Tonight we shall be
scared."*
No one asked how an accursed and expelled Brother was

able again to summon them. Rejoicing that he was able, they waited
to be told what to do.

They did not wait long. One came ~~back from the kitchen~~ ^{shouting from the kitchen}
with a torch lighted from ^{the kitchen} coals kept alive ~~there~~ under a blanket of
ashes.

and "Light!" another Brother shouted as though this was that
other light which they had been taught was the mainspring of their
days, and all took up the cry.

"Light!"

"Light!"

Then the Priest of Aaron appeared and the ~~loose~~ throng
moved into disciplined ranks and began a murmur of praise.

"The path of glory..."

"..from the dwelling place of the night!"

"..out of the black tumult.."

All snatches of songs handed down from the Community's
first generation. And ~~then~~ the Priest of Aaron ~~cried~~ ^{prayed} out in his

Liers-in-wait, jarmen, pitchmen, scrollmen, cave finders and those tidying up, Jared drove them all, the cave finders more than any others. ~~The best~~ hiding places were hard to find. But Jared and a few more remembered how they had swung along the faces of the cliffs ^{to} and had come on caves with ~~small~~ mouths so small that ~~the~~ no finder was likely to ^{see them} ~~know them~~ for what they were and inside so dark, deep and twisting that any finder would ^{hesitate to} ~~hesitate to~~ squirm in for fear of scorpions which delighted in deep darkness.

The Priest of Aaron ~~watched and dozed, and watched and dozed~~ ^{again} and so did most of the oldsters. But the Chaste One, who slept as little as he ate, remained awake, ~~from the beginning.~~ And once he went into the Library where the jars were being filled. ~~and~~

"Take ~~these words~~ to your heart these words," he murmured. "Recite them when you stay at home and when you are far away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your hand and let them serve as a symbol between your eyes.."

And he ^{took} ~~unwound~~ the phylactery from his ^{arm} ~~wrist~~ and dropped it into a jar.

"Well," Jared said, ~~watching,~~ "So holy a thing can't do anything but help," and dropped ^{into another jar,} ~~in~~ his own phylactery, and so did half a dozen others.

Finally all the scrolls were in jars, ^{and} the filled

to bring

"A people born to rule," ~~you say.~~ ~~Applesauce!~~ While they, ~~you say,~~ were bringing "other nations a better life," they let their own turn into the mess which ultimately brought the Gauls victoriously down. Caesar Augustus himself could not revive their own once better life though he coaxed Virgil to write the Georgics in the hope that those good poems would coax Italy's ex-farmers from their lotus life of bread and circuses back to their wasting acres. And note, also, the verdict of the aristocratic Celt, Calgacus. He called the invaders of Britain "a motley agglomeration ..most of them of no country .. who create a desolation and call it peace." ~~Note, finally, that when you get to the time of St. Ambrose Rome had, perhaps, a bigger percentage of juvenile delinquents than any nation has had since.~~

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jars in caves, ^{and} in the Library worn scrolls were scattered along shelves and tables looking as though they and no more ^{at this} always had been there, and newly filled ^{were} new jars had been put in storerooms and pantries and wherever such containers ^{would} normally be found. All unused bitumen ^{was put} had been taken back and the shore scraped to make ³ it look as though nothing had been ^{taken} moved. The pitchmen had cleaned their hands and garments or if the garments had been too soiled ^{burned} them or they had been burned. A few jars had been broken but the shards had ^{were} been tossed with other shards and a few added shards ^{white coast} told nothing. One or two foot tracks up to the caves had been brushed out so that no Roman would say, "Look! New! See where ^{this} it leads." And now the Brothers were resting in the heat of the day. This was not the custom but the Priest of Aaron had awakened and directed it.

The Brothers had accepted Jared's guidance, and the Fifteen had and after the rest the Brothers continued to look.

"Now what?" one ^{do} said. ^{Another said}

"What will we do when the Romans come?" another said.

"The Romans ought to be here now," another said.

"They will be, soon enough," Jared said. "But you still have time to what I think would be best."

The Chaste One had been listening and fleetingly looked like a liar-in-wait as he ^{nodded} turned to Jared.

"What is best, Jared?" the Priest of Aaron asked, ^{coming out of a door}

"Just a small change from what we did when the Roman century came long ago. Then the oldsters stayed, but those of us who were ^{the} young, and strong, and likely to ^{be taken} tempt the Romans to take prisoners hid in our caves."

^{would} "The caves wouldn't be far enough now," the Chaste One said. ^{5 search?}

"The desert would be," Jared said. "And of course every man should take a warm cloak, and ^{food} food and if ^{he} not water should know where ^{to} he come come to water every night."

"not to be"

599 "The desert will be," Jared said "The young Brothers

~~Print~~ "Go off in ^{little} ~~very~~ small groups, ^{and} ~~and~~ every group in a different direction," ~~the Chaste One said.~~ ^{warm cloak and food leaving}

~~Everything here~~ "Leave your caves, and every place you have used here in the Community, ^{must} looking as though ^{the} you had heard of the Romans coming and had run while ^{the} you could."

"What will the Romans do to us who stay behind?" one of the Fifteen said.

"~~They'll have orders to destroy.~~ They'll toss torches on the roofs, but the buildings are stone, so after they ^{are} gone you ^{everyone} can come back and rebuild."

"^{Some} Many of us who stay ^{may die} will be dead," one of the Fifteen said.

"^{Yes, and some} Many who run ^{may die} will be dead. The Romans will search the desert."

"We may need to hide a long ^{time} while. Where should that be?" a young Brother said.

"The Lord is everywhere," the Chaste One said. "But those who are to run should ^{run} do so. Any moment the Watch Tower may ^{how} whistle ^{shout} that the Romans are coming." ~~The young Brothers took off and~~

Jared looked at the Fifteen, and the few Masters, including the Chaste One, ~~who seemed so old they might remain in safety, even with~~ ^{from} Roman legionnaires. ~~The Priest of Aaron intercepted the look.~~ ^{looks at their weaponless hands}

"No!" ^{The P. of Aaron} he said. "Don't say it Jared. ~~We will not go.~~"

~~Jared looked at the weaponless hands of the oldsters.~~

"We would not know how ^{any longer to go out into} to use weapons," ^{The Desert} the Priest of Aaron said. ~~He had read the look. "You may hide the Scrolls, Jared, but do not send us into the dark world outside."~~

"It isn't really that dark," the Chaste One said, "But even ^{so,} I shall remain here." ~~The Chaste One said~~

"You may never finish your commentary," Jared said.

"Even Hillel would not hold an unfinished commentary enough to make him flee, ^{if} ~~if~~ he were here. But if ^{my} commentary were finished I ~~still~~ would stay. I cannot any more hide under a rock, sleep wherever

The young Brothers milled ~~around~~ for a moment, choosing ~~who~~
~~would go in~~ this little group and that and a few took a last look ~~around~~
making sure no untidiness had been left to stir Roman suspicion. Then
they all hurried away, some directly into the desert, some to their
caves for a last look there before taking off ~~to hide.~~

Jared turned to the Fifteen and the few Masters, including
the Chaste One.

"No!" the Priest of Aaron said, reading the look. "Don't
urge ~~that on us~~, Jared." ^{us to hide}

"There are caves in the desert, ~~too~~ and not too far away.
~~And~~ I think you still have time. ~~And~~ the younger Brothers ^{are carrying} ~~could share~~
the food they are carrying." ^{for all}

"I am not so frightened ~~of Romans~~ that I'll sleep in a cave
to avoid ~~them~~," one of the Fifteen said. ^{Romans}

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

"Even Hillel, if he were here, would hold an unfinished
commentary no excuse for fleeing," the Chaste One said. "~~Besides, I~~
~~cannot now hide behind rocks, or find warm sand a good enough bed.~~"

The Priest of Aaron ~~nodded~~ and pulled at his beard, ^{then} and sat
down to ~~show that he~~ ^{show} that he agreed.

"But now you, Jared, must hurry ^{up} after the others," he said.
"You have stayed too long already."

The Watch Tower sentinel shouted.

~~"I am not going into the desert,"~~ Jared said. "I may be needed
here." ^{Jared said}

* * * *