

"Beg pardon, Miss Abbot," he said, but we shall soon be in sight of the harbor, and I want to talk to you about that precious bag."

By her uncle's advice Mary had given her treasure into the captain's charge, and he had told her it was safe in his cabin.

"Keep it, captain," she said, "till you give it up to Mr. Somerfield along with me."

He smiled. "I like to see your confidence, but still things happen which no one can guard against—something might delay your friend a day or so," then, as he saw her sweet face sadden at his words, he added, "although I don't doubt but what he's in New York waiting for you by this time. Still it may not be so, especially as our passage has been a short one."

"Well?" Mary said.

"I'm coming to that," the captain was amused by her impatience, "it's just possible you'll have to stay at an hotel till he arrives, and in that case I advise you to take out, before we land, some money for expenses, and I'll give the bag in charge of the landlord where you lodge."

"I know Willie will be waiting for me," Mary said, but she saw the reasonableness of this advice, and, after a few more words, she went with the captain to his cabin and took out a sufficient sum to provide for several days' stay in New York. She did this in simple obedience. "But I'm sure I shan't want it," she said. It seemed to her impossible that her Willie could fail to keep his tryst.

Very early next morning, before the passengers had left their berths, Mary learned that they were in the harbor. It seemed to her as if she were in a dream. She got up and dressed herself mechanically. She could not touch her breakfast. It did not matter to her what the captain had said. She knew that she should see Willie waiting for her.

The captain felt a pressure on his arm as he stood saying "Good-bye" to his passengers. Mary was beside him, her soft eyes filled with happy light, while a flower-like color dyed each cheek. There was no need to tell the captain what she saw, but following the direction of her eyes, he singled out of the crowd on shore, around the gangway, a tall young fellow waving his hat, and thus showing a handsome head covered with rich red chestnut curls. The eyes looked red, too, but they were smiling till they narrowed to a line between the young man's black eyelashes.

"I see him," the captain said. "Anyway," he thought, "he's a fine-looking chap enough, though a bit devil-may-careish, and there's no mistake that he's glad to see her. All right, my dear girl, keep close to me, and in a few minutes your sweetheart can come aboard."

Mary stood quietly beside the captain, but her pulses were leaping with excitement, though it seemed still to her that it was all a dream, and that when her lover, who looked to her more beautiful than ever, came on board, she should waken suddenly to find herself still expecting him.

III.

The bright promise of the morning had faded into a gloomy afternoon, when the train, after a long interval, once more stops, and her lover hands Mary out of it. As the girl looks around her, she thinks this is surely the wildest, most lonely place she has ever seen. It looks like a vast clearing made for this out-of-the-world station; tree stumps show here and there on the waste, and in front is a dark horizon of forest. Behind lies the lofty ridge of hills out of which the train has emerged, and on the right is another hill with a tunnel below, towards which the train they have quitted is already on its way.

Hours have passed since Mary said "Good-bye" to her friend the captain, and yet she feels still as if she

were dreaming. She walks on beside her lover. The road is so rough that she fancies it can only be half made, and she stumbles more than once over stones or huge lumps of earth. She looks up at her tall, handsome lover. Surely she ought to feel very happy—her longing wish is fulfilled—and yet she cannot shake off the disappointment he has caused her. His letter had said they were to be married as soon as she landed, and that he would then take her to the home he had made for her in the wild country he now lived in; but after his first rapturous greeting, as soon as he found himself alone with her, Somerfield told her that his plans were altered, and that he had settled to go on without delay to a station near the house of a friend of his, an old woman, who would care for Mary as if the girl were her own child.

"Your luggage can be sent off after us, and when it arrives and my darling is rested from her fatigue," he said, "we will take another railway journey to Onona and get married."

This had been said so lovingly that, although Mary protested, she felt herself to be ungracious. Somerfield gave her no time to reflect in. In a few minutes she was driven off to a railway station with only her small bag of necessities and the precious treasure bag which the captain had handed to her lover.

During the journey Mary thinks her companion has grown very grave; but then he has been absorbed in listening to the story of her aunt's illness and to the account of her voyage; and, indeed, in the delight of his presence she takes little notice of his manner.

As they now walk side by side, the dream-like expectancy is so strongly on Mary's nerves that she feels as if she must cry out or take some other decided way of banishing it. She stumbles again and would have fallen, but Somerfield catches her. The oath he utters makes her shudder, and she draws away from his supporting arm.

This is not the first from him that she has heard, and she remembers sadly that swearing was not a habit of Willie's in the old days.

"If I had only come to him sooner!" She wishes she were his wife, this would give her a right to remonstrate; but surely, even as it is, she ought not to let him suppose that she is willing to tolerate such words.

"Are the men very rough you go among, dear?" she says timidly.

It is now a gloomy evening, the sun has nearly set, and they are just entering the wood they have so long seen in front of them. It is yet darker here, and although she cannot see her lover's face distinctly, he turns his head away from his companion.

She feels sure she has vexed him, and now that she rouses herself to think, she sees that he must have been vexed for some time past, and that is why he has been so silent as they have walked along.

She cannot tell how it has happened, but she must make it up at once. She clasps both hands round his arm, and looks up at him lovingly; but he keeps his face turned away from her.

"Please don't be angry with me, darling," she says softly, "I never heard you speak so before, and it—it—frightened me."

"Did it?" he says gruffly, and there is another pause of silence.

It has now grown so dark that Mary is glad to take her lover's arm. The path feels smoother under foot, and this gives her hope that they are approaching a more civilized part, for she has not seen so much as a cabin since they left the station.

The only sound since they entered the wood has been the snap of a dry twig under foot or a rustling among the