

# THE CAR SMASHER



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**DURING the first week of March, 1937, through the grace of God, I ended 20 years of a life made practically useless because I could not do two things.**

**First, I was unable to not take a drink.**

**Second, I was unable to take a drink without getting drunk.**

**Perhaps a third as important as the other two should be added; my being unwilling to admit either of the first two.**

**With the result I kept trying to drink without getting drunk, and kept**

**making a nightmare of my life, causing suffering and hardship to all those relatives and friends who tried so hard to help me and whom, when I was sober, I took the greatest pleasure in pleasing.**

**The first time I drank anything strong, or in greater quantity than a glass of beer, I got disgustingly drunk and missed the dinner which had been arranged for me in honor of my coming marriage.**

**I had to be taken home and remained in bed the following day; more sick than I thought a human could be and live. Yet, until five years ago I periodically did the same thing.**

**Making money was always pretty easy when I was sober and worked.**

**All right when sober-absolutely**

**helpless with a drink aboard. But I seemed to have had the idea that making money or a living was something to take or let alone.**

**I got into the real estate business—began to neglect business, sometimes with four houses under construction, wouldn't see any of them for a week or even longer—sometimes paid good money for an option, then forgot to exercise it. I made and lost plenty of money in the market.**

**Understand, I wasn't actually drunk all of this time but there seemed always to be an excuse to have a drink, and this first one, more and more often lead to my becoming drunk. As time went on, periods between drunks got shorter and I was full of fear; fear that I wouldn't be able to do anything I agreed to**

**do; fear of meeting men; worrying about what they might know of my drinking and its results; all of which made me quite useless whether I was sober or drunk.**

**Thus I drifted. Breaking promises to my wife, my mother, and a host of other relatives and friends who stood more from me and tried harder than humans should be expected to, to help me.**

**I always seemed to pick the most inopportune time for a binge. An important business deal to be closed might find me in another city. Once when entrusted to purchase for a large customer, I agreed to meet his representative in New York. I spent the time waiting for a train in a bar; arrived in New York tight; stayed tight the week; and came home by a route twice the distance from New**

**York.**

**Worked weeks, by long distance, wire, letters, and personal calls, to contact possible business connections under proper conditions and finally succeeded, only to show up tight or get tight and insult the man whose friendship, or respect meant so much.**

**Each time there was the feeling of regret, inability to understand why, but a firm determination that it would never happen again-but it did-in fact the periods between became increasingly shorter, and the duration of each binge longer.**

**During the aforementioned period, I had spent thousands of dollars, my home was broken up; half a dozen cars smashed up; I had been picked up by police for driving while**

**intoxicated-plain drunk; had sponged and borrowed money; cashed rubber checks; and made such a general nuisance of myself that I lost all the friends I had. At least they felt unwilling to be a party to financing me while I made a more complete ass of myself. And I, on my side was ashamed to face any of them when I was sober.**

**My friends secured jobs for me; I made good on them for a time. I advanced quickly to night superintendent in a factory but it wasn't long until I was missing, or worse, turning up drunk; was warned-warned again; finally fired. I was later rehired as a factory hand and mighty glad to have it-advance again-then back to the bottom-always the same process.**

**I drank continuously and when I**

**drank, sooner or later, and generally sooner, I got drunk and threw everything away.**

**During the early part of 1935 my brother secured my release from the city jail. On that day by sincere but non-alcoholic friends I was shown what might be done about my drinking with the help of God.**

**I asked for this help, gratefully accepted it, and in addition to losing my desire for drink, asked for and received the same help in other matters. I began to earn my living and in my new found security, was unashamed to meet people I had avoided for years with happy results.**

**Things continued well, I had two or three advancements to better jobs with greater earning power. My every need was being met as long as**

**I accepted and acknowledged the Divine Help which was so generously given.**

**I find now, as I look back, that this period covered about six or eight months, then I began to think how smart I was; to wonder if my superiors realized what they had in me; if they were not pretty small about the money they paid me; as these thoughts grew, my feeling of gratefulness grew less. I was neglecting to ask for help-when I received it as I always did, I neglected to acknowledge it. Instead I took great credit for myself. I began to take credit for the non-drinking too-it came to me strongly that I had conquered the drinking habit myself-I became convinced of my great will power.**

**Then someone suggested a glass of**



**beer-I had one. This was even better than I thought-I could take a drink and not get drunk. So another day, another beer until it was regular every day. Now I was indeed in the saddle concerning drink-could take it or leave it alone. Just to prove it to myself, I decided to march right past the place I usually stopped for beer, and I felt pretty good as I went to the parking lot for my car. The longer I drove the greater was my pride that I had finally licked liquor. I was sure I had-so sure in fact that I stopped and had a beer before I went home. In my smugness I continued to drink beer and began occasionally to drink liquor.**

**So it went until inevitably, "as darkness follows the sun," I got drunk and was right back where I had been fifteen years before,**

**slipping into a binge every now and then-never knowing when they would come-nor where I would wind up.**

**This lasted about eight months-I didn't miss much time from work-did spend one ten day stretch in the hospital after a beating I got while drunk-was warned a few times by my superiors-but was "getting by."**

**In the meantime I had heard of some men who, like myself, were what I had always scoffed at being-alcoholics. I had been invited to see them, but after twenty years of drinking, I felt there was nothing wrong with me. *They* might need it; *they* might be queer; but not me. I wasn't going to get drunk again.**

**Of course I did, again and again, until these men not only contacted**

**me but took me under their wing.**

**After a few days of "degoofing" in a hospital, these men came to me one by one and told me of their experiences. They didn't lecture- didn't tell me I should quit. But they did tell me *how* to quit. THAT WAS IMPORTANT and simple too.**

**Their suggestion was that we simply acknowledge we had made a pretty dismal failure of our lives, that we accept as truth and act upon what we had always been taught and known, that there was a kind and merciful God; that we were His children; and, that if we would let Him, He would help us.**

**I had certainly made a mess of my life. From the age of 20 I had thrown aside everything God had seen fit to endow me with. Why not avail**

**myself of this all wise, ever-present help?**

**This I did. I ask for, accept, and acknowledge this help, and know that so long as I do, I shall never take a drink and what is more important, though impossible without the first, all other phases of my life have been helped.**

**There are, it seems to me, four steps to be taken by one who is a victim of alcoholism.**

**First: Have a real desire to quit.**

**Second: Admit you can't. (This is hardest.)**

**Third: Ask for His ever present help.**

**Fourth: Accept and acknowledge this help.**

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