

CHAPTER XVII -The circus boys on the flying Rings

In Chapter XVII of "The Circus Boys on the Flying Rings," titled "Left Behind," the aftermath of a circus accident unfolds dramatically. Two clowns, amidst their preparation for a performance, discuss a recent mishap that hints at a potentially serious injury, suggesting someone might have broken their neck. The band and clowns persist in their entertainment, quickly steering the audience's attention away from the distressing event. The narrative then shifts to Emperor, a concerned animal shown resisting until commanded by Mr. Kennedy to proceed to his quarters.

The scene moves to the dressing tent, where Phil Forrest lies injured on an improvised bed made of trunks and horse blankets, surrounded by fellow performers in varying states of costume. The uncertainty of Phil's condition is palpable as the performers wait anxiously for a doctor's diagnosis, discussing the unfortunate accident caused by a faulty wire.

Mr. Sparling, upon hearing news of the incident, rushes to the tent. His concern for Phil is evident as he demands updates and insists on assuming responsibility for the safety measures that failed. The arrival of the doctor brings a tense silence, breaking only with Mr. Sparling's urgent inquiries about Phil's condition. The doctor's examination reveals Phil's fortunate escape from more severe injuries, considering the height from which he fell. Despite suggestions to leave Phil in a local hospital, Mr. Sparling vehemently decides against it, insisting the doctor himself stay behind to ensure Phil's recovery, emphasizing Phil's importance to the circus.

Phil is moved to a hotel, where he receives constant care from the surgeon through the night. As dawn breaks, Phil regains consciousness briefly, showing concern for his absence from the circus. He is informed that the circus has moved on without him,

leaving him in the care of the town's medical facilities, highlighting the familial ties and deep concern within the circus community for one of their own. The chapter closes on a reflective note, with Phil coming to terms with his situation and the collective effort to ensure his well-being amidst the transient life of the circus.

