

THE STORY OF A STREET ARAB

[From the London Figaro.] I was a street Arab. So was my brother Bill. Father and mother used to drink and send us to beg or steal—it didn't matter much which, so that we brought something home. We were ragged and dirty, fierce, impudent and reckless. I was the worse of the two for I was the oldest and the strongest. All day, and almost all night too; I was in the street. To escape the "Bobby" I used to get a few boxes of lucifers and fuses, and about out "Here yer are, four for a penny." I sold very few of 'em. They only served as a blind to get ha' pence without giving a box. How I was knocked and kicked about, to be sure! In rain and snow, frost and sun, I was in the streets the rainer and frostier, the better for, though there were few people out then, I got more money out of pity; and could pry more from the stalls—they weren't watched so much. Some of the money I took home, but most of it I spent. Generally I got enough to eat, but sometimes I was almost starved. If I didn't get any money or wittels, I didn't go home to our one room in a crowded, dirty court, which we called our home. Not that I cared much for the thrashing I got, but I liked better to lie on door steps, or in entries, or anywhere, where I could skid the Bobby. It was an awfully jolly life for a time, and didn't I look down on the well dressed kids who were forced to keep themselves clean, and don't turn a catarine-wheel in the mud, or play for pitch and toss, heads or tails, with their money!

COMBAT IN MID-AIR.

Deadly struggle on a Tight Rope—one Combatant Hurled to the Ground and Instantly Killed.

Little did the tens of thousands of men, women and children who thronged the public-square of Agram, Croatia, on the 15th of August, anticipate that they were about to witness a spectacle such as has, perhaps, never been seen before—a moral struggle in mid-air. The occasion of the gathering was a performance on the tight-rope. The acrobats, Andreas Kolter and Francis Pergowitch, were to appear on a window in the fifth story of the Court House, a distance of 250 feet. The acrobats were to meet midway, and then to pass each other.

When the clock struck twelve, the acrobats emerged from their respective windows, dressed in tights and without balance poles. Kolter walked rather cautiously, while Pergowitch came to meet him from the opposite direction, with a nervous, quick step. At last they met, and the suspense of the crowd underneath changed the next moment to a feeling of indescribable horror, Pergowitch suddenly uttered an angry exclamation, and dealt Kolter a terrible blow on the head. Kolter staggered and fell, but in so doing succeeded in clutching the rope with one hand, while with the other he grasp the left leg of his assailant. Pergowitch now fell likewise, but passed his right arm around the rope, so that he hung upon it in comparative security.

And now began a life and death struggle. Kolter, with his right hand, tried to drag Pergowitch from the rope, while Pergowitch kicked Kolter with his right foot, and with his left hand endeavored to loosen his antagonist's hold. No one was able to interfere, and the result, it was easy to foresee, must be the death of one or both acrobats. Many women fainted, while men wept like children.

What added to the general despair was the appearance of Kolter's young wife at the open window, from which her husband a few moments ago had set out upon his fatal walk. Her piteous screams were heard above the din below, and her appeals to Pergowitch to spare her husband's life would have moved the heart of an Apache. The struggle in mid air lasted perhaps a minute, when Kolter suddenly uttered a last cry and lost his hold. He fell to the ground, striking it violently and expiring instantly. While the people gathered round the corpse of poor Kolter, his murderer on the tight rope managed to get on his feet again. With a diabolical expression on his face he uttered a yell of triumph.

The prefect of Police ordered Pergowitch to surrender. In case he should not do so within five minutes he would be shot down like a dog. Finally he raised himself to his feet and ran quickly to the court house window, where he surrendered, begging that he might be protected from violence. There was great danger of his being executed by the people, who loudly clamored that the murderer be given up to them; but the military by a bayonet charge cleared the public square. Pergowitch being asked what caused him to perpetrate this crime, said that there had been a grudge between him and Kolter ever since the latter had married young Rosita Serganoff, a Polish girl of rare beauty. Kolter, in a fit of jealousy, had told him he knew one of the other must die on this account. Andreas Kolter was the youngest member of the distinguished family of acrobats of that name.

This labor troubles in Charleston, S. C., have not been quieted, but the strikers are not succeeding. The Baltimore Sun gives notice that Maryland will spend no more money on the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, and Congress will be asked for a subsidy.

a real blessing and a true help. Everything we undertook prospered. Why, she could do everything—from fine sewing to milking cows. Brothers and sisters were also kind, helpful, and we were as one family, working for one end—the happiness and prosperity of all. In another year, just before our first lad was born, I was able to buy the plantation, and so became my own landlord.

The sight of Mary's brothers often made me think of poor Bill. Father and mother had died while I was in the reformatory, but I could learn nothing of the lad whom I left in the streets. I told Mary all about it, and she, bless her heart! advised me to go to England to seek him out. I am sure she advised it because she saw I wanted to go and find the only relation I knew of the old country. I had now been away ten years, and although not quite thirty, had made a good fortune, married the best of women, had a happy family around me, troops of friends, and brother Bill might perhaps, be starving, or, what would be worse, working in a prison, for crimes which, if left like him, I too might have committed. So, with good wishes from all, with prayers for my success from Mary, I returned to England to find my brother. If he is alive, I know I shall find him; and whether he is good or bad, whether he is married or single, he shall go back with me to Africa, and we will make a new man of him. He is the younger of the two, and not too old to begin life again. I know I shall find him, and then there will, perhaps, be another chapter to add to this true story of a street Arab.

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