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# A SNOWED-IN THANKSGIVING

By EFF HATCH

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**L**AWRENCE GREER, looking from his bedroom window, could see nothing but snow as far as his eye traveled. It was snow on the window panes, snow on shrub and tree and hill, snow everywhere in all sorts of fantastic shapes and with yet more coming. The first big storm of the season was descending on the region whither he had come but two days before to spend his Thanksgiving vacation from city office duties in his uncle's home. Already roads and even fences were obliterated.



GERTRUDE CAME FORWARD WITH A GREETING.

"Hello, Lawrence!" came the voice of his uncle from below. "Guess we'll have to dig out our end of the gully road this morning. Breakfast ready in ten minutes. Get on your heaviest togs. It's a snifter this time."

This wasn't the first time that Lawrence had lent a hand in snow plowing and shoveling out the snowed-ins of his uncle's district. Ever since he was a boy of fifteen, ten years before, he had been making annual winter visits to this best of all his uncles and aunts, and he would have returned home sorely disappointed had he not encountered at least one deep drift experience.

At breakfast it was arranged that Lawrence, with old Jacob, should undertake the breaking through of the gully road as far as the Widow Bennett's. At that point they would undoubtedly meet the Pearson boys from a mile beyond.

Now, Lawrence had pleasant recollections of Widow Bennett's hospitable home. As a boy it had opened its arms to him, and it was there he had spent many an hour with Mrs. Bennett and her granddaughter, the brightest, black-eyed, alert little girl that ever wore short skirts, rode on snowplows, called him "Uncle Law" and insisted on his own grownupness and his fitness to advise her on her reading, her studies and even her ambitions. Gertrude, however, had been away at school these later winters and Lawrence had caught no glimpse of her, although his aunt and even his uncle had much to say of her attractiveness and loveliness as evidenced in the summer life of the place.

"We ought to make Bennett's by noon and get back here by three o'clock," was the schedule announced by old Jacob.

"If it gets any worse later in the day don't try to get back tonight. Just bed at the Bennett farm and dig toward it in the morning," was the uncle's parting advice.

The storm did grow worse and grew worse so rapidly that by the time they had covered three-quarters of the distance to the Widow Bennett's Lawrence and old Jacob considered it advisable to detach the horses from the



GERTRUDE SO WROTE.

snowplow and, mounted one on each horse, make their way to the Bennett farm.

"Worst storm ever!" said the widow as she welcomed the two. "It doesn't look as if we should get out for days. I was telling Gertrude it was mighty lucky for her that she came yesterday, for she couldn't possibly have escaped a snow blockade had she taken a train later."

Lawrence was all attention. "I say, little Gertrude isn't here, is she?" he asked.

"Well, I don't know as she is," quizzically replied the grandmother. "Little Gertrude hasn't been in evidence for some years, but Miss Gertrude isn't far away."



When the stately bird of promise is yet a toothsome dream As in the noonday sunshine he moves with radiant gleam.

Soon there was a quick step and a laughing "Hello, Uncle Law" as Gertrude came forward with a greeting that for its simplicity and heartiness and but for the ripened flower of womanhood before him might have carried him back a half dozen years.

Lawrence Greer was not one easily to be carried off his feet, but he was too evidently in the air this time even to disguise the fact cleverly.

"But I say, Gertrude, how on earth did it all happen?" looking her over from head to foot.

"Years, Uncle Law, just years and the getting into touch with new kinds of life. You said it would be just as I've found it and also that I would some day forget my Uncle Law and that he told me so. But, you see, I haven't forgotten either." And she smiled as frankly as in the days when he told her, sitting on his knee, of the world that she would go into, through the gateways of school and experience and of the society, whose doors had not then opened to her.

That she hadn't forgotten him and those talks to the child Gertrude gave Lawrence a thrill of real pleasure.

That afternoon and evening was a rare day in Lawrence's experience of life. The storm raged furiously, and Lawrence, relieved of duty, gave himself up to the spell of a renewal of acquaintance that had all the novelty, piquancy and delight of a rare and agreeable discovery.

What astonished Lawrence most were the frequently recurring and flatteringly delightful evidences that wherever she had been and however occupied during these intervening years Gertrude had kept close tab on his own career and, furthermore, had found a certain inspiration therein. To be sure, that career had not been hidden under a bushel, for he was already sufficiently in public life to make him a marked man among influential men.

Gertrude's discriminating allusions to his work as commissioner, delegate or president of the board, to his work in correcting civic evils and in his other public activities betokened a peculiarly personal interest such as Lawrence had not before met and such as he least expected in any woman. His own mother and sisters had shown no such intelligent interest in his work, and even his brother, he was willing to wager, knew far less of his career than did this mere girl whom but yesterday, as it were, he had amused as a child, but a child that he loved.

Was it possible that in shaping the ideals of life for a child he had unwittingly offered himself as an ideal to the heart of that child? If so would she find him worthy or not now that the years had proved him? Was her admiration only admiration? If more than that might it not yet be that some one else already forestalled him in her affections? How was he to know?

"Does he know that?"

"He must know it—by now," with a baffling smile.

"Can you give me any idea of what he looks like, some picture of him before you consigned him to your heart? Of course you must have had a tintype experience on some early excursion, been snaphotted on the lawn or koddaked somewhere."

An amused smile and a mischievous look came to her face as Gertrude took from his separate envelope a carefully protected kodak picture of a youth not yet out of his teens and a girl just entering hers. He was bending down the branch of a mountain ash that the girl might pick the red berries. She was trying by standing on her toes to reach yet a little higher.

"Here is the gem of my collection, if you will see it. Perhaps you will recognize the subjects and recall the occasion. I have never become reconciled to the fact that you failed to bring those berries within my reach."

With Lawrence's look of recognition and a laugh at the all but forgotten circumstances of the time thus recalled came a puzzled expression, as if he were trying in some way to connect this picture with the question he had asked.

At the same instant Gertrude's face assumed the expression of one who fears she has said a word too much, and she hastened to call Lawrence's attention to the writing on the back of the picture.

"You wrote that line above, 'It's the reaching upward that counts.' You asked me to write my own interpretation on the picture at some later time. I have never done so. I suppose I might do so now. What do you suggest?"

"Will you write what I suggest and as your own?" He was now watching her face with intensest look.

"Try me." And she returned his gaze as directly.

"Write, 'It takes two together to capture the higher prizes of life.'"

And Gertrude so wrote and underscored it besides.

**Our Noblest Bird.**  
The noblest of birds is the turkey, As the baldheaded eagle is king, And now when the weather grows murky, With politics out of the ring, Other goods we may look at and long for While our hearts are with thankfulness puffed.  
But the bird of our hearts is all ready And waiting poor dear, to get stuffed.



"When I refused Jack three weeks ago he declared that it would be the death of him."

"Well, it wasn't. He proposed to me last week, and I accepted him."

"Oh, then he must have meant a living death!"

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REV. T. WIRE, Pastor.

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