

I never could have done it of myself till now. Chance, or what we call chance in our strange repugnance to a recognition of the intangible, did it finally. It was dusk, and the first rocket had soared. We all stood watching it from the terrace, when Nelly called piteously

Oh! I'm so short, and there are *such* great men in front of me, I can't see anything. Harry, do take me down near the fountains! It's so much cooler."

"You'll find it a good deal too cool Mrs. Haywood, I fancy," grunted Leadenhall. "When you come to my old lady's age here you'll know more of the dangers. But girls will be girls I suppose, and—why Charley, do you want to go too? I can't allow that you're in good care I admit, but I should never meet you in the crowd. You had better stay where you are.

Now was the occasion, and I snatched it. "You won't leave before ten, Sir," I deferentially submitted, "And I will have Miss Fenchurch on the platform a quarter of an hour earlier, so there can be no danger. And really, for these girls it is a lovely night. Come Nell, are you both ready? I shan't fail you may depend upon it, Sir; 9.45 sharp, on the platform."

I can't say how it was Fred managed to pick us up outside. But he did somehow. I had enough to do to pilot my wife through the throng, and so Charley fell to more congenial escort. But when the half-hour came, and we turned inwards, she called suddenly,

"Mr. Haywood, is this the right way? We were to meet on the platform you remember, and you are going to the left. It does not seem the way we came—at least to me."

"I assure you, it is the way we came," I answered in all innocence. "Don't be in the least afraid. I'll take you safe enough."

"Fred, can't you re-assure the young lady? I promised her to her uncle and he shall have her."

Whatever form the re-assurances took there were no further remonstrances, as we walked down the long tiresome gallery that leads out upon the station. There was an immense crowd, but up and down pertinaciously, we sought the Leadenhalls in vain. I marvelled much at Fred's daring to remain, from what I had seen of him earlier, but supposed he knew his own affairs best, and said nothing of it. Ten struck, and still no ancients. Half-past! and their wheels yet tarried. Eleven, and the last train was going. I was absolutely uncomfortable, and could not make up my mind to leave, but turned irresolute up the steps again. There was a whistle and a snort, and doors were roughly slammed, and a prolonged Ri-i-ight! rang in our ears, and then there were but an empty platform, and four helplessly imprisoned visitors. We were left behind, beyond hope of rescue.