MY NIGHT IN A "BOX." [CONCLUDED.]

Great Heaven! my worst fears were realized. It was my own home. I choked down the agony, which almost forced a cry, and pressing onward with redoubled speed, soon arrived at the scene of the fire. The house was a large one, and when I reached it, smoke was issuing in thick, murray volumes from the windows of the second first, while fierce tongues of flame were already leaping along the roof. A crowd of men were hurrying confusedly with buckets and pails of water. In the center of a group of women I found our maid, Mary, stretched on the grass in a swoon. "My wife!" I exclaimed, and I rushed forward, "where is she?" "God knows, sir," said one of the men; "we have twice tried to reach the second flat, but were each time driven back by the smoke and fire." Without uttering a word I entered the house and ran along realised. It was my own home. I knows, sir," said one of the med; we have twice tried to reach the second fist, but were each time driven back by the smoke and fire." Without uttering a word I entered the house and ran along the lobby. The stair, fortunately, was built of stone, but the woodwork on each side was one mass of blazing and crackling flame. Before I had taken three steps I fell back, blinded, fainting and half suffocated with the smoke. Two men who had followed me caught me in their arms, and tried to restrain me by force from endeavoring to ascend again. "Don't attempt it," they said; "you will only lose your own life, and can't save hers." "Let go, you cowards!" I cried as soon as I could speak; and with the strength of madness dashed them aside. I rushed up the stairs, and this time succeeded in reaching the first landing in safety. The room which we used as our bed-chamber led off a small parlor which was situated on this flat. Groping my way through the smoke, I found the door, but to my horror it was locked! I dashed myself against it again and again, but it resisted all my efforts. To return as I had come was impossible, and I knew that the only hope of saving even my own life was to go forward. Despair gave me strength, and lifting my foot, I struck it violently against one of the lower panels of the door. It yielded a little. Another blow and it was driven in. I crept through the opering, but so thick was the smoke in the parlor that I could distinguish nothing. "Maggie." but no answer was returned. Crossing the room I gained our bed-room door. To my joy it was open, and stretched on the floor I found the apparently lifeless form of my wife. I bent over her, and on placing my hand on her heart I found that it was still beating. I lifted her very tenderly and gently, and carried her in my arms to the window, which I broke open. Of what followed I am only dimly conscious; I have a confused remembrance of men bringing a ladder, and strong arms helping us down, and the people cheering, but it is all very vague and indistinct.

over me, and tending me with loving hands. We had been burned out of house and home. Fortunately everything was insured; but even had it not been so, I had been content so long as On the evening of the next day, when the short Winter twilight was fast closing round, and the first snowflakes were falling, Maggie drew a little stool close to the couch on which I lay, think-

self in my father's house all bruised and

weak, but with my own wife bending

were falling, Maggie drew a little stool close to the couch on which I lay, thinking over the strange events which I have related. I had said nothing to anybody regarding the warning which I had so mysteriously received; and when questioned as to what caused me to return so opportunely, had always made some evasive answer, for I feared that the reality would never have obtained belief.

"Willie," said the soft low voice of my wife, "if you had not ome home..."

"Hush, my darling. Don't talk like that, for I can't bear to think of it."

"But it might have been. And do you know, Willie, I had a strange dream on that awful night?"

"A dream, Maggie? Tell me what it was."

"You remember," said she, drawing closer to me, "the evening you took Mary and me into the telegraph office, and told us all about the batteries, and magnets and electricity, and a great many things which we couldn't understand at all, though we pretened to do so, lest you should think us stupid?"

"Perfectly."

"And you remember, too, how when I said that I would like to send a message with my own hands, you made me take hold of the handle, and then you guided it, while I sent a message to your brother Robert, who was in the office at Lowestoft then? And the end of it was, "Come home—come home!" When I repeated it over and over again, unfill could do it quite well without your help."

I turned quickly round, but she was

I turned quickly round, but she was gazing intently at the fire, and did not perceive the startled look I gave her.

"Weil," she continued, "the night before last, when you were away, I could not sleep for a long time after I went to bed; and when I did sleep, I dreamed—such a horrible dream! I thought I was in your office again; and I had fled there because I was chased by some Terrible Thing. I did not know what it was, but it was close behind me, and I thought nobody could save me but you. But you were not there, and so I seized the handle, and signed the words. Come home—come home! as you had taught me, thinking that would be sure to bring you. Then, when you did not

taught me, thinking that would be sure to bring you. Then, when you did not come, I felt its hot breath on my neck, as if it were just going to clutch me in its dreadful arms, and I screamed so loud that I awoke. The room was all dark, and filled with smoke so thick that when I jumped up I fainted for want of air. And, 6 Willie, if you had not come just when you did, I might—"

"There, Maggie. don't let us think of what might have been, rather let us be thankful that we are spared to each other still."

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