

But I had enclosed stamps. Miss Taylor always did so in posting my manuscripts. Or it might be a polite note from the editor, declining my work which should have arrived by the same post but had been delayed in the mails. I knew that after your writing rose to a certain point of excellence, or if you were introduced by a well-known friend your dismissal would come from a higher source than at first and would take the form of "The editor, per . . . . ."; the lower grades of readers only dealing out the printed matter.

Well, I thought at last, I might as well know my fate, and so took up a letter-knife and opened the envelope.

Could, I believe my eyes? It was an autograph note, not even a typewritten one, from the editor of *Scribber's Monthly* requesting my acceptance of the enclosed cheque for one hundred dollars for my story "Fallen Leaves." They were glad to say it was just in time for their November issue, which they intended as usual to make a distinctively Thanksgiving number.

A tingling sensation shot through me, my very finger tips prickled sharply as my heart stopped beating and then stumbled heavily on at much more than its usual pace. I brushed back the hair which seemed to sting my forehead wherever it touched me and walked quickly up and down the little room a number of times, stopping by the desk at each turn to read over the signature—not on the cheque, but on the note which was of infinitely greater value than one hundred dollars. "Just in time for the November issue." "Just in time," I kept repeating. The words went like wine to my brain.

I dashed downstairs and naturally taking my most accustomed route hurried along to York street nodding in a cheerful, half-unseeing way at the friends I met or passed with their brief bags swinging in their hands as they rushed up to the Hall or back to their offices. After tramping out to Rosedale and spending an hour or two lying among the June grass and daisies with only the distant sound of playing children to disturb my dreams I felt calm enough to go back to the office.

I told some of my more intimate friends of my success, and they, of course, told others. A manuscript I sent in to the *Monday Morning Star* was accepted, not the first by any means, but it was prefaced by a reference to me as the rising writer of short stories and mentioned that I was the author of the Thanksgiving story in the forthcoming November number of *Scribber's Monthly*.

Congratulations poured upon me and when I went to Muskoka for six weeks at midsummer, it is only fair to say I felt myself not unknown.

What struck me as most dreamlike about my position was the naturalness of it all. The old days of constant failure seemed so remote now as to be part of the life story of one of my own characters. I accepted myself as unquestioningly as one does the little green girl with blue hair, pink eyes and affectionate smile who sometimes makes one's sleep so unquiet after a too liberal supper.

I wrote almost nothing during the summer, merely jotted down the outline of a story or sketched in a scene that happened to strike me, for use in the winter's work which I planned. I felt more confidence in my work and when an idea suggested itself to me I noted it down at once instead of letting it turn itself over and ripen in my brain as I used to do.

Formerly, I thought over my stories too much before beginning to write them out. They became dear children of my fancy for whom the plain robes of common speech were too coarse. I revolted at seeing the thoughts that passed so fairy-like before my vision as I sat over the fire of an evening, spread out on paper like leaves in an herbarium with all the life and color gone out of them. By the middle of September I was back in town doing my share of the office work and managing to get in a good deal of time over my desk in the evenings and early mornings. The thought of some one who had taken a kindly interest in my work and had sung my favorite songs on moonlight nights on the lakes had a good deal to do with the ardor with which I worked.