

The "de o" destiny is turning fast towards Florence. And sort of accumulation of facts point that way

The West.

THIS WEEK ... DESERT CLAIM. ... SUBSCRIBE NOW.

Vol. V.

FLORENCE, LANE COUNTY, OREGON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1895.

No. 44

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DESERT CLAIM

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One quickly understood, watching her pretty, humming bird sort of restlessness, how it was that her husband's eyes were always turning toward her with a kind of doglike devotion in their gray depths. "We had happened to be invited out to see at a neighbor's, ten miles away, and it was 10 o'clock when we reached home. Ah, I was perfectly frantic when we found your telegram waiting for us. I wanted to start right off, but it was so dark, and Hugh would take care of himself perfectly well. He says you always do."

"He is very kind, but I might have found it rather difficult last night but for Mr. Brown. Edith hastily interpolated, with a smile of sweet friendliness at the young man. Now that all her anxieties were at an end she was in a radiant good humor. "If he had not been so good at the station."

"And so you went on to Cameron's and were there all the while. How perfectly lovely!" cried Mrs. Ellery rapturously. "Oh, we were sure that you would manage just right."

"But it was Mr. Brown who did all the managing," the girl protested with a laugh. "You must give him all the credit."

"It was only a matter of luck that I happened to be over at the station, but of course I am very glad," he said, smiling back at her gratefully over his work of stowing his small baggage in the front of the carriage, where it considerably threatened the legs of the two small boys, who sat looking on in shy wonder.

"Ah, the poor children will be crushed under my things! Come here, you dorks. I want you both on my lap. I shall offer to pay him for the team and for his trouble, Nelsine!" she whispered hurriedly behind a small boy's back. "He has been so kind."

"Not for the world!" returned the other energetically. "He would take it as an insult. It was so fortunate for Miss Ellery that you happened to be there," she went on, turning to the young man with that radiant smile which, to most men, had been a reward sufficient for any service. "And we are so much obliged to you and to everybody at Cameron's. I wish we could have been sure that she was in such good hands."

The wagon from the ranch had just come up, and Paul Brown, with the driver of the team, was engaged in transferring Miss Ellery's trunk from the back of the buckboard. The work kept him silent for a moment, but he turned around with a gay, infectious laugh which showed his firm, white teeth. "Hospitality, like virtue, is its own reward sometimes, Mrs. Ellery."

"Angels' visits are few and far between at Cameron's. When they do come, we consider that the luck is all on our side."

"What a charming remark! Miss Ellery must thank you again," cried Mrs. Ellery pleasantly, at once, however, proceeding to engross her guest's attention with a vivacious flow of questioning and talk which left no thought to spare for the young fellow still standing beside the carriage.

"And how soon are you going to be through down there?" asked Ellery, detaching him as he moved to go. "We have quite a bunch of colts that ought to be broken, and I was wanting to see you, to ask when you could come over."

"Why, as to that, I ought to be getting back to my own place, I believe, Mr. Ellery," the young man returned, with an air of uncertainty, his eyes fixed upon the ground. "How soon would you want me?"

"Right now, if it would suit you—as soon as you get through at Cameron's."

"I'm about through there now, but—"

"You might come for a month now if you can give us no longer and then come for another in the fall," urged Ellery rather anxiously.

"Well, perhaps if that will do," he hesitated a moment with a half glance at the back seat of the carriage as he turned back toward his own team. "I have my own horse at Cameron's and will ride over in the course of a week or so if I can arrange it to come. Otherwise I will drop you a line."

The ladies were paying no heed to anything besides their own absorbing conversation, but aroused by seeing him moving to go Edith started forward impulsively. "Oh, Mr. Brown, are you going? You must let me thank you again," she peremptorily holding out a small, gloved hand. The man had been really kind, and now that she might never lay eyes on him again, for she had not heard a word of the arrangement that her brother had been making, she felt that she could well afford to be gracious. "I appreciate all your kindness so much, Goodby."

"You need not have shaken hands with him, dearie," murmured Nelsine in her ear, "but of course you could not know. His manners are so gentlemanly!"

"Except perhaps when he happens to be exhorting the bucking and impatient broncho," laughed Hugh parenthetically.

"But he was so very kind, you know, and I could not pay him!"

"He probably considers himself munificently rewarded now," laughed her brother teasingly.

"There is something almost suspiciously refined about that young man's manner," observed Mrs. Ellery reflectively. "It seems as if he must have a history, as if he might be hiding in this out of the world place for some reason."

"Ah, Nelsine, your imagination, if devoted to sensational literature, would make your fortune," observed her husband indulgently. "As for poor Brown, though, give the devil his due and stick to what you know about him."

"But he does not seem quite like a common cowboy, really," put in Edith interestedly. "What do you know about him?"

"Simply that he is Brown of Lost River and the best broncho breaker in Wyoming."

"It seems rather odd," murmured

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last may take the first and welcome, so far as I am concerned at this moment," luxuriously swinging back and forth, enjoying the landscape with eyes half closed.

"You are perfectly blasphemous, you conscienceless creature! I lament afresh that we are 50 miles from church privileges."

"What a relief it must be in the matter of bonnets!" rejoined the girl, smiling incoherently. "For my own part, I shall appreciate the opportunity for finding 'tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones,' and all that sort of thing, without the drawback of a congregation, but I suppose there are neighbors somewhere?" her glance speculatively ranging the distant hills.

"Oh, yes. Within a radius of 80 miles there are several families—such as they are. Good people, too, but you know the type"—shrugging her dainty shoulders incoherently. "Nothing like the parlor and 'God Bless Our Home' in worsted work over the mantel."

"I recognize the description, and is the young woman yonder one of the natives?"

"Artalissa"—glancing down at the young woman by the creek, who had now put down her pan and was gathering roses on the other side—"oh, Artalissa is from Nebraska."

"Artalissa of Nebraska. What a fetching title that would be for a novel!"

"I believe she might tell a bit of a story if she chose. I have heard some hints of a romance. Somebody—I think it was her sister—married her lover," Nelsine explained, with the smiling indifference we accord to the tragedies of other lives.

"And so Artalissa's heart was broken," Edith rejoined, regarding the girl with languid curiosity.

"If it was, she believes in the theory of similia similibus curatur. In her limited sphere Artalissa is a dreadful flirt. The boys on the place are all dead in love with her, for which I am devoutly thankful, hoping they may amuse her sufficiently to induce her to stay."

"Death to the frogs perhaps, but"—"Oh, men have died from time to time, but not for love," replied Nelsine, calmly cynical. "If it is fun for Artalissa, I am not disposed to worry about the frogs. The servant girl difficulty is too serious in Wyoming to be squawkish about trifles—another of the drawbacks of Arcadia. We have more than work enough here for two girls, but even with the bait of \$30 a month it is all we can do to find one. When I read of 200,000 working women on the verge of starvation in New York, it makes me furious. If only the sentimentalists and silly philanthropists would stop talking and writing about it and devote their energies toward bringing those starving women west, where they are needed!"

"She is rather handsome," remarked Edith absently, her eyes following the girl. "There seems even a certain air of refinement about her. I should hardly have regarded her as belonging to that class."

"That class! For pity's sake, Edith, don't breathe such a reflection aloud!" cried the other in comical dissonance. "Artalissa belongs to the best society—in Arcadia. She teaches a district school in the winter—with half a dozen scholars. In the summer she has done housework in certain well recommended families, partly, I believe, because of the little family unpleasances before referred to, on account of which she prefers not to go home, and partly because of a canny eye to business. And I suppose the next thing she will be getting married. I live in fear and trembling—such have as matrimony has always played in my household. Never girl have I had who has not left me to be married within six months of her coming. There seems a fatality about the place. I believe even you would succumb to the sentimental influence—hard-hearted little wretch that you are—if there was any man in the country whom you could possibly marry."

"Do you think so?" and Edith looked away as she spoke, with an odd little smile.

"Speaking of that, do you know it seems rather strange, dear, that you don't seem to find anybody to please you?" Nelsine observed inquiringly, hitching her rocking chair a degree nearer. "I wonder how much longer you will keep us in suspense, regarding the girl with a sort of tender curiosity, a certain gleam of excitement lighting her dark eyes as she perceived a smile deepening and dimpling about the pretty mouth."

"Not much longer, I think, Nelsine," the girl's face flushing faintly as she answered, with a soft little laugh.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Way of Long Twilight.

On first thought it seems to be a rather paradoxical statement that the nearer we approach to the equator the shorter is that intermediate stage or transition from day to night and from night to day, which we call "twilight."

This being the case, however, the period of duration of "the dim, uncertain light" in all tropical countries is very short when compared with that of countries of high northern or southern latitude. The explanation is this: On the equator the sun's path is at exact right angles with the horizon. The last beam of light fades from view when the sun is at 18 degrees below the horizon. This 18 degree mark is quickly reached at the equator for reasons given in the first sentence of this explanation. The farther from the equator we get the less become the angles which the sun's course makes with the horizon, and the longer the time required for him to reach the 18 degree mark; hence the longer the period of twilight.—St. Louis Republican.

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Almond Oil, Cedar Oil, Eucalypti, Peppermint, etc.

CHAPTER II

The buildings of the K 6 ranch were grouped in picturesque disorder on a little plateau dotted over with box elder trees, forming a natural park at a bend of the shallow creek. The small stream deserved its name of Big Cow creek only by way of comparison with a tiny consort three miles or so across the country, to which it became united a few miles below. In point of beauty indeed both deserved fairer titles, but the early settlers of Wyoming were practical souls, given to considering every object with reference to their particular interest, the cow. In all the country round no fairer grazing ground might be found than this, where the cattle could revel knee high in grasses in this blossom time of June, while here and there an old cottonwood towered here and shoulders above the others almost somber in the dignity of duller and darker dress. Crowding down from the banks of the stream was a gay riot of wild flowers of every hue, and in this brief carnival time of summer, nature had been minded to give beauty for ashes with mad prodigality.

The house was a low, rambling structure, complacently violating every known law of architectural style in the series of additions which had grown upon the first settler's cabin, but within it was most ingeniously contrived for both comfort and convenience, lacking few of those luxuries that have come to be the necessities of modern refinement.

"It is not in the least an ideal cattle ranch," Edith declared, with a laugh and a certain air of disappointment. "I must reconstruct my ideas from first to last. I came expecting to 'rough it,' and find silk portieres and Persian rugs, high art furniture and the latest books. I feel that I have been a victim of misplaced confidence; that 'the wild and woolly west' is a myth. This is a paradise."

She was lying in a hammock in the shade of the wide piazza, that, save for one broad entrance way, was all walled in on its open sides with vines of wild cucumber. Through that wreathed opening one looked down a velvety slope of lawn to the creek, across which a noble group of trees joined hands, flickering lights chasing each other across the polished leaves as the light breeze buffeted the willing branches to and fro. A wooden bridge crossed the creek in the shadow of the trees, and resting on its timbers at one side a small flume carried water to the irrigating ditch on this side to the garden beyond, the tiny flow laughing, gurgling and rollicking on its way with ten times the noise and jollity of the murmuring creek below. Between the swaying branches one caught a sapphire flash here and there of the water winding about among the wild rose

hedges, as though searching out the fairest flowers, its low banks guarded by a diminishing line of trees in fresh summer bravery softly outlined against the gray of the sky.

Under the trees by the bridge, a pretentious picture against the background of shimmering greens, a young woman in a brown cotton gown, bareheaded, and with well rounded arms showing to the elbow, was feeding a flock of downy chickens, the clang of the spoon beating against the pan calling her charges to gather sounding like an accompaniment of cymbals in the drowsy summer symphony of bird song and the hum of insect life, the soft swish of many leaves, and the melody of running water. Edith looked at all the fair picture with exquisite delight, but most of all she looked at this girl.

"You have not had time yet to find out the thorns beneath the roses," returned Nelsine, almost with an air of pique, being, in fact, rather given to a certain enjoyment in the little airs of martyrdom she assumed by reason of her social isolation.

"I shall see nothing but the roses, my dear. I never saw so many together in all my life before. And to think that I actually have been waiting sympathy upon you, you wretched little impostor! You write charming letters, Nelsine, but you belong to the school of the impressionists. Your scenery is always delightfully vague and sketchy. I had imagined you in a howling wilderness."

"Well, I think the wilderness is here, for all the roses. You forget that one of the drawbacks of Arcadia is a lack of society."

"No, I don't. I count that in with the roses and other blessings. Society is a nuisance."

"Ah, you are like a man who had just dined, crying out 'Who wants anything to eat?' You have been satiated with the world, the flesh and the devil for the time being."

"I have, my dear, certainly, and the

girl thoughtfully, looking away.

"It is suspiciously odd," pronounced Mrs. Ellery decidedly. "I am sure that he has a history."

Calling her charges together.

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