

I wouldn't go! Boys, do you see that?

He pointed to a scaffolding which which had been erected about the steeple for the use of the workmen. It projected several feet, and overhung the vast chasm below.

"We see it; but what of it?" asked Louis Raymond.

"You'll see what of it," answered Tom. "It's a jolly place to dance a hornpipe!" and before his companions could realize his intention, he had climbed out upon the scaffolding and was walking fearlessly about it.

The boys stared in sheer amazement at such recklessness, and begged him to be careful.

But their fears for his safety only made Tom more anxious to show his boasted courage, and he began rather a feeble imitation of a sailor's hornpipe.

"Wouldn't it be a long jump to the pavement?" he said.

As he spoke he looked down—a fatal thing; for his head, which had until now been so cool and steady, began to whirl strangely. He could not remove his eyes from the chasm below him. It seemed to fascinate him.

The boys looked at each other in horror. They saw the terrible danger which menaced him; they knew it was only a question of moments now before he must fall and be dashed to atoms on the pavement below. He stood in a kind of stupor, looking down into the fascinating gulf, his eyes wild and staring, grew more torpid with every instant, and his eyes seemed starting from their sockets. Back of him shuddered his horror-stricken comrades, waiting in an agony of suspense for the fatal end of this terrible drama; before and below him yawned the great chasm, at the bottom of which the people moving along looked like dwarfs.

Suddenly there was a movement among the boys, and Ross Carson, with white face and set teeth, climbed quickly and noiselessly out of the steeple on to the scaffolding, and with steady step approached the boy who stood on the brink of such a fearful death.

"If he touches him, Tom will fall," whispered Louis Raymond.

Low as was the whisper, Ross heard it, and half turned his head towards Louis, pausing an instant as if to think. Then he made a quick, firm step forward, and throwing his arms around Tom's waist, dragged him backwards.

It was all over in an instant. In the face of a fearful and imminent danger Ross saved his enemy, and slowly, carefully, for every step was peril, drew him back to the steeple, and with the help of the other boys got him inside once more, white as a corpse, it is true, and utterly unnerved, but safe.

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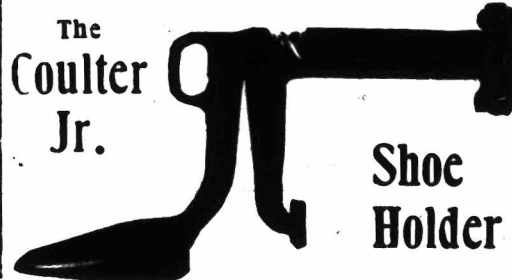
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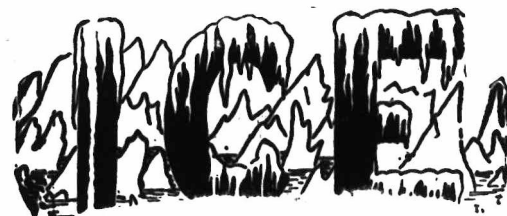
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