

Draxy's first feeling was one of resentment; but it was a very short-lived one. The earnest tone, the solemn stillness of the wondering people, the peaceful summer air floating in at the open windows,—all lifted her out of herself, and made her glad to hear her own hymn read by the man she loved, for the worship of God. But her surprise was still greater when the choir began to sing the lines to a quaint old Methodist tune. They had been provided with written copies of the hymn, and had practised it so faithfully that they sang it well. Draxy broke down and sobbed for a few moments, so that Elder Kinney was on the point of forgetting everything, and springing to her side. He had not supposed that anything in the world would overthrow Draxy's composure. He did not know how much less strong her nerves were now than they had been two months before.

After church, Draxy walked home alone very rapidly. She did not wish to see any one. She was glad that her father and mother had not been there. She could not understand the tumult of her feelings.

At twilight, she stole out of the back door of the house, and walked down to a little brook which ran near by. As she stood leaning against a young maple tree she heard steps, and without looking up, knew that the Elder was coming. She did not move nor speak. He waited some minutes in silence. Then he said "O Draxy! I never once thought o' painin' you! I thought you'd like it. Hymns are made to be sung, dear; and that one o' yours is so beautiful!" He spoke as gently as her father might, and in a voice she hardly knew. Draxy made no reply. The Elder had never seen her like this. Her lips quivered, and he saw tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Draxy, do look up at me—just once! You don't know how hard it is for a man to think he's hurt anybody—like you!" stammered the poor Elder, ending his sentence quite differently from what he had intended.

Draxy smiled through her tears, and looking up, said: "But I am not hurt, Mr. Kinney; I don't know what I am crying for, sir;" and her eyes fell again.

The Elder looked down upon her in silence. Moments passed. "Oh, if I could make her look up at me again!" he thought. His unspoken wish stirred her veins; slowly she lifted her eyes; they were calm now, and unutterably loving. They were more than the Elder could bear.

"Oh, Draxy, Draxy!" exclaimed he, stretching out both his arms toward her.

"My heart grows weaker and more weak
With looking on the thing so dear!"
Which lies so far and yet so near!"

Slowly, very slowly, like a little child learning to walk, with her eyes full of tears, but her mouth smiling, Draxy moved toward the Elder. He did not stir, partly because he could not, but partly because he would not lose one instant of the deliciousness of seeing her, feeling her come.