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## A STORY.

OUT where the street lost itself in prairie, the flowers made one gay mass of blue and gold and scarlet, where the grasshoppers whirred busily in the thick yellow haze of the long summer afternoon. A woman was sitting in a low chair on the hotel verandah, looking up from time to time with a far-away glance from the papers she was reading. Drawing a long breath, she laid the papers aside, stretched herself to her full height, so that the subtle curves of her figure were revealed by her clinging black gown, and, calling for a pony to be brought around, was soon away with a brisk canter towards the open.

Once well out of town, she urged the pony on, till, filled with exhilaration, she half rose from the saddle when he landed, daintily safe beyond some bad gopher holes, to wave her hat and shout with the very joy of living. Enter from a distant village, Telesphore Grozelle, excitable Gascon, riding hard, and speaking volubly before he was near enough to be answered.

"Mrs. Lennox, I am charmed to meet you. I come to call upon you, for I want to see you since a week. Will you do me the so great honor to be my bridesmaid?"

"Your bridesmaid," she repeated gravely, looking down at her black gown; then in a lighter tone she continued, "Why, men don't have bridesmaids, Mr. Grozelle! Are you going to be married?"

"Yes, Mrs. Lennox; my financee"—this proudly—"comes by the train of to-day—she is alone. She knows no one here. You met her once, it is not long ago—we sat beside you on Field-Day, only two years ago, at Rosedale. You do not forget? But you will do this for me—for her?" he corrected, pleadingly, seeing her face sadden at the mention of that bright happy afternoon, for she recalled a pale little girl with big inquiring eyes, who laughed and clapped obediently as Telesphore commanded, over the different events.

"When do you want me, Mr. Grozelle?" she asked.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Lennox, I am of such a stupidity to-day; be so kind as to go now with me to the station, and I shall send your pony back to the hotel."

The train whizzed in on time, and there alighted the same fragile girl, whom Telesphore nervously welcomed and brought to Jean Lennox. But, catching sight of a tall man in the throng of arrivals, he hastily excused himself a moment, to return with "Waring—you met Waring—of 'oo—is it not so? Mrs. Lennox—Mr. Waring." The stranger gave a startled glance at her, then looked away.

Telesphore explained the situation briefly to the newcomer, and, eliciting the pledge of his support, took his sweetheart on his arm to lead the way towards the church.

"There's certainly no time wasted in the West, Mrs. Lennox," said the man in his soft Highland accent, with an apparent effort to maintain self-control.

"No, indeed," laughed Jean Lennox, "Mr. Grozelle is almost a Lochinvar, isn't he?"

The church was locked. Had the minister a wife? Then, Jean protested, her services were not required. But, Telesphore demanded with energy that she should see the affair concluded, so they wended their way to the manse.

Just as the minister read the first vows of the service, the groom reddened, fumbled in his shabby pocket, and produced four pairs of gloves, the fingers he had so often clasped slipped snugly into their white sheath, but Jean had great difficulty in restraining herself from working, like "La Patte de Dindon," the long white tips that dangled from her hands. Telesphore saluted his bride, handed the minister an envelope, thanked Waring and Mrs. Lennox, and disappeared with his wife so literally that the others laughed aloud, and Waring volunteered to escort Jean to her lodging.

On their way back to the hotel, her confusion grew. Waring, of all men! Why had he come? She had so much accustomed her mind to self-analysis that telepathic communication with like minds was easy, and yet he startled her by answering her unspoken thought.

"Yes, it's a far cry from Ontario to Calgary, Mrs. Lennox, I never expected to see you here! Maybe you'll wonder why I came—it isn't for pleasure—the syndicate running these mills sent me out as manager. And you?"

"Well, I'm earning my living, you must know," she answered, defiantly, and he flushed a little under her clear, bright glance. "When father died, Maisie and I had no funds after the estate was settled."

But Waring still wondered about her black gown and her solitary mission here in the distant West. What about Lennox? He couldn't ask her if her husband had died.

"Perhaps you have seen those papers on the Galicians in The International?" she continued, more mildly, "I have just finished them, and then I ran up here for a change—just for a fortnight," she added in haste.

That evening in a remote corner of the dining-room of the