

**The First Day of the Week**

Rocky remembered when they had taken their first trip with the guys. He and his brother had gone with Him and the others out into the wilderness to see Cousin. They were going to spend a few days out in the desert, just hangin' out and havin' a good time. That first night would forever be etched in his mind, and the memory returned on the night He died. As daylight faded, the boys decided to make camp along an old watercourse which was only wet when it rained. They should have been a little more observant. A little before dusk they were caught in a downpour, and made a mad scramble for the cave that one of them had stumbled across. Any port was welcome in a storm, but Rocky had never ventured into a cave this deep before. At least it was dry, but everything they had was soaked, and there was no way to make a fire. The last rays of light disappeared as they huddled deeper into the darkening corners, looking for the soft comfort of some sand devoid of stones.

The shrill howl of a coyote startled Rocky from his slumber as it echoed against the cavern's walls, circling deeper into the bowels of the earth. He opened his eyes - or thought he did. There was a blackness in the cave that he could smell. The darkness of fear seemed to suck the breath from his lungs. Young Rocky was no coward, but facing this utter blackness caused him to shudder to the bone. He had camped out under the stars, tending the families meager herd. He had been alone on his father's fishing boat during a nighttime storm on the sea. He had explored the catacombs of ancient ruins, but he had never seen anything this black. There was not a speck of light - the darkest of the dark - wherever he looked. He could not see his hand before his face and his very breath brought forth an eerie echo from the stifling walls encroaching upon him. He strained with all his might to detect the breathing of his buddies, and tossed fitfully until a faint ray of illumination penetrated the darkness, betraying the location of the cavern's mouth.

That day was always considered the darkest day of his life. As he shuddered in the darkness, Rocky awaited the faintest hint of a ray of light which would direct him to the exit from this stifling tomb. He promised himself that he would never endeavor into the bowels of the earth again. And yet the past day and a half were darker still. He had witnessed from afar the death of his Friend on the tree. He had been powerless to help, and had slowly succumbed to the darkness of the night, and then to the blackness of the lost soul. Could he ever recover? Did he really want to?

The first day of the week dawned bright and sunny, but the sun could not dispel the deep dark soul of despair which had sucked the very life from Rocky's body. How could he face the light again, following the dark days that had ruined His plans -



had stolen his dreams? There was no comfort, no consolation, no hope. Perhaps he would return to the cave and pull the entrance in on top of him. He heard a tentative knock on the door - he hoped they would go away. It was one of the women, excitedly saying that His body was gone from the grave. Something muffled . . . about resurrection? She was gone, running to others with the news.

Rocky was not as fast as he used to be, but he made great time to the cemetery. Others were there already, warily eyeing the yawning mouth of the cave where the body would have been. Rocky paused for only a second as his eyes searched the darkness within. Nothing! He ran through the yawning mouth of the cave/grave, into the blackness which signaled grisly death, and found . . . nothing! And everything! He was not dead, but alive. Hope lives. Darkness is turned to light. He is the light of the world, come to rescue the hopeless from the darkness of sin. He will bring light to all those who trust in Him.

**"Be not afraid: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here:" Mark 16:6**

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