

## THE REWARD OF SUSAN

The baby was dying.

He lay in his cot, with the blue of his eyes showing through the closed, heavy lids, with a waxen pallor on his cheeks, drawing wheezing breaths which stabbed the heart of his mother, who bent over him.

Sue Giles went to the cottage window in despair. Before her stretched the moor—wild, rugged, almost purple against the flaring western sky. Then she glanced at the clock. It wanted half an hour before the six-forty stopped at Barleycombe, and it took Ben, her husband, twenty full minutes to trudge the mile to the lonely cottage down the line.

There were no neighbors nearer than Barleycombe. Yet the doctor ought to be summoned. And Dr. Kent lived two and a half miles down the line, in the opposite direction to Barleycombe, nearer Lakehampton. The railway ran past his garden, half a mile after Archer's tunnel and the cutting, and it was the nearest route. Sue had often trudged there and back.

But to go meant to leave the baby alone. To stay meant—She glanced at the child once more, shaking her head and repressing a sob.

Ben was Barleycombe's solitary porter, and his lantern, ready-trimmed for the nine-fifteen, stood in the corner. Sue lit it, scribbling a note to her husband, and laying it on the dresser. "Good night, doctor," she said. "I'm here."

Then she kissed the baby, very lightly for he seemed asleep, and slipped to the door.

It seemed terrible to leave the child alone. But she comforted herself as she hurried on, that he was young to walk, that the fire was safely guarded, and that before long Ben would take her place.

It was weary walking, plodding over the heavy ballast beside the permanent way. She dared not run, for she was not strong; but she pressed on, mutely praying, passed the signal, her face to the glowing, fiery sunset. She reached the stunted bushes round Wolf's Hollow, left them behind, and crossed the trestle bridge over the babbling Aze.

Now she passed Highwayman's Oak—a landmark to stragglers lost on the moor—and now the mouth of Archer's tunnel, black and grim, was before her. She had always feared its depths and its darkness, had usually climbed the hill and plunged into Archer's Wood, to descend the steep sides by the jaws of the cutting a quarter of a mile on, in preference to the more direct route which the tunnel's grimy, reverberating hollows afforded.

But she could not think of herself now. The tunnel was the quickest, and therefore the only way, and she chose it, without pause or hesitation.

It was long, and the lantern's feeble rays seemed swallowed up, mocked at, in the gloom. The light from its mouth faded. Pitch darkness settled down before and behind her. But she had forgotten herself; she was only counting her steps, hoping to reach the doctor's garden, praying to find him in.

A dim light began to pervade the blackness; it grew stronger, and the air sweeter. She trudged on round the curve of the line, and presently the arched opening of the tunnel's mouth showed more like a bite taken out of a huge slice of black bread.

Only the cutting now, she rejoiced, quickening her steps; only the cutting, half a mile of level road, and her journey was done! Dr. Kent would get out his trap, the old grey cob would be coaxed into his ambling canter, and—

She tripped, stumbled a few paces, regained her balance, the lantern swinging. Without stopping, she looked over her shoulder. Once more her feet found an obstruction; she turned the lantern forward, with a scream of horror.

For fifteen yards ahead of her, rails, sleepers, the ballast-path she trod, were obliterated in a pile of rock, on which the ferns and wild flowers still grew. One glance told her what had happened. She remembered such an occurrence before. The face of the cutting had slipped. Stresses of storm, beating rain, and the constant vibration of passing trains had loosened its foundations, letting down tons of red rock, of red earth and loose stones, in piled confusion on the rails.

But though she had stopped, the delay was but momentary. The subsidence was an obstacle, no more. Nothing short of the will of Heaven should prevent her reaching Dr. Kent. She clambered up the fallen rock, sending a volley of stones which turned beneath her feet down the steep sides of the mass, catching at ferns and roots to aid her ascent, and almost on her hands and knees, she reached the litter.

The thought of her baby—only

that. Only that till the summit was reached, the descent before her, the difficulties surmounted.

And then she thought of the six-forty. The six-forty! It stabbed her to think of it; it set her trembling, shaking, her lips quivering, her forehead damp—this sudden remembrance.

The six-forty with its five mile run before it, its clear road, its passengers, its huge speed, its tearing whistle as it slid into the tunnel, the roar of it as it shot into the open of the cutting.

She saw the end—saw the engine rolled over, with a shriek of escaping steam; saw the coaches piled one upon another, heard the screams, the groaning and the moaning of the passengers; saw red fire creeping over the ruins, quaked at the thought of imprisoned men, women and children—babies like her own!—being roasted as the debris of the wrecked train fed the flames.

And in fifteen minutes—fifteen minutes at the most—it would be done!

She could save it—might save it—if she turned her back on her own errand. Faced the tunnel once more, changed meeting it there and her death.

But even if she won through, even if her lantern brought the train to a standstill, a precious half-hour would be lost. It meant death to her baby. She could not doubt that. She had seen Death come to a little brother, to the babies of others innumerable, and she knew his approach.

Her baby! She began to clamber down the steep sides of the fall. The mother in her kept her on. What matter if the whole world perished, if her baby lived! She had come so far to save her child—

She paused. Why, she could come back. Suppose she ran to Dr. Kent! There would be time. She would come back! She would stop the train when her errand was done.

But as she struggled on, the hot arguments of her heart died down. She began to feel chill. She knew there would not be time. It was one or the other; she knew that.

But still she kept on her way. Her baby—her baby! Why did Heaven ask this thing of her! And as she reached the level ground on the other side of the fallen mass, she fell on her knees, shaking with sobs, crying out:

"Ah, them people! Ah, them people!"

She sank down, throwing out her arms, letting her head fall on them, weeping piteously, moaning.

When she struggled to her feet, she stared dimly down the cutting, and her lips moved.

"Oh, Heaven, save my baby! I can't!"

She turned her back on her destination, feverishly began to retrace her steps, fought her way over the slipping debris with fierce energy of a mind made up.

Down the other side she scrambled with a alither of pattering stones, along the littered pavement way to the ballast, free from the fall, nearer the tunnel.

Then she darted into the darkness, running, panting, her heart burning and her breast torn with each wild breath. She passed the middle of the tunnel, where the walls ran water, and drip-drip it fell in melancholy cadence from the roof. She was nearing the other end when first the rails began to hum, and she knew the six-forty was upon her!

Out of the night came the rumble, the roar, the clatter of the onrushing train. She rounded the curve of the cutting, catching sight of the headlights; of the steam by the driving wheels, floating backward like pennants; of the scudding smoke overhead, illuminated, as it passed the cab, by the ruby glow of the furnace.

She stood upon a rail, balancing herself, holding the lantern high above her head, waving it madly, screaming, though even then she knew her puny cries were swamped in the roar of the whirling wheels.

Suddenly the pennants died away. With a hideous, grating whir the brakes were put on. The engine glided on, and she slipped from the rail with it only a dozen feet away from her. Still the lantern waved as a hoarse voice shouted to her and the train went by.

It began to draw up. Heads appeared at every window. The guard leapt down, lantern in hand. The fireman left his engine, groping his way back to the screaming woman at the rail side.

"A fall—a fall in Archer's cutting!" she wailed, and toppled forward into the fireman's arms.

"'Twas as she said," she heard a gruff voice saying as she came to. "The train must ha' bin wrecked—several hundred tons—rock. (She saved the train and all of us!"

Sue opened her eyes. A man bent over her, and a pair of kindly stern eyes looked into hers.

"All right—feeling fitter? I'm a doctor. You saved us all, we hear. You're a brave woman—"

"A doctor!" she cried shrilly. "Then come—my baby—e's dying—at the cottage—not far back—come. Please come!"

"I'm afraid it's impossible. I've a very important operation—"

"You can't get on to-night, sir—at least—not yet awhile," announced the guard. "We shall have to

run back to Barleycombe, and have a gang sent down to clear the line. It'll be several hours afore we're—"

The train passes my cottage—on the way back. Won't you come, sir?"

The doctor nodded.

"If I can't get on I'll come," he said, gently. "If it had not been that I could allow no one in the kingdom to delay me, I wouldn't have refused at first. Are you running back now, guard?"

He helped Sue into the first-class compartment he had left, and climbed in beside her. A word from him to the guard brought the train to a standstill at the little track-side cottage. Ben met them at the garden-end, his face white.

"E's nearly gone!" he whispered. "Dr. Kent!—Why, Sue, couldn't you find the doctor?"

A few minutes afterwards Ben found himself driven from the cottage.

"Where's your nerve, man?" growled the doctor. "Oh, give me a woman where there's illness and something to be done!"

Later on Ben fetched Dr. Kent. The two medical men talked together in the garden till the train passed the cottage once more, picked up the stranger, and went on its journey through the cleared cutting.

Dr. Kent went into the cottage, where Ben and Sue stood hand-in-hand, the woman rosy, with tears of thanksgiving in her eyes, the man white and shaking.

"You were lucky, Mrs. Giles," he said. "The boy'll recover. Never have I seen a more delicate or more skilful operation. Had it been delayed an hour, death must have ensued. Had the fall in the cutting not taken place, had you come straight on to me, I should not have been prepared for an operation, and the child would have almost certainly perished before I could have sent home for my instruments. You don't know, I suppose, who attended you? You don't know the name of the man, so providentially equipped for the emergency you summoned him on!"

Sue shook her head. How near she had been to going straight on! How swift her punishment would have been!

"A Royal personage lies ill at Devermouth; an operation was decided on yesterday. When you saved the train, Mrs. Giles, by your bravery, you also saved Sir Alexander Beaton-Bruce, O.B., Surgeon to His Majesty the King, and—incidentally—your baby's life!"—London Answers.

FORTUNES THAT WERE FOUND

Valuable Finds That Have Been Made by Picnic Parties.

Most people think that holidays are a blessing, but some have had more cause to look back with satisfaction on their holidays than others.

Six years ago a Glasgow man, named Killowen, took a trip to London. One day he was wandering along the Thames embankment near Chelsea Bridge when the tide was low. His attention was attracted by something sticking out of the sand and mud. On investigation, this proved to be a wooden box containing ingots of copper to the value of £950.

An extraordinary piece of luck came to a Bradford man, named Jensen, while on his holidays a few years ago. An uncle of his had invited him to come and stay at his farm in North Lincolnshire. While there he began collecting birds' eggs, and one day he climbed an apple tree to investigate the contents of a nest. Finding it was an old one, he pulled it down, when several fragments of paper fluttered from the broken nest. They proved to be three five pound notes.

One of the richest oil fields in Pennsylvania was discovered by a holiday tripper. He happened to be a miner, and while picnicking in the district, he laid some of his sandwiches on the grass. When he picked them up, he found that they tasted of petroleum. He knew at once that there was oil underground, and keeping the secret to himself, he bought several acres of land in the district. He put down a drill, and at a depth of seventy feet "struck oil," and ultimately retired with his holiday-won fortune!

Bournemouth was the starting point to fame of one of our best-known doctors. While spending a holiday there, he witnessed a disastrous carriage accident, the only occupant, an old lady, being seriously injured. He immediately rendered all the assistance he could, and by his timely aid saved her life. She died suddenly a year later, and the astonished young doctor found that he had been left £50,000 for his help at the time of the accident.

A fortune was literally thrown away on holiday once. A man named Kinghorn, while taking it easy at Digby, in Nova Scotia, saw a lump of tallow substance floating about in the bay. He took it home and endeavored to boil the lump down to make soft soap.

He failed in his attempt, however, and threw away the supposed plant there, and in a couple of years netted \$750,000. Not a bad holiday—ah!

## A WOMAN'S TRAP

I. "Good-morning!" said the jovial, red-faced man pleasantly. "Fine view from here!"

Dick Fenchurch started. He felt his own face suddenly, flush as he looked into the smiling grey eyes of the man who had spoken.

For, after one has been in prison for nearly three years, it comes as something in the nature of a shock to be addressed once again as an ordinary respectable human being. And it was only two hours since Fenchurch had left the cells of Markdale Prison.

An hour ago, he had noticed this red-faced, fresh-looking man behind him, and once or twice had tried to shake him off. He wanted to be alone. Now, as he stood by a gateway, leading to the fields, which bounded the road on one side the stranger had overtaken him, and went on, without waiting for any reply.

"Making for Farnwood, I suppose?"

"Yes," Dick got the word out this time.

"Then, if you don't mind—what d'you say—we'll go along together."

Dick nodded, and the two walked on. Fenchurch was a clean, well-built fellow of thirty; his companion, inclined to stoutness, but ruddy of cheek, healthy, and very clearly of jovial disposition. The stranger was not lacking in conversation, and Fenchurch listened.

The name of the red-faced man was Westmere, and he was in business in Farnwood. Walking was his great recreation. He would sacrifice his business to it, if necessary.

"Went down early this morning to Markdale by train to see a man who wanted to come as assistant," Westmere continued. "But he wouldn't do. Can't take anyone into a business like mine!"

He laughed and turned round on Dick. "Suppose you don't want a soft berth, with fair pay? Guess you've already got something decent?"

And now Fenchurch laughed—for the first time in three years.

"Do you know where I came from this morning?" he asked. It was the longest speech he had made so far. "I came out of prison—came from three years' penal servitude!"

Westmere whistled, but appeared in no way shocked.

"Why! Now I'd never have thought that! D'you know what I took you for? I sized you up all as soon as I stopped and spoke to you. I put you down as a legal man—a solicitor, you know."

"Ah!" Dick had become suddenly very calm. He was even enjoying this scene, though it made him feel the bitterness still more keenly. "That's what I was before—before the crash came."

"Tell me about it," said Westmere. And it seemed the most natural thing in the world now for Fenchurch to give this stranger the history of those tragic events three years ago.

They were tragic, though the story was neither uncommon nor remarkable. Simply he was a young solicitor, engaged to be married to a girl who was somewhat above him in social position. Anxious to have sufficient money to keep his wife, when he did marry, in the manner in which she had been accustomed, Fenchurch had speculated, had lost, and had raised money in a mad moment from his bank on certain shares which he held jointly in trust. He had forged the name of his co-trustee to do this, fully convinced that he would be able to replace the money before any inquiries were made.

But discovery of his sin was not long delayed. There came a day when he stood in the dock, was sentenced to three years' penal servitude, and, of course, had been struck off the Roll.

"And the girl—the young lady you were engaged to?" asked Westmere, when Fenchurch paused.

"She—she said she would wait," Fenchurch was struggling to keep control of himself. "I—But, of course, it was impossible. I hope she's found some man more worthy of her now."

"And you'll not attempt to see her?"

iosity. Imagine what he thought when he discovered, a little while later, that what he had thrown away was ambergis, worth \$35 an ounce! He had been unknowingly thrown away thousands of dollars.

More than one mine has been found when on holiday bent. The first nugget of gold in the Carolinas, for instance, was picked up by a man named Budd, who was spending a few days in the district. This nugget alone fetched \$4,250!

Two brothers, who were paying a visit to Chili after an earthquake there, came across a huge block of almost pure silver in a newly opened crevice. They set up a mining plant there, and in a couple of years netted \$750,000. Not a bad holiday—ah!

"No, no. I hope and trust she has forgotten me. No; not quite that. But let's turn to something else, or—"

And he laughed cynically. "We're coming to the town—Farnwood, I suppose. Perhaps you'd prefer to drop me now. Ex-convict 271 isn't quite the company you'll want."

"Poon!" Westmere was as genial as ever. "Perhaps you'll take that job I offered you—eh? Pay isn't wonderful—two pounds a week—but I guess you won't mind that for a start?"

Fenchurch stared at him. "Do you really mean it? I've told you the truth. I came out of prison this morning."

"Tut! Lots of us make mistakes—only we don't get caught. You've paid the full penalty for yours, haven't you? Well, will you take the job?"

"Yes."

Fenchurch said nothing more. He scarcely realized that there was so much good in human nature, and he could not express what he felt. He gripped the other's hand, and Westmere understood.

II. That same day Richard Fenchurch began his duties as assistant to John Westmere, accountant and estate agent, of Farnwood.

After a time, in fact, he began to wonder how Westmere made an income out of his business. But John Westmere was perfectly serious, and sometimes very busy, and Fenchurch formed the opinion that Westmere had private means, and indulged in this business as a hobby.

It would be, perhaps, five weeks after his release from gaol, and Dick was beginning to recover some sense of independence, some faint desire to win a place for himself in the world, some little feeling that he might yet live down his disgrace, when one day Westmere came to him. In his hands he held three of four sheets of foolscap, which he handed to Dick.

"I want these typewritten," he said, "and we haven't a typewriter. But there's a girl upstairs—Miss Austin, I think her name is—who has just started. Get she doesn't get much work in this town. You might take these up to her, and ask her to do them for me some time—no hurry."

"Right!" said Dick, and rose. "I didn't know we had a typist here."

No; she's only just come. Nice girl—come down in the world, I think. We ought to give her any work we can."

Dick nodded and went out. Had he observed the smile which came over Mr. Westmere's face after he left the room, he might have been suspicious.

But he was ascending the stairs. On the topmost floor there were two small rooms, and at first Dick Fenchurch did not see the very small brass plate attached to one of the doors—"Miss Austin, Typewriter."

Just as he did espy it, the click, click of a machine began within. He stepped to the door, and tapped. Above the click of the typewriter came a soft voice, somewhat nervously: "Come in!"

Fenchurch opened the door and walked inside. Opposite him sat the typist, her head bent low over the machine. By her hair, that wondrous golden-red—surely, it could not be—Unconsciously, he gasped.

The head was raised. Then Dick cried, in amazement: "Millie! You here! What does it mean?"

He was too astounded himself to notice that she was not wondrously amazed. He mistook her nervousness for astonishment.

"I!" she cried, and rose to meet him. "Oh, Dick, I'm so glad to see you!"

Forgetting everything, save that her arms were stretched out toward him, and that her eyes called him, he took her in his arms.

Only, a little later, he asked: "But tell me, Millie, how has it happened. Your money—your father—has he lost?"

"Don't, Dick," she begged. "I'm trying to forget that."

And Fenchurch, because he was a man, thought he understood. He did not question her again. Later he would do so. But for the present it was sufficient that she still loved him, as she had loved him before those black days came. And now, because she was only a typist, because she was alone, he could offer her something—a name that was tarnished, perhaps, but one that for her sake should be made bright again.

Almost unwittingly, it seemed, he told her this, and she acquiesced.

"I promised to wait, Dick," she said. "But, oh, I didn't think I should have so little to offer you!"

"So little?" he asked. "Why, darling, it's wonderful! I am almost glad that this—"

But, seeing the look which came into her eyes, he kept clear of the subject which might bring her pain. When, an hour later, he left her, his heart was filled with a new joy. He would fight and make his name one that both he and she would not be ashamed to bear!

He told Westmere this, much to the astonishment of the good-natured "accountant."

"I'll raise your salary," the red-

faced one said promptly. "Three pounds a week; you can manage comfortably on that. Now, if I were you, I'd get married as soon as possible, and take Miss Mildred Austin—or Miss Mildred Austin-Challinor, as you say her name is—away from this typewriting business. Get a nice little house for her to look after; they're quite cheap round here."

"I will! By George, I will!" Fenchurch said, still intoxicated with the sudden joy which had come into his life.

"And, look here," Westmere went on, "take my advice, and don't you mention anything to her about her own trouble. I don't know what it is, of course; but you wait until you're comfortably married, then she'll tell you all about it, I expect. But you just pretend you know everything until then. See what I mean?"

"Yes," Fenchurch nodded. "Perhaps it will be as well."

Two months later they were quietly married at a small church near Farnwood, in the presence of Westmere and a friend. It was Westmere who gave the bride away and Westmere who gave the only wedding present—a ten-pound note, to be spent on a honeymoon of at least a week's duration. That was Westmere's stipulation.

They had been married in the early morning, and late in the afternoon they sat on the cliffs at Westbeach, where their honeymoon was to be spent.

Dick Fenchurch had been repeating over and over again the fact that his joy was too great to be expressed. But on the face of Millie there had come a little look of fear.

"Dick," she said at last, and he turned suddenly. The fear had crept into her voice.

What is it, dearest?" he asked quickly.

She took his hand. "You love me, Dick? Could you forgive me if—if I had deceived you?" Her voice was very steady, almost emotionless.

"Forgive you?" he repeated. "Of course. But why? What is there to forgive?"

"Oh, Dick, it's hard to tell you!" And she gasped a little. "But I have deceived you. My father—we have had no trouble at all. I am still as wealthy as I was before—before you went away. No; let me tell you everything."

For Dick had risen suddenly, and opened his lips as though to speak. "Let me tell you everything," she repeated.

And he remained motionless. "It was my plan," Millie said, trying to speak calmly. "I found out the date when you would be free, and I talked it over with my father long before. You know, Dick, he liked you—likes you now. And, though at first he wished me to give you up, afterwards he agreed to help me."

"We knew you would never come to us again. So I—we asked father's friend, Mr. Westmere, to help. He was to wait for you, follow you, and find you employment. It was he who took the office, and played at being an accountant. Then later, when he thought you were recovering from your—your trouble, he went word, and I came to act my part. I never really said I was poor, Dick."

She rose hurriedly, and faced the man, who stood staring blankly at her.

"Don't, Dick!" she cried, and held out her arms towards him. "You are not angry, are you? I don't think I trapped you. I wanted to stand by you and help you to fight your way back again. Tell me, Dick—tell me! You don't hate me because I loved you too much to lose you?"

A moment's silence—a moment of agony for the girl who waited—and then Fenchurch had seized her, and was kissing her madly, rationally.

"Hate you!" he gasped, for a wild torrent of love was surging through his veins. "My, he, I can hardly believe it possible. You did this for me! I'm not worth it, Millie! But, please Heaven! I'll fight and try to make my name—our name—dearest—more worthy of your love!"—London Answers.

STRANGE POLICE COURTS.

The recent instance of a judge and the officers of the court proceeding to a plot of ground to try a case upon the spot, is by no means the first instance of its kind. Cases have been heard in all sort of queer places. A few months ago a witness who was very ill had to be examined, so a magistrate and the parties interested went to his private house, which was converted in a police court for the time being, the matter being satisfactorily settled. On one occasion an urgent application was made to a judge just as he was about to set out for the assizes. It was imperative that he should not miss his train. The upshot of the matter was that a first-class compartment was reserved for the party, and before the judge arrived at his destination the matter, which had been argued en route, was disposed of.

Probably the supreme human achievement is self-mastery.

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