

Foregive-ants

In all antiquity, never had a man exuded mercy as Eugene Roy had. Eugene was deemed “excessively pious” in his accordance with the Holy Scripture and its doctrines. While the vast majority of man knew the significance of observing the Fifth Commandment and philosophies like “turning the other cheek,” Eugene surpassed these expectations and refused to vanquish even the life of a diminutive ant, citing Psalm 50: “... and the insects in the fields are mine.”

On a mellow Sunday afternoon, Eugene Roy was struck with the fancy for a picnic, but not merely a stereotypical wicket basket meal. No, he would fashion a feast rivaling the banquets of medieval lore. Thus Eugene passed the next hours in labor, cooking his culinary masterpieces with the fastidiousness of a violin virtuoso. When the last pecan pie had cooled beside his open window, cakes and pies of myriad size and various dishes (foreign and domestic) were crammed into baskets and creels to be driven to Quaker’s Hill; Eugene believed this to be the only site offering unblemished views of the river below.

After reaching Quaker’s Hill, Eugene proceeded to blanket a parcel of land with a motley quilt on which his repast was laid. But at the instant of his prayer’s conclusion and the “amen” uttered, a small ant appeared, heading an unwavering course towards a crumbly apple pie. Eugene observed with curiosity as the insect advanced, hefted a crumb upon its back, and began the journey back to the nest.

“What are you doing, my small friend?” Eugene questioned the ant.

“Oh sir, please do not raise your boot against me! I solely yearn to nourish my family!” cried the ant, terrified for its trivial life.

“Do not fear, little ant. I am not akin to other men. Go on your way, but I implore you not to take any additional food,” said Eugene in reply, and off the ant went. Moments later, another ant appeared, this one traversing the journey to the garnished salmon. A vexed Eugene asked the insect, “Did I not tell you to refrain from coming back here to my food?”

“Great sir, I beg you not to crush me! We have not yet met, and I am simply garnering sustenance for my children!” the ant pleaded. Though piqued, Eugene recollected Psalm 50 and allowed the creature to continue. No sooner had it vanished into the labyrinth of grass than another came, trailed by more and more until their magnitude extended into the thousands! Eugene witnessed with awe and dismay as the insects carted off every dish which he had arduously prepared.

Rage, raw and rampant, boiled in his heart. The wrath, however, was quickly quelled; in spite of the incident, Eugene was not entirely infuriated. Rather, a line from an article by Bill Vaughan which he had previously perused bore itself in his mind: “We hope that, when the insects take over the world, they will remember how we took them along on all our picnics.”