

Softly the words were spoken, yet the voice was strong and vibrated with sweetest sound through and through the maiden, and even the air around resounded and seemed to strike the ears of the sleeping birds above her, who moved with one accord, and then in plaintive sounds re-echoed the words of the speaker—

"Gentle Wawanesa, thus I have found you."

But not by an outward sign did the maiden show she had heard them, only her blood surged faster and faster through her, but still she sat, waiting for what might follow.

"Rise, gentle maiden. Why sit you still and so silent? Rise, and behold the twin spirit that seeks you!"

Then she arose, but ere she stood before him, a great burst of song rent the air, a song of greatest sadness.

"Just the birds," the voice said, "wailing for your departure, long their spirits have known that I would come and take you, only though for a season, while we are here together. In some far-off future we will return to them, only as higher spirits, when we shall be their leaders, but now, on earth, we are sufficient for each other. Rise, then, Wawanesa, long seasons I have sought you. Rise, and behold the twin-spirit of your being!"

Slowly turning to him, her every fibre thrilling with a new-born attraction of wondrous love and worship, she beheld before her the twin-spirit of her being. Spell-bound they stood, the love-light in their eyes, feasting upon each other, a powerful, yielding magnet drawing their souls together. For moments thus they stood; when, opening his arms before him, he drew the maiden to him. "Gentle Wawanesa, thus I have found you!"

And again the notes of the birds sounded in sad refrain above them.

"Do you not know me, maiden? Then I will tell you of me!"

"Long, long ago I had known you—away in the spirit land where we were both as these feathered songsters; but our spirits took their flight and entered other bodies, and for seasons long I lost you, nor did I know where to find you—not even, indeed, what I wanted, but only a restless feeling, of something known and forgotten, possessed me, until in human form my spirit possessed a reason; and then I knew it was my companion spirit of bird life who had changed into a human. I knew the notes of the birds as they sang to me, and, somehow, I knew that they sang to you, and you too heard their voices, but knew not what they told you. The son of a Blackfoot Chief, I too, must become a Chieftain, yet under all my love for my nation lay a love for my twin-spirit that once I had known, and must now seek in a woman. I too grew sad when their songs grew most joyous, for I knew that when our spirits met their songs would be saddened. After my father's death I traversed wide the country, but never found the maiden whose heart would beat with mine in perfect rhythm and measure. Then the Yellowquill chief sent to me a message asking that I come northward and hunt with him in the valley—'The valley of Wawanesa,' he said, 'called by the name of my daughter;' and from that I knew that he hoped for a union of nations. And the name, 'Wawanesa,' rang through my thoughts, the name of my spirit's companion. Gladly I answered his message, and made haste to prepare for my coming. Then the birds' notes grew sad, and I knew then that I should meet you. All the way northward I pictured you to myself, yet no picture did justice to the lovely form you have taken—beautiful,