

"No, with God. It is God that gives me this desire to suffer or to die for him. I know it is given for something, but I must wait until the way is open for me."

"The way is opened to-day. Before New-Year's, I hope that you and I will be carrying out the spirit of that hymn in the republic of Texas."

"Why? How? Come in and tell me."

Mark went in, and saluting her with a lover's warmth, told her what his father had said. Help from this quarter was just the most miraculous thing in the world. The Maid of Orleans was not more sure of a divine vocation, than was Roxy at that moment. She pushed her chair back from the window, beckoned Mark to kneel down with her, and then, with the enthusiasm of St. Theresa when she sought in childhood a martyrdom among the Moors, Roxy poured out thanks to God for the inestimable privilege of suffering, and perhaps of dying for the Lord.

Mark left Roxy when the tavern bell was ringing its muezzin call to supper. He went away as he always left her presence, in a state of sympathetic exaltation, which would have lasted him until he could have sunned himself again in her religious experience, had it not been that in his walk towards home, he passed the house of Haz Kirtley. The sight of the house disturbed his complacency with recollections of past failures. He had no fear now of any enticement from Nancy, but he was growing a little more distrustful of himself, in a general way. A lurking feeling that underneath this missionary Mark was a treacherous other self, capable of repeating the follies of the past, troubled him. He longed for Texas, not as of old, to leave Nancy behind, but because he felt, as who does not, that a great change in circumstances would help to make a change in him. He forgot, as we all forget, that the ugly self is not to be left behind. There is no way but to turn and face a foe who must needs be mess-mate and bed-fellow with us to the very end.

That night, at supper, Amanda, the elder of the sisters Bonamy told Mark that he would better learn to make shoes. This obscure allusion to the trade of Roxy's father was meant for wit and sarcasm, but to Amanda's surprise, her father took up for Mark. Roxy Adams was a fine girl,—a little too pious, but that at least, was not a common fault with girls. And Janet, the impulsive younger sister, said she wished Mark would marry Roxy. She had such a handsome face, with a glad look shining out from behind.

"What a little goose you are!" said the dignified Amanda; "did ever anybody hear such nonsense?—a glad look shining out from behind! Silly! For my part, I don't like a girl that is always smiling."

"But she don't smile. She only looks glad," persisted Janet.

"As if anybody could look glad without smiling! Let's see you try."