

the latter, as a pretext for so doing, complaining of indisposition. They had already planned their mode of escape, which they knew to be fraught with great danger. Nitia was to leave the lodge first and alone, save for Bruno, knowing that if she should unfortunately be detected while trying to escape, the savages would not be likely to suspect her of anything wrong; whereas, if Dess should be with her, they would immediately divine their purpose. She was to have the horses in readiness, the swiftest in the band, and in twenty minutes from the time she left the tent, Dess was to follow her, and repair to a certain place near the creek, a place with which they were both familiar. This was the plan of action agreed upon, and, when the Indians had been asleep some time, the squaw stealthily crept from the wigwam, with Bruno by her side. Dess found it somewhat difficult to make the dog understand that he was to accompany the Indian woman, he preferring to remain with his mistress. It was a perilous undertaking, but, in her eagerness to escape, she never hesitated for a moment. The wily savage himself could not have crept away more stealthily than she; and though the moon had not yet shown her smiling visage above the treetops, she found no difficulty in reaching the rendezvous agreed upon. She found the squaw awaiting her, agreeably to promise, and in less than half a minute they were ready for the tedious journey that lay before them.

"Let Naoma follow," said Nitia, at the same time plunging her horse into the midst of the rapid stream.

They rode along as swiftly as possible, though it was slavish work for the animals to force their way against the rapid current. Old Bruno did not seem to enjoy the excursion very much, being obliged to pick his way along the ragged shore, but, nevertheless, he did not lose sight of his mistress for a moment. The moon had risen high in the sky ere Dess and her guide emerged from the bed of the stream.

"Naoma must go alone now," said the squaw, reining in her pony. "Go that way," pointing to the south, "and when the sun goes down to-morrow, turn to the setting sun, and before the sun comes up again she will be near her home."

"But you; will you go with me?"

"No, pale-face home not good for Indian woman."

"What! Will you go back to Watumni?"

"No, Watumni kill. Nitia go to reservation. She has brothers and sisters there, and they will keep her. Maybe she never see Naoma again," and a tremor was noticeable in her voice, though her face was impassive.

"This is cruel, Nitia. I thought you would go home to live with me."

"No, Nitia go to her own people. Let the white

girl be brave, and she find her people. She has a good heart and a bright eye, and Nitia love her much."

With this, Dess and her companion clasped hands and parted, each pursuing an opposite direction, and urging their ponies to their utmost speed. It was a rough, perilous journey, but the brave girl never forgot for an instant that her future destiny depended upon this night's work, and she gallantly urged her noble little nag ahead, unmindful of the wild, rugged character of the country through which she must pass. At the dawn of day, next morning, she paused on the slope of a rugged mountain, in order to rest her wearied pony. She looked about her in every direction, uncertain as to the course she was pursuing. She could form no adequate idea as to where she was, nor how far distant she might be from the Indian lodges. She knew only that she must push on for her life, lest the wily savages pursue and recapture her. Ere long, the sun showed his pleasant face above the high mountains, and the girl was over-joyed to find that she was pursuing the proper direction.

Her only fear now was that her horse would not prove equal to the heavy jaunt that lay before him. By the time it was midday, she had reached the summit of the high mountain, the ascent of which had greatly wearied both horse and rider. Nevertheless, she was delighted to know that she was thus far removed from her much dreaded captors, though the vast wilderness that lay before her was by no means an inviting scene. She never halted till darkness had gathered around her; and then, seeing that her horse was about to weaken from fatigue and hunger, she dismounted and prepared to rest for the night. Having tethered her pony, but leaving him saddled and bridled, that she might remount at a moment's warning, she threw herself on the cool, green grass beside her canine friend, and cautioned him to be on the alert for any foe that might approach them, however warily. Bruno, though greatly fatigued, was faithful to the command; but their peace was undisturbed, save for the piercing howl of coyotes and the hooting of a great owl which sat in the top of a tall pine just above their heads.

At the dawn of day, the girl was once more in the saddle, and was being carried away at the utmost speed of her horse, which, owing to his night's rest and the luxuriant grass upon which he had fed, was greatly recruited. Her course was now westerly, and ere noon, as she paused on the summit of a high, rolling elevation of land, she perceived, away beneath her and to the westward, a river, which, owing to the great distance, appeared like a tiny rivulet, flowing through a low, picturesque little valley. Her heart jumped with delight as the thought dawned upon her, that she was gazing upon the little valley of Oak