

Right at Last

Holding her firmly in his strong arms, he made his way across the stage and succeeded in finding a small opening which had represented a door in the scenery.

He rushed through this only just in time, for all that remained of the scene fell a moment afterwards, and exactly on the spot where he had been standing. Through the darkness caused by the smoke, and relieved only by the fitful glare of flames, he made his way, stumbling sometimes over pieces of wood and ropes and at others almost falling down the yawning pits of traps.

What direction he was taking he did not know.

The yells of the mob in the front of the house were now lessened by the cracking and roaring of the flames and the sound of the water thrown by the steam engines, and which fell in glittering cascades on the stage.

Presently he found himself in a small space divided from the stage by a partition which the flames had not yet reached.

There was light enough from the livid reflection of the fire to see the first steps of a staircase, and Bertie, though half in doubt and desperate, was about to carry Joan down there when it suddenly occurred to him that some portion of the falling timber might drop over the opening and confine them in a cellar which the suffocating smoke might transform into a veritable tomb for them.

At this moment, as he stood undecided, Joan stirred, and, struggling faintly, uttered a moan.

Still keeping his arm around her, he let her slip to the ground.

"Where am I?" she said, faintly, then uttered an exclamation of dismay as the recollection of the fire returned to her mind.

Bertie's heart leaped at the sound of her voice. Even in that supreme moment of peril, a wild, mad feeling of joy and satisfaction had taken possession of him.

Fate had decreed that he should go to the coroner that night, that he should meet her once more, that he should save her.

This thought had run swiftly through his brain, and echoed in his heart while he had been in his arms.

Even as he had made his way across the stage, with the fierce flames stretching out on all sides of him, he had said to himself, "I shall save her once more, this time from death!" and the thought would have "nerved him" even if he had lacked the courage, which he did not.

And now she spoke, her voice thrilled him as it had thrilled him the first time he heard it. It was like the picture opening its sweet lips at last.

A strange shyness fell upon him as he looked at her. Her hair had slipped from its coils, and hung in silken profusion over one shoulder, her face was pale, her eyes soft and dreamy.

"For heaven's sake, don't be frightened," he said, at last.

"I am not frightened. Where are we?"

"In the theatre still!"

"Yes, we are in the theatre, I think," he said.

Then she remembered the panic-stricken people fighting and struggling towards the doors, as she had seen them in the last moment of consciousness, and she shuddered.

"The poor people! the poor people!" she moaned. "Are they safe? Oh, it is terrible!"

Even at that moment he noticed, with a thrill of admiration and devotion, that her thoughts, her fears, were not for herself.

"I trust they are all safe by this time—or most of them," he replied.

"There were several exits—" she cried, wringing her hands—"generally locked! Oh, it is terrible!"

"Yes, yes!" he assented, hurriedly; "but I must think of you now!"

She glanced round through the thick smoke.

"Are we not safe?" she said, wearily; "where are we?"

"I do not know," answered Bertie; "I scarcely know how we came here. It is the back of the stage."

She looked about her again, and her eyes grew grave.

"We are on the back of all that. This is the way to the cellars, where the machinery is kept."

"Is there a way out?" he demanded, quickly.

She shook her head.

"No. This is the only door leading to it."

He glanced towards the front, now a sheet of flame that lit up the narrow recess in which they stood. How long would it be—how many minutes before the flames would reach them? Five—ten—or less?

"We are in danger!" said Joan, in a quiet voice and quite calmly.

He did not speak; he was wondering at her calmness—this girl who a few moments ago had seemed all nerves and emotion.

"We are in a trap," he said, hoarsely; "a trap to which this is the only door!" and he pointed to the square opening now lurid with fire.

Joan sank upon a piece of timber, and quietly pushed her hair back into a knot. Her lips trembled slightly, but her hand was steady and firm.

"How did we come here?" she said.

He groaned with remorse.

"I—I carried you here!"

"I did not mean that! I am ungrateful! It was good and noble of you; it was the only way—you did not know. But which way did you come?"

"Across the stage, I think," he replied; "I can scarcely tell. A piece of the scenery had fallen across the right wing."

"Then that is the only way out," she said, pointing to the opening.

"And that will be left to us long," said Bertie, grimly.

He paced up and down for a moment, then came to her side again.

"Do you think you could venture to try the passage with me?" he faltered.

She rose and held out her hand with a faint smile on her white face, and he took her hand; but as they neared the opening she shrank back slightly.

Bertie set his teeth hard, and catching her up in his arms, dashed forward. The heat was terrible. He felt it scorching his face and thought of her, of the beautiful lily-white face whose likeness he had gazed at for so many hours.

"Turn your face to me," he whispered. "Hide it against my breast."

Half-mechanically, Joan obeyed, and closed her eyes. She felt herself borne along as through a stream of liquid fire, then there came a momentary pause, and when she opened her eyes she found herself still in his arms and back in the recess.

"I have failed!" he said hoarsely. "It would have been death for you if I had gone on!"

"And for you?" she said, gently.

"For me?" he said, with self-coercion. "What does it matter whether I live or die? I am of no use to myself or anyone! But you—you!" his voice broke and he turned his head away. "You shall not die!" he cried suddenly.

"There must be some way—some way!" and he ran to the walls and groped about in frantic despair.

"Oh, be calm!" murmured Joan; but as she spoke she burst into tears and covered her face with her hands.

"For heaven's sake don't cry!" he said, almost fiercely.

"No, no!" she murmured. "I could not help it! I was thinking of her—of a very dear friend—one who was more than a sister to me, Oh, Emily, Emily!"

"If she is an actress she is most likely safe!" he said, eagerly. "There was time for them to get away before the wings caught. You would have been safe if you had not remained to look to the people in front, and if I—!" he stopped, choked—"if I had not brought you here."

"Hush!" she said, holding out her hand to him. "You did it for the best. If my life is saved you will have saved it. Do not accuse yourself of anything—but rashness in coming to my aid."

He knelt at her side, and, seizing her hand raised it humbly to his lips.

As he did so the flames he had been dreading broke through the opening, and a flood of light poured upon his white face.

Joan started and drew back, then bent forward and looked at him in amazement.

"You!" she cried.

"Yes," he responded, reading her thoughts; "it is I, Bertie Dewsbury. You remember me?"

"I remember," said Joan, faintly; "and you came here to-night, you knew me?"

"Not till I saw you on the stage," he said, rapidly; "I came to the theatre by accident, by chance, I know you the moment I saw you."

"It is strange," she faltered; "once before you saved me—" Her voice broke over her.

"And I will save you now!" he almost shouted, and scarcely knowing what he was doing he caught up a heavy piece of timber and commenced pounding at the wall.

Bertie was strong and desperate; the wall, which was of single brick, shook, and shivered beneath the blows of the heavy piece of timber which he used as a battering ram, and presently the brickwork gave way.

He had only just time to drop the timber and drag Joan out of the way when a portion of the wall fell in, a cloud of dust mingling with the smoke which was now rendering their place of refuge thick and murky.

"Where does this lead? It is a kind of passage," he shouted in Joan's ear, for the noise of falling beams and the roaring of the flames rendered speech almost impossible.

Joan looked round her. She knew of no passage except that of the painting-room above and behind the stage.

"It leads to the painting-room," she said.

"Come with me!" he shouted, and taking her hand he hurried her up the stairs.

Even as they reached the first landing he, looking back, saw their late refuge one mass of flames.

On the landing where they now paused to take breath there was a window, and instinctively they both went to it and looked down.

The lurid light of the burning building fell upon an immense crowd, a sea of upturned faces which shone fitfully in the red and yellow glare.

As they came to the window the crowd caught sight of them, and a roar, which seemed to shake the tottering theatre, rose from thousands of throats, as hands were raised and pointed to the two figures at the window.

"Thank God!" murmured Joan. "They will put the escape up! Ah, it is none too soon," and she laughed hysterically and put her hand to her throat, as she felt choking with the intense heat and the smoke.

Bertie had to stifle a groan. He knew that from where they stood no escape could reach them; his quick eye had caught the sight of flames breaking with fierce breath, and with a swift pang through his heart he felt that if she was to be saved it was by him, and him alone.

"Wait here!" he said, putting his hand on her arm to reassure and encourage her. "Keep close to the window and get as much air as possible! I will not be a moment!"

Then as she smiled up in his face in token of obedience, he sprang up the few steps and entered the painting room. As he did so he heard a sharp, hissing sound against the walls; it was the by-stands playing round the window where Joan stood. With the rapidity of a man fighting for life against time, Bertie got together all the rope that he could

find, and fortunately there was a quantity lying about, and joining it into one long piece, he coiled it up and returned to Joan.

"Help me!" he said, feverishly; and he showed her how to make a slip-knot, while he passed one end of the rope round the rough but strong balustrade of the stairway.

While he was doing it the shouts of the crowd grew louder, and took to themselves a note of warning.

He knew what it meant, and that there was not a moment to lose.

"Now!" he said, and he slipped the noose under her arms. "You will be brave, will you not? It is my only chance of saving you! Put out your hands and keep yourself from striking against the wall!"

Joan looked at him.

"You were going to let me down?" she said, standing close to him.

"Were? I am!" he said, eagerly. "Step on to the window ledge and let yourself down; close your eyes and do not fear. You shall not come to any harm."

But still she stood looking at him.

"And you?" she said, in a low, intense voice.

"I?" he said, impatiently. "Oh, I am all right. They will reach me somehow. I can go down the rope after you. For heaven's sake be quick! Hark! They are shouting to us that there is no time to lose."

Still Joan hesitated.

"You cannot go down that rope after me by yourself," she said, catching his arm. "You are tired, worn out. Look how your hand trembles! Ah! I see what you mean; you would save me, and stay here and die! I will not go! No! We will stay together."

The sweat broke out on his face and his heart seemed to stand still.

"For the sake of heaven," he cried, "do not hesitate!"

She smiled at him, and the smile lingered in his memory for years afterwards.

"I am not so fond of life, my friend," she said. "No; we will stay together."

There was no time for further parley. Desperate, reckless, Bertie made the rope fast, and, securing her in his arms, murmured: "Oh, forgive me!" and put her outside the window.

She clung to him for a moment with a convulsive shudder, but Bertie put her hands from him tenderly, reverently, and then, springing back to his rope, let her down gently.

A roar of surprise and delight rose from the crowd, a roar which grew in volume and frenzy as the slim figure of the girl who had become a popular idol swung and swayed in the air, the red light falling on her beautiful face.

"It is Ida Trevelyan!" the mob shouted. "Hurrah! Keep up your hearts, miss. You're all safe! All safe! Bravo!"

Slowly, steadily she came down; the crowd raved and roared in its excitement. Men shouted themselves hoarse, women shrieked and screamed in mad hysteria, and all made one frantic effort to get near her, as if every man wanted to touch her and seize her first.

Then suddenly, from the centre of the crowd, a man broke, and dashed himself towards the spot to which she was descending. White, speechless, his eyes fixed on her in a wild, despairing glance, he fought his way, until he came close beneath her. Then, the light falling on his face, the crowd saw and recognized him.

It was Mordaunt Royce.

His were the hands which first seized her, and as she fell fainting into his arms a yell of triumph went up from the mob.

Then came a cry.

"Look! look! the man!" and a thousand eyes were fixed on the window at which Bertie had again appeared.

They saw him lean over, as if to see whether she was safe, then he sprang to the ledge, and, grasping the rope firmly, began to climb down. As he did so there was an awful crash, and the roof fell in. A shower of slates and charred woodwork fell round him, some of them striking him, but still Bertie clung on.

The crowd was now as silent as the grave; in the awful suspense it seemed as if scarcely a man breathed.

Faiger eyes were fixed on the figure clinging to the frail rope and coming down so slowly, slowly, that it seemed as if days elapsed between every yard he made.

The firemen, alone calm and collected, dashed up to the spot carrying an immense square of canvas, and the crowd, seeing their intention, yelled their approval.

Foot by foot Bertie made his way. It seemed to him that his lower limbs were made of lead, and that his hands were sawn apart, so heavy was the strain. He dared not look down, he could not look upward for fear of the falling sparks and hot ashes which fell in a shower about him.

With closed eyes and clenched teeth, he clung on until he could climb no longer.

Then, with a short, quick sigh, he felt his hands slip from the rope.

A sob, a yell, arose from the crowd as he fell backwards, which suddenly changed to a roar of satisfaction and delight as the firemen caught him in the canvas and waved their hands as a sign that he was safe.

Men and women rushed forward to seize him by the hand; voices were heard inquiring who he was; and when his name went round, shouts rose of: "Bravo, my lord! Bravo, Lord Dewsbury!"

Bertie, half stunned by the noise, stood amidst the crowd in his shirt sleeves, his waistcoat torn and spotted with the blood that had dropped from his cut and chafed hands, his yellow hair scorched and burnt, his face blackened and grazed.

"Where is Miss Trevelyan?" he inquired at last, when he had pulled himself together.

She was not far off. They had tried to persuade her to go home, but she would not move until she saw with her own eyes how her preserver had fared; and now she came up to thank him, her eyes moist, her hands held out heaven!

"Oh, thank heaven!" "Thank heaven!" she said, reverently. "You are not hurt?"

"Not in the least," he said, his eyes fixed on her. "And you?"

She shook her head.

"Not! It is wonderful how we escaped! And—and I owe my life to you!" Bertie still held her hands, utterly indifferent to the crowd that surrounded them, some of whom were not unused to the scene.

"He saved her life!" said a rough man, with a heavy hand on his shoulder, just as the girl was about to be carried off. "I've seen! Three cheers for Lord Dewsbury! Heaven bless you, my lord!"

Bertie still held her hands when Mordaunt Royce came up.

"Come, Ida," he said, "the cab is here."

Then he stared as his eyes fell on Bertie.

"This—is this the gentleman who saved me?" said Joan, with a sudden flush on her pale face.

Bertie started.

"Who? Royce?" he said.

Royce laughed nervously and held out his hands.

"I—I didn't know it was you, Bertie!" he said, hurriedly; "they—they didn't tell me. How can we—thank you?"

Bertie, mystified and bewildered, waved his hand.

"It was nothing," he said; "any fellow would have done the same."

"I—I will see you to-morrow," said Royce, hurriedly; and taking Joan's hand he drew it through his arm and led her away.

As she went, Joan looked back over her shoulder and Bertie bowed. She was taken off in a moment and hurried out of his sight, and there was nothing left for him but to go home.

One of the men stripped off his jacket and held it out to him.

"Put it on, my lord," he said; "it ain't worth while catching cold, after what you've done. Talk of the aristocrats; I don't want to hear no more rubbish about 'em after this, if you're an aristocrat," he added, with an oath. "If you'd been a common workman you couldn't a done more!"

(To be Continued.)

STILL ANOTHER POSTMASTER TELLS

Why He Pins His Faith to Dadd's Kidney Pills

Doctors Failed to Cure His Bright's Disease, But He Found Relief in the Great Canadian Kidney Remedy.

Clam Point, Shelburne Co., N.S., Jan. 30.—(Special.)—Joshua Nickerson, postmaster here, is among the many in this neighborhood who tell of pains relieved and disease banished by Dadd's Kidney Pills.

"I am sixty-two years old," says the postmaster. "And I'll tell you why I think so highly of Dadd's Kidney Pills. Owing to a bad cold my kidneys commenced to bother me, and the trouble developed into Backache, stiffness of the joints, and finally Bright's Disease."

"I was treated by a doctor, but that did not help me much, and it was six boxes of Dadd's Kidney Pills that brought me relief."

Everywhere you go in Canada people tell you of the great work Dadd's Kidney Pills are doing, and everyone who tells you can give the reason why. That reason simply is that there is no case of Kidney Disease, Dadd's Kidney Pills cannot cure. These people have tried them and proved this time. Backache, Rheumatism, Dropsy, Diabetes, Lumbago, Heart Disease and Bright's Disease are some of the more serious troubles that Dadd's Kidney Pills always cure. Simply because these are all either Kidney diseases or are caused by diseased Kidneys.

Have You Told Your Child?

(By Cynthia Grey.)

Girls and boys of fourteen to sixteen are unusually sensitive and sentimental; they are easily embarrassed, are restless and unsatisfied without knowing why.

And it is also true that parents are prone to be less patient with their children than they were once in their own youth; they, too, were once in need of patient and thoughtful kindness at this critical period of childhood.

Some of us, whose youth is only a memory now, were fortunate enough to possess mothers whose ideas were right, but the mothers of many others inherited opinions handed down from the good old grandmother days, chief among them being the one that children must be kept in dense ignorance of the secrets of their bodies.

The former class of mothers is still, alas, too few, while mothers of the latter class are countless.

Boys and girls of this age find themselves possessed of new and strange powers, which they cannot understand. They are disposed to erratic behaviour, are inclined to fall despondently in love, are liable to go astray in conduct and commit fatal mistakes through the ignorance of their parents are alone responsible.

Mothers, why don't you realize that this ignorance is the greatest source of danger for your boys and girls, and that it is in your power to enlighten them in the right way in the study of self?

The modesty which bids you to silence on this subject is only false modesty, which leads your children to think that the story of life must be something of a mystery that will be ashamed, since mother refuses to speak of it.

Let the children feel from infancy that they can come to you in all their problems without fear lest their queries meet with ridicule or evasive answers. Meet them face to face and answer their questions in the proper spirit. There will then be little danger that the easily impressed minds of the children will be poisoned by the vulgarities of their school-mates.

You may be sure that there are plenty of evil-minded children abroad who WILL tell your children their opinions, and the harm will be irremediable unless you forestall them by telling them in your own words the things they ought to know.

Accurate.

"How high is the thermometer?" asked the Philadelphia girl.

After a busy moment with a tape measure her Boston cousin replied "Five feet and three inches from the floor, dear."

Shiloh's Cure

quickly stops coughs, cures colds, hoarseness, throat and lungs. 25 cents.

HOOKWORM, SCOURGE OF SOUTHLAND, IS DOOMED

(By Robt. F. Wilson.)

Washington, D.C.—Hookworm, the parasite scourge of the south, blamed for much of its poverty to-day, is to be wiped out within a few years, in the opinion of Dr. Bailey K. Ashford, U.S.A. surgeon in Porto Rico.

Dr. Ashford is one of the two American pioneers in the treatment of hookworm disease, the other being Dr. Walter W. King, of Savannah, Ga., member of the U. S. public health and marine hospital service.

Working separately by experiments, Dr. Ashford and Dr. King each arrived at the conclusion that hookworm disease was contracted by the parasite larvae entering the victim through the skin. They found this out by experimenting upon themselves. Dr. Ashford put the deadly hookworm eggs on his hand and, through a microscope, saw the newly hatched larvae wriggle through his pores into his blood.

Up to ten years ago hookworm disease was not recognized. Among the clay eaters of the south doctors diagnosed the affliction as profound anemia. The victim grew paler and paler, and if they did not die they remained helpless invalids, held by a malady so elusive that they were put down by the energetic as lazy good-for-nothings.

Once the disease was recognized, cure was speedily worked out. Five doses of thymol, a dangerous drug unless administered by a physician, is usually enough to restore the most chronic cases of health, strength and energy.

At the time of the American occupation it was estimated that the work capacity of Porto Rico was reduced 50 per cent by hookworm. In 1900 there were 12,000 deaths from hookworm disease.

After six years of vigorous work, the death rate has fallen from 42 to 21 per 1,000, and less than 1,000 Porto Ricans die each year from hookworm. And the campaign has only begun.

"We found that these sick men could only average 50 per cent of the amount of work healthy men could accomplish," says Dr. Ashford. "Thus we found the worm responsible for much of the island's poverty."

"The density of population, 264 per square mile, and the muddy soil, shaded by the coffee bushes, were the two principal reasons why hookworm was so fatal. The eggs of the parasite hatched in the warm, moist loams, and the larvae penetrated the bare feet of the

laborers, largely Spanish whites.

"The cure of 300,000 out of a total million population convinced the Porto-Ricans that hookworm was one of their principal obstacles to industrial success and social betterment. The people, at first afraid of the treatment, now aid dispensary work in every possible way.

"We now have 60 hookworm dispensaries, combining treatment and education. Wages are rising generally as workmen are becoming more efficient with better health, and the output of coffee has been increased."

The government will publish Dr. Ashford's extensive work on hookworm disease.

The fight against the hookworm disease is but one phase of the campaign for better health in Porto Rico.

In the five years preceding 1900, 3,000 Porto Ricans died of smallpox and 600 of yellow fever. Fatal epidemics of both were frequent.

To-day there is not a case of smallpox or yellow fever on the island, nor has there been a death from either in several years. The vaccination of 800,000 Porto Ricans in 1900 wiped out smallpox. Rigid quarantine extinguished yellow fever.



DR. BAILEY K. ASHFORD, U.S.A. Army Surgeon Who Worked Wonders in Porto Rico.

ON THE VERGE OF A BREAKDOWN

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills the Only Hope for Weakened, Nervous People.

This warning will be read by thousands of people who only just succeed in getting through the day's work tired and broken down. If you feel always without rest, have but little appetite, and a poor digestion, cannot sleep well, suffer from headaches, backaches and nervousness, it may mean that you are on the verge of a serious breakdown.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure weak, nervous, troubled men and women because of their direct action on the blood. Every dose of these Pills helps to make new, rich blood, which tones the vital organs, strengthens the nerves and brings renewed health and strength. Mr. Geo. Johnson, of Lequire, N. S., suffered for some years as a result of overwork and strain, but found no help for his condition until he began the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mr. Johnson says: "While working on a railway handling heavy ties I hurt my back and had to give up work. Later I was able to do light work, but for about six years I suffered from dreadful pains in the back and down my legs. This condition became aggravated by indigestion and chronic constipation, and my life was one of constant misery. During those years I was treated by different doctors, but did not get any help. One day a friend urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and proved his faith in them by presenting me with a box. It was more to please him than from any belief that they would be of service to me. That I began taking the Pills. Before the box was finished, however, they seemed to be helping me; the pains in my back and legs grew less intense and the bloating in my stomach, caused by the indigestion, disappeared. I continued taking the Pills until I had used over a dozen boxes, when I found myself fully restored to my former health, and for the past year have not lost a day, or had the least symptom of my former troubles, and I attribute it entirely to the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are