

Ros looked; then with a glad cry he sprang forward.

"Tilly! my baby! my darlin'!" he shouted.

Without a word the terrible, staggering figure laid the child unhurt in her father's arms. Then he reeled as if about to fall.

"Sam! my hero!" cried the minister, supporting the burned and exhausted man. "You must not give out now. We need you. Come, Ros, hurry! We'll cut through at the first opening to the Hawkins farm. There's no place any safer than that."

"Let me run, papa, I'm all right," begged little Tilly. "I went to find my kitty an' when I comed back, mama an' ev'ybody was gone. I was des goin' to cry when my teacher's Mister Hawkins comed an' said he'd take me to mama. Oh, my! but he was awful burned an' sore, an' I wanted to get him some water, an' some o' mama's mutton tallow an' cream, but he wouldn't wait for the leastest thing, but des grabbed me up an' run. An' we had to go fru a dre'ful fire. I was afraid, but he said he couldn't help it, an' it was the on'y way to get to mama. He took off his coat an' wrapped it all roun' me, even my head, so's I couldn't hardly breave, till we got fru the fire; but his hair an' eyes an' han's got more burned—poor man! He must be awful good. I des love him, I do—most as much as I do my teacher."

The little girl wriggled herself out of her father's restraining arms, and running to Sam caught one of his hands in hers and kissed it tenderly. Then she gazed at it a moment in silent pity, and the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Oh, it's so sore!" she said. "I must wrap it up des like my mama does in soft rags with plenty of mutton tallow and cream."