

change of purpose in her, with such pleasure as Daniel must have felt when he found the lions would rather not eat him. She retraced our steps a long way—until we reached the middle of the line of building which divided the two courts.

"There!" she said, pointing to the top of the square tower over the entrance to the hall, from which we had watched the arrival of the guests: it rose about nine feet only above where we now stood in the gutter—"I know I left the door open when we came down. I did it on purpose. I hate Goody Wilson. Lucky, you see!—that is if you have a head. And if you haven't, it's all the same: I have."

So saying, she pointed to a sort of flying buttress which sprang sideways, with a wide span, across the angle the tower made with the hall, from an embrasure of the battlement of the hall to the outer corner of the tower, itself more solidly buttressed. I think it must have been made to resist the outward pressure of the roof of the hall; but it was one of those puzzling points which often occur—and oftenest in domestic architecture—where additions and consequent alterations have been made from time to time. Such will occasion sometimes as much conjecture towards their explanation, as a disputed passage in Shakspeare or Æschylus.

Could she mean me to cross that hair-like bridge? The mere thought was a terror. But I would not blench. Fear I confess—cowardice if you will—poltroonery, not.

"I see," I answered. "I will try. If I fall, don't blame me. I will do my best."

"You don't think," she returned, "I'm going to let you go alone! I should have to wait hours before you found a door to let me down—except indeed you went and told Goody Wilson, and I had rather die where I am. No, no. Come along. I'll show you how."

With a rush and a scramble, she was up over the round back of the buttress before I had time to understand that she meant as usual to take the lead. If she could but have sent me back a portion of her skill, or lightness, or nerve, or whatever it was, just to set me off with a rush like that! But I stood preparing at once and hesitating. She turned and looked over the battlements of the tower.

"Never mind, Wilfrid," she said; "I'll fetch you presently."

"No, no," I cried. "Wait for me. I'm coming."

I got astride of the buttress, and painfully forced my way up. It was like a dream of leap-frog, prolonged under painfully recurring difficulties. I shut my eyes, and persuaded myself that all I had to do was to go on leap-frogging. At length, after more trepidation and brain-turning than I care to dwell upon, lest even now it should bring back a too keen realization of itself, I reached the battlement, seizing which with one shaking hand, and finding the other grasped by Clara, I tumbled on the leads of the tower.

"Come along!" she said. "You see, when the girls like, they can beat the boys—even at their own games. We're all right now."

"I did my best," I returned, mightily relieved. "I'm not an angel, you know. I can't fly like you."

She seemed to appreciate the compliment. "Never mind. I've done it before. It was game of you to follow."

Her praise elated me. And it was well.

"Come along," she added.

She seemed to be always saying *Come along*. I obeyed, full of gratitude and relief. She skipped to the tiny turret which rose above our heads, and lifted the door-latch. But, instead of disappearing within, she turned and looked at me in white dismay. The door was bolted. Her look roused what there was of manhood in me. I felt that, as it had now come to the last gasp, it was mine to comfort her.

"We are no worse than we were," I said. "Never mind."

"I don't know that," she answered mysteriously. "Can you go back as you came? I can't."

I looked over the edge of the battlement where I stood. There was the buttress crossing the angle of moonlight, with its shadow lying far down on the wall. I shuddered at the thought of renewing my unspeakable dismay. But what must be must. Besides, Clara had praised me for creeping where she could fly: now I might show her that I could creep where she could not fly.

"I will try," I returned, putting one leg through an embrasure, and holding on by the adjoining battlement.

"Do take care, Wilfrid," she cried, stretching out her hands, as if to keep me from falling.

A sudden pulse of life rushed through me. All at once I became not only bold, but ambitious.

"Give me a kiss," I said, "before I go."

"Do you make so much of it?" she returned, stepping back a pace.—How much a woman she was even then!

Her words roused something in me which to this day I have not been able quite to understand. A sense of wrong had its share in the feeling; but what else I can hardly venture to say. At all events, an inroad of careless courage was the consequence. I stepped at once upon the buttress, and stood for a

moment looking at her—no doubt with reproach. She sprang towards me.

"I beg your pardon," she said.

The end of the buttress was a foot or two below the level of the leads, where Clara stood. She bent over the battlement, stooped her face towards me, and kissed me on the mouth. My only answer was to turn and walk down the buttress, erect; a walk which, as the arch of the buttress became steeper, ended in a run and a leap on to the gutter of the hall. There I turned, and saw her stand like a lady in a ballad leaning after me in the moonlight. I lifted my cap and sped away, not knowing whither, but fancying that out of her sight I could make up my mind better. Nor was I mistaken. The moment I sat down, my brains began to go about, and in another moment I saw what might be attempted.

In going from roof to roof, I had seen the little gallery along which I had passed with Mrs. Wilson on my way to the library. It crossed what might be called an open shaft in the building. I thought I could manage, roofed as it was, to get in by the open side. It was some time before I could find it again; but when I did come upon it at last, I saw that it might be done. By the help of a projecting gargoye, curiously carved in the days when the wall to which it clung had formed part of the front of the building, I got my feet upon the wooden rail of the gallery, caught hold of one of the small pillars which supported the roof, and *slewed* myself in. I was almost as glad as when I had crossed the buttress, for below me was a paved bottom, between high walls, without any door, like a dry well in the midst of the building.

My recollection of the way to the armoury, I found, however, almost obliterated. I knew that I must pass through a bed room at the end of the gallery, and that was all I remembered. I opened the door, and found myself face to face with a young girl with wide eyes. She stood staring and astonished, but not frightened. She was younger than Clara, and not so pretty. Her eyes were dark, and so was the hair she had been brushing. Her face would have been quite pale, but for the rosy tinge of surprise. She made no exclamation, only stared with her brush in her hand, and questions in her eyes. I felt far enough from comfortable; but with a great effort I spoke.

"I beg your pardon. I had to get off the roof, and this was the only way. Please do not tell Mrs. Wilson."

"No," she said at once, very quietly; "but you must go away."

"If I could only find the library!" I said. "I am so afraid of going into more rooms where I have no business."

"I will show you the way," she returned with a smile; and laying down her brush, took up a candle and led me from the room.

In a few moments I was safe. My conductor vanished at once. The glimmer of my own candle in a further room, guided me, and I was soon at the top of the corkscrew staircase. I found the door very slightly fastened: Clara must herself have unwittingly moved the bolt when she shut it. I found her standing all eagerness, waiting me. We hurried back to the library, and there I told her how I had effected an entrance, and met with a guide.

"It must have been little Polly Osborne," she said. "Her mother is going to stay all night, I suppose. She's a good-natured little goose, and won't tell.—Now come along. We'll have a peep from the picture-gallery into the ball-room. That door is sure to be open."

"If you don't mind, Clara, I would rather stay where I am. I oughtn't to be wandering over the house when Mrs. Wilson thinks I am here."

"Oh, you little coward!" said Clara.

I thought I hardly deserved the word, and it did not make me more inclined to accompany her.

"You can go alone," I said. "You did not expect to find me when you came."

"Of course I can. Of course not. It's quite as well, too. You won't get me into any more scrapes."

"Did I get you into the scrape, Clara?"

"Yes, you did," she answered laughing, and walked away.

I felt a good deal hurt, but comforted myself by saying she could not mean it, and sat down again to the *Seven Champions*.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GHOST.

I SAW no more of Clara, but sat and read until I grew cold and tired, and wished very much that Mrs. Wilson would come. I thought she might have forgot me in the hurry, and there I should have to stay all night. After my recent escape, however, from a danger so much worse, I could regard the prospect with some composure. A full hour more must have passed; I was getting sleepy, and my candle had burned low, when at length Mrs. Wilson did make her appearance, and I accompanied her gladly.

"I am sure you want your tea, poor boy!" she said.

"Tea! Mrs. Wilson," I rejoined. "It's bed I want. But when I think of it, I am rather hungry."

"You shall have tea and bed both," she answered kindly. "I'm sorry you've had such a dull evening, but I could not help it."

"Indeed, I've not been dull at all," I answered—"till just the last hour or so."

I longed to tell her all I had been about, for I felt guilty; but I would not betray Clara.

"Well, here we are!" she said, opening the door of her own room. "I hope I shall have peace enough to see you make a good meal."

I did make a good meal. When I had done, Mrs. Wilson took a rush-light, and led the way. I took my sword and followed her. Into what quarter of the house she conducted me, I could not tell. There was a nice fire burning in the room, and my night-apparel was airing before it. She set the light on the floor, and left me with a kind good-night. I was soon undressed and in bed, with my sword beside me on the coverlid of silk patchwork.

But, from whatever cause, sleepy as I had been a little while before, I lay wide awake now, staring about the room. Like many others in this house, it was hung with tapestry, which was a good deal worn and patched—notably in one place, where limbs of warriors and horses came to an untimely end on all sides of a certain square piece quite different from the rest in colour and design. I know now that it was a piece of *Gobel us*, in the midst of ancient needlework. It looked the brighter of the two, but its colours were about three, with a good deal of white: whereas that which surrounded it had had many and brilliant colours, which, faded and dull and sombre, yet kept their harmony. The guard of the rush-light cast deeper and queerer shadows, as the fire sank lower. Its holes gave eyes of light to some of the figures in the tapestry, and as the light wavered, the eyes wandered about in a ghostly manner, and the shadows changed and flickered and heaved uncomfortably.

How long I had lain thus I do not know: but at last I found myself watching the rectangular patch of *new* tapestry. Could it be that it moved? It could be only the effect of the wavering shadows. And yet I could not convince myself that it did not move. It *did* move. It came forward. One side of it did certainly come forward. A kind of universal cramp seized me—a contraction of every fibre of my body. The patch opened like a door—wider and wider; and from behind came a great helmet, peeping. It was all one terror, but my nerves held out so far that I lay like a watching dog—watching for what horror would come next. The door opened wider. A mailed hand and arm appeared, and at length a figure, armed cap-a-pie, stepped slowly down, stood for a moment peering about, and then began to walk through the room, as if searching for something. It came nearer and nearer to the bed. I wonder now, when I think of it, that the cold horror did not reach my heart. I cannot have been much of a coward, surely, after all! But I suspect it was only that general paralysis prevented the extreme of terror, just as a man in the clutch of a wild beast is hardly aware of suffering. At last the figure stooped over my bed, and stretched out a long arm. I remember nothing more.

I woke in the grey of the morning. Could a faint have passed into a sleep? or was it all a dream? I lay for some time before I could recall what made me so miserable. At length my memory awoke, and I gazed fearful about the room. The white ashes of the burnt-out fire were lying in the grate; the stand of the rush-light was on the floor; the wall with its tapestry was just as it had been; the cold gray light had annihilated the fancied visions: I had been dreaming, and was now awake. But I could not lie longer in bed. I must go out. The morning air would give me life: I felt worn and weak. Vision or dream, the room was hateful to me. With a great effort I sat up, for I still feared to move, lest I should catch a glimpse of the armed figure. Terrible as it had been in the night, it would be more terrible now. I peered into every corner. Each was vacant. Then first I remembered that I had been reading the *Castle of Otranto* and the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, the night before. I jumped out of bed and dressed myself, growing braver and braver as the light of the lovely spring morning swelled in the room. Having dipped my head in cold water, I was myself again. I opened the lattice and looked out. The first breath of air was a denial to the whole thing. I laughed at myself. Earth and sky were alive with spring. The wind was the breath of the coming summer: there were flakes of sunshine and shadow in it. Before me lay a green bank with a few trees on its top. It was crowded with primroses growing through the grass. The dew was lying all about, shining and sparkling in the first rays of the level sun, which itself I could not see. The tide of life rose in my heart and rushed through my limbs. I would take my sword, and go for a ramble through the park. I went to my bed-side, and stretched across to find it by the wall. It must have slipped down at the back of the bed. No. Where could it be? In a word, I searched everywhere, but my loved weapon had vanished. The visions of the night returned, and for a moment I believed them all. The night once again closed around me, darkened yet more with the despair of an

irreparable loss. I rushed from the room and through a long passage, with the blind desire to get out. The stare of an unwashed maid, already busy with her pail and brush, brought me to my senses.

"I beg your pardon," I said; "I want to get out."

(To be Continued.)

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[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

TALES OF THE LINKS OF LOVE.

BY ALEXANDER SOMERVILLE.

LILLYMERE.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CONFLICT.—RUNNING A NATION BY ONE MAN POWER.

Within a private chamber, conducting a nation's business in midst of convulsion, Peter Seadeep sat at a central table.

By aid of two pages, a boy and girl, who carried scraps of paper between himself and two secretary operators sitting at telegraph instruments, Peter was then concentrating an army nine hundred miles away, from points two hundred and fifty miles apart to stations of railway and river arrival within a radius of ten miles.

Within the ten miles he exchanged thoughts with three generals about positions to be taken for an impending battle.

And he was then concentrating a fleet of gunboats, and instructing an Admiral two thousand miles away.

He was directing the several divisions of another army, forty to eighty miles from his chair, to change base.

He was directing a naval commander at two hundred miles off, and another at the distance of seven hundred miles, what orders to send by steam cruisers to the squadrons blockading the ports of the South. And suggesting what measures they might devise to entrap the scourge of the Atlantic, the Corsair ship, "El Abra."

He was directing two navy yards, respectively, what rams of war to send South, and what iron-clads to build.

He perused telegrams of editorials which had appeared that morning in different journals, hostile to national interests, and was ordering arrests of editors.

He ordered the arrest of the Donna Euryntia at the Rappahannock river, and her removal to Washington under suspension of Habeas Corpus.

He ordered the arrest of two Englishwomen, Agnes Schoolar and Isa Antry, suspected spies, then hovering on skirts of the army of the West.

He ordered that the adroitly courageous and audacious young corporal of the Redbolt Infantry—Simon Lud, should be appointed captain to Number One Company of Mounted Redbolts, then forming for special service.

He ordered the authorities at Detroit to be alert against plots of El Abra or his incendiary agencies, to burn frontier cities, capture river steamers, and make wreck of railway trains.

He ordered that the New York — of next day, should bid defiance to the London — of January 21 recently brought under notice; and that all travel between the States and Canada should henceforth be subject to stringent passport restrictions.

Because of that astounding declaration of January 21, Canadians in the States to be under constant surveillance.

He ordered that the Hon. Mrs. Pensyldine and her daughter, Sylva, be arrested at Philadelphia, under suspension of Habeas Corpus. Probably in reprisal for the London — of January 21.

John, one of the telegraphing secretaries in the corner, handed to the page at his elbow a message just received, which the child, Elfa Isador, carried to Peter. He read:

"The Donna Euryntia is arrested and now on the train to Washington; due at 6 p.m."

William, the secretary operator in the second corner, gave the boy, Julian Isador, a paper which was carried to the centre table and read:

"Hon. Mrs. and Sylva Pensyldine in custody; occupying separate cells as directed. Contents of the letters they were in the act of writing forwarded. Also their English letters of yesterday."

The girl, Elfa Isador, brought a paper to Peter, who read:

"Army of the West. Headquarters, noon. Lines closing in order of battle. Enemy massing in force. Our troops in perfect order. I have no doubt of a decisive victory. Will attack at 3 p.m., if he does not advance sooner. Hurry on troops and supplies."

Half an hour later:

"We are attacked by infantry, on right and