

WHY SHE PROPOSED.

There was rather less than the usual Sunday crowd outside the Monte Rosa Hotel on this September morning. Holidays were drawing to an end.

"A good thing too," said Edward Lincoln, when Jocelyn May remarked about it. "Ah! For my part, I'm tired of a bit of a stir," said the other. He moved aside, so that he could glance at one of the hotel windows. His face minutely became radiant.

Lincoln noticed the change in his companion, and hit his lip. He looked to do as May had done—yet he dare not.

They were both dressed for an excursion: Norfolk jackets and knickerbockers, ice axes, and the inevitable coil of rope. There was a slight commotion among the Zermatt guides as they moved forward. "Doesn't the gentleman desire a man?" asked one of the men, taking his pipe from his mouth, and smiling pleasantly.

"Not to-day, Euler," said Lincoln.

"We're going to do nothing serious."

"It is good weather, even for the Homs," proceeded the man.

"Name of your Matterhorns for me, my lad," said Jocelyn May, with a laugh.

"I'm under a vow, Lincoln."

"To whom, I wonder?"

"That's telling, old chap."

Again Lincoln hit his lip.

"Come along," he said hastily, "or we shall never have dinner."

They soon got their stride, with their faces towards the Breithorn. It was understood that the magnitude of their excursion was to be independent upon the state of the snow.

They had met by chance at the Monte Rosa—these two Jocelyn May lived with his mother at Graycester. He was believed to be a coming poet. His first little green book had made its mark, at any rate. Lincoln, on the other hand, was a young barrister in the country town. As fellow collegians, they had been sufficiently intimate. But there was now one particular reason (in Lincoln's opinion) why they could have had little in common.

Evelyn lies, the Dean of Graycester's daughter, that was reason.

Still, they kept up the appearance of friendship; and when Evelyn had challenged him, after breakfast that morning, with making a martyr of himself for Jocelyn's sake, Lincoln had done his best to convince the girl that it was by no means so. But Evelyn was not easily deceived.

And so they strode up the valley, with the snow and the blue sky before them; and each tried to assure himself that it would be as well for the time to forget Evelyn's gray eyes, and to make the most of a prime day among the Alps.

Meanwhile the Dean and his daughter had had a little conversation at the window of the great breakfast-room, with its rows of honey-pots still on the table.

"How very strange it is, my dear," said the old gentleman, "that we should invariably, wherever we go, encounter friends or acquaintances?"

He said this while he smiled at young Jocelyn, who had just then moved towards the window from the outside.

"Yes, papa," said Evelyn. All her energies were at that moment concentrated in her eyes.

"The world is very small, my dear."

"Very small, papa—smaller every day."

The Dean laughed at this.

"You puzzle me with your paradoxes, child," he said. "But," he added, kindly, "I had no idea Jocelyn would be at Zermatt. His mother said not a word about it when we were leaving."

Evelyn held her tongue. She drummed on the window-pane, with two taper little fingers.

"Had you any idea of it, my love?"

The Dean's daughter drew a deep breath, blushed, and replied—

"Yes, papa. He told me we might meet."

"O—h!"

"Yes, papa," continued Evelyn, warmly. (They had the room to themselves). "He did more than that. He told me why. He said he couldn't spend six dreary weeks at Graycester without seeing—who do you think, papa?"

"My dear Evelyn! Is that so? Then I am to understand that Jocelyn—Well, well! He is a good lad, a good lad. Besides, his mother's property is really rather inconsiderable."

"I care nothing about his prospects, papa," exclaimed Evelyn.

"Oh, indeed. Is it possible you like that young barrister the better, after all?"

"Papa! I was the reproachful retort."

"I only asked you, my dear. Well, well! This has burst upon my blind old head like an avalanche. So I am destined to lose you one of these days, my little daughter?"

"Never, I hope, papa," said the girl, nestling her hand into the old man's. "But I do hope you will gain a son in Jocelyn. I care very much indeed for him."

"Come and let us talk it over by the river," said the Dean. And they did so.

Three hours later, May and Lincoln were on the Gorner glacier, between the Gorner Grats and the great Breithorn. They had not had very much to say to each other. May was preoccupied. He was thinking that he would surely, in the course of a day or two, face that interview with the old Dean. And Lincoln also had much to think of. There was the rope, for one thing; and the bitterness of knowing that Evelyn lies did not look on him with affection, for another.

Suddenly May stopped. At his companion's request he had been leaning throughout.

"I say, you know, this is really too much of an obstacle," he said, with rather a nervous laugh.

They were on the edge of a deep crevasse, the blue ice of which contrasted well with the hot blue heavens.

Lincoln came to the side, and looked at it.

"I expect," he said, "we can improve matters considerably by following it up."

"But," urged May, when they had gone about fifty yards up the broken scree, "need we bother about it? Don't you think we've done enough, considering we've only out for a sort of constitutional?"

"Do you fancy, May?"

"Fancy it! Not I. What in the world makes you put such a question to me? I was thinking of dinner, that's all."

"We have a good five hours still. Sorry if I hurt your feelings. You poets are so touchy—there's no managing you."

Jocelyn May laughed lightly.

"I expect you're right, old fellow. I

am extremely anxious. They all tell me so. We'll do precisely what you plan. I can't say more than that."

"All right. Then your bit of a bridge will serve our turn handsomely."

The crevasse had widened, and its depth was now something but formidable—some fifteen feet at the most.

In these circumstances Jocelyn was easily persuaded by Lincoln to begin to drag himself over the snow bridge which spanned the crevasse.

It was not a safe bridge at all. Whether Lincoln knew or did not know that, he set him to it very freely to resist any strain that might accidentally be brought to bear upon him.

Suddenly, when Jocelyn was in the middle of the bridge, this broke inwards. The young man uttered a cry. There was a strong jerk upon Lincoln; as momentum was strong, and then it was evident what had happened. The rope had broken, red strand or not in it. And Jocelyn was lying, more surprised than hurt, among the ice and snow at the bottom of the crevasse.

Lincoln smiled, and then looked down.

"Don't be anxious, old chap," said Jocelyn from below. "Only a scratch or two. But what a nuisance about the rope."

"A great nuisance, May. Cold, isn't it, down there?"

Jocelyn stood up, rubbed his right thigh and then shivered.

"Awfully cold. What is to be done?"

"Oh, I can get you all right. There's twice as much rope as is necessary round my waist. But I want you to promise something."

"Promise something! What do you mean?"

"You must admit, May, that your life's at my mercy. If I were to leave you here for two or three hours, I doubt if you'd bear it."

"Lincoln! You'd never do that."

"May, I'm a very human sort of a brute, with evil passions like the rest of the world."

"I—I don't see what you are driving at," said Jocelyn, faintly. "What am I to promise?"

"That you will give up making yourself agreeable to Evelyn lies—that's all, May. I guess it's a mean proposition to make. But I am past caring for that. She is going to let me go."

"To you?" gasped Jocelyn—mental disquiet as well as bodily discomfort were accountable for the new fit of shivering which took him.

"I'll give you five minutes to think it over," said Lincoln, calmly.

He looked at his watch, strolled away, and lit his pipe. He scanned the snow-bound horizon somewhat eagerly. Very small would be made to look if at any time were just then to come in sight.

At the end of six minutes he returned to the crevasse.

"Well, May, what is it to be?"

Jocelyn was shaking with the cold.

"I have no alternative," he said dimly with chattering teeth. "For pity's sake help me out."

"I do."

Then, in silence, Lincoln did what was necessary.

"I—I did not think you could have been such a scoundrel," said Jocelyn, afterwards.

"May? At any rate, I have your promise. You will leave Zermatt to-morrow, I hope?"

"Just as soon as I can, you may be quite sure. It sickens me to think of staying where you are."

Lincoln laughed ironically.

"I don't mind your abuse, May. All I am concerned about is this: I may have sacrificed my self-respect for nothing."

"Quite so," said Jocelyn, and in spite of himself, new hope came to him.

When they got back to the Monte Rosa, Jocelyn felt very queer. The cold had reached his bones. He could do nothing but shiver.

There was an English doctor at the hotel. To him Jocelyn sent word, and when he had come he ordered the young man to bed.

"You may be in for a bad turn," he added.

"Tell Lincoln that," said Jocelyn.

The doctor did more. He told the Dean and Evelyn. He also made the incident quite a lively topic of conversation at the dinner-table—much to Lincoln's disgust.

This gentleman had, in fact, to tender a garbled version of the accident.

"Then, but for you, he would never have been saved!" inquired Evelyn, with bright eyes.

"I suppose so," he replied.

Immediately after dinner, Evelyn came up to Lincoln, and again showed her sense of gratitude.

Strangely beyond anything, the man must needs there and then blurt out his confession of love.

"Miss lies," he said. "I would do anything for you. If only I might hope!"

"Hope what, Mr. Lincoln?"

"That you would consent to be my wife."

"Out of the question, completely," was the girl's prompt reply. "Thank you for the invitation, nevertheless."

At this very moment who should come up but that annoying doctor, with the broken rope in his hand.

"I've taken the liberty, Mr. Lincoln," he said, "of overhauling your rope, and there's something like a deliberate cut half across it."

"Loc-cut, I suppose," stammered Lincoln, conscious that Evelyn was looking at him.

"With your permission, then, I'll make an exact study of it," said the doctor.

"The subject is interesting and important."

Months passed and Evelyn was unhappy, for Jocelyn seemed to avoid her company. One day she asked him, at a chance meeting, "Jocelyn, what is the matter? Can it be that you promised Lincoln not to ask me what I know you wish to ask me?"

"Forgive me, Evelyn," said Jocelyn.

"And now you intend to keep that promise, of course. There is no reason why you should not. This is the dawn of the day woman's prerogatives, and as you can't ask me to marry you, why, I will ask you!"

"I was weak."

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storing the money and Jocelyn in his pocket the woman, mounted his wheel and spun away to the quarters of the police, who even had the fellow in charge. This example will always be worth considering by those who may hope to see the same kind of thing in their neighborhood. It is not a very good reason for highwaymen, anyway.

A JOHNSON HARK TALK.

How He Reached a Reputation of Mighty Head.

Charles Davis tells a good story about Mark Twain, in which the humorist was far from being a laughing matter.

Davis was then with the Poughkeepsie show, which happened at that particular date to be playing in Hartford. The extraordinary incident thought it would be a good advertisement to get an interview arranged between Twain and the Indians, then a feature of the circus. He called upon the humorist and laid the matter before him. Mark said as didn't care for Indians and was busy and didn't see what the Indians had to do with his show.

"Why, the fact is," replied the circus man, with a gravity worthy of a higher life, "they have heard of you and want to see you."

This didn't appear to be strange to Mr. Twain. Still he was indisposed to grant the request, and he said to the Indian chief he had declared that he would never die happy if he could not return to the reservation without having seen and spoken to the man whose name was as wide as the world.

"All right," said Twain, "run 'em in at 6 and let me make it about 7."

About that hour the humorist sat on his porch and saw, to his astonishment, an immense cavalcade of mounted warriors coming down the street. In the place of a dozen chiefs expected, there were not less than fifty tearing along like mad in exhibition of their horsemanship. They galloped upon the lawn and broke down the shrubbery and were off the grass and devastated the whole place. The spokesman of the party was a mighty hunter, and had been previously informed that Twain was distinguished for the awful exhibition of their horsemanship. They galloped upon the lawn and broke down the shrubbery and were off the grass and devastated the whole place. The spokesman of the party was a mighty hunter, and had been previously informed that Twain was distinguished for the awful exhibition of their horsemanship. They galloped upon the lawn and broke down the shrubbery and were off the grass and devastated the whole place. 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