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FAUNA; OR, THE RED FLOWER OF LEAFY HOLLOW.\*

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CHAPTER XX.

Now that the winter's gone, the earth hath lost  
Her snow white robes, and now no more the frost  
Candies the grass, or calls an icy cream  
Upon the silver lake or crystal stream.

THOMAS CAREW.



SHORT time before Harald's ship, the *Artemisia*, had returned to England from her cruise among the Ionian Isles, and the young midshipman had obtained leave of absence that he might visit his family in their new abode, Mr. Warrender had been travelling in Turkey and Greece, and returned home in Harald's frigate, and having long known Mr. Blachford, he was greatly

delighted with the boy's high spirit, talents and bravery. As for Harald, he conceived the greatest admiration for his new friend, who had travelled over the greater part of the old world, and in doing so met with so many romantic and exciting adven-

tures, and encountered so many wondrous accidents by flood and field, that he appeared a perfect hero to the young sailor's vivid imagination. He was therefore highly delighted when Warrender proposed to accompany him to Canada, from whence he meditated a journey through the United States, Texas and Mexico, to South America. They accordingly sailed for New York, and proceeding to Niagara, procured an Indian guide there to conduct them through the forest to the lonely and sequestered township, in which Mr. Blachford had pitched his tent.

All seemed now unclouded gaiety at Hemlock Knoll. The chief pride and hope of the house had returned, handsome, brave, and high-minded; his noble and warm heart uncorrupted and unchilled. His father with delight presented him to the inmates of the Hollow. Fauna, with her wild lustrous eyes, her sweet melancholy voice, her graceful figure, and seldom broken silence, at once interested his fancy, and with Rhoda he speedily became as good friends as if they had been children together. But he seemed determined not to like Max; and as the young artist, from his highly imaginative and refined temperament, was habitually reserved, their real intimacy did not make much progress. Altogether the new comers gave fresh zest to the life of the forest dwellers; Mr. Warrender appearing as much delighted with the rude employments and simple pleasures of a bush life as the young and ardent Harald.

Some evenings after their arrival, a party was formed to visit the sugar bush of Yankee Joss by moonlight, which of course included Max and

\* Continued from page 307.