

RUMFORD

THE WHOLESOME
BAKING POWDER



Brings out the rich, delicious flavor in the baking. Produces that evenness of texture so much desired by all good cooks. Rumford appeals to particular and thrifty housewives.

G. D. SHEARS & SON, Agents.

PURE

Happiness At Last, —OR— Royalty Recompensed.

CHAPTER XLII.

When Bright had gone, Gaunt left the room and went on the terrace with a cigarette.

"So she was going to be married to that illustrious! And why not? He looked that he would be worthy of her. Ah, no! No man could be worthy of his girl-love, of his Decima!

"He went down the steps from the terrace and sauntered through the park into the road. From there he could just see the chimneys of The Woodbines.

"She was there—awake; and he was here. But what a wide gulf yawned between them!

"And she was going to be married! Ah, well, that was quite right. It was 44 it should be. She was young and beautiful; and this young fellow—well, it was right that she should marry one who was young and well-to-do. A wave of bitterness swept over him. He tried to crush down the throes of her that rose in his heart. He would go in the morning. He would see her. He would go back to Africa to meet the death which would come sooner or later; sooner, he hoped.

"As he turned away toward the Hall, he saw a sharp light spring into the sky. It seemed to come from the spot at which he had been gazing, from The Woodbines.

"He stopped and looked earnestly in the direction of the light. It grew and expanded, and there was the sound of an explosion. He ran up the hill and looked earnestly, anxiously, in the direction of the flames; for there were flames now, and the sky was red above the spot, from which they sprang.

"It was a fire; and at The Woodbines. He set off running.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Gaunt ran across the lawn, and climbing the park fence, got into the road. As he went, he was hoping that it might not be The Woodbines, but a hay-stack or rick near it; but when he had gone another hundred yards or so, he saw that it was the Deane's house that was on fire.

"Several other persons were running in the same direction, and by the time he had gained the front gate, a crowd had collected and was shouting and rushing about excitedly.

Gaunt pushed his way through and caught a man, the nearest to him, by the arm.

"Are they all out—safe?" he asked.

"Before the man could reply, Mr. Bright came running down the path from the burning house.

"Is that you, Lord Gaunt?" he panted; then turned and addressed the crowd. "Some one run down to the farm and bring up a ladder—the longest you can find; bring two, and some rope! Has any one gone for the engine?"

"Yes, yes, sir!" replied a voice.

"Are they all out, Bright?" demanded Gaunt. He spoke quietly and calmly enough, but he looked from Bright to the house with a terrible anxiety.

"I don't know. I have only just arrived," replied Bright. "I saw just

moment, and well-nigh stifled him; but the crackling of the wood-work and opening his eyes, he saw a white figure standing on the landing above him.

"My God!" he said, under his breath, and for a second he was paralyzed by fear for the first time in his life. It was only for a second, the next he was himself again.

"Decima!" he cried to her, "Decima! Can you see—hear me?"

A tongue of flame shot up between them, and they could see each other plainly. He saw her start and hold her arms to him, heard her cry upon his name, and he held out his arms to her, intending to tell her to jump; but he checked the command that sprang to his lips. In the uncertain light, in her terror, she might miss him or jump short, and if she did so, she would inevitably injure herself.

"Decima, can you hear me?"

"Yes, yes!" she cried back to him; and her voice, though thick and trembling, was free from the frenzy of terror. "Oh back! Oh, go, go! You can't save me!"

He laughed fiercely.

"Can I not? I can, and I will save you! Do not be afraid. Go back—look! Is the staircase above you safe yet?"

She glanced upward.

"Yes, I—I think so! Oh, yes; pray—pray! Go! The fire is all around you! I can see it!"

"Go up to the top room—the one at the back!" he shouted. "Let me see you go! Quick!"

She paused a moment and looked down at him. Surely it was not terror on the white face which the flames lighted up so plainly, not terror alone, but an indelible tenderness and joy.

"Go!" he repeated, almost sternly. "There is not a moment to lose! I will save you! Go to the window, but do not break it—the draught—"

She understood, and with another glance at him, sprang up the top stairs. Gaunt turned and fought his way through the flames and smoke into the open air. Half a dozen men seized him and dragged him away from the house and beat out the sparks and spots of fire which smoldered in his clothes. His face was black, his hair scorched, and he was almost blinded by the smoke.

"All right!" he said, shaking himself free from the anxious kindly hands. "She is safe—as yet. The ladder!"

"It's here!" cried Bright. "Are you hurt?"

"No, no! Take it round to the back—the window with the bars! Quick!" said Gaunt.

He was cool and self-possessed, but his lips trembled.

They tore round to the back with the ladder and set it up against the house; but the ladder would not quite reach the window. Gaunt looked up. Some ivy was growing against the side, and he thought he could manage to reach the window.

He sprang to the ladder, but Bright and some of the other men seized him. "Wait—for God's sake, wait until we've tied the smaller ladder on to this one."

"You can do that when I'm up," said Gaunt, quietly. "I can reach the window by the ivy. Let me go, please!"

He pushed Bright aside and tore off his coat, with his foot on the ladder. Then he ran up. They held the ladder firmly, and gazed up at him with white, scared faces. When he had gained the top rung he twisted his hands in the ivy as high above his head as possible and drew himself up. For a moment or two he hung by this frail support, and the crowd, as they stared up at him, gave a kind of sob and gasp. When they saw him loosen one hand and reach for the window-sill.

"He'll never do it!" exclaimed a voice below. "He'll fall—drop like a stone! Some one get some blankets—something to catch him!"

But Gaunt's strength was herculean, and it was backed by that cool courage which has made the Englishman master of his world. He raised himself inch by inch, got a grip with his other hand, and presently had one knee on the widow-sill. The crowd sent up a wild cheer; but there was terror and apprehension in it as well as admiration.

Fortunately, the sill was one of the wide, old-fashioned ones, and Gaunt found it possible to kneel on it. As he did so, he saw Decima. There was only the glass between their two faces; hers white and strained with terror; his for him, not for herself—his black and grimed with smoke.

He smiled at her encouragingly and spoke her name. Then he gripped one of the bars and tore it away, and with a cry of warning to those below, hung down. The second bar came away as easily, but the last held fast. It was nailed with clamp nails and resisted all his efforts for a time, and he could not put forth all his strength, for fear of losing his balance and falling. Every moment was precious.

He saw a gleam of light behind Decima, and knew that it was the flames which had reached the top story and would take hold of the room itself presently. Clinging to the side of the window, he exerted all the force he dared, and the bar came away suddenly, so suddenly that he staggered and swayed. As the spectators beneath groaned and shouted warningly.

"Open the window now," he said to Decima.

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set over the fence. The servants are out and safe; I saw them just now. There they are, and Mr. Deane—he was here just now."

"And Decima—Miss Deane?" said Gaunt, impatiently.

Mr. Bright shook his head.

"I haven't seen her. Has any one seen Miss Deane?" he shouted.

There was a silence as the crowd looked from one to the other; then the cook pushed her way up to Bright, wringing her hands and crying.

"Oh, where is the young mistress? Where is Miss Decima?" she wailed. "I can't find her! We—we thought she had come out with us, but I can't find her in the crowd!"

Gaunt took her by the shoulder.

"Don't be afraid," he said, quietly. "Tell me—which room?"

The girl stopped wailing and crying for a moment.

"The back room—at the top, my lord. Miss Decima is sleeping there for a night or two; her own room is being done up."

"Show me!" said Gaunt, quickly.

She ran round to the back of the house and pointed to a window of the top room.

"That's it, my lord! Oh, my poor young mistress!"

The night had grown dark, and a slight drizzle had commenced. The fire had not reached the back of the house as yet, though it was spreading rapidly, and he could not see anything at the window. He noticed that there were iron bars to it; the room had been used as a nursery by a former tenant.

Gaunt shouted "Decima!" but no answer came, and he ran round to the front again. The house was an old one, and having been built when timber was cheap and jerry-building unknown, there was plenty of wood in it. The flames had caught at the thick beams and quarterings, and the whole of the front of the house was a sheet of fire.

One of the men had brought an ax and broken in the front door, and the draught was driving the fire up the staircase and through the lower rooms fiercely.

But Gaunt did not hesitate a moment. Decima might have escaped and be safe somewhere in the crowd; but he would not leave it to chance. He meant going into the house. Putting his arm up before his eyes, he ran toward the door.

Bright saw him and sprang forward. "Where are you going, my lord?" he demanded. "You can't go inside—it's impossible!"

"Have you found Miss Deane?" cried Gaunt, over his shoulder.

"No," said Bright; "but you can't go in—it's certain death!"

Gaunt broke from him and ran into the house. A volume of flames and smoke surrounded him and shut him from Bright's sight. The crowd roared with excitement and yelled, "Come back—come back!" and some of the women screamed. Gaunt, with his face covered by his arm, blundered to the bottom of the staircase and looked up. The flames had traveled through the first floor and were licking round the balustrades of the landing; the smoke was so thick that he could see nothing but the flames.

"Decima!" he called. "Decima!"

There was no answer, and half-blinded and suffocated, he was about to rush up the stairs, when they fell away from the landing with a dull crash.

The smoke and dust rendered it impossible for him to see anything for a

moment, and well-nigh stifled him; but the crackling of the wood-work and opening his eyes, he saw a white figure standing on the landing above him.

"My God!" he said, under his breath, and for a second he was paralyzed by fear for the first time in his life. It was only for a second, the next he was himself again.

"Decima!" he cried to her, "Decima! Can you see—hear me?"

A tongue of flame shot up between them, and they could see each other plainly. He saw her start and hold her arms to him, heard her cry upon his name, and he held out his arms to her, intending to tell her to jump; but he checked the command that sprang to his lips. In the uncertain light, in her terror, she might miss him or jump short, and if she did so, she would inevitably injure herself.

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She glanced upward.

"Yes, I—I think so! Oh, yes; pray—pray! Go! The fire is all around you! I can see it!"

"Go up to the top room—the one at the back!" he shouted. "Let me see you go! Quick!"

She paused a moment and looked down at him. Surely it was not terror on the white face which the flames lighted up so plainly, not terror alone, but an indelible tenderness and joy.

"Go!" he repeated, almost sternly. "There is not a moment to lose! I will save you! Go to the window, but do not break it—the draught—"

She understood, and with another glance at him, sprang up the top stairs. Gaunt turned and fought his way through the flames and smoke into the open air. Half a dozen men seized him and dragged him away from the house and beat out the sparks and spots of fire which smoldered in his clothes. His face was black, his hair scorched, and he was almost blinded by the smoke.

"All right!" he said, shaking himself free from the anxious kindly hands. "She is safe—as yet. The ladder!"

"It's here!" cried Bright. "Are you hurt?"

"No, no! Take it round to the back—the window with the bars! Quick!" said Gaunt.

He was cool and self-possessed, but his lips trembled.

They tore round to the back with the ladder and set it up against the house; but the ladder would not quite reach the window. Gaunt looked up. Some ivy was growing against the side, and he thought he could manage to reach the window.

He sprang to the ladder, but Bright and some of the other men seized him. "Wait—for God's sake, wait until we've tied the smaller ladder on to this one."

"You can do that when I'm up," said Gaunt, quietly. "I can reach the window by the ivy. Let me go, please!"

He pushed Bright aside and tore off his coat, with his foot on the ladder. Then he ran up. They held the ladder firmly, and gazed up at him with white, scared faces. When he had gained the top rung he twisted his hands in the ivy as high above his head as possible and drew himself up. For a moment or two he hung by this frail support, and the crowd, as they stared up at him, gave a kind of sob and gasp. When they saw him loosen one hand and reach for the window-sill.

"He'll never do it!" exclaimed a voice below. "He'll fall—drop like a stone! Some one get some blankets—something to catch him!"

But Gaunt's strength was herculean, and it was backed by that cool courage which has made the Englishman master of his world. He raised himself inch by inch, got a grip with his other hand, and presently had one knee on the widow-sill. The crowd sent up a wild cheer; but there was terror and apprehension in it as well as admiration.

Fortunately, the sill was one of the wide, old-fashioned ones, and Gaunt found it possible to kneel on it. As he did so, he saw Decima. There was only the glass between their two faces; hers white and strained with terror; his for him, not for herself—his black and grimed with smoke.

He smiled at her encouragingly and spoke her name. Then he gripped one of the bars and tore it away, and with a cry of warning to those below, hung down. The second bar came away as easily, but the last held fast. It was nailed with clamp nails and resisted all his efforts for a time, and he could not put forth all his strength, for fear of losing his balance and falling. Every moment was precious.

He saw a gleam of light behind Decima, and knew that it was the flames which had reached the top story and would take hold of the room itself presently. Clinging to the side of the window, he exerted all the force he dared, and the bar came away suddenly, so suddenly that he staggered and swayed. As the spectators beneath groaned and shouted warningly.

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She paused a moment and looked down at him. Surely it was not terror on the white face which the flames lighted up so plainly, not terror alone, but an indelible tenderness and joy.

"Go!" he repeated, almost sternly. "There is not a moment to lose! I will save you! Go to the window, but do not break it—the draught—"

She understood, and with another glance at him, sprang up the top stairs. Gaunt turned and fought his way through the flames and smoke into the open air. Half a dozen men seized him and dragged him away from the house and beat out the sparks and spots of fire which smoldered in his clothes. His face was black, his hair scorched, and he was almost blinded by the smoke.

"All right!" he said, shaking himself free from the anxious kindly hands. "She is safe—as yet. The ladder!"

"It's here!" cried Bright. "Are you hurt?"

"No, no! Take it round to the back—the window with the bars! Quick!" said Gaunt.

He was cool and self-possessed, but his lips trembled.

They tore round to the back with the ladder and set it up against the house; but the ladder would not quite reach the window. Gaunt looked up. Some ivy was growing against the side, and he thought he could manage to reach the window.

He sprang to the ladder, but Bright and some of the other men seized him. "Wait—for God's sake, wait until we've tied the smaller ladder on to this one."

"You can do that when I'm up," said Gaunt, quietly. "I can reach the window by the ivy. Let me go, please!"

He pushed Bright aside and tore off his coat, with his foot on the ladder. Then he ran up. They held the ladder firmly, and gazed up at him with white, scared faces. When he had gained the top rung he twisted his hands in the ivy as high above his head as possible and drew himself up. For a moment or two he hung by this frail support, and the crowd, as they stared up at him, gave a kind of sob and gasp. When they saw him loosen one hand and reach for the window-sill.

"He'll never do it!" exclaimed a voice below. "He'll fall—drop like a stone! Some one get some blankets—something to catch him!"

But Gaunt's strength was herculean, and it was backed by that cool courage which has made the Englishman master of his world. He raised himself inch by inch, got a grip with his other hand, and presently had one knee on the widow-sill. The crowd sent up a wild cheer; but there was terror and apprehension in it as well as admiration.

Fortunately, the sill was one of the wide, old-fashioned ones, and Gaunt found it possible to kneel on it. As he did so, he saw Decima. There was only the glass between their two faces; hers white and strained with terror; his for him, not for herself—his black and grimed with smoke.

He smiled at her encouragingly and spoke her name. Then he gripped one of the bars and tore it away, and with a cry of warning to those below, hung down. The second bar came away as easily, but the last held fast. It was nailed with clamp nails and resisted all his efforts for a time, and he could not put forth all his strength, for fear of losing his balance and falling. Every moment was precious.

He saw a gleam of light behind Decima, and knew that it was the flames which had reached the top story and would take hold of the room itself presently. Clinging to the side of the window, he exerted all the force he dared, and the bar came away suddenly, so suddenly that he staggered and swayed. As the spectators beneath groaned and shouted warningly.

"Open the window now," he said to Decima.

(To be continued.)

moment, and well-nigh stifled him; but the crackling of the wood-work and opening his eyes, he saw a white figure standing on the landing above him.

"My God!" he said, under his breath, and for a second he was paralyzed by fear for the first time in his life. It was only for a second, the next he was himself again.

"Decima!" he cried to her, "Decima! Can you see—hear me?"

A tongue of flame shot up between them, and they could see each other plainly. He saw her start and hold her arms to him, heard her cry upon his name, and he held out his arms to her, intending to tell her to jump; but he checked the command that sprang to his lips. In the uncertain light, in her terror, she might miss him or jump short, and if she did so, she would inevitably injure herself.

"Decima, can you hear me?"

"Yes, yes!" she cried back to him; and her voice, though thick and trembling, was free from the frenzy of terror. "Oh back! Oh, go, go! You can't save me!"

He laughed fiercely.

"Can I not? I can, and I will save you! Do not be afraid. Go back—look! Is the staircase above you safe yet?"

She glanced upward.

"Yes, I—I think so! Oh, yes; pray—pray! Go! The fire is all around you! I can see it!"

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