

You will in future be paid your annuity apart from your father. You will also draw your wife's money." Then taking the young Indian's hand, the agent continued, "I am greatly pleased with the work on your farm, and with your general conduct. You are an example which I hope other young Indians will follow. It has given me great pleasure to report to the Commissioner on the advancement you are making." To be thus singled out for distinction, was a source of gratification to Silver Trail.

And so summer passed, autumn went and winter came. In the early fall Blue Fawn and her husband abandoned their summer tent and took up their abode in their new house. Here they lived and loved and talked and planned. Their winter home was the centre of the community for social gatherings, with feasts and dancing throughout the long cold months.

Spring was approaching. And then a cloud of sorrow came. Satan entered this happy Eden in the person of an attractive young widow named Red Weasel. In the blindness of her love Blue Fawn saw nothing amiss. Like Mrs. Bardell, "she had no fear, she had no distrust, she had no suspicion." Nor perhaps did Silver Trail esteem less highly the good qualities of his young, confiding wife. But the polygamous strain of generations surged in his veins and he fell—fell to the wiles of the Weasel.

The sun of the vanishing winter days had begun to melt the snow on the hilltops, when one early moonlight night, sleigh bells were heard and a well loaded "jumper" was seen flying southward.

Red Weasel and Silver Trail had decamped.

Crushed, humiliated, broken hearted, Blue Fawn sought the shelter of her mother's home, where she was tenderly cared for. Long weeks she suffered, more in mind than body. To all her mother's efforts to comfort her there was but one response. "Mother, Mother, I am a castaway, a discarded one."

Meanwhile, the runaways, who had been traced to Qu'Appelle, had found disfavour in the eyes of the police authorities, with the result that they were sent back to their reserve. On his arrival there in early June, Silver Trail found his home deserted. If he had any expectation that Blue Fawn would welcome his return he was doomed to disappointment. To his father-in-law he confessed his error and sought the old man's influence to secure his wife's forgiveness.

Blue Fawn's proud heart had turned to flint. She was obdurate. Her father

urged in vain. "My daughter," he pleaded, "it would comfort my failing years if all this unhappiness could be ended. The one wish of my heart is that I may spend my few remaining days with no cloud between our families."

"My Father, O my Father, there is nothing I would deny you except this. Do not press me. I will not, I cannot yield. He threw me over. I will never forgive. I can never forget. My love for him is dead."

Her grandmother sought to effect a reconciliation. "Grandmother," she exclaimed impatiently, "you have never ceased to remind me that in my veins runs the blood of a long line of Chiefs who ruled our tribes before my good grandfather, Ready Bow. My ancestral pride has been too sorely wounded. My heart has been crushed, I have been humiliated in the sight of our people. I will never again enter his wigwam."

Could the young wife's strong determination be overcome by the persistent efforts of her husband?

Silver Trail had still another card to play. Following a tribal custom he called a council of twenty men, comprising all the chiefs and headmen. These met in solemn assembly. The talk was a prolonged one. The general desire was for peace and reunion. The last speaker was Little Sparrow Hawk, a chief of great influence. "We all desire peace," he told them, "but under the laws of our people we cannot compel. We can only advise. Our niece must not be coerced. Her word must be the last word."

Blue Fawn would not yield.

Silver Trail had still another card to play. He would appeal to officialdom. In a few days the annuities would again be paid. He would draw Blue Fawn's annuity. With this semblance of official recognition as her husband he would present his case to the agent and bring the pressure and influence of the Government to bear in his favour.

The great day came. In his turn Silver Trail presented his ticket, given him the previous year, reading "one man, one woman." Then the blow fell. The agent spoke quietly.

"Silver Trail, your conduct during the past few months has been a disappointment to me. I can scarcely recognize in you the young man who stood before me a year ago. You have treated your young wife shamefully. You have neglected your farm, and in a few short months from being industrious and seemingly honest, you have become a gambler and a nuisance. You will be paid five dollars for yourself only. Your wife, Blue Fawn, will be paid separately."

Fateful decision.

The Indian spoke not, but his eyes flashed anger, and his scowl boded ill. "For his heart was hot within him, Like a living coal his heart was."

Then he disappeared and was seen no more that day. Was he seeking—and would he find a solution of the problem?

And what of Blue Fawn? When taking from the agent's hand the annuity of five dollars for herself alone, what feelings may have filled her heart? Joy or sorrow? Had she now a sense of final separation from her husband? Did she relent? Did she relent? Did she waver in her resolve never to forgive or forget? Did better thoughts prevail? Did her deeply sensitive and susceptible nature undergo some great change?

Let us not forget that in moments of meditation the Indian has a profound sense of the presence of Gitche Manitou, the Great Spirit. The Author of his being is not merely in the remote spaces beyond the clouds, or in some far off recess of the universe. In the wild flowers of the prairies, in the rustling foliage and in the swaying branches of the trees, in the running waters, beside the still pool, in the sighing murmurs of the summer breeze, or in the North Wind's threatening blizzard—everywhere he recognizes the nearness of the Great Spirit and listens to His voice. Did meditation and a consciousness of this presence quell the surgency in Blue Fawn's heart, bringing tranquility with rekindled love and forgiveness for her husband? Who can fathom the depths of a woman's soul?

This only is known. At an official enquiry, held later, it was learned that at the close of the treaty payments, when the shades of night were falling, Blue Fawn sent for her father-in-law, Big Sky, to come to her wigwam. He came. "Find my husband and when tomorrow's sun is highest in the sky bring him to me that we may speak together; nothing more," she said, with an air of dismissal. "It is well," answered Big Sky and departed.

Going straight to Stem Child's tent he related his strange interview with his daughter-in-law, exclaiming, "Our children will now be at peace. Tomorrow's mid-day sun will see them united again. It is well. Let us be glad tomorrow."

Stem Child's only response was, "Yes, brother, it is well, let us be glad tomorrow."

Tomorrow! Tomorrow! What of tomorrow?

Morning was breaking in the east. The purple clouds were putting on their gold and violet to look the fitter for