

**GENTLEMAN  
JIM**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649023691

Gentleman Jim by Mrs. E. Prentiss

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Cover @ 2017

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**MRS. E. PRENTISS**

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THE RESCUE. — P. 65.

**GENTLEMAN JIM.**

BY

**MRS. E. PRENTISS,**

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HIS FRIENDS," ETC.



LONDON :

JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.

1879.



## GENTLEMAN JIM.

—♦—

**T**HERE'S some things that ought to be wrote down,—I mean written down. Now let me see; it is nigh upon twenty years ago that a young fellow worked in these here mines, and handled his tools so ill that he got the name of "Clumsy Joe." If anybody met with an accident going down the shaft, it was always him; if anybody got blowed up and singed, he always did. His face, it was never handsome, but the red scars of his burns made it

ugly : and his hands, rough enough before, had got unshapely and inconvenient to use. But ugly as he was, and clumsy as he was, he'd got a soft heart under his jacket, and the schoolmaster's daughter caught and held it fast.

The way of it was this :

It wasn't that she was the prettiest girl anywhere round, though she was ; nor that she had the prettiest ways of any of them, though she had. It was the loving-kindness she felt for everybody in shame or trouble. If a fellow got chaffed for his awkwardness, and was burning with shame, she'd lay on a soft word that cooled and soothed him. If one was dismissed for some trifling fault, rest she would not till she'd plead him back again. If there was



an accident, and a fellow's face was made horrible to look at, she'd work at it and shape it, and bear with it, and say, over and over again :

“It's the heart I look at, not the face ; and the scars of burns are not half so mar-  
ring as seams of sin.”

I wasn't the only one she was kind to ; it was all the same to every man, woman, and child for miles round. I knowed it, and yet I wouldn't know it.

All the same, I never had the least hope that she would ever love me. I knowed she never could love such a silly softy as I was ; but it was some comfort that she did not care any more for the other men than she did for me.

But, blundering as usual, I have run on

all this time without a word about Gentleman Jim.

When he first come among us, I remember that, after one look at his face, I looked sharp at his hands, thinking to see them soft and white, with pink nails. But they were grimy and used to hard work, so it was plain he was made of clay, like the rest of us, only he was made of a kind out of the common. He never took airs upon himself, but mated with us all, friendly and agreeable. For all that, he hadn't been in the mines a month before we all spoke of him as Gentleman Jim. Nobody would have dared to call him such a grand name to his face; he wouldn't have stood it if they had. And as I watched him from day to day, I said to

myself, "Here's a man fit for Rosemary"—there! her name has slipped out at last! He'll go raving distracted about her, and she'll do the same by him as soon as she knows it, or my name aint Clumsy Joe.

But he hadn't been among us many days before her father took to his bed and never left it again.

Now, she had plenty of friends who would have been glad to help her nurse him; but no, nobody was to do for him but herself. She said she had promised her mother, on her deathbed, not to let him miss her love and care, and she never would, not she.

Well, the old man lived on and on, and she began to flag. She got hardly any sleep,