

Brave Girl Rides through a Sea of Fire Convulsed by a Cyclone to Save her Lover

A Wild Race with a Wave of Flames and a Desperate Plunge from a high bluff into the Roaring Waters of a Swollen River 60 feet deep.

A Cascade, on the Colorado river, in western Texas, a few days ago the elements combined to produce one of the most appalling scenes ever witnessed by a crowd of amazed and frightened people. A vast forest of cedar, covering the mountains for miles, had taken fire and a hurricane was approaching from the southwest.

A cedar brake burns as if the trees were saturated with oil. When the fire spreads a little it soon grows beyond human control. The people of Cascade saw the skies clouded with smoke, through which they could see streaks of red, and realizing what had happened, they collected on the shore of the river to look on in fear and amazement. It was known that a party of wood choppers with families and several hunters were encamped in the mountains, and when the people saw men, women, and children running along the trails the excitement became intense. Cedar trees move faster than a man can run, and it was feared many people would be caught in the flames and burned alive.

Alice Myron, a young woman well known to every one in the terror stricken crowd, dashed to the river bank mounted on a fine horse. "Has any one news of the fire?" she asked. There was no reply. The trembling girl looked towards the bridge half a mile away, and then turning her white face towards the fire struck her horse with her whip and plunged into the river.

To Rescue Crippled Sweetheart.

"That is dangerous," said an old fisherman. "What does it mean?"

"I can tell you," was the reply of one who seemed eager to talk. "Her sweetheart, Keenan Spidron, is lying in a hunter's camp over there, suffering with a sprained ankle. But don't you fear; she is as brave as her old daddy and she is riding Moonbeam, the fastest racehorse in all Texas."

The powerfully muscled horse swam high, and the venturesome girl, with her feet drawn up in the saddle, escaped getting wet. A wild cheer echoed through the hills when Moonbeam clambered up on the solid rocks on the opposite shore.

Riding as the crow flies straight up the mountain side, the brave girl sought the main road over which she knew those who were imperiled would seek to escape. Before she reached the vicinity of the fire hot winds burned her cheeks and she heard cries of distress.

The crowd on the shore were witnessing a scene that made strong men turn pale and women fall in a swoon from fright. Tongues of flame were licking the skies and the wind had increased in violence until it looked as if the elements were convulsed by a cyclone. There was a great whirlwind of twisting, roaring flames, with which were mixed dust, logs, and trees that had been torn up by the roots.

On the road Alice Myron met men, women, and children running for their lives. They were senseless in their fright. The wall of fire was not far behind. Meeting a hunter whose

face she recognized she inquired for the one for whom she was risking her life. "The terrified man hardly looked up, shouting as he ran in a choking voice. "If you mean Spidron, he is crippled; he can't run; he is lost."

Plunges In While Others Fly.

But she was familiar with the mountain trails, and, knowing the hunters had fled to Panther Springs, she determined to reach that place ahead of the fire. A cedar chop-

per paused in his flight to warn her of the peril she was inviting. "You may get there," he said, "but the flames will close in behind you and there will be no way to escape."

"I will ride through the flames if I can find poor Keenan who has been abandoned by a pack of cowards!"

On sped the black horse, sparks crackling under his feet and foam flying from his nostrils. A strong man who possessed the trail in his flight, thinking the girl mad, seized the horse by the bridle. "Turn quick," he said. "The camp is on fire. Spidron is lost; he can't run. Turn and let me on behind you!" he shouted.

"You miserable coward, take that," shrieked the enraged girl as she brought her quilt down over the man's head and urged Moonbeam over his body. The hot wind scorched her face and the horse was sporting from terror when Alice came in sight of the camp of the hunters. Her heart ached. There was not a mortal in sight.

The big tent was on fire, and a pack of wolves were passing, foam and blood dripping from their chops.

"Keenan, Keenan, dear boy, where are you?" shouted the faithful girl.

"Here, I am here. O, Alice, I beg of you turn and fly for your life."

Finds Lover Surrounded by Flames.

The wounded man had crawled from the burning tent and was making an effort to reach a gorge. With heart throbbing with joy the fearless girl, urging Moonbeam forward, leaped over, and, catching her lover's outstretched hands, drew him up on the saddle behind her.

"Which way shall I ride?" she cried as she observed a wall of seething flames closing around her. She felt the beating of Spidron's heart.

"We are lost," he said quietly.

"Then we will die together, dear boy," whispered his courageous sweetheart.

The hurricane increased in violence. Whirlwinds of twisting flames loaded with trees that were being torn to splinters

approached on every side. The roaring was of a hundred trains crossing bridges and crashing each other to fragments. The bleating of wild animals, mingled with the howls of wolves, tortured to madness, thrilled the souls of the imperiled lovers. Yet Alice Myron, possessed of the soul of one born to defy danger, did not despair.

The water from Panther Springs followed a cañon to the Colorado river, 800 yards away. Looking in that direction, the girl's quick wits noticed that the smoke and flames appeared less dense. Both were choking, the skin on their hands



Alice Myron
Heroine of the Cedar fire.

And faces were being scorched, and sparks falling on Moonbeam had set him plunging with rage and pain. Alice's long tresses caught fire, but her lover extinguished the flame with his lips. No seconds had been lost in the camp, and the brave girl had no sooner grasped her lover and decided on the only chance for an opening than she touched Moonbeam with her whip and dashed forward.

Courageous Dash Through Wall of Fire.

"Nerve, nerve!" she whispered, the words coming between gasps for breath. He heard and clasped her closer to his bosom.

The noble horse sprang forward into smoke and flame so dense Alice had not seen anything, for the fire had jumped across the narrow cañon, and the cedars on both sides were a roaring mass clear to the bluff that overlooked the river.

It was too late to look for another route. There was a wall of fire on either side and a cloud of flame overhead settling down upon the lovers, from which sparks, cinders, and hissing brands were raining upon them.

Noble Moonbeam! Another horse would have become mad. Alice bent forward and slapped the flying horse with the palm of her hand. "Save us, Moonbeam, and you shall eat sugar forever!"

Spidron's clothing was on fire, and the girl seemed to be shaking flames and a shower of sparks from her long hair when they gained the high bluff overlooking the river, and the crowd on the opposite shore shouted until the echo rose above the roar of wind and raging waters.

Plunges Madly Over Precipice.

"Again we are lost," said Spidron, looking at the river in front and the flames on every side.

"Only those who hesitate are lost," exclaimed the heroic girl. Men threw up their hands in warning and stopped breathing while women closed their eyes or turned away. The bluff is forty feet above water sixty feet deep. Moonbeam never halted.

From the edge of the precipice he shot forward through the air, striking the flood of water with his nose between his fore feet.

"They are gone—farewell, brave girl; good-by gentle Spidron," groaned the only man who could master his emotions.

People seemed to breathe.

Aces seemed to pass.

"Look, look!" cried a boy, pointing his hand at an object 200 feet below the bluff.

Then there was a shout of joy; men and women threw themselves into each other's arms weeping. Moonbeam was swimming straight to the shore and the lovers were clinging to his back.

Men waded into the water to grasp the heroine and bear her to the land in triumph.

"Brave Moonbeam!" said Alice when she had recovered. "You shall have sugar and clover all the balance of your life."

Careless Lover Gets Life Sentence.

"Fool that I am," said Spidron, "I caused you to risk your life, and the boys ought to throw me into the river."

"O, no," said the joyful spokesman of the crowd. "We will allow your rescuer to pass sentence on you for causing her so much trouble. What shall we do with him?" he added, turning to the happy girl.

The applause nearly drowned the reply, but Spidron's heart, throbbing fast, throbed faster when he heard the words, "I will take him."

What Will Be the Future of This Versatile Grandchild of a Famous Actress?

BLOOD will tell," so runs the old adage. "Early influences mean much." This is the dictum of modern child science.

E. D. Waters, an artist photographer of Hyde Park, Chicago, has had recent reason to believe both statements true.

Always on the lookout for picturesque subjects, Mr. Waters, who especially delights in artistic studies of children, not long since invited to visit the photographic studio maintained in his residence an attractive small boy whom he had noticed playing about the neighborhood. No technical "posing" of the handsome little fellow proved necessary for the artistic pictures desired and presently attained by his delighted admirer; every movement and attitude assumed and made by the diminutive sitter was grace itself. The same diminutive sitter also offered prompt evidence of a rarely philosophic turn of mind and conversation, as well as a quiet charm of manner. As "Charles Modjeski" he gave his name.

When, a little later, Mr. Waters discovered the small sitter to be Master Karolek Modjeski, grandson of the great Polish actress, Helena Modjeska, and godson of Mme. Calvé and Jean de Reszke, he could better understand the little lad's evident though unconscious gift of dramatic intelligence and representation. Karolek—Charles only to his schoolmates, never to members or intimate friends of the family—undoubtedly possesses potential genius scarcely astonishing in view of his lineage and early associations, but not usually observed in a laughing, eager, impatient boy of 8 years old. Merely superstitious friends and relatives are sometimes inclined to attribute this potential genius to a pretty incident occurring shortly after the boy's birth.

Well-Wished by Famous Singers.

Calvé, his godmother, was missing from the social gathering in the Modjeska drawing room toward the close of the festivities attendant upon the christening of the infant Karolek. The baby's mother, Mrs. Ralph Modjeska, slipped away after the distinguished guest and godmother, away to the upper room where the baby lay sleeping. Here Calvé was discovered bending tenderly above the unconscious dreamer, softly singing to him a quaint fairy folk song of her own far country—a sort of fairy benediction, invoking for his subject the gifts of power, sensibility, and music, and the good fortune to be always happy and well. So charming was the picture thus presented to the surprised mother that she hurried back to summon Jean de Reszke, the child's godfather, to share its beauties with her.

"I must sing him something also," cried the great tenor, catching the spirit of Calvé's impulse on the instant. "What have you been wishing the infant, Calvé? I will wish for him that he shall be a true man and a patriot, through and through."

In laughter and merriment was the pretty scene speedily forgotten—for the time being. But again and again has it since recurred to the memory of those who witnessed it, and who are acquainted with the quaint and unusual ways and gifts of the small grandson of Mme. Modjeska.

"I should not at all wonder," smiled Jean de Reszke, during his last visit to Chicago, "if Mme. Calvé's fairy song came true."

And Mme. Calvé, who adores her small godson, and who has several times sat for pictures with him, is sure that a great future lies "out in the years" awaiting the quaintly graceful child, whose truly boyish aim just now embraces a wish dear to the heart of all but universal childhood.

"I want to be a policeman or a railway engineer when I grow up," represents the boy's latest ambition. The gentle



The Gracie Song.

recent suggestion of Mrs. Modjeska that the work of a railway engineer or police officer might be successfully performed with a less comprehensive education that would probably be supplied him was met by the calmly thoughtful reply that prominent railway officials are great and influential citizens, while an older brother had informed him that many of the most notable had begun as engineers. Always the child has been distinguished for clever remarks, most childishly delivered but decidedly unchildlike in character and scope.

Plays Piano Duet with Paderewski

"If I do not run a railway engine by and by, I will become an electrician," is the present determination of the boy, who, at 6 years old, played a piano duet with Paderewski, and who composed music—good music of his kind—at an even earlier period. Just now, however, school life and duties, with the necessary play intervals, absorb nearly all the attention of the small Karolek, and the piano, at which he was once wont to spend whole days when the mood seized him, is badly neglected. The unquenched dramatic fever expressed and satisfied by play duets and scenes with his sister serves as sole satisfaction for his artistic tastes and inclinations.

The novels of Henry Sienkiewicz, read aloud by his mother, represent the chosen literary pabulum of the third grade student, who only entered public school last year, and he himself is each of the famous characters in turn. Any passage or chapter dealing with war or conflict must be read and reread to him, and anything of a Slavonic interest or nature he regards with absolute devotion. Whereby the small Karolek, being yet a devoted, enthusiastic American, hangs one of the most perplexing problems so far encountered by his childish brain and heart.

Has Inherent Love for Poland.

America seems to the small lover of liberty the greatest, the most wonderful, the only "worth while" country in ex-

istence, while his youthful comrades frequently remind him that geographically Poland, the land of his hereditary affection, has no place or existence. And yet there are times when it seems as though Jean de Reszke's chanted christening wish that his small godson might become a true patriot may yet work out in astonishing manner, that the little Karolek may be and by turn his American love of freedom to channels and uses not presently suspected. Even the little musical rhythms that occur to and haunt the child in such seasons are characteristically Slavonic in character, and, at all times, though knowing nothing of the difficult Polish grammar from the scholastic aspect, he speaks beautifully Polish, purely by ear. If Calvé's baptismal benediction should yet be fulfilled in its entirety there is small doubt as to the character of the music he will render or produce.



KAROLEK MODJESKA

For the present small Karolek Modjeski is a natural, normal 8 year old urban child, during most of his waking moments, normally intent upon school work and play diversions, his love for all things military and Polish, together with his passion for "acting out" the most interesting parts of his favorite Slavonic stories and the power and ability with which he represents each admired character or personage in turn alone setting him apart from other and less favored children. Even the music he naturally adores is usually forgotten now for lessons and the more natural recreations of boyhood.

Gives Promise of a Great Future.

But let the little lad, simple, unconscious, and innocent of nature as he is gifted and clever, drop for a moment into one of the unthinking artistic and graceful poses that would alone proclaim him endowed with the much discussed "artistic temperament." If not with real genius, and the thoughtful mouth and dreamy eyes have great and mysterious things to predict for the unknown future.

To no harked or impotent purpose were the fairy bestowers of the gifts of music, poetry, and patriotism invoked for handsome, childish, quick tongued, quick witted Karolek Modjeski by the earthly sponsors—themselves beloved of the high powers that rule the song world and those who joyously devote their lives to the serving of others—who rejoiced at his christening festivities. Nor were they empty, unanswered petitions that Mme. Calvé and Jean de Reszke sang softly into the tiny ears of the sleeping child.