

**"Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit,
but righteousness delivers from death." [Prov. 10:2 ESV]**

On the outskirts of a bustling city, a fortress-like mansion stood, its gates guarded by stately trees. Acres of meticulously manicured gardens and lush green lawns surrounded the mansion, a testament to the wealth and power of its owner, Victor Blackwood. A titan of industry, Victor was known for his ruthless tactics and insatiable appetite for wealth. His empire was built on the suffering of others, with his actions shrouded in shadows of deception and deceit.

Years passed, and Victor's wealth swelled to unimaginable proportions. Yet, despite his riches, a gnawing emptiness lingered within him. The treasures gained by wickedness had brought him power and influence, but they offered no solace in the lonely, quiet moments of reflection.

Within the mansion's walls, a young maid named Eliza resided. Her innocent eyes, like mirrors, reflected the purity of her soul, untainted by the corruption that permeated her surroundings. While the allure of wealth tempted many to deceive and steal, Eliza remained resolute in her integrity, honesty, and humility, finding inner strength in her unwavering righteousness.

One fateful evening, as Victor reveled in his ill-gotten gains, a knock echoed through the halls of his mansion. An unexpected visitor stood at the threshold, bearing news of an impending storm. Ignoring the warning, Victor dismissed the visitor with a flick of his hand, intoxicated by his own arrogance.

As the night wore on, the storm brewed outside, its fury assaulting Victor's mansion like a tsunami. Unbeknownst to him, the lightning highlighted the shadows that lurked in every corner, whispering of his impending downfall. The treasures gained by his wickedness were now trembling, their value fading with each passing clap of thunder sounding the portent of the consequences of his selfish actions.

As Victor stood alone on his ornate balcony, gazing out at his vast estate amidst the darkening skies, a sudden realization washed over him like a wave crashing against a rocky shore. His wealth, amassed through deceit and exploitation, held no lasting value. It was a hollow victory, a mirage in the desert of his soul.

As the storm struck, trembling, he retreated into a closet in his third-floor master bedroom suite. Meanwhile, Eliza scrambled down to the basement, heeding the visitor's warning.

As the clock struck midnight, a deafening crash broke the silence, reverberating through the mansion like a harbinger of fate. Victor's glorious mansion was crushed as several large trees surrounding it fell, crashing through the roof and toppling the walls like a house of cards. All of his ill-gotten treasures were shattered.

After the night of chaos, Eliza emerged from the basement unscathed. As dawn broke over the devastated estate, Victor's beloved mansion had become nothing more than a fleeting illusion, a heap of ruins.

And so, the echoes of the proverb rang out true once again – "Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death." [Prov. 10:2, ESV].