

was worth to the Harris family, for he had only been superintendent for a few years. Tom wrung his hands as he thought that this paper was not his, but was in the custody of Mr. Conrad till he picked it up. Tom could not sleep. He must decide what should be done with that paper, which was the missing link in the evidence necessary to lay claim to Mud Creek valley.

The next morning Tom was in search of Mr. Conrad, whom he found at the house of his brother, just across the street from the scene of the fire. Ella met him at the door, and presented him to her father as her hero. "Your daring has made me a happy man," said Mr. Conrad, as he looked Tom square in the face and held his hand. "We can never repay you, Tom." "Never mind," stammered Tom, for he was not a little embarrassed at the praises he was receiving from all sides. "I came," he said, "to make an apology and ask a favor." Mr. Conrad smiled and said, "Your apology is certainly out of order, but I am only too glad if I can do you a favor." Tom somewhat relieved went on. "After throwing your desk out of the window I picked up a paper that had fallen out when the desk was lifted. Without thinking, I carried it home. Last night I drew it from my pocket and then remembered where I got it. And that is my apology." Tom colored and looked Conrad square in the face. "This paper," he said, "furnishes evidence that would put mother and Bertha in comfortable circumstances. I only ask that you will see that it is not destroyed, and if it is destroyed that you will bear testimony of its existence." Tom paused. Mr. Conrad's face was a puzzle. "I knew," added Tom "that you would want to see justice done." "Certainly," interrupted Mr. Conrad, "I am only too glad if I can do you a kindness, and doubly so if it aids justice." Tom handed the paper to Mr. Conrad, and was about to leave, when Ella addressed him. "Do come again, Mr. Harris, for mother will be anxious to see you when she is a little better. We fear she was hurt in her fall yesterday." "Yes, Tom," said Mr. Conrad, looking up from the old lease which Tom had given him, "Come in any time. We want to know you better." Tom finally promised, and said goodbye.