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| When or how he found his way back to the begiuning of his perpetual journey, was a question tliat Katie never asked even of herself. It was enongh that every morning the swift train brought him ont of the unknown country beyond the hills, and added a something that had grown to be very pleasant to the peace and quiet of her day. <br> There was something very notewortly, even to railway men, about the manner in which the road broke in upon the valley. $A$ deep cut, a sharp curve, and a heavy down-grade, combined to make the precise point where the conductor had learned to look for Katic's greeting an interesting one ; and her white kerchief may even have seemed to wave a species of congratulation at his repeated safe passage of what might at any time have shaped itself into a danger. <br> Be that as it may, the railway "cut" had brought to Katie Crowninshield, among other results, a shonter and easior path to the home of her aunt, her mother's sister, who lived just a little way beyond the ledge, and who was never satisfled if two many days passed by without bringing the sunlight of Katio's face across her threshold. And sotratie had gone and returned, many and many a time, by the narrow path between the granite walls. Nobody in that peaceful region dreamed of fear at being "ont after dark," and again and again had good Betsy detained her pet until night had fallen, although her only companion homeward was her little star of a lantern. There cama a day when Katie's handkerchief fluttered in vain, aud then another, when even the reply she received from the train convinced her that there had been o change of some kind, and that she would receive no more signals from the same hand. And so she sadly prepared to give it up, in the first fit of genwine blues she had ever indulged in, but, a few evenings afterward, she lingered at the garden gate a little after her return from Aunt Betsy's, to see the lightning express go flashing by. It was a grand sight when it came, incomparably more interesting and mysterions in the darkness than ever in the day, and Katie wondered she had never thought so before; but she almost unconsciously raised her little lantern and swung it aronnd her head, as she had used to wave her handkerchief. | ing its radiance ahead, as if it were trying to tell her : "There, dcar, that's it ; don't be afraid, now, I'll show you the track !"' She had not gone far, however, before the granite walls brought to leer ears, all the way from the lower end and round the curve, as if the cut had been a speaking tube, the sound of voices that were evidently meant to be low and guarded. There were other sounds mingled with the voices, and Katie conld not make out more than a word or so here and there, but there was something about it all that startled and fightened her. At first she was half-inclined to turn and make the best of her way back to Aunt Betsy's ; but that seemed foolish, and Katie was really a courageous little sonl. She hid her lantern under her shawl, however, and stepped very lightly and swiftly forward, trying to remember if there was not a rock or hollow where she would be as safe from men as she had been from the passing train. She was very nearly througis herself, before she could any way make out what it all meant ; but, as she paused in the deep sladows of the rocks and peered timidly ont toward the now dull and muffied sounds, with which the voices were no longer mingled, a broad quick gleam, as from a lantern suddenly shaded or extinguished, shot across the track not many yards below, and then all was darkness and silence. <br> But that one moment of illumination had revealed extraordinary things to the keen, excited vision of Katie Crowninshield. <br> There were men, three or four, she could not say just how many, but rough, fierce, wild, and anxious-looking, and before them on the railway track, from which the rails had been pried away just there, was a confused heap of heavy granite boulders and fragments. Katie understood it as cleverly as if those men had taken her into their contidence, and bad told her in words. <br> It was a plot to wreck the train ! <br> And now she was in the open air, beyond the upper entrance, and she could soe the peaceful light still shining from Annt Betsy's window. But there was no time to go there for help. <br> The train must be so very near : <br> Katie did for a moment think of kinding a'bright *ife on the track, but that would take too long, and the great ruin and horror would come before oven a small fagot would be mell ablaze. | a group away beyond even the shattered lccomotive, however, which forbade her lingering for an instant. Right down torard her own garden gate four men were carrying a heavy burden, and others were following, and Katie heard them say, as she darted by : <br> "Who is it ?" <br> "Why, its the conductor. He was thrown from the platform of the forward car." <br> "Is he killed?" <br> "They say so. Nobody else was hurt. He was a splendid fellow." <br> A tall, handsome, bearded man, in dark blue elothing, but his face was ghastly pale when they laid him on Grandfather Crowninshield's own bed, and the surgeon, who had been among the passengers, bent gloomily above him. <br> "Head all right," muttered the man of science. "Only a cut or so. Ah, there's a rib, two of 'em, and his arm below the elbow. Struck the ground so, that's clear, and the other bones are likely to be all right. Must have been leaning out to look ahead, I shouki say. Hallo, what's that light on his face ?" <br> The light in the room, what with the crowd and the country candles, had been none of the brightest, but just at this moment a clear, golden gleam was poured down on the face of the injured man, and slowly, as if the radiance itself had awakened him, he opened his eyes and looked dreamily about him. <br> The surgeon heard a sigh that was half a sob close behind him, and looked up to see that the sudden light came from Katie's lantern, but just then the questioning eyes of the wotinded conductor fell upon her face, and heexclaimed faintly but earnestly : <br> "I knew it was you. There was hardly room to stop the train in, but we'd have all gone to pieces if it hadn't been for you and your lignt. You've saved them all." <br> And so Katie Crowninshield suddenly found herself a heroine, with a swarm of grateful people about her, very much to her discomfort. They would have made her a present if she would have allowed them, but the only really welcome words she heard from any one were those of the surgeon. <br> "What, killed? A man like him? Nonsense ! He'll carry his arm in a sling for a month or so, but he'll be up again in a fortuight," | happy, and with no foreshadowing of evil. <br> John Best was a justice of the peace in the township where he lived, and his judscial duties frequently took him from home. So, although their cabin was situated in the depths of the forest and at a distance from any other habitation, his little family went about their usual pursuits without feeling particularly lonesome in his absence. <br> As the morning advanced, the noise of a velricle jolting over the rough road, accompanied by a voice drawling out a song in that peculiar cadence which characterizes the melolies of the Emerald Isle, broke in upon the quiet of their littie world. It proved to be a rickety old cart drawn by a cow in quaint rope lumriess. The animal was driven, or rather was suffered to go at her own gait, by a gray-haired old man, who drew feebly at the stump of a clay pipe which he held between his straggling yellow teeth, occasionally removing it to give utterance to the refrain of a song which probably carried him back in imagination to his younger days in his home far over the sea. <br> The cart camo to a stand still bofore the daor, very much as a matter of course, for the old cow was accustomed to stop at every house she came to. <br> *A neighborly greeting to you, Mr. McCarty !" called out the housewife from the doorway. <br> "The thop o' the mor-rning to yez, Misthress Best ?' returned the old man, heartily. "It's a foine day we're havin', this same." <br> "It is, indeed. And if that's what brings you this way I hope we may have many of them." <br> "It's to mill I'm going, for we must have bread for the babies, Misthress Best. The dame told me that the male was getting low, so I love in the ghrist and hitched ul. old Betty, thinking belike we'd not have so fair a day ag'in in a hurry." <br> "But you're not going by without having a neighborly chat and a mug of beer, are you? You've made a great stranger of yourself lately, and must come in and tell me all about Mis. McCarty and Jamie. I haven't heard how the little fellow is getting on with that eruel cut," <br> "He's doing bravely. He shaws himself a McCarty," replied the old man, proudly; and continued: "But I'll come in as ye bid me. Sure, it wouldn't be neighborly to refase a dhrop from a friend like yex, Minthress Best, Au' if the truth must be told, |
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