

first to destruction. Just at the moment, however, when her head touched the tiles, she awoke, to find it was broad daylight, and that she was alone in a strange room and in a strange bed. The mists of sleep cleared, and she remembered who and where she was, and with a big stretch and one or two sleepy yawns, went across to the window to see how her husband had fared.

A heavy dew had fallen, and the lawn, sparkling with diamonds, stretched away from beneath her window to the big cedar tree. Her own bed was empty and tumbled as she had left it, but what—what—WHAT was that awful shape stretched upon Lancelot's? Lenore neither shrieked nor fainted, she just clung to the window sill and stood as if turned to marble with her protruding blue eyes fixed on the recumbent figure of the lion, and her heart grew cold as a stone, as she realised that her husband was dead, devoured, while she, who had basely deserted him, had been sleeping in security within a few yards of the awful tragedy.

Then she gave a great cry, and would have dropped in a dead faint had not her closing eye caught a glimpse of a pink-and-lavender arm waving stiffly to her from the top of the cedar. He lived, and with a sudden revulsion of feeling, Lenore uttered a peal of laughter, and for the next twenty minutes gave way to a fit of violent hysterics. But even the most genuine hysterics are apt to languish for lack of human sympathy, and Lenore wiped her eyes, and pressing her clasped hands to her throbbing bosom, returned to the window, hoping

The official evidently turned away to a companion, for she heard disjointed bits of conversation: "Lamb's Circus lion"—"accident to cage yesterday—door worked loose"—"Riverside Cottage—ring up Lamb."

"Yes, yes, madam," the official voice continued, turning to the mouthpiece again, "that will be all right—we'll send immediately."

"Oh, but make haste," cried Lenore. "What shall I do? My husband is up the tree. He's been there all night."

"Tell him to stay where he is," said the soothing voice. "The lion has escaped from a travelling menagerie. I must ring up the proprietor and tell him to remove the animal. Good-morning."

The next hour was an eternity to Lenore, not to mention Lancelot. Her whole intelligence seemed reduced to three words, "Hold on tight!" and his to two, "Stop inside." Yet there was also a question at the heart of both, that remained unspoken until Mr. Lamb, three negroes, and two cow-boys had gingerly approached and successfully lassoed the lion, and hauled the half-strangled beast back into his cage, until, in fact, Lancelot, scrambling down, practically fell into his wife's outstretched arms. Then, when the first ecstatic embrace was accomplished, they met each other's eyes, and said in unison, "Where's the Sausage?"

Where, indeed? Sadly they searched the garden, and found in the bushes by the gate where the lion had been busy during the first part of his visit, not the Sausage, but all that was left of him, the broad pink ribbon and silver bell wrenched from his silky, if shapeless, neck.

"The faithful angel," ejaculated Lenore, with happy tears, forgetful of the fact that he had left her and Lancelot to their fate.

"We'll finish our holiday at Brighton," said Lancelot, as they sat at dinner and listened glompingly to the switching of the electric train wires and the ceaseless roll of traffic on the high-road, "and we'll stay at the Metropole," he added.

"Yes," assented Lenore, "there'll be no nature at Brighton, thank goodness." She spoke boldly and he did not reprove her.

"Except the sea," he said. An apprehensive frown crossed Lenore's face.

"I'd forgotten that," she said; "well, I shan't let either of you out of my sight for a moment."

"In case the sea serpent might come and eat us?" laughed Lancelot.

"Oh, don't," said his wife, "how can you joke about such things, for you never know what may happen."

And, judging from recent experience, Lancelot was inclined to agree with her.

The Safest Place on Earth.

A British railway train is still, the "Railway Magazine" points out, the safest place on earth, as only one passenger in seventy millions is killed, and one in every 2,300,000 injured. This deduction is based upon a careful survey of the Board of Trade report on railway accidents during the year 1907. Last year the number of fires in trains amounted to 170, but it should be explained that many of these were of the most trifling description. It is a significant fact that of the number of fires reported, not a solitary one occurred either directly or indirectly through a lightning flash. It would appear that for some reason, railway trains are practically immune from the disastrous effects which usually mark the track of a violent thunderstorm. What is the explanation of this fact? In reply we are told first that the telegraph poles alongside the railway provide a measure of protection to passing trains. These poles are usually spaced three chains or sixty-six yards apart, and on each pole is stapled a thick galvanised iron wire, projecting about six inches above the pole roof and terminating five or six feet below ground. This earth wire, as it is technically known, tends primarily to prevent conduction between contiguous wires, but there can be no doubt that it also serves as a lightning conductor, and that too in a very efficient manner. Further, it is contended that the pieces of ironwork scattered over the roof of a train constitute a conductor, or act as a safeguard against the injurious effects of atmospheric electricity. They fulfil the function of a metal screen or cage, and it has long been known, in scientific circles that a complete metallic enclosure will protect a railway train as effectually as a powder magazine. Sir Oliver Lodge has declared that "a wire netting all over a house, a good earth connection to it at several points, and all over the roof a plentiful supply of lashed wire, which serves so abominably well for fences, and you have an admirable system of defence against lightning." The similarity between the roof of a railway carriage and the conductor system described is evident.

The owners of a St. Abbs fishing boat have made the important discovery that a net dyed as nearly as possible the hue of the sea, instead of the traditional brown, yields much larger results in the matter of fish caught. The discovery was, says an American exchange, put to the test a short time ago, when out of a fleet of sixty-five boats, the boat with its nets dyed blue made far and away the largest catch.

The dye used is bluestone. The discovery has aroused much interest among the fishermen.

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Three negroes and two cowboys had gingerly approached and successfully lassoed the lion

and half believing she had been the victim of some horrid nightmare. But no, there lay the same scene stretched before her—the softly-wooded country all around, the high road winding up the nearest hill, the glint of sun on the river below the paddock, the dew-spangled lawn of the country garden—the figure in pyjamas in the cedar tree, and the lion luxuriously stretched on the bed beneath it. What could she do? She was distracted. Her dear Lancelot, mumbled and cramped, might at any moment come crashing through the branches—and then! It was unthinkable, and she groaned aloud in her helpless anguish. All of a sudden an inspiration came to her—the telephone in the hall—that "obtrusive trapping of civilisation!" She flew downstairs and seized the telephone book and rang up Winterton Police Station.

"Hullo! Hullo! Who are you?" came the voice the other end.

"I'm Riverview Cottage," wailed Lenore. "Oh, send help at once. There's a lion in the garden, and it's nearly eaten my husband."

With these last sad relics in her hand, Lenore returned to town next day with her husband, positively refusing to stay longer in a place so full of horrors. She did not reproach Lancelot, but he knew, and he felt she knew, that in a sense his open air sleeping had been the cause of the disaster. His long night's vigil had made him a less self-confident and more biddable man, and like Lenore, he felt a positive repugnance to the unprotected countryside, and a relief at the proximity of bricks and mortar.

It was nightfall when they stood at the door of their villa in Tooting, and Lancelot was finding the key-hole with his latch-key, when he stumbled over a bundle of something on the step. His nerves were in ribbons, and he swore the only oath he had ever uttered in his wife's presence. But she never heeded it, for with a wheezy yelp, half pain, half pleasure, the bundle leapt into her arms. It was Sausage! Frightened out of his small wits by the appearance of the lion—which happily for him was already gorged with half a sheep—the Sausage had run all the way home.

BY APPOINTMENT TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

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