

tiny stretcher hastily made of twigs, felt thankful that Spicer had been out of the way, or the little procession might have been a funeral.

It was a couple of days after, and Esty, accompanied by her faithful Jenny, set forth to give Bobolink, still an interesting patient, an airing in the meads. The Persian, carefully wrapped in a gay antimacassar, was lounging in a doll's perambulator which Esty wheeled slowly. His wounds were healing, and, by the aid of saucers of beef tea constantly supplied him, Bobolink was almost his handsome self again.

'Jenny, couldn't we go down by the river path?' suggested Esty. She had a secret hope that, perhaps, they might see Bobo-

on the grass Jenny flung herself, drumming her heels, and screeching loudly for aid.

It was a blustering August afternoon. In the far distant harvest fields the reapers were busy getting in the corn that the high winds had already dried. But there was nobody to hear Jenny's screams; nobody to lend a helping hand to the exhausted boy whose weight gradually was bowing the branch close down to the rushing waters. Little Esty, with white lips and starting eyes, looked down at Jenny. That, surely, was hardly the way to render aid to any one in peril! The blood of her race ran in the veins of the tiny, frail child. Her quickened wits jumped as she suddenly noted the old punt chained to the bank a little further down the river.



JUST IN TIME.

link's preserver, the boy at Southmoor. And Esty's hope was realized.

'Oh, Jenny! Look, Jenny!'

Away down the sloping bank rolled the perambulator, and Bobolink had barely time to save himself by nimbly springing out. Esty and Jenny were racing to the water's edge, their faces pale with horror. There had been some heavy storms that week, and the little river between the Manor and Southmoor was swollen to a rushing torrent. Across it was bending a huge bough of a tree, creaking with a human weight hanging from its middle by the hands.

'Oh, Jenny, Jenny! It's the boy from Southmoor, the one who saved Bobolink!' shrieked Esty.

'My patience!' sobbed Jenny affrightedly, 'He's going to be drowned for sure!' Down

'Quick, Jenny, quick.'

Derry had screamed himself dumb. His lips wide apart, were baked and dry; but a flicker of hope leaped into his anguished eyes as he heard Esty's cry: 'Quick, Jenny, there's the punt!'

Jenny abruptly stopped shrieking and sat up. Yes, she understood! The strong-armed girl had the boat chain unfastened and the oars in her hands in a trice. Esty, whose frail little strength did not match her quick wits, stood on the bank with her mites of hands pressed on her chest to keep in her sobs, while Bobolink, his magnificent tail curled round his feet, sat near his mistress watching the proceedings as he placidly washed his face with the air of saying, 'Ah, if it hadn't been for me coming out for an airing, where would young master be now?'

The boat was only just in time. So close down to the stream were Derry's toes as he hung from the creaking branch that Jenny easily clasped the half-fainting boy in her arms and laid him in the heaving boat.

'Hilloa! Whatever's all this?' shouted a new voice. It belonged to one of the men-servants from the house who had been scouring the meadows for his little mistress. One of her guardians had arrived from London, and Esty was wanted at once.

Charles speedily landed the unconscious Derry, and laying him flat on the grass proceeded to bathe his face with capfuls of water.

'Don't be frightened, missy,' he said to the trembling Esty. 'Tis only a faint. He will come to presently.'

Sure enough Derry's eyes opened suddenly to gaze wonderingly up into the anxious faces bent over him.

'I'd like something to eat!' he weakly said, true to a boy's first instinct. Then he tried to sit up; but the strain had been too great, and Derry slipped off into another swoon.

It was late in the evening before master Derry had got over the shock of a disaster that might have caused his death, for, had the bough given way, the rushing stream would have raced him along for miles. If he had escaped being smashed against the boulders in the river, he would have sped on to a more dreadful fate at the mill.

'God has been very good to you, Derry, boy!' said his grandmother who sat by his bedside feeding him with sips of hot milk by the doctor's orders.

'I know, Granny; I know he has! It was awful. You see, I'd been up that tree often before, and it seemed as strong as a house. But the storms must have cracked that branch—and I was hanging over the water ever so long, until—Oh, Granny, I'm sorry I called her a rag doll, and wouldn't go up to the Manor to play with her!'

'Who—what do you mean, dear?'

'Why, that little girl, Esty. Granny, she was the one who saved my life! I saw it all as I was hanging from the bough!'

Then a strange thing happened. There was nobody in the room to see it, but sweet old Granny, so Derry cried! Of course it is not every day that a boy has to face death, and the bravest need not have been overwhelmed of those tears of Derry's.

'Dear little Esty!' murmured Granny, sobbing for company. 'Dear little motherless, fatherless lamb! To think that tiny head should hold so much wit. Derry, that frail, brave child who saved your life knows nothing of the meaning of a happy childhood such as yours has been, with loving parents and a little crowd of brothers and sisters. When I asked you to be kind to the lonely little girl, you refused, scorning her as weak and contemptible. Well, you see, God thinks differently. He sometimes puts into weakly bodies brave hearts, and into tiny heads bright wits. It was our dear Lord himself who said, "Judge not . . . for with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." When you were hanging in peril of death, which of you was the weakest, you, or little Esty?'

'Oh, Granny, I see it all!' humbly said Derry. 'But I'll be so awfully good to her in the future.'

And Derry kept his word. There was nothing he would not do for Esty, grudging neither time nor trouble. Even when away in the little world of public school he did not quite forget her. In the holidays Derry was Esty's prime minister, mending her waxen family, organizing her army of pets, teaching her to quell the high-spirited 'Tip-cat,' and never, never allowing himself to jeer at the wee maid's frail stock of strength.