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A SLIDE ON A ROOF

Terrifying Experience on an Ice
Coated Mansard.

FIGHTING DEATH IN MIDAIR

Perilous Plight of Two Workers, and
an Exhibition of Coolness, Presence
of Mind and Heroic Patience—How
the Difficult Rescue Was Effected.

During the fall and winter of 1870
A. T. Stewart, who had bought the
Grand Union hotel at Saratoga, largely
rebuilt that great hostelry of 2,000
rooms. The building has a mansard
roof, and at the peak it is ninety-eight
feet from the sidewalk.

One cold winter morning, when the
work was virtually completed, two
men, Harvey, the head roofer, and a
helper named Dennison went up on
the roof to finish the flashing round
the base of the tower. There had been
a slight mist that morning, and it had
frozen upon the roof, but the two
men had on india rubber overshoes to
prevent them from slipping on the
slates.

Suddenly, however, Harvey's feet be-
gan to slip. He went very slowly at
first, for the upper roof of a mansard
is not steep. He tried to stop himself,
but there was nothing to which he
could cling. He turned his head in
Dennison's direction to see if he could
not give some assistance, but Dennison
too, was sliding slowly down the
roof.

Harvey's presence of mind did not
leave him. "Lie down flat!" he called.
So both men carefully laid themselves
at full length on the icy roof in order
that the increased friction might re-
tard, and perhaps stop, their descent.
For an instant it checked the move-
ment. Then the men began again
slowly to slip nearer the angle of the
roof and the steep pitch below.

It seemed like hours, although it was
only a few moments, when Harvey felt
his heels catch on a slight projection.
A blind gutter had been built into the
lower edge of the upper part of the
roof to carry off the large amount of
water that would fall upon such an ex-
panse of roof. The upper gutter pro-
jected above the slate roof only about
half an inch, but it was against this
that Harvey's heels had caught.

There he hung on the very brink of
the abyss—safe for an instant. He
dared not move a muscle, however, or
even turn his head to see if Dennison
were still on the roof. He did not cry
out for help, for he feared that the
mere effort of filling his lungs and
shouting might dislodge him. No one
could see the men on the flat of the
roof from the street below. The only
hope lay in the carpenters who were
at work inside the building. But how
should they know what was happening
up there on the roof?

Suddenly Harvey heard a voice, low,
but distinct, come from the tower
above him. "Hold on," it said, "and
I'll help you!" Then after a long time
Harvey heard the sound of several
voices. Whoever had found him had
got help.

The first voice spoke again: "Hold
on! We will lower this rope to you!"
Presently something rubbed on the
slate above Harvey's head. It was
the rope, which they were slowly
working down toward him.

"Can you get hold of it?" asked the
voice.

"I don't dare move much," Harvey
replied. "Can't you get it down near
my hand?"

They had to give it a flip to get it by
his shoulder. Then it traversed the
length of his arm and finally touched
his hand.

Harvey raised his arm very care-
fully and took hold of the rope. It was
an inch cable that had been used in
raising the slate from the ground to
the roof.

"Can you turn over very carefully
and climb up?" asked the voice.

Cautiously Harvey worked his hand
along on the rope—it was his right
hand—until he finally drew it taut.
Then he carefully raised his left hand
and, reaching across, grasped the rope
with that hand too.

Then when the worst of the matter
was over, he began to shake like a
leaf. He lay there, flat on his back,
clinging desperately to the rope and
dreading inexpressibly the next step.
How was he to turn over on that slip-
pery roof when he needed both hands
to cling to the rope?

At last he spoke hoarsely:

"Can you pull me up?"

They consulted together.

"I don't dare to turn over," he
added.

There was a sharp tug on the rope.

Harvey let them draw his arms up to
their extreme length, still afraid to
trust his weight to his rescuers. Then
he felt his heels lose their grip on the
gutter, and he began slowly to move
upward.

It was not till he had nearly reach-
ed the tower that he dared turn his
head in Dennison's direction to see if
he were still safe. There he was,
spread out on the roof, just as Harvey
had been. He did not move a muscle.

Patience, heroically, he waited his
turn. Then the men seized Harvey's
shoulders and drew him into the
tower.

In a few minutes Dennison was also
rescued, looking a little blue round
the mouth, but unharmed. Neither
man suffered any ill effects from his
terrible ordeal.—Youth's Companion.

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