

had and do not want—that it was quite enough to make me dislike him.

However, a sunny morning in the holidays is a cheerful thing, and when I strolled down stream with my rod I felt I could enjoy myself very nearly as much as I had before his coming spoiled our party. I had chosen the lower river because Mr. Herapath usually fished the upper part, and I would not be ruffled this nice day. So I was the more vexed to come suddenly upon him fishing, and fishing where he had no right to be. It was a spot where one bank rose into quite a cliff, frowning over a deep pool at the foot of some falls. Close to the cliff the water still ran with the speed of a mill race, so fast as to endanger a good swimmer. But on the far side of this current there was a bit of slack water which was tempting enough to have set one's wits to work to devise means to fish it, which from the top of the cliff was impossible. Just above the water was a ledge, a foot wide, perhaps, which might have done only it did not reach to this end of the cliff. However, some foolhardy person had espied this, and got over the gap by bridging the latter with a bit of plank, and then had drowned himself or gone away, in either case leaving his board to tempt others to do likewise.

And there was Mr. Herapath fishing from the ledge. It made me giddy to look at him. The rock overhung the water so much that he could not stand upright. When I had walked a few yards, meaning to pass round the rear of the cliff, I began to fancy all sorts of foolish things would happen. I felt sure that I should have no more peace or pleasure if I left him there. I hesitated. Yes, I would. I would go down and ask him to leave the place, and, of course, he would do it.

I lost no time, but ran down the slope smartly and carelessly. My way lay over loose shale mingled with large stones, and it was steep. It is wonderful how quickly an accident happens. I was checking myself near the bottom, when a big stone on which I stepped moved under me. The shale began to slip in a mass and the stone to roll. It was all done in a moment. I stayed myself, that was easy enough, but the stone took two bounds, jumped sideways, struck the piece of board which was only resting lightly at either end, and before I could take it all in the little bridge plunged end first into the current, which swept it out of sight in an instant.

He threw up his hands in affright, for he had turned, and we both saw it happen. He made indeed as if he would try to save it, but that was impossible; and then, while I cowered in dismay, he waved his arm to me in the direction of home—again and again. The roar of the falls drowned what he said, but I guessed his meaning. I could not help him myself, but I could fetch help. It was three miles to Breistolen, rough, rocky ones, and I doubted whether he could keep his cramped position with that noise deafening him, and the endless whirling stream before his eyes, while I was going and coming. But there was no better way I could think of; and even as I wavered, he signaled to me again imperatively.

I cannot tell at all how I did it; how I passed over

the uneven ground, or whether I went quickly or slowly, save by the reckoning papa made afterwards. I can only remember one long hurrying scramble; now I panted uphill, now I ran down, now I was on my face in a hole, breathless and half-stunned, and now I was up to my knees in water. I slipped and dropped down places I should at other times have shrunk from, and hurt myself so that I bore the marks for months. But I thought nothing of these things: all my being was spent in hurrying on for his life, the clamor of every cataract I passed seeming to stop my heart's beating with very fear. So I reached Breistolen, and panted over the bridge and up to the little white house lying so quiet in the afternoon sunshine, papa's stool-car even then at the door ready to take him to some favorite pool. Somehow I made him understand in broken words that Herapath was in danger, drowning already, for all I knew, and then I seized a great pole which was leaning against the porch, and climbed into the car. Papa was not slow either; he snatched a coil of rope from the luggage, and away we went, a man and boy whom he had hastily called running behind us. We had lost very little time, but so much may happen in so little time.

We were forced to leave the car a quarter of a mile from that part of the river, and walk or run the rest of the way. We all ran, even papa, as I had never known him run before. My heart sank at the groan he let escape him when I pointed out the spot. We came to it one by one, and we all looked. The ledge was empty. Jem Herapath was gone. I suppose it startled me. At any rate, I could only look at the water in a dazed way, and cry quietly without much feeling that it was my doing; while the men shouting to one another in strange, hushed voices, searched about for any sign of his fate.

"Bab! Why, Miss Bab, what is the matter?"

Safe and sound! Yes, there he was when I turned, safe, and strong, and cool, rod in hand, and a quiet smile in his eyes. Just as I had seen him yesterday, and thought never to see him again, and saying "Bab" exactly as of old, so that something in my throat—it may have been anger at his rudeness, but I do not think it was—prevented my saying a word until all the others came round us, and a babel of Norse and English, and something that was neither, yet both, set in.

"But how is this?" objected my father when he could be heard, "you are quite dry, my boy?"

"Dry! Why not, sir? For goodness' sake, what is the matter?"

"The matter! Didn't you fall in, or something of the kind?" papa asked, bewildered by this new aspect of the case.

"It does not look like it, does it? Your daughter gave me a very uncomfortable start by nearly doing so."

Every one looked at him for an explanation. "How did you manage to get from the ledge?" I said feebly.

"From the ledge? Why, by the other end to be sure, so that I had to walk back round the hill. Still I did not mind, for I was thankful that it was the plank and not you that fell in."