

SKY PILOT NEWS

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Allan and Valerie

JEALOUSY: FROM THE SKY PILOT'S LOG, 2CH BROADCAST

It was Sunday morning in Arnhem Land. The bright sun shone fiercely on the Mission garden, and its rays were reflected from the slowly-flowing river at the foot of the garden. The natives were sitting on small mats on the concrete floor of the cane-grass Church, and they listened intently to the native preacher, or joined in the bright singing. The service was drawing to an end and George paused at the door to listen.

As the sounds of the last hymn died away the natives hurried out of the Church, followed by Bert and Dick. Joe, who had supervised the service, joined them a few minutes later, and he immediately button-holed Dick.

"There you are, Dick," he said, "it is perfectly simple and straightforward. The natives just about run it themselves. All you've got to do is to supervise things."

"It looks easy enough," Dick admitted, "but I don't like it. I know when I'm out of my depth. I'd do anything I could to help you, but I wasn't reckoning on running a Church service."

George laughed. "So Dick is to relieve you, is he Joe?" he asked. "I never thought you'd turn missionary, Dick, blowed if I did."

"I'm not turning missionary," Dick avowed. "All I promised to do was to give a bit of a hand here, so that Joe could go down to the coast for a few days. I didn't realise that I'd have to take services, though."

"There's no one else. You might have done it, George, but I know you're on your way to Mataranka. Dick was my only hope."

"Indeed!" Bert interrupted. "And what about me? Am I not more qualified to take services and preach than this — this ungodly vagabond!"

"Hold on, Bert!" Dick exclaimed. "I ain't no vagabond. If it comes to that, what are you? I'm as good as you are, or a darn sight better."

Bert adopted a pious voice. "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. I was . . ."

"I don't mind you cryin' in the wilderness," said George. "But this is no wilderness, so don't throw any acts here. If Joe had to choose between Dick and you, I reckon he's made a good choice. At least Dick is genuine."

"That's what I thought," Joe put in. "I know Dick won't interfere, and the native Christians can look after the service. But they need a white man to supervise and keep them up to time, and so on."

"But," Bert protested, "I could do that as well as Dick, and, besides, I am accustomed to preaching. This work is what I was called to do. I was anointed for this very work. I was called of God."

"That's no good," said Joe. "I know you by now, Bert. You'd change everything and run the service your own way. Then the natives would get upset and go bush. Dick won't interfere."

"I would make some very necessary changes," Bert admitted. "I would preach hell and damnation and put the fear of God into these primitive savages. I would terrify their miserable souls with the fear of hell fire. I would. . . ."

"Yes," said Joe. "That's why I didn't ask you to take over. I prefer Dick."

George laughed again. "I would like to attend the services Bert took," he remarked. "I can imagine how he would thump the pulpit, and that wouldn't do in this Church."

"And why not?" asked Bert. "I merely thump the pulpit to emphasise a point. I'll bang it as much as I like."

"Well," said George, "there are white ants in that pulpit and when you got excited, Bert, you would bring it crashing down in a cloud of dust. Anyhow, what Joe says is right, you would drive the natives away. I reckon Dick is the best man for the job."

"Yes," Joe replied. "That's what I thought. I can trust you, Dick. I know I can. But I couldn't trust Bert."

"Monstrous!" Bert exclaimed. "It is an insult. I despise you, Joe, and I hate you, Dick."

"You're jealous," said George, quietly. "That's all it is. You're jealous and jealousy is a very wicked thing. No Christian should be jealous."

"That's true, I'm afraid," Joe agreed. "Jealousy is the root of half the misery in the world. It's an evil thing."

"It depends on circumstances," Bert defended. "God said: 'I am a jealous God.' If God is jealous, it can't be wrong."

"Yes," said George, bluntly. "But you ain't God, Bert, even if you act as if you were."

"Is that true?" Dick asked. "I mean about God being jealous. It don't sound right to me."

"It's true," said Joe reluctantly. "But I'm sure there must be some explanation. Jealousy is evil, and God can't be evil. I suppose it's different in

the case of God but that's always something I have never been able to understand properly."

"Jealousy is a weakness," Dick continued. "It must be. So how could God be jealous? It puts Him on the level of man."

"I have made my point," Bert interrupted. "You can't blame me for being jealous, when God is the same. I seek to follow God, and I mould my character as far as possible on Him."

"Shut up, Bert," said George. "I can't stand for that sort of talk. I don't understand it myself; but I know you're only a thunderin' hypocrite. Now beat it while your luck's in, or I'll kick you. My foot gets itchy whenever you open your mouth."

* * *

George was camped 30 miles from Mataranka. Joe, who had been down the coast, had returned to the Mission, taken the car, and driven in with a sick native. As the car pulled up in a cloud of dust, George came to meet him.

"Hullo, Joe," he greeted. "I thought you were on holidays? What are you doin' here?"

"I found this stockboy in Jim's camp. He's crook. I think he's dying. Smithy is away with the aeroplane, and Jim asked me to do something to save the boy. But it's beyond me. I thought I'd bring him in and see if I could get him to Darwin for treatment."

"He looks pretty far gone to me," George replied. "I don't reckon you'll make Darwin with him. But I'll tell you what. The old doctor is at Mataranka on a shootin' trip. I promised to take him out after crocodiles. He's due here today, but we'll send for him right away. Hey! Lefthand! Get a horse and beat it into Mataranka and hurry the doctor out. Tell him there's a patient waiting for him and not to waste any time gettin' here unless he wants a post-mortem. Come on, Joe, let's get this poor fellow into the tent. Lift him gently. Steady! I think he's fainted."

* * *

The hours dragged by, and George became very impatient. Finally he exclaimed: "I wish that flamin' doctor would hurry up. Lefthand has been gone half a day already."

"He can't be back yet," Joe told him. "But the patient is all right so far. He's conscious now, and he seems easier."

"If the doctor isn't here within a couple of hours, he won't have no patient to attend to."

"Surely he's not as bad as that, George? I thought he was looking better."

"Sorry," said George. "I forgot you don't know the native lingo. I didn't mean that he would die that quick; but his cousin is here, and the old medicine man in the camp is itchin' to have a go at him."

"But surely you wouldn't turn him over to the medicine man?"

"Course I wouldn't. Not if I could help it. But this boy is not properly civilised, even if he has been workin' for Jim. I heard the natives talkin' just now. They say the medicine man could cure him; they are plannin' to come in force and demand him. If we don't let him go and he dies, we'll get the blame. If we let him go he'll die pronto! Looks like we're between the devil and the deep blue sea."

"I wondered what all that singing was in the camp. They're at it again. Listen!"

"Sounds as if they mean business. I wish . . . hullo, there's a cloud of dust on the road. Hope it's the doctor."

"There are three men coming. Lefthand is in front, and — yes — there's the doctor, but I can't see who the other fellow is."

"It's Taffy," said George, as the men approached. "You remember him, don't you? He's the missionary from up Rose River way. Hullo, there! Glad you came, Doc!"

As usual the doctor seemed peeved. "What's all this about, George?" he demanded. "Can't a fellow have a bit of peace and quiet without you sending a messenger to root him out? Oh, I hate this country, with its heat and flies and dust. Besides, I'm on holidays and I don't do any medical work. Take this horse, can't you, and let me down. Now, come on, where's the patient?"

"Right here in the tent, Doc. How are you, Taffy? Ha, ha, the old doctor don't let a man get a word in edgeways. Glad to see you again."

Taffy smiled. "It is a pleasure to be seeing you men again. You are looking fit, George, and so are you, Joe."

"How are you, Taffy?" Joe asked. "Still as cheerful as ever?"

"Cheerful? Yes, I am. And why should I not be? A beautiful day it is, and the Good Lord in the heavens to watch over us."

"Excuse me," George whispered. "I'll have to attend to the old doctor. He roars like a bull, but he's as gentle as a woman, really."

The doctor stamped around. "Now where's this sick man?" he demanded. "It's a wonder he isn't dead, lying on the ground in this hot tent. Come on, George, let's see to him. What do all these jabbering natives want hanging about the tent? Send them away, George, send them away."

George grinned. "Well," he said, "they was suggestin' that we get another opinion. They ain't got much faith in you, Doc, and they thought of takin' the poor fellow down to the medicine man at the camp. You can hear 'em singin' in the distance."

Even the doctor paused for a moment. As they listened, the chant of the medicine man rose and fell in a monotonous and never-ending cascade of sound.

The doctor stamped his foot. "What's all this humbug about medicine men? I can cure this fellow without any interference from those savages. Send them away, George, send them away. I don't want them hanging about my patient."

"Professional jealousy," George told him, with a chuckle. "That's what it is, Doc. You're jealous of the medicine man. Jealousy is a very wicked thing. Joe said it was, didn't you, Joe? We never finished the argument because Bert reminded us that even God was jealous."

"Stop that silly nonsense!" the doctor demanded. "Of course I'm jealous. I'm jealous for my patient. He'll die if that medicine man gets to work on him. What's wrong with jealousy, anyhow?"

"It's all in the way it's directed," Taffy explained. "The doctor is not jealous **of** the medicine man, he's jealous **for** his patient. It is the wickedness of man that he is jealous of others. God is jealous **for** us, not **of** us."

"That's what I couldn't understand before," Joe said. "Now I know what it means when God says He is a jealous God. He's jealous for us — for our good — not of us."

George laughed. "That's one for old Bert. Wait till I see him again."

* * *

The old doctor nursed the black stockboy back to life, in spite of the medicine man's scepticism and contempt. Sometimes a medicine man, without knowing the cause of the illness, is able to help by restoring a native's faith in life and giving him the will to live; beyond this, he is powerless. But the white doctor knew the cause of the illness, and had the life-giving drugs as well. He was not jealous of the supposed magic of the medicine man or of the childish paraphernalia of sacred stones, feathers, and pieces of dead men's bones; but he was jealous for his patient, knowing that his only hope for life lay in the white man's skill.

God is not jealous of puny man, as we humans are jealous of one another; He is jealous for us, knowing that our only hope of life and happiness depends on our trust in Him and our obedience to His law.

And the final entry in today's Log is taken from the 20th chapter of Exodus, and the 11th chapter of Second Corinthians: God said, "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God"; Paul said, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ."

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EASTER EGGS. We are most grateful to those friends who brought along Easter Eggs for our children. These were much appreciated and, needless to say, they did not last very long. However they brought great pleasure to the children who were made to feel that Easter was just as much for them as it was for the white children.

☆ ☆

HARVEST FESTIVALS. For some time now there have been several Churches who send all their Harvest Festival goods to us. This is a very real help and we do thank God for this provision for our needs. Many of the children here were suffering from malnutrition when they arrived and the fresh milk, eggs and farm vegetables have made a great difference to them. The Harvest Festival goods bring a great variety of fruit and vegetables into their diet that we ourselves are unable to supply from our garden.

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CHILDREN'S OUTINGS: Owing to the kindness of friends the children are given many outings on Saturdays. Sometimes they all go together with some organisation such as Rotoract, Scouts etc. and sometimes a small group are taken by individuals. As a matter of fact we have sometimes to restrict their outings; they have as many as are good for them; also there are friends who come out to the Mission Farm on a Saturday and give them lunch or afternoon tea here. We are most grateful for these friends who think of the Aboriginal children in this way.

This work is progressing very well and as we look back a few years we are amazed at the way God has provided for us and led us according to His will. To Him be all the honour, praise and glory for this is really His work and we are only His humble instruments.

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