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The Fading Fall.

The sighing, sobbing, sad south wind Plays on my peaceful, placid bough, As over the dim and distant days Of years of yore I linger now.

The pitiless and pattering rain, Drips from the dark and dingy eaves, And, splashing in the puddles, plays At hide and hunk with hoarse leaves.

A red-brown robin bows beneath The grass-grown boughs all of my door, But sings no more his low sweet song Of autumnal sunshine as of yore.

The long-creased hunter the drawn bow, The sombre sun, with face unseen, Sinks slowly to his saddened rest.

A hurried human heart beside The sudden, silent start at noon, Diamonds and throws the tangled reed Around a drenched and drooping oak.

The chickens cackle at the cross-trees,

The crows cry round the gabbling geese;

A bleating lambkin blenders by;

The full-drawn dam with dripping fleece.

Indoors the deepening darkness drags Its lazy length upon the walls,

While glimmering gleams of silvering glare Gleam through the lamp-light in the hall.

Grim blackness broods about my bed,

And settles in the silent air;

I slam the shutters in the gloom,

And cuddle in my cozy chair.

Sweet silence soothes the sad south wind,

And lulls to sleep the sobbing storm.

My lone heart yearns for years of yore,

And many a merry-making form,

And settles fit before my face,

The dear, dear darlings of the past,

The sad south wind a solace rings

That promises sweet peace at last.

A. J. D.

SONORA HEWITT.

BY MRS. NUNIC WITHERELL.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

MEETING OF CATHERINE AND LODI—ARRIVAL

OF FRIENDS.

About a month after Lodi had promised our heroine her release they sat together, as usual, at the door of the tent, watching the sun as it cast its declining shadows over the bare and leafless trees, whose branches now and then crept mournfully as the chill November blast swept by. Lodi was consoling Sonora and Rissey with the hope that they should very soon be released from their bonds, when suddenly she sprang to her feet with a cry, "He comes! He comes!" he comes!"

Such a yell as went forth was never heard except on great occasions. Hard Heart was the first to run and greet one whom he supposed was his pretended friend; but as he neared the place from whence the form was emerging, judge of his surprise and consternation when he beheld strange pale-faces, and not one, but four, who were none others than our Bridgeport friends, headed by Catherine. With a peculiar motion she made signs to Hard Heart to approach alone, telling him they were friends and meant no harm. She told him in a few words the intent of their journey and appearance among them, asking his protection and aid during their stay, for which he should have gold double the amount of the bribe that Norman had offered.

"Hard Heart is chief—a mighty warrior among his tribe. All obey him. He will see that no harm comes to you, but the pale bird cannot be released. Hard Heart means otherwise. You must wait till the white chief comes, and then take him and depart."

"Let it be as you say. We will abide till he comes," was the reply of Catherine.

"Follow to the wigwam of Hard Heart. There you will be safe," and he led the way, while the savages looked on with surprise, some uttering yells and others dancing at the sight of so many pale-faces. Leaving our friends there, he went to inform Lodi of this new occurrence.

"Pursuers, he!" exclaimed she, as he finished. "Come to carry away our captives! Would you let the pale dove go?" asked she, quizzically.

"He! he! he!" laughed the savage. "The pale dove must be mine. I will see that she is not taken. Keep her secure. The white squaw who accompanies the three pale-faces has my promise to return in safety."

"The white squaw! The pale girl's mother perhaps?"

"No, an enemy to the chief whom she will wait for. I will learn more and let you know," said he, rising to go.

"I will go to her," said Lodi, rising and following.

Sonora and Rissey now clung to each other, for our heroine knew by the savage yell and looks and manner of Hard Heart that something new had happened, and her heart sank with fear as she thought that probably Norman's arrival had caused it. Little did she think that the friends who loved her so dearly were near her to rescue her; that Harry, her darling brother, was waiting to clasp her to his breast; and that Clarence, the devoted lover, was within a few steps to bear her home to friends and happiness. Had she known all this under the present excitement the consequences might have proved fatal, for the too sudden revulsion from fear to joy would have been too much for her just then.

As Lodi entered the tent where our friends were seated her eyes instantly fell upon Catherine. For a moment she eyed her keenly; then, walking towards her, she uttered, "Leopard's bride," and clasped to her bosom her astonished

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gues. Then, taking her by the hand, she said:

"Come with me. I would see you alone a little while."

Catherine, who feared nothing now, did as she was desired, not knowing what was the cause of this sudden friendship.

Lodi led Catherine directly to the place where Sonora and Rissey were. Bidding her enter, she stood at the door a spectator. So sudden and unexpected was the meeting that for a moment Sonora lost all control over herself; then with a bound she threw her arms around the neck of her friend, weeping as a little child. Rissey, whose joy was utterly unspeakable at the sight of a friendly face, entirely forgot her inferior station, and with one spring followed the example of her mistress, clinging frantically round the waist of Catherine, crying:

"Bless you! Bless you! De Lord hab sent you for us. You come to take us home? Rit will lub Miss Snory's God forever—dat she will! Oh, bless you! bless you!" and the overjoyed creature wept and prayed together.

Sonora spoke not for a few moments; then, falling upon her knees, she uttered a short prayer of thankfulness, calling down blessings upon the heads of those who had so kindly befriended her, and asking that through them she "might be delivered from the oppression of her enemies."

Lodi, whose heart was fast to full for words, looked on in silence, while the scalding tears coursed each other in rapid succession down her wrinkled cheeks, as she vividly brought to mind her youthful love and the long hatred she had borne her unknown rival, who now stood before her; and then of the sorrow she had been the means of causing the fair captive, who knelt and begged blessing after blessing upon her, and she determined at all hazards to retrieve the injury by doing all in her power to aid in her escape.

"Bless you! Thank you, dear Cath-

erine, for your second preservation of my happiness. How shall I sufficiently recompense you, one of my best of friends?" were Sonora's words as she arose from her knees.

"Then, as you said, I will speak to him again."

"I have it," answered Catherine, her eyes brightening. "I will prevail upon the young chiefs to comply with the wishes of Hard Heart and pretend to leave willingly. They will proceed to Plague Mine and await her coming, which you must manage in some way to Hard Heart, who suspects not that you are her friend."

"That is sufficient if you can succeed with your part. Depend upon me. I will not leave her until she is with those who can protect her from harm," and leaving Catherine to return to the pallet she had left, Lodi directed her steps cautiously to the wigwam where she had seen Hard Hart conduct Sonora. Listening, she found all soundly sleeping. Opening the canvass she beheld her captive stretched upon a blanket, alone and evidently sleeping. Stepping in cautiously, she stooped down, when Sonora, who was awake, started, but finding the intruder to be her friend, clasped her round the neck, begging her to stay with her.

"This cannot be, though I will watch you as carefully as if I lay beside you. Catherine de Michel has repeated all to me, and the murderer of Lenard's child can never wed the pale dove," and there, in the darkness of midnight, while the cold autumn winds whistled mournfully around them, did Lodi inform Sonora how she and Catherine had planned the escape of herself and Rissey. As she concluded she asked:

"Are you satisfied with this arrangement, and willing to remain a little longer till the white chief comes, for Lodi cannot do it till then?"

"Anything so I can but return to my home," answered Sonora, weeping as she thought of the time which must elapse ere she could behold those dear friends who were even then so near, and her anxious parents, who were mourning for her return.

"Oh, Miss Snory, don't leave me! Please don't!" screamed Rissey, fearful that she was forgotten.

"You shall go when I do, my faithful Rissey; never fear," answered Sonora, coming back and putting her arm around the waist of her worthy servant.

"It will be necessary to walk a little longer," said Lodi, rising. Then, turning to Catherine, she continued: "Return to the wigwam of the white chief; for the present, and to-night when all sleep, before the moon comes forth to light our path, meet me at the foot of the cottonwood tree that grows a few rods from this tent. Then and there I will tell you all regarding myself and my intentions towards yonder maid, who is safe with me as though she slept upon the bosom of her own mother, and whose freedom I promise you. But hark! Yonder comes Hard Heart. Say nothing. Appear willing to do as he says. Return now, but remember, to-night ere the moon rises," and waiving her hand, she motioned for her visitor to depart, as Hard Heart entered with a scowl upon his countenance.

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sorrow we find our dearest friends in those who can sympathize with us by once having troubles similar to our own.

"I will see that Norman receives his just dues," said Catherine, as she arose from her seat beneath the old tree. "If I cannot obtain my revenge any other way, I will use this," and she flourished the dagger in the air, which she still carried. "See you?" continued she, that the pale-faces are restored to their home in safety, and I will wait here for him."

"I fear the anger of Hard Heart more than all else—not for myself, but for the white chief in yonder wigwam," whispered Lodi. "Should they persist in not going without the pale dove, his anger would prove terrible, and danger must certainly fall upon their heads. We must manage to persuade them to escape in some way."

"I have it," answered Catherine, her eyes brightening. "I will prevail upon the young chiefs to comply with the wishes of Hard Heart and pretend to leave willingly. They will proceed to Plague Mine and await her coming, which you must manage in some way to Hard Heart, who suspects not that you are her friend."

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