

THE BRIGHT LIGHT

KEYWORD: Faithfulness.

The soft summer breezes gently rustled the leaves on the trees, and the bright moonlight made everything attractive and alluring. Dick and Rosalie had had such a happy day with Grandfather in the woods on the side of the mountain. They had all come home rather reluctantly, for the great out-of-doors was so wonderful. Good-nights had been said, and they had parted. As Dick lay in his comfortable bed on the sleeping porch, he seemed still to be outdoors, and this was very pleasant. He was tired and sleepy but very full of memories of a happy day. Grandfather was so wise — such a wonderful man. He seemed to know everything. He had told the children charming stories about brave knights and faithful princes and beautiful, kind-hearted princesses and noble queens.

As Dick lived over these fascinating stories, suddenly he thought he heard a voice. What was that? He was sure he had heard his name called: "Dick! Oh, Dick!"

He arose instantly and followed the voice up a rugged mountain path, winding through beautiful tall and sturdy trees, the ground carpeted in spots with dainty ferns where the elves and gnomes might play. Oh, how beautiful it was in the moonlight! Again he heard the voice, and so he walked a bit faster.

The mountain seemed more wonderful at night than in the daytime. He paused to look at the Moon and the stars. He was just about to sit down on the stump of a tree, when he thought he saw a gnome glide into that very stump. Then he heard his name called again. He looked all about him but saw no one. However, to his surprise he saw a little

hut quite high up on the mountain. There must be some one up there calling to me, he thought. But he had never seen that hut before, although many times he had climbed the mountain with Daddy.

"Well, there is a bright light in the hut, so someone must live there," he said to himself. "It must be the Man of the Mountain that Elf-kin told me about. He is the friend of the trees and ferns and birds and all the woods people. Maybe he wants an errand done. I think I'd better go and see."

Just then a little voice said: "It's a long way up there for a little boy to go alone." Another little voice said: "You're afraid to go through the dark woods alone." And another voice said: "Better turn back now." But Dick had been taught to be brave and fearless and steadfast and always to finish anything he started. So he just straightened himself up and hastened along to see who lived in the hut. It did seem a long, hard climb, and he was really lonely, but he went right on. And then he remembered about Secret Thoughts, and that helped him right away. His secret thoughts were good ones: he wanted to be brave and to help the Man of the Mountain if he needed help.

Just at that moment he heard what seemed to be a low cry of pain, quite near him. Looking down he saw lying on the ground right at his feet a lad about his own size, moaning. "Please help me," cried the little stranger. Dick stooped, put his arms around the lad and tried to help him to stand. But he could not do so, for he had sprained his ankle. Dick thought of the hut. He could carry the lad there, for he was strong, but the path was steep and it was dark. He stood still for just a minute and said to himself: "I must help this boy, and I will be brave." Then he looked toward the hut again to see just how far it was. Strange to say, it did not seem so dark after all, and as he looked,

right there in front of him was the most beautiful Light. The Light was like a Shining Presence. It wasn't really anybody — just a wonderful Light. Then a deep, rich voice said: "I will help you. You can easily carry your little brother on your back. There, that's good, and I will guide you."

So the Light went before Dick and his new friend, and soon they were inside the hut. "Just lay him gently on the bed, and we will see what we can do for him." The voice was very kind and told Dick just what to do to help his little friend. How hard Dick worked, and he was so happy to be doing something kind for another boy! Then the Shining Presence said: "You have been a brave lad, Dick, and a loyal friend in need. Faithfulness is a wonderful quality, and your character will be noble and honest and true if you keep on being faithful."

"Dick! Oh, Dick!" another voice called.

"Yes, Mother," answered Dick. And as he opened his eyes wide, the Sun shone right into them. He could scarcely realize that he was in bed, and not up on the mountain miles away. My! how quickly he put on his clothes and rushed downstairs to tell Grandfather about his wonderful dream!

Grandfather smiled graciously and looked very pleased. "Dick, my lad, that was a remarkable dream, and it was no doubt a real experience. Because you have been constant in studying your lessons, upright and loyal in your friendships, steadfast in the care of your body, and faithful in your many little duties, your faithfulness has been rewarded. You were allowed to be a little Invisible Helper last night to the Shining Presence and lovingly to serve a friend in need. Perhaps some time you may see the Light of the Shining Presence again."