

the pale yellow sunshine only glittered perfunctorily and gleamed at some suspicious looking clouds, which whitened in patches, seeming to show their teeth in response. It looked much like a reconciliation patched up between a pair of panting duellists.

"It is not all over yet," declared Miss Davenport. "See, there go the swallows skimming the ground."

"Superfluous joy around appears,  
And nature smiles as tho' she sneers,"

said I, quoting Lamb.

"Ah, child! never say that," Miss Davenport replied—much too seriously, I thought. "Nature is just the one who always remains kind, whatever befalls. But," she continued in a lighter tone, "lest she should betray her partizan by treating you to a cold, your driest route will be down through the Tanneries. Follow that bend in the bank and it will shortly lead you to a street where you may take the car and reach the lower part of the town."

I thanked her, very glad to avoid a scramble through the wet grass and underbrush. Turning through the sharp curve in the bank, I saw that it completely shut off all view of the nook I had just left. I observed also that high up the clay wall was perforated thickly with holes, in and out of which swallows darted excitedly.

"Indeed, Una, I am relieved to see you," my mother cried, as I entered the house. "How did you contrive to keep dry? I saw your umbrella in the hall stand, and knew, of course, you were unprovided against such a sudden change."

I explained.

"Davenport," she repeated; "the name has a familiar sound. Oh, yes! I am sure I have heard old Mrs. Rowe speak of a Mr. Davenport with an only daughter who lived here many years ago. He had been a Hudson's Bay man, very wealthy, I think she said; gave great entertainments and saw a good deal of the military. But it can't be the same family. She did not seem in good circumstances, you say?"

"Did I?" I asked. "I don't remember; but I suppose she is not."

"But really, Una," said my mother to return to her stray lamb, "I hope you do not wander off into out-of-the-way places. Even with Leo I hardly like to trust you so far from town."

"Indeed, mamma, it is scarcely more than a mile from the city limits, as I saw from a milestone." I knew if my mother could form any idea of the glen she would consider it as wild as the backwoods; so I eagerly seized a chance to change the subject.

"Oh, mamma, there goes my old gentleman." We were standing at the window.

"Where?" asked mamma, very naturally falling into the trap and looked out at a fine-looking old man who was passing.

"What a melancholy expression! Silly child!" added she with a laugh, and settling down in an easy chair to her knitting. "And why is he your old gentleman?"

"Because I've adopted him," I replied promptly.

"I think he is a stranger here. He sat in our pew on Sunday morning and I lent him my hymn book. He wears a grand military air and behaved all through service as if it were a field and the Archangel Michael were inspecting the troops."

### III.

lost not much time in revisiting a spot which to my young imagination seemed possessed of a charmed atmosphere all its own. In these green glades and hiding nooks I could conjure up scenes from "Robin Hood" or "Midsummer Night's Dream," or the "Faery Queen," and many besides. The bent

form of the old lady welcomed my vision when next I entered the dell. She was gathering mushrooms. Her face brightened as she saw me and advanced a step or two to greet me.

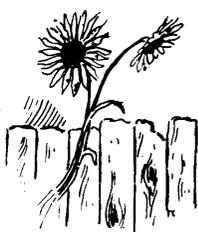
From that time a weekly meeting strengthened our intercourse into a firm friendship, and if, on entering the garden, I missed a glint of the grey gown—of some antique stuff much brocaded with patient darn and temporizing patch—it became an understood thing that I should call at the cottage. On bright days, when she felt inclined for a stroll, Miss Davenport shewed me many good subjects for my pencil and materially assisted its operations by criticism and advice.

We were standing in the old garden one day in the late summer. I had fallen in love with an immense sunflower and was preparing to sketch it. Miss Davenport made some remark about the growing chickness of the afternoons, always more quickly perceptible down in the dell, whence the sunshine fled nearly an hour sooner than from the higher ground. I suggested carrying the sunflower indoors and finishing it there.

"Oh, no! Do not pull it to-day," said my companion, nervously. Then, with a faint flush and a smile upon her fragile face, she explained: "It is next week's marketing."

"What!" I cried, "can you eat that?"

"Why not?" laughed Miss Davenport. "However, as it happens, I don't intend to do so directly. It is to provide meals for my little hen, and the centre of the blossom is hardly ripe yet. In a day or two poor Clytia must be sacrificed."



In order to dissipate any dreadful impression of her sordidness which might settle in my mind, Miss Davenport went on speaking with unusual communicativeness.

"The Glen is superior to a butcher's shop or market in many ways. In the first place my commissariat is at my very

door, you see; and then everything keeps so fresh. Besides, just consider the variety. Mushrooms to-day; yesterday some delicious cress from the brook; to-morrow there will probably be puff-balls ready." To a school girl's lively appetite this appeared very painful fare, and I hardly knew what to say. So I idly wondered aloud where Leo had taken himself off to.

"I suppose," surmised Miss Davenport, "he considered you safe enough with me and has gone for a ramble on his own account. Wise dog."

Leo did not return for nearly half an hour. Then, looking up from my sunflower, I espied him coming at full speed round the corner. "Is it that the colour of the flower is in my eyes?" I asked, "or has Leo a yellow something in his mouth?"

He stopped short upon seeing us, then trotted on slowly, and finally dropped whatever it was he carried, and seemed irresolute as to the next move. I moved towards him and he shrunk around me with his tail between his legs. In both so superior, his courage could not outface his conscience, and he failed to growl protection for the parcel that lay on the ground wrapped in stiff yellow paper. We unfolded it. There was revealed a fine leg of mutton. Confident of safety here Leo had not waited on the road to demolish his plunder. He must have counted on our being indoors.

"Oh, Leo! you wicked thief!"

Leo crouched abject, yet longing.

"Poor dog, let him have it," pleaded Miss Davenport.

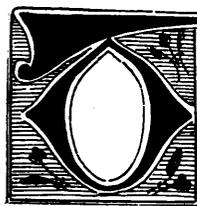
"No, indeed," I said, sternly, inwardly rejoicing over the booty and its careful wrappings, which Miss Davenport could not have failed to observe. "He shall not be rewarded for such dishonesty. Could you not put it in the house, please, Miss Davenport, where it won't tempt him. We must teach him a lesson. He is getting frightfully greedy. If you could have seen the dishful he dined off to-day. So much meat can't be good for him at this time of year."

"I fear some one will be at the loss of it," Miss Davenport hesitated doubtfully.

"Well, but I can't carry it about looking for an owner, can I? and certainly Leo is not to be trusted to return it honestly. Bad dog! Down, sir!"

After that I took a violent fancy to study the culinary art, much to our cook's disgust, and had to carry Miss Davenport samples in order that she might pronounce upon my progress and skill.

### IV.



THE season was advancing. Black Monday drew near. For my visits to the Glen, I should soon be dependant upon the moods and humours indulged in by the Saturdays of a season given over to moods and humours, mostly

aqueous. I had "done" the place pretty thoroughly—for me—but could not harbour the thought of breaking the intercourse with my old friend, of whom I had become quite fond.

"How do you manage in winter?" I enquired of her one day.

"Oh, Archambault, an old retainer, living in the Tanneries, comes and digs me out occasionally. He used to occupy the cottage when it was our lodge, and he does not forget his old mistress. His wife, too, bestows some time charing about the house."



"But is it not very lonely for you? Could you not take a room somewhere? There must be some better way."

I felt venturesome in thus speaking, for Miss Davenport always observed a dignified reticence with regard to her own affairs.

Whenever she broke through her reserve, even in trifles—such as the local edibles, for instance—it was done

with an air of special indulgence for me, but eloquent at the same time of the effort it cost her. She did not now reply for a moment, then said very quietly:

"Yes, child, there may be a way, but the means are lacking. The Archambaults would be pleased to place a room at my disposal, but I could not remunerate them for the services they would render, if I maintain the position I have always held to them." Her expression grew into a strong resemblance to the proud face in the old portrait, which I now knew to be her father's, as she continued, "It would be impossible to sit at the same table and become one of themselves, as I should feel bound to do, were I simply their guest. No. We must not act as though there were no principles to guard for others. I will never so impair the integrity of the social fabric."

Which long speech from my old friend reduced me to silence for the time.

### V.



TWO or three weeks passed before time and opportunity again permitted me to visit the Glen. When I did so it was just after a frost, and the poor straggling relics of floral beauty lay half blackened on the dank ground in the deserted garden. Some white berries, with dark, glossy

leaves alone survived, under shelter of the elm, and these I gathered, knowing it would please Miss Davenport to see them in my dress. She loved these poor souvenirs of her Eden, and never seemed aware of their decadence when pressing their acceptance upon me with a little accompanying speech, "At least I can offer you some flowers."

When we met I was struck with a change in my friend. She was sitting with the old album open before her. A faint pencil sketch of the Glen on one page, on the opposite a transcription of



'Faery Queen,'