

with every second and redoubling itself in the extremity of her impotence and despair, when she heard a thundering crash, accompanied by a frightful yell of triumph, and knew that the door was down and her mistress at the madman's mercy.

The door was down indeed, and the wardrobe which flanked it had fallen forward on its face, narrowly missing the doctor's wife as it did so. The moment Peter's bounded on it, with that yell of triumph which rose, flying for her life, heard on the keen wind of the winter night, and they stood face to face, the pale woman who knew that the hour of death had come, and who braved it as steadily as any hero that ever lived, and the unfortunate creature into whom a raging flood seemed to have entered.

"Where is it?" she shouted, in a high-pitched key "I told you I'd kill it, and I mean to do it. I'll kill you, too, as quick as I have killed her, if you don't give it to me. I've built a big fire, a splendid fire, to put it on, and I mean to burn it up, so that nobody'll ever know anything about it. Where is it? Where is it, I say?"

"The voice together with every succeeding shriek and wail, and half in the red leaping light behind him, half in the pale moonlight before, Annie Somers saw again the deadly gleam of the knife he was brandishing. He wanted, as if for an answer, and since none came he sprang forward like a wild beast, but did not touch her. At that moment a broad, vivid blaze of light burst over them, and, raising her hand with a gesture that averted even him, she said:

"Stop. You may save yourself the trouble of killing me, for we will both be dead in a few minutes. The hour is on fire."

He started, gave one glance over his shoulder, and saw that she spoke the truth. Every movable article of furniture that he could find in the room he had crammed into the fireplace, and piled high on the hearth, so that, fanned now by the draught from the door and window, the flames shot up in a fierce volume to the very ceiling, and a volume of dense smoke rushed suddenly over the two, standing face to face in the dressing closet. Madman as he was, Peter was not so mad but that he realized at once his terrible danger, and feared it. He gave one frightful cry, and turned as if to rush into the blazing room, but the woman, who a minute before had shrunk from him, now seized him by the arm.

"You will kill yourself if you go in there," she said, "look, the window is open. Here you only way. Let yourself down by this cord."

He paused and gazed at her suspiciously. He saw at once what she meant, but he plainly distrusted her. "You want me to kill myself," he growled, "so that then I can't kill you. But I won't do it. I'll go this other way, and I'll leave you to burn up. You will have a big fire to burn in. But—" a sudden thought seemed to strike him—"I'll let you first. Then you can't run away."

He lifted the knife over her, but she caught the wrist of the hand that held it, and pleaded once more, not for her own safety, but his.

"For God's sake, listen to me—for God's sake, do as I tell you. Why should I wish to kill you? You never harmed me nor mine. My child is safe, and for myself I am not afraid of anything you could do. You will die horribly if you go into that room. Here, this is the only way of escape."

She drew him almost by main force, she opened the window, and put the cord in his hands; but as she did so a sudden horrible change came over his face, a terrible convulsion seized him as in a grip, and he fell back, foaming, and weeping in a fit of epilepsy.

behind her this man whom she could not save, even by dying with him. Perhaps to a really brave and generous heart there could be offered no harder necessity than this. But Annie Somers felt very truly that her life was not yet over, and she hoped to live. She rose to her feet, and as the steadily advancing flames attacked the side of the wall nearest her, as the floor grew hot beneath her feet, and the room beyond presented only a sea of fire to her gaze, grasped the cord which was her only hope. She was not at all sure that her wounded and paining arm would bear her safely to the ground, but she could only make the attempt. Her before doing so, she leaned over her companion once more, to see if there was yet no hope of his recovery. The violence of the paroxysm had abated some little time before, but he had lain ever since in a heavy stupor, from which her utmost efforts failed to rouse him. Now, however, at her touch, he opened his eyes, and she saw at once that he was not only restored to consciousness, but for the time being to sanity.

A recollection flashed across her of having heard her husband say that Peter was always clear and sensible immediately after an epileptic attack, and even in that terrible moment of extremity, her heart rose up to God in thanksgiving for this great mercy.

"The flames are almost upon us," she said, as she met his look of uncomprehending astonishment. "There is not a moment to lose. Take this cord and lower yourself from that window—quick!"

"Who are you? How did I come here?" he gasped.

"I am Mrs. Somers, the Doctor's wife. Never mind how you came here. The house is on fire, and you must save yourself by leaving it. Take the rope, I say, and go."

He took it, obeying her tone of command without any expostulation, until his foot was on the ledge of the window. Then a dull thought of her seemed to struggle through his brain.

"You ought to go," he said, slowly. "You are a woman. You go first."

"I will go as soon as you have reached the ground," she answered. "Don't waste time in considering me—go."

She pushed him as she spoke, and the next instant he was sliding down the cord, as Rose had slid before him. Unfortunately, however, his weight was much greater than that of the girl, and just as he was half way down the cord broke and fell with him, leaving only a short fragment dangling at the upper window. He was not injured for he had fallen on a bed of soft turf from a distance of not more than six or eight feet; but as he fell there sounded in his ears a low cry, the first and last which despair wrung from the woman watching above, the woman whose only hope of safety was gone with that rope.

He heard it, and it stirred all the human heart that was left within him. He was still entirely unable to comprehend how or what he was doing there; but an instinct told him that this woman had surrendered her chance of escape to him, and also another instinct made him desire to save her from the frightful death that was roaring and crackling above. He looked round, half stupidly for a means to do so, but there was none at hand. No stone, no brick, no piece of wood, no projecting ledge offered a foothold, and there seemed literally no means of reaching her. Yet if she was not reached in a few minutes, succor would come too late, for already volumes of black smoke were pouring from the window, and every moment he expected to see the vivid flames leap forth, as they were doing elsewhere. He rushed from the window, and he saw a ladder, a rope, anything, but searching vainly. He thought of the staircase, but he had sense enough to know that it was hopeless, since even if he reached the upper story a gulf of fire would intervene between him and her. He stood still and looked at the window from which her face had vanished, and wrung his hands in wild despair. Nothing save a miracle could save her now. Yet, hark! he started and listened, as, borne forward on the midnight air, there came the loud cry of "Fire!" the sound of many voices, the tramp of many feet, the uproar and tumult of numbers rushing from the town down the high road toward the blazing house.

On they came, pouring, as if by magic, from every direction, leaping over the paths, dashing down the fence, filling the peaceful yard with a wild scene of commotion, as the engine was brought up with a gallop and wheeled into position.

that way, and that it was madness and weakness to have tried it, when suddenly they stopped to shout again with all their might and main. For there he was, there he stood on the ledge of the window, with the stairs background behind him, and the forked tongues of flame darting out toward him—there he stood, looking grand and majestic to the wondering eyes below, with a woman's reasonable figure resting on his arm.

They watched him breathlessly, for the trial of descent was now before him, and the whole wall was burning so rapidly that the ladder might fall at any moment. He descended slowly, burdened and exhausted, it seemed, by the weight of the woman on his arm. From the ground a dozen strong arms were ready to assist him. He received their aid for himself, but he would not surrender his charge until he safely reached the ground. Then he gently laid her down, the unconscious woman, whom he had found among the flames and smoke—and the amazement of the people passed all bounds when they recognized in the blackened countenance of her rescuer the features of Peter the carpenter.

The astonishment of Dr. Somers may, perhaps, be imagined when coming home next day from the death-bed of old Colonel Bradshaw, he found his house in ashes, his wife raving with brain fever, and heard the particulars of that night's work, as well as any one knew or could guess at them. It was a long time before he heard them from the only lips that could tell them as they occurred, but when at last Annie Somers waked again to a knowledge of her and the things of life, she gave her arms round the child she had saved and told her husband to thank God that he had given her strength to live through that hour of terror.

CUPID AND CHRIST.
Quick came Cupid near to Christ,
At His feet he did down his bow;
"See, Thy love hath all sufficed!"
Burning in His heart and glow.
From His heart grew fired and glad,
Bluntly, not a word he said:
"Take my arrows, let me go!
Vainly now were hearts enticed."
Christ said, "No!"

"Take thine arrows, take them up!
From My feet take up thy bow!
All that I have I give thee up!
Little will My people know.
How My love hath drained their cup,
Shout thine arrows, let them go!
On the hearts I cherish so,
Thou mayst yet break fast and sup."
Cried Cupid, "No!"

"Ah!" spake Christ, "and shall their shame
Shout thine little day?
While I wait, 'tis all the same;
If they yet can make thee say
With pleasure, play thy game!
Little weight shall I have;
Where, at last, My wounds may stay:
Plickering sparks may kindle flame.
Run and play!"

Cupid, as the other bade,
Took his arrows back, and played,
"Ever since that time he set in
Mars a heart the Other mend,
But ere forth upon that raid,
Once his heart Christ's he laid,
Murmuring, yet half afraid—
"After when the playing ends,
When grow will the wounds I've made,
We'll be friends—no more a foe."
"BROTHERS THERE A—"
Breathed there the Prophet so base
Who never tried to prove his case
By quoting "Paganism" and "Bab"
And bit of clippings treated so
That anything they like they'll show?
Or made a fact beyond all doubt?
By juggling figures round about?
And proved that all the Papist crew
Have nothing else on earth to do
But revel in the pleasures of the law?
The Protestants both night and day—
That the Confessional is the cause
Of such offence against the laws—
That countries where the priests have been
The people all are poor and lean,
While, where the persons draw their
"screw"
They're rich and fat and well-to-do?
Such things, my God, my God, my God,
For him no Orange rupture ever
Great though his virtues, high his
name,
Thou thy very honour he may claim,
Despite his noble Christian mind,
The man who is no bigot blind
That he is in every man's eyes
Merely a Jesuit in disguise!
"Percy Beazley I rith the Catholic Times,
"DEEP IN THE MOUTH OF THE MOSS."
A moss-bed, green and spongy, stood
Like velvet carpet soft;
To outward view, thought scant and slight,
This nook contained a seemingly slight
Of leaves and boughs aloft.

"To greenwood tree and rose overhead
The moss looked up and whispered,
"Such things, my God, my God, my God,
But trodden under foot of men,
No wretch my poor shrine dost ken
Marking low light and glare."
"But lo! there came that eventide
Christ, passing through the forest
With visage pale and wan;
Though footstep he would further go,
Thus ease to feel the moss below
His feet, the Son of Man."

"Come o'er the plain in heat and
In sand and sun, 'twas here that first
The moss 'gan cool His feet.
Then spake the Lord, 'My Father's
Such love in thee hath surely planned,
And made thee soft and sweet.
"What eye so blind as not to see
E'en here in this low degree
God's love, my God, my God, my God,
Thou comest here, 'tis set at naught,
Of thee too thy Creator thought;
Thy lot 's trebly best!"

"Jesus had scarcely spoken so
When from the moss began to grow
A rank and noxious weed,
Moss-rose 'twas called in little time,
It bloometh now in every clime,
Of meekness emblem true."
—C. R. Woodward.

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