

CLARE REVELL

Tuesday's Child



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*Monday's Child must hide for protection,
Tuesday's Child tenders direction,
Wednesday's Child grieves for his soul,
Thursday's Child chases the whole,
Friday's Child is a man obsessed,
Saturday's Child might be possessed,
And Sunday's Child on life's seas is tossed,
Awaiting the Lifeboat that rescues the lost.*

Dedication

To Grandad.

Deaf for most of his life, we had wonderful
conversations with the white board and marker pen.
Gone but never forgotten.

Thanks to Detective Constable Philip Wilson for the
police procedure advice.

Other Titles by Clare Revell

Novels

After the Fire
Monday's Child

Novellas

Season for Miracles
Cassie's Wedding Dress
Time's Arrow

Dollar Downloads

Saving Christmas

Free Reads

Kisses from Heaven

Praise for Clare Revell

Season for Miracles

This author definitely has talent and great imagination. Kyle and Holly came to life in this book with so much ease they hardly sounded fictional and so real. The pain and fear that Holly goes through is heartbreaking but I loved that with Kyle anything is possible. This is definitely a book worth reading for it has everything just right for the season: God and hope.
~Lena, Happily Ever After Reviews

Saving Christmas

Clare Revell does it again with this beautiful story of hope and redemption. *Saving Christmas* packs a lot of story into a limited number of pages, and draws the reader in from the very first line. It's a wonderful respite from the hectic holiday to-do list. ~Author Mary Manners

Cassie's Wedding Dress

When long-time friends Jack and Cassie reconnect, you think the ride is almost over, but Ms. Revell has a few surprises left in this short, sweet, and emotionally satisfying story. I'll be watching for Clare Revell's next book. Five stars for *Cassie's Wedding Dress*! ~ Author Dora Hiers

Time's Arrow

I stand in awe of Revell's ability to pack an entire novel's worth of action and emotion into so few pages.
~Author Delia Latham

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Tuesday's Child tenders direction...

Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4: 5-7

That girl really has no sense of time whatsoever.

Manning the reception desk of Datura Doll Hospital wasn't Adeline Monroe's idea of fun. She was more of a hands-on person than a receptionist, and as soon as Susie returned from her break, Adeline would be where she belonged—out back mending the growing pile of dolls and teddy bears. The doll hospital she ran with her best mate, Jasmine, seemed to be one of the few businesses on the High Street not struggling in the current economic climate. She guessed it was because no one wanted to buy new if old could be repaired.

Besides, nothing spoke comfort like the teddy you'd grown up with and shared many a nightmare and secret with.

Constant rain hit soundlessly against the windows. So much for the unbroken sunshine and temperatures of seventy-seven degrees Fahrenheit

predicted for today. Adeline chuckled. Of course the Met Office hadn't forecast the hurricane that had completely devastated the south of England a couple of years ago, either. Hopefully, this storm wouldn't be a repeat. Even if it did mean she no longer had to water the plants when she got home tonight.

Drumming her fingers on the desk, she eyed the clock and sighed. Susie's hour break seemed to get longer each day. "Where is she?"

She glanced down. Ben, her black and white Cavalier King Charles spaniel, sat resting his head on his front paws, one ear cocked open as always. His coat shone, and he opened his mouth in a long lazy yawn before raising his dark, soulful eyes up to her.

"You think Susie's taking a nap somewhere, huh, Ben?" she asked, reaching down and stroking him. "More likely she's run into that boyfriend of hers and lost track of time."

The door flung open letting a blast of wind and rain in with it. Ben jumped up and pushed at Adeline. She acknowledged him by rubbing his ears and then twisted her head to glance over at the door. "Hello."

A small child stood in the doorway, her coat flapping undone and dripping a puddle of rainwater onto the floor. A pale blue bobble hat with woolen braids hanging off the ear flaps was pulled down snugly over her head. Known as 'dappy' hats, they were all the rage.

Adeline even had one hanging on the peg in her hallway.

A doll clutched in her hand, chest heaving, the child stood motionless, her gaze darting around.

I know it's raining, but a wooly hat in the middle of summer? It's not as if it's cold.

"Hello? Can I help you?" Adeline moved around the desk towards her.

"She's broken." The child held out the one-armed doll, tears streaking her face. "It said doll hospital..." She turned her head away, and Adeline missed the last half of the sentence.

"I'm sorry. I need you to face me so I can read your lips. I'm deaf."

The child turned back, staring at her, eyes wide with wonder. "For real? You can't hear anything I say?"

Adeline shook her head. "Nope, but if you look at me when you speak, I can read your lips."

"But you can talk. I thought deaf people only talked with their hands. They didn't have voices 'cause they didn't need them."

Adeline smiled at her, signing as she spoke. It was refreshing to be with someone who said what they thought instead of hiding their reaction. "I can talk with my hands *and* my voice. I could hear just like you can until I was five. So what did you say?"

"I said the sign said doll hospital, but it doesn't look like a hospital. There aren't any beds. And it doesn't have that funny smell."

"Well, when you go to the people hospital are there beds in reception?"

The child wiped her nose on her sleeve and hiccupped through the tears. "No. I guess not."

"Nor here. What happened to your doll?" Adeline pulled a tissue from the box on the counter and offered it to the sobbing child.

"Uncle Nate broke her."

"I'm sure he didn't mean to."

She nodded her head vigorously. "Yeah, he did."

"What's your name?"

"Don't have one."

Really? I thought everyone had a name. Adeline bit her lip, wondering how she could find out. Maybe deal with the doll first and make friends that way.

"All right. Tell you what. Let's take your doll into the next room and check her over. Does she have a name?" She stood and reached for the peg behind her, pulling her white doctor's coat over her street clothes.

"Her name's Amelia Jane like in the story. Only she's not bad." She scrutinized Adeline's badge. "Doctor...what's that word?"

"That's my name. Dr. Adeline."

"That's a pretty name."

"Thank you. I expect yours is pretty, too."

The child shook her head.

Adeline grabbed a clipboard with forms on it and smiled. "If you come this way, we'll get her on a bed and fill in some paperwork. Then I'll check her over."

She led the way through the side door, Ben by her heels, and grinned at the expression of wonder that came over the child's face. It was the same every time, but she never grew tired of seeing their faces light up on their first view of the hospital she and her father had created.

Doll-sized beds lined the shelves set at chair height along each wall. Each bed contained a doll or teddy with bandages in the appropriate places. Some had miniature IV's set up, while others had tiny oxygen cylinders by the bed. A sign on the wall announced visiting times, and each bed had a vase of flowers on the side table. A chair placed next to each bed ensured any visitor could drop by properly.

"Wow, wow, wow." The child slowly turned

around.

"What do you think?" Adeline asked, unable to read her lips.

The girl grinned at her, eyes like saucers. "It's amazing. Just like the real thing."

"And just like the real thing, I need you to book Amelia Jane in while I examine her. Pop her up on the couch for me. Did you bring her arm?"

"And her finger." The child set the doll gently onto the exam couch and pulled the arm and finger from her pocket, putting them next to the doll. Her hand touched the doll's face, as if she were reassuring her that everything was going to be all right.

Adeline handed the clipboard over and set about her work checking the doll. The crack on the doll's forehead was superficial. A little glue and paint and it would be gone. The arm could be reattached with a new elastic band and the finger would just need a little glue and paint. She glanced up. "How's the form coming on?"

The child handed it back.

"You have lovely handwriting. It's almost as neat as mine." Adeline skimmed it and pointed to a blank line. "You didn't put your name on here where it says next of kin."

"What's that mean?"

"That's the name of the main person who looks after the doll, so we know who to talk to about her and ring when she's better. Usually her mummy or daddy, but not always. I'm guessing that's you, so you need to put your name in there."

"Uncle Nate said never to tell strangers my name."

"Uncle Nate is a very wise man, but I'm not a stranger. I'm Amelia Jane's doctor, and I need to know

what to call you." She tilted her head. "I can't call you Amelia Jane's mummy."

"True." She took the clipboard back and, tongue hovering over her bottom lip, painstakingly wrote her name down.

"Vianne Ophélié Holmes. That's a very pretty name. Did I pronounce it right?"

Vianne nodded. "You did. I'm named after mummy. She was Ophélié."

"Well, Vianne, the good news is I can make Amelia Jane better, but you'll have to leave her here for a few days." Adeline ran a finger down the form and did a double take. "Child abuse?"

"I told you. Uncle Nate broke her."

"How did he break her? Did he drop her?"

"No. He said I was too big to play with dolls and put her on top of the wardrobe. I climbed on a chair to get her down, only it was a swivel chair and we fell. She broke, and I hurt my knee and my hand." Tears filled Vianne's eyes again. "It really hurts."

"Let me check you over, as well. Sit up here with Amelia Jane for a moment." Adeline lifted Vianne onto the couch next to the doll.

Now that Vianne knew the doll would be all right, the pain from her own injuries took over.

"Let's have a look. I can be pretty good at fixing bumps and scrapes on people as well."

Vianne pulled up her pant legs, and Adeline checked her over.

"It just needs a plaster and you'll be fine. But a fall isn't child abuse. That's deliberately hurting a child. And neither he nor you did that. This was an accident. So how about we change the form to reflect that?"

A thoughtful expression crossed Vianne's face and

she nodded slowly. "All right. A big fall. Can you make Amelia Jane better with a plaster, too?"

Adeline reached for the first aid kit. "I wish I could, but Amelia Jane hurt herself badly when she fell. She'll need surgery on her arm, head, and finger. So I reckon four days before you can take her home."

"Will she have a bed?"

Adeline opened the box of plasters and offered them to Vianne to choose one. "Of course. And you can come and visit in the afternoons between two and four, except Sunday. We have a selection of books and comics you can read to her."

"Cool. Can you look at her eyes, too? Her left one won't open anymore. Uncle Nate says she's blind 'cause she's so old. She used to be mummy's once."

"Sure I can have a look. It won't take long." Adeline changed the details and added eyes to the clipboard, impressed how Vianne always looked at her as she spoke. That was something most adults tended to forget mid-conversation.

Vianne handed her a bright pink dolphin plaster. "This one."

"Great choice." Adeline fixed it on her knee and jumped her down off the couch. "There you go, all done. Now, you can pick an empty bed for Amelia Jane and put her in it. This card goes in the slot at the end of the bed."

Vianne took the doll and card, and headed across the room. She fussed over the doll as she settled her into the bed and tucked her in.

"Shall I give mummy or daddy a ring to come pick you up?"

"I live with Uncle Nate. He's working until five. It's an inset day—"

“An insect day?”

Vianne laughed, her whole face lighting up. “No, an inset day. It’s where the teachers have lessons, and we have a day off. I was supposed to go to Mrs. Sullivan. She lives next door, but Sophie has the measles, and I haven’t had them. So Mrs. Sullivan wouldn’t let me in. She said I needed to stay away so I didn’t get sick, too. I don’t like being sick cause it means I have to stay in bed for days and days and days.”

Adeline forced a smile as a shiver ran down her spine. That was exactly how she’d lost her hearing. Complications from a high fever she’d contracted with the measles. “I see. Does Uncle Nate know Sophie’s sick?”

Vianne shook her head and chewed on a nail. “Nope, he left for work as I knocked on the door. Mrs. Sullivan gave me the spare key so I could get back in the house. I was on my own all day. Even made my own lunch—a jam, marmite and cheese sandwich, crisps, and fizzy pop. I left the back door unlocked so I can get back in.”

“Jam, cheese and marmite? Not all together, surely?”

Vianne grinned and nodded. “It’s yummy. Not as nice as peanut butter, though.”

Adeline wrinkled her nose. “Peanut butter is disgusting. But you’re clever to make your own lunch. How old are you?”

“Ten and a half.”

She couldn’t let the child leave on her own. Who knew what would happen, especially with the serial killer at large? No one was safe. A small child alone would be easy prey.

"You're not really old enough be on your own, and I can't let you back out in this weather. Let me ring Uncle Nate and see what he wants to do."

"I'll be fine at home. He finishes soon, anyway."

She tilted her head. "Actually Uncle Nate will be in big trouble if anyone finds out you were home on your own."

Vianne's face fell. "Oh. I don't want to get him in trouble."

"If it's all right with him, perhaps you can stay here and help man the front desk." She glanced up and saw Susie sitting in her chair now. "I've got a stack of coloring sheets if you're interested."

Vianne nodded. "If Uncle Nate says it's OK. What's your dog called?"

"His name is Benjamin, but I call him Ben." She smiled as Ben's ears pricked up at the mention of his name.

"Benjamin? That's a funny name. But Ben suits him."

"I think so, too. How do I get hold of Uncle Nate?"

"He's a policeman." Vianne shoved her hand into her pocket and pulled out a small card. "Here's his number."

Adeline smiled, picked up the phone and started to dial.

A small hand touched her arm. "You're deaf. How do you use the phone?"

"It's a special one. You just watch."

Detective Sergeant Nate Holmes swung his chair back on two legs and glared at the file in his hand. He