

the ropes securely round his body, and slowly but surely, with wildly anxious hearts and careful hands, those above drew him up, and eager, tender hands lifted him unconscious over the sides and laid him down.

But Mary—tender-hearted Mary, aching as she was in every limb, her hands raw and bleeding from the help she had given with the ropes—wrapped him in warm blankets; and with John Roms' assistance raised him from the cold, wet ground and carried him across to the cosy, firelit kitchen.

Danny was raised next; and then Mercy, swaying in mid-air one moment, bumping, bruising herself against the sides the next too weary and worn out to make any effort to save herself. Exhausted and bruised, she crept slowly away to the house, too bewildered at first to remember David or anyone else. But she had not gone many paces before the thought of him flashed back on her mind, and with it a shock of fear.

'David! Dave!' she called weakly, peering through the beating rain—'David!'

But no answer came. Back by the pit edge David lay exhausted in mind and body, too spent to move or speak or hear.

So Mary Truman carried her husband's murderer across the threshold of her home, and Mercy, following later with the man who had scorned her in her need, found her ministering to him, trying vainly to restore him, all else forgotten save that he was hurt and needed help.

Danny was soon in bed, and sleeping off all effects of his adventure. David fell into an exhausted sleep on the great couch in the kitchen. Help unneeded, but lavishly offered, arrived from Pensallas. The doctor came and went, and came again, but still Zekiel Pendray made no response to their efforts to bring him back to consciousness.

Mary became hopeless, Mercy was growing despairing, and the night was far spent before the first faint fluttering breath cheered their anxious hearts. His eyes opened, and Mercy, kneeling beside him, saw that he recognised her.

'I couldn't keep away from the old place,' he whispered presently. 'I was hungering cruelly for the sight of the sea and the sound of her, and my feet turned homewards against my will.'

'Thank God!' said Mercy brokenly. 'Thank God, father, for bringing you back to me safe!'

His mind wandered again, but later he recovered consciousness once more, and recognized more clearly where he was, and who was with him. Seeing Mary Truman standing by, he begged piteously for her forgiveness for the wrong he had done her and hers; and Mary, weeping bitterly, assured him that long years since she had forgiven all, for dear Mercy's sake.

'She has never let me know want or trouble,' she said gratefully. 'No one knows what she has been to me and mine. I am sure God has forgiven all, as I have, for her sake.'

Her words appeared to comfort him greatly.

'Thank you, Mary,' he said humbly, and turned to Mercy. He put out his hand and took hers almost shyly. 'Can you kiss me, my girl, after all I have done?'

Mercy threw her arms round him tenderly. 'Father, dear father, I have nothing to forgive. Stay with me—only stay and let me make your life happy—that is all I want.'

He shook his head painfully. 'Tisn't to be, my girl,' he said. 'The Lord knows best. I was set on going far away, but my feet turned homewards against my will. I

tried hard to go my own way, but He is leading me home. I'm nearly there now, Mercy. I'm glad to see where you and Mary have been so happy together—and I've heard the sea a-roaring and a-calling. I tried to go away, and get lost 'mongst strangers; but my feet turned homewards against my will.'

On the evening of the day when poor Zekiel Pendray was laid to rest in Pensallas Churchyard, Mercy, white, worn, and sorrowful, and David, grave and anxious, stood side by side looking out over the moor.

David was trying to point out to her the way he thought he had come that fatal night, and where he had first seen her father.

'I must have wandered nearly a mile out of my way,' he said, 'as far as I could tell, for I was coming up that way'—pointing to a great tract where no path or landmark was to be seen, away on the opposite side to where the white road to Pensallas lay along the edge of the moor—'instead of over there'—pointing to the usual tract, which was distinct and well worn now, running in from the main road—and the rain was beating in my face, so that I could not raise my head, or open my eyes if I did; and the wind was deafening me so that I couldn't hear another sound; and I bore away and away until I got bewildered and lost, and walked first one way and then another, until all of a sudden a faint glimmer of light caught my eye, and so glad was I to see it that I made straight for it, never thinking of any danger in my path, or that I was near the old mine or the pit around it.

'Then all of a sudden the ground seemed to be breaking away under me; there was a jerk and a slip, and before I knew anything I felt myself seized and twirled round like a leaf in a gale. Then, before I could recover my senses, I heard a noise of scrambling and falling, a thud, and a groan. Too scared to know what to do next, I stood still where I was; for to be suddenly seized and twirled about by something unseen, in a place where you felt sure you were the only living creature abroad, was enough to frighten any man.

'But presently came the groan again from somewhere beneath my feet, and this time I thought it was the groan of a man. I got out matches and struck them, and hard enough it was to keep them alight in that hurricane; but at last I managed it, and by their light saw what had happened. I had been just on the point of stepping over the edge of the pit, when your father, who must have been close to the spot, heard or saw me, and knowing the place better than I did, and perhaps his eyes being more accustomed to the darkness, knew the danger. He clutched me and pushed me back on to safe ground; but with the effort slipped himself, and fell to the very death from which he had saved me.'

Mary sobbed bitterly.

'He must have been there waiting,' said she. 'Yes, out there in the cold and wet, waiting, and I was in the warmth and shelter, longing for him to be with me. He had come home after all—only to leave me again; just then, too—just then, when life was beginning afresh for him.'

The strain of all she had undergone was telling on her, and she sobbed like a heart-broken child whose grief is beyond control. 'May God accept the life he saved for the life he took, and forgive him!' she murmured brokenly.

'If I can make it worth His acceptance I will,' Dave said devoutly. 'Mercy, Mercy,

will you forgive, and take as from your father's hands the life he saved? Many's the time I have started to come to you, dear, but stopped because—I was ashamed—after the way—I had treated you.'

'That night the storm and darkness gave me courage, I think, and I felt how lonely I was, how lonely you were, and your father the most lonely of all, and I thought we two together could make him happy; and I—I knew it rested with you, Mercy, whether I should be happy again or not.'

'I was too proud and self-satisfied,' went on David humbly, 'and I have been humbled. If He had wanted me He would have taken me instead of him that night; but He knew I was not fit, and your father was.'

Mercy's face brightened.

'Yes; I think—he was ready,' she said softly. 'I trusted and hoped, and God is bringing all right at last.'

They wandered away out on to the great heathery solitude, where the calmness and solemnity of the coming night, and the peace around them, calmed their troubled, aching hearts.

'Will you take me, Mercy?' Dave pleaded once more, 'in place of the life God has taken from you to Himself. He has humbled me for my behavior, dear, through your dear self. He has never let me forget you, Mercy, try as I would—not all these years.'

She turned to him quickly, a look of happy questioning on her face.

'I wonder,' she said, 'I wonder if He meant that I should never forget you, for—with sudden, swift confession—I never have, Dave, and I—I did try to do so.'

[The End.]

## Be In Time.

What a difficult thing in life it is to some people to be in time! They are late in rising in the morning, late for breakfast, late for the train, late for everything!—and they spend their days in fretful haste, trying to overtake the last moments.

One member of the household being late often puts the whole house out; breakfast lingers on the table when all should be at work; and the late member of the family has begun the day ill, and will no doubt be cross and disagreeable in consequence.

Many years ago I was running in haste to catch a train. I had put off doing so till the last moment, and arrived at the station hot and breathless to see the train puffing out. I flung myself on a bench much out of temper, when a voice at my side made me start—

'Be in time for the future, and you will save yourself and others a deal of trouble and annoyance. A little self-denial will conquer the bad habit.'

The advice was kindly meant; I took it, and have found it a marvellous help. I believe that to be in time is the stepping-stone to success in life.—'Friendly Greetings.'

## A Seaside Thought.

The white-winged ships sail past, and in  
Dim distance fade from view,  
But though beyond our sight, we know  
They still their course pursue  
O'er other seas to lands unknown—  
By God's hand steered, by God's breath  
blown.

And so, where wandering winds of Heaven  
O'er silvery seas blow light,  
Our loved and lost still work God's will,  
Though vanished from our sight;—  
Their harbor light His smile; His breast  
The haven where they find their rest.  
—'Independent.'