

**BY AN UNKNOWN
DISCIPLE**

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By an unknown disciple by Anonymous

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"He that hath marvelled shall reign."

"Wherefore have ye not perceived the reasonableness of the Scriptures?"—GOSPEL TO THE HEBREWS.

"My humanity is the road by which men must travel."—SUSO.



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I

MARK JOHN was only a boy then, and what he wrote down he learnt from Peter. Peter was there, but he was hauling up the boats, and didn't know what had happened until he heard the shouts and saw the swine break away and rush down the hillside into the sea. He never saw the madman until all the swine were dead. How, then, did he know enough to tell Mark John? Well, of course, he heard the others talk. And then that was Peter's way. He was always sure that he knew everything until he did some hot-tempered, silly action, and then he was sure that he knew nothing. He would believe everything or nothing according to his temper towards the teller. He did not care for the labour of weighing facts to decide between false and true. You could never make Peter believe that even when people describe a thing as they think they saw it they may still speak falsehood. If a man told Peter that he had met a demon or

a magician in the mountains Peter would be quite sure that it was a magician or a demon, unless the man who said he saw it was a Scribe or a Pharisee, and then Peter would say he was a liar.

Always Peter hated the explanations given by others. He never wanted to ask how things had happened. He felt so strongly that he was sure he knew and that other more subtle explanations smelt of the Scribes. Later he grew into somewhat of a tyrant, but always he was lovable.

Luke was not there. I do not know who told him. Yes, he was an educated man; but he was a physician, and he seldom saw beyond the things of the body. Witness the way he changed the Blessings. Peter never made such mistakes about the Message; to the end he loved the poor, but Luke wanted to keep them orderly.

Peter and Luke and Mark John—they are all dead now, and I can speak my mind. When they were here I often tried, but they did not want to listen. They liked their own way of seeing the miracle best, and, so, for the sake of peace and good-fellowship, I ceased to speak. If it were the truth, then one day it would prevail. So I kept silence. But you are waiting to know about the swine and the madman.

The dawn was breaking when we reached the land after that stormy passage across the lake,

and I followed Jesus up the slope of the shore to the headlands. Peter and the other fishermen were busy hauling up the boats; some of the people who, like me, had been passengers, lay down to sleep, some followed us far behind in a little group. The light spread over the hills was purple and pink, and the stillness was broken only by the cheep of a sleepy bird.

I do not know if Jesus prayed as he walked, but I felt the stillness, and the loneliness brought God near, and I followed in silence. When we reached the brow of the headland it was full daylight, and there, in the distance, was the herd of swine, slowly rooting its way towards us. The swineherds had turned aside to eat their morning meal, and, as they ate, pigs of all sizes and colours, of all ages and shapes, moved on alone, occupied only with filling their bellies. Here a small pig grunted in anger as he was pushed aside by a gaunt sow, whose barren dried-up teats touched the earth. There a great boar, with tusks pushed up under his lip, thrust himself out from the crowd with sidelong blows of his heavy head to seize the portion of some smaller pigs, who fled, squealing.

Jesus stood still to watch, and, as he watched, he smiled. When he spoke, it was to answer the question that had remained unspoken in my mind.