

SAVED AT SEA.—A LIGHTHOUSE STORY.

By the Author of "Christie's Old Organ," "Little Dot," etc.

CHAP. III.—(Continued.)

For some time we battled with the waves, unwilling to relinquish all hope of saving some of them. But we found at last that it was of no use, and we were obliged to return.

All had perished, except the child lying at my feet. I stooped down to it, and could hear that it was crying, but it was so tightly tied up in a blanket, that I could not see it nor release it.

We had to strain every nerve to reach the lighthouse. It was not so hard returning as going, for the wind was in our favor, but the sea was still strong, and we were often in great danger. I kept my eye fixed on the lighthouse lamps, and steered the boat as straight as I could. Oh! how thankful we were to see those friendly lights growing nearer! And at last the pier came in sight, and Mrs. Millar still standing there watching us.

"Have you got none of them?" she said, as we came up the steps.

"Nothing but a child," said my grandfather, sadly. "One small child, that's all. Well, we did our best, Jem, my lad."

Jem was following my grandfather, with the oars over his shoulder. I came last, with that little bundle in my arms.

The child had stopped crying now, and seemed to be asleep, it was so still. Mrs. Millar wanted to take it from me, and to undo the blanket but my grandfather said, "Bide your time, Mary; bring the child into the house, my lass, it's bitter cold out here."

So we all went up through the field, and through our garden and the court. The blanket was tightly fastened round the child, except at the top, where room had been left for it to breathe, and I could just see a little nose and two closed eyes, as I peeped in at the opening.

The bundle was a good weight, and before I reached the house, I was glad of Mrs. Millar's help to carry it. We came into our little kitchen, and Mrs. Millar took the child on her knee, and unfastened the blanket.

"Bless her," she said, as her tears fell fast, "it's a little girl!" "Ay," said my grandfather, "so it is; it's a bonnie wee lassie!"

CHAP. IV.—LITTLE TIMPEY.

I do not think I ever have seen a prettier face than that child's. She had light brown hair, and round rosy cheeks, and the bluest of blue eyes.

She awoke as we were looking at her, and seeing herself amongst strangers, she cried bitterly.

"Poor little thing!" said Mrs. Millar. "She wants her mother." "Mam—ma Mam—ma!" cried

the little girl, as she caught the word.

Mrs. Millar fairly broke down at this, and sobbed and cried as much as the child.

"Come, my lass," said her husband, "cheer up! Thee'll make her worse, if thee takes on so."

But Mrs. Millar could do nothing but cry. "Just think if it was our Polly," was all that she could say. "Oh, Jem, just think if it was our Polly that was calling for me!"

My grandfather took the child from her, and put her on my knee. "Now, Mary," he said "get us a bit of fire and something to eat, there's a good woman! The child's cold and hungred, and we're much about the same ourselves."

Mrs. Millar bustled about the house, and soon lighted a blazing fire; then she ran in next door to see if her children, whom she had left with a little servant girl, were all right, and she brought back with her some cold meat for our breakfast.

I sat down on a stool before the fire, with the child on my knee. She seemed to be about two years old, a strong, healthy little thing. She had stopped crying now, and did not seem to be afraid of me, but whenever any one of the others came near she hid her face in my shoulder.

Mrs. Millar brought her a basin of bread and milk, and she let me feed her.

She seemed very weary and sleepy, as if she could hardly keep her eyes open. "Poor wee lassie!" said my grandfather; "I expect they pulled her out of her bed to bring her on deck. Won't you put her to bed, Mrs. Millar?"

"Yes," she said, "I'll put her in our Polly's bed; she'll sleep there quite nice, she will."

But the child clung to me, and cried so loudly when Mrs. Millar tried to take her that my grandfather said:

"I wouldn't take her away, poor motherless lamb; she takes kindly to Alick; let her bide here." So we made up a little bed for her on the sofa, and Mrs. Millar brought one of little Polly's night-gowns, and undressed and washed her, and put her to bed.

The child was still very shy of all of them but me. She seemed to have taken to me from the first, and when she was put into her little bed, she held out her tiny hand to me and said:

"Handie, Timpey's handie."

"What does she say? bless her!" said Mrs. Millar, for it was almost the first time that the child had spoken.

"She wants me to hold her little hand," I said, "Timpey's little hand. Timpey must be her name!"

"I never heard of such a name," said Mrs. Millar. "Timpey, did you say?"

"What do they call you, darling?" she said to the child.

But the little blue eyes were closing wearily, and very soon the child was asleep. I still held that tiny hand in mine as I sat beside her, I was afraid of waking her by putting it down.

"I wonder who she is!" said Mrs. Millar in a whisper, as she folded up her little clothes. "She has beautiful things on to be sure! She has been well taken care of, anyhow! Stop, here's something written on the little petticoat; can you make it out, Alick?"

I laid down the little hand very carefully, and took the tiny petticoat to the window.

"Yes," I said, "this will be her name. Here's *Villiers* written on it."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Millar. "Yes, that will be her name! Dear me, dear me, to think of her poor father and mother at the bottom of that dreadful sea! Just think if it was our Polly!" And then Mrs. Millar cried so much again, that she was obliged to go home and finish her cry, with her little Polly clasped tightly in her arms.

My grandfather was very worn out with all he had done during the night, and went upstairs to bed. I sat watching the little sleeping child. I felt as if I could not leave her.

She slept very quietly and peacefully. Poor little pet, how little she knows what has happened, I thought, and my tears came fast, and fell on the little fat hand which was lying on the pillow. But after a few minutes I leaned my head against the sofa and fell fast asleep. I had no sleep the night before, and was quite worn out.

I was awakened, some hours after, by some one pulling my hair, and a little voice calling in my ear, "Up! up, boy! up! up!"

I looked up, and saw a little roguish face looking at me; the merriest, brightest little face you can imagine.

"Up, up, boy, please!" she said again, in a coaxing voice.

So I lifted up my head, and she climbed out of her little bed on the sofa on to my knee.

"Put shoes on, boy," she said, holding out her little bare toes.

I put on her shoes and stockings, and then Mrs. Millar came in and dressed her.

It was a lovely afternoon; the storm had ceased whilst we had been asleep, and the sun was shining brightly. I got the dinner ready, and the child watched me, and ran backwards and forwards, up and down the kitchen. She seemed quite at home now, and very happy.

My grandfather was still asleep, so I did not wake him. Mrs. Millar brought in some broth she had made for the child, and we dined together. I wanted to feed her as I did the night before, but she said:

"Timpey have poon, please!"

and took the spoon from me, and fed herself so prettily, I could not help watching her.

"God bless her, poor little thing!" said Mrs. Millar.

"God bless ou," said the child; the words were evidently familiar to her.

"She must have heard her mother say so," said Mrs. Millar, in a choking voice.

When we had finished dinner, the child slipped down from her stool, and ran to the sofa. Here she found my grandfather's hat, which she put on her head, and my scarf, which she hung round her neck. Then she marched to the door and said, "Tatta, tatta; Timpey go tatta."

"Take her out a bit, Alick," said Mrs. Millar. "Stop a minute, though, I'll fetch her Polly's hood." So, to her great delight, we dressed her in Polly's hood, and put a warm shawl round her, and I took her out.

Oh! how she ran, and jumped, and played in the garden. I never saw such a merry little thing. Now she was picking up stones, now she was gathering daisies ("days-days" she called them), now she was running down the path and calling to me to catch her. She was never still a single instant!

But every now and then, as I was playing with her, I looked across the sea to Ainslie Crag. The sea had not gone down much, though the wind had ceased, and I saw the waves still dashing wildly upon the rocks.

And I thought of what lay beneath them, of the shattered ship, and of the child's mother. Oh! if she only knew, I thought, as I listened to her merry laugh, which made me more ready to cry than her tears had done.

CHAP. V.—THE UNCLAIMED SUN-BEAM.

My grandfather, and Jem Millar were sitting over the fire in the little watch-room in the lighthouse tower, and I sat beside them with the child on my knee. I had found an old picture-book for her, and she was turning over the leaves, and making her funny little remarks on the pictures.

"Well, surely," said Millar, "what shall we do with her?"

"Do with her?" said my grandfather, stroking her little fair head. "We'll keep her! Won't we little lassie?"

"Yes," said the child, looking up and nodding her head, as if she understood all about it.

"We ought to look up some of her relations, it seems to me," said Jem. "She's sure to hve some, somewhere."

"And how are we to find out?" asked my grandfather.

"Oh, the captain can soon make out for us what ship is missing, and we can send a line to the owners; they'll know who the passengers was."

(To be Continued.)