

The little cottages became close and the children fretty. At the Randalls' Bennie and Joe got into a fight, and were punching each other over the floor, much to the inconvenience of the other members of the family. Their Uncle Richard reached a long arm for them, but it never touched them.

The boys stopped fighting to stare in amazement. The rest of the family stood petrified. For against the doorway, the rain running in streams from her dark hair, her cloak, her dress, leaned Jess Carlow. For a moment she struggled for breath, fought for it, her hand at her throat. Her dark eyes commanded rather than besought Richard.

'Father's hurt!' she gasped. 'The light! Come, oh, come!'

Without an instant's delay the young fellow snatched up his oilskins and followed her down the path to her dory, tossing like a cockle-shell at the little pier.

'You didn't come alone?' he cried, aghast. Jess was already in the boat.

'There are two pairs of oars!' she cried. 'I had to! Oh, quick!'

He untied the dory and sprang in after her. Instantly they were in a grey, seething tumult. He set his teeth and fought his way. They could see nothing, but they both knew the direction by the sound of the breakers on the head. They were tossed, beaten, buffeted, driven, it seemed, a dozen ways at once. Then suddenly, miraculously, the bulk of Little Wolf, fighting the turmoil, intervened, and behind it, drenched and staggering, they made the landing.

As they passed through the cottage, there was the sound of a man's voice, calling hoarsely. Jess thrust her fingers in her ears.

'The light first!' she panted.

The tumult, as soon as they closed the cottage door, was unspeakable, and the whole tower shook about them—they seemed climbing into the heart of the storm. Richard could hear the girl's laboring breath beside him, but she did not give up till they reached the top, and one quick glance assured her that everything was right; then she sank in a heap on the floor.

'I—can't!' she gasped. 'The lamps—'

He lighted them, and glanced quickly about.

'This?' he asked, and over Jess's agonised face swept a passion of relief. She watched him while he wound up the clockwork, slowly, steadily, as if he had done it all his life. Suddenly she buried her face on her arm and sobbed.

The young fellow finished his task and waited awkwardly. He did not know what to say—which was not strange when one considers not only that he had spoken to the girl for the first time in his life less than an hour before, but that no Randall had spoken to a Carlow for nearly forty years. But before he could think of anything, the girl lifted her head from her arm and said, with only a little break in the words:

'Now, I'll show you about—things. We come up once an hour at least when there's a storm.'

She explained clearly the simple mechanism—very simple, for the light was an old-time one with crank and weights. As she started to go downstairs, she turned for a moment, and there was in her eyes all the agony of renunciation. She had done her best for the light; for its sake she had been traitor to her own blood.

Down in the cottage the hoarse cries were still echoing with terrible monotony. The girl ran into the room, and as she opened the door the young man saw that the keeper was tied to his bed.

'You don't mean——' he began.

She turned on him fiercely. 'Go away! Did I ask you to come here? This isn't the light.'

He turned away at once. He understood it now. Her father was delirious, and fearing he would harm himself, or possibly even the light. What she must have gone through!

The girl came out of the bedroom presently, and made some coffee and set out bread and meat. She drank a cup of coffee, but refused to eat anything. All that night and all the next day she contrived to avoid taking a meal with him. And all that night and the next day and the next night, while Jess Carlow watched her father, Richard Randall kept the Wolf Head Light.

The third day Jess woke from a snatch of sleep and found her father looking at her. She was at his side instantly.

'What's happened?' he asked. His voice was scarcely more than a whisper.

'You must have fallen and hurt your head, daddy,' the girl replied. 'You staggered to the bed and fell.'

'How long?'

'Three days ago.'

The sick man tried to rise. 'The light!' he cried.

'It is all right, daddy,' the girl assured him. 'It hasn't failed a minute. Now, lie down and go to sleep.'

Obediently he fell back and was almost at once asleep. A long, healing sleep it was, in which nature did her splendid work. When, twelve hours later, he opened his eyes again, he was far on the way to his own self. The girl was at his side at once—she, too, looked more rested. Some one crossed the sitting-room and vanished through the door.

Jed Carlow sat up and looked at his daughter.

'Who is it?' he asked, sharply.

Jess's face whitened under its brown.

'Let me get you something to eat first, dad,' she pleaded.

'Then I'll tell you all about it.'

'Who is it?' he repeated, sternly.

The girl dropped down on the floor beside the bed. She was trembling, but her eyes were unflinching.

'Dad,' she said, 'you taught me—you and grandfather—that the light must have the best—no matter what it cost.'

He nodded, his eyes holding hers with fierce intensity.

The girl's voice broke into a cry. 'Dad, dad, I had to. Everybody said he was the best man on Wolf. It's Richard Randall.'

The keeper's face changed so that the girl bent over him with an exclamation of terror. He weakly motioned her away.

'Leave me—a little while, Jess!' he gasped.

The girl went out, closing the door softly behind her. In the kitchen she walked back and forth for an hour. Then at last her father's voice called her. To her amazement, he was dressed, although huddled weakly on a chair.

'Did you—treat him well, Jess?' he asked.

'I cooked for him,' the girl answered. 'I didn't eat with him—or talk. I—couldn't, dad.'

'He was our guest and saved the light,' Carlow said, slowly.

A dull red burned through the girl's brown face.

'I—couldn't, dad!' she choked.

Her father did not seem to see her. His eyes looked across the grey sea to where beneath the heavy clouds a band of clear light was breaking at last.

'We've got to give it up, Jess. I had a warning. It was some sort of dizziness that made me fall, and—we can't take any risks for the light. When the inspector comes I shall resign, and tell him to appoint Richard Randall.'

The girl started up with a cry. 'Oh, dad, not leave the lighthouse! You don't mean for us to leave!'

The man's voice was weak, but there was no faltering in it.

'It's our duty, Jess. I don't see how we can get round it.'

The girl walked to the window, her hands clenched fiercely, her unseeing eyes staring into the west. Yes, they must go—she saw it. There was no other way. It would kill them both, but they must do it for the sake of the light.

Then across the darkening water shone a broad path of light, white, red—a pause—white, red. Above the tumult of their lives, as above the tumult of the sea, the great light was shining.

The storm had passed, and on the following day Richard Randall went back to Big Wolf.

A week later the supply boat appeared, and the keeper gave in his resignation, but when the inspector hunted up Richard Randall in regard to an appointment, an unexpected obstacle appeared—the young man positively refused to be made keeper.

Assistant Richard would be willingly, but not keeper so long as Jed Carlow was living. So it was finally, after much argument, arranged.

All this was three years and more ago. Last year the old tower was pulled down and a new brick one built, with a powerful single burner in place of the lantern with its ten lamps. The keeper's house, too, has been enlarged, and people say, well, of course, people always must be guessing. But certain it is that at last two of the Carlows and Randalls have learned how to talk to each other.—*Youth's Companion*.

to Perhaps she's on the railway!

Perhaps she's on the sea

Perhaps she'll go

To Jericho,

Perhaps she will! Perhaps she won't,

But if she does or if she don't,

I'm glad that I presented her

A bottle of Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.