

flowers on her shady hat. The girl had a sweet, gentle face, but somehow a shadow fell on Feronia's as she looked. Later Feronia saw these two stroll slowly away towards the high rock—the rock she had so lately shared with him.

That night as she crept into the covered waggon that served her for bed, she took Dick closely in her arms. "Are you perfectly happy, Dickey boy?" she asked.

"I feel like this was Heaven," Dick answers solemnly.

"No scoldin', no work, nothin' but play all day and wachin' the birds and flowers, and he's so good. Oh! ain't he good, F'roney? He's goin' to gimme a flute, a real flute, and some picture books, and a top that goes ever so long. Do you think, F'roney—do you think"—hesitatingly—"that our own Jack is any gooder? Do you F'roney?"

The girl paused. Then a small sob crept upwards as she said: "Our Jack is our very own. He wouldn't leave us for anyone else. He wouldn't—he wouldn't forget us, Dick!"

Dick is puzzled. "Do you think he likes them other folks better'n us?" he asks, anxiously.

"Oh! I'm sure he does; see how he never came near us all evening, and us goin' back to-morrow!"

This, then, was Feronia's hurt. Her last evening of an all too-perfect time had been made a time of torture, of jealousy, of self-humiliation. The girl for the first time in her life had looked in loathing on her dun-coloured dress, her heavy shoes; her browned hands. "How different hers are!" she thought, for with woman's true instinct she had singled out Redmond's betrothed from among the merry crowd of campers.

All unconsciously Redmond had done Feronia a grievous harm. He had sought her out from among the rest, walked with her, talked with her, gathered flowers and berries for her, been as deferential as he would have been to any lady of his acquaintance, and greatest of all he had protected her from the taunts and violence of her would-be lover. She seemed in many ways so like a child, he never seriously thought of the possibility of a woman's heart awakening. And yet an hour had awakened it, and an evening's neglect had taught the girl much of the woman's sad wisdom.

In the morning the camps were all astir, Redmond's friends to move further among the hills, the Le Croix party for home. Redmond had not altogether forgotten Feronia the night before. He had talked of her to his betrothed, Helen Brown, and together they had decided to give Feronia and Dick the pleasure of camping with them. But to his surprise Feronia did not seem anxious to go. He noticed an indefinite change in the girl that pained him somehow.

"I thought it would be so pleasant for you," he says, ruefully, "and for Dick, you know. Think how Dick would enjoy it. Do Feronia"; so the girl yielded at length.

"But I am so—so shabby," she says, tears of mortified pride in her eyes.

"Oh, your clothes are all right," he says, carelessly. "Just the thing for climbing, and tearing through the bushes." So Feronia sees her friends depart, not without some misgivings, and yet with a guilty joy at being near him, so much longer.

The days flew merrily by, excepting that Redmond found Feronia so odd and changed that at times he regretted having asked her to accompany them. Sometimes, indeed, she was so bright and sunny the whole party delighted in her mirth. But Helen tried in vain to make a friend of her; she would not be won over. Still, in her own gentle way, Helen persisted, choosing Feronia for a companion as often as possible. Often Redmond made a slip, and it not unfrequently happened that Feronia slipped away, and left them to themselves, seeing how they forgot her very presence. And so in the girl's wild, untamed heart the seeds of jealousy and hate were planted and like a savage she reaped the fruits.

Redmond had at length decided to visit his friends on the island. Feronia, from her favourite rock, saw him depart, tramping down over the hillside; watched him until he grew a faint moving speck, and finally disappeared from her view. She drew a long breath that had a sob in it. Then stretching out her arms towards the spot where he had vanished, a flood of tender epithets broke from her lips. Her whole being was aglow. The restraints of a week—a lifetime to her—were removed. She was mad for the time. She forgot her surroundings, her past, her future; the present was a delirious ecstasy.

Something arouses her. She turns. Helen Brown stands by her side. In the revulsion of feeling, a hatred fierce and awful springs up in Feronia's heart. "He was all mine until she came; all mine!" And then a maddening thought flashed: "She is just at the edge of the rock. If I pushed her ever so little who would know but she fell over accidentally?"

Her hands open and shut convulsively. There is something wolfish in the eyes turned on Helen, something that strikes a vague terror to the other's heart.

"What is it, Feronia?" Helen asks faintly; "What troubles you?"

"What troubles me?" There is a mocking laugh, then a burst of rage. "You trouble me! You, you, with your soft face and fair hair and baby ways. You took him from me. You have done it. I hate you! I could kill you, and I will too!" The girl is an incarnated fury now. Gathering herself together she makes a blind rush,

but terror gives Helen some hint of what is coming. Quick as thought she darts back, turns and flies as if ten thousand demons were after her.

As for Feronia, she had not calculated on missing her prey. The spring had been so violent that, overbalancing herself, she lost her footing and plunged over the edge of the cliff. A breathless moment followed, then she struck a bush, clung to it long enough to break her fall, and rolled, torn, bruised and bleeding, to the bottom of the hill. She was only partially stunned, yet she lay there some time before attempting to move.

"If I had killed her!" she thought, "good God, how he would have hated me! How he will hate me anyhow when she tells him! What horrible thing have I done!" All her anger has vanished now, all her hate. If only she could undo the past! Then it occurs to her that Helen may not find her way back to camp, and may die of fright in the wood. She knows how timid the girl is. "I must find her," she thinks; "it is a long way back."

Bruised and aching she doggedly makes her way up the cliff again. Night is falling, but Redmond cannot have reached his friends yet. She hardly knows just why she calls, but she does call, sending the yodel far and clear over the hillside.

Redmond is nearly at the water's edge when he hears it, and something about the sound startles him, he knows not what. It is Feronia's call certainly, he would know that anywhere. Can anything have happened? He looks upward, but the cliffs stand out against the sky, sombre and still. No sign there. It is a long, weary climb again to the top, but something impels him to make it. He takes the path to the high rock from which he feels sure Feronia called. It is slow, weary work, the upward climb, and night has settled down before he reaches the summit. He peers eagerly around,—no sign of life, no cause for disquiet. Still the odd feeling of danger is upon him, so he is not surprised when an answer comes to the hoarse call he sends forth on the night air. Again he calls, and again the answer comes, not far distant, Feronia's voice. So, calling and listening for the answer, he makes his way painfully enough through the scraggy bushes, and reaches where Helen lay, her head in Feronia's lap. The pale moon is just beginning to light up the scene, and both girls look ghastly. He is on his knees by their side in a moment.

"What has happened?" he asks gently enough, chafing Helen's cold hands. "Are you hurt?"

It is Helen who answers, "I was frightened and fainted, so Feronia could not get me back to camp." But she shudders visibly and clings tightly to Redmond.

"What frightened you?" he persists.

"A silly fancy," she says; but he sees how she still trembles, and is not surprised when she throws herself into his arms with a burst of tears. "Oh, take me away! take me away!" she sobs.

This is not a time for questioning, he sees; so partly carrying, partly guiding, with Feronia's help he gets her back into camp. Here she is speedily taken in charge by the ladies, and got quietly to bed. Then it is that Redmond first notices Feronia's plight. Bruised and torn she stands downcast before him.

"Feronia, my dear little girl," he cries, "you are hurt and yet said nothing of it, but helped me get her back. What a selfish brute I am not to have thought of you before."

He takes her hands affectionately, but that one touch of kindness proves too much for poor Feronia's over-charged heart. Kindness from him! She cannot bear it,—not now. Flinging herself on her knees before him she cries, "Oh, if she lives, will you forgive me? I was mad, I swear I was mad, or I never would have done it. I was sorry and shocked at myself the next minute. Oh, say you forgive me!"

There is no mistaking the truthfulness, the entreaty in those agonized eyes. Otherwise Redmond must think her mad indeed.

"Pardon you! For what?" he asks.

"I didn't do it! I didn't really do it! I only tried to, but she ran away, and I fell over myself. See!" and she shows her bruised arms and torn flesh.

"Tried to do what?" Redmond wonders if this is really his voice, so hoarse is it.

"To push her over the cliff."

"The cliff! What cliff?" He is loosening his hands from her clinging hold.

"The cliff on the lower hill." Her voice is a whisper now.

"Ha!" How unnaturally calm he is as he tried to kill her! Why?"

But Feronia's head is drooping, drooping till it touches his feet. Her contrition, her self-abasement move him not.

"Why?" he persists doggedly, moving back from her touch, though she drags herself, still on her knees, after him. "Why?" he repeats.

"Why! Because"—in a sudden desperation—"you were so kind to me till she came; then she took all your thoughts; because she had everything and I nothing; because she was happy and I so wretched; because I hated her!" And she springs to her feet defiantly, but cowers away instantly before his look of loathing.

"And so, viper-like, you would sting the hand that did you kindness! You dared to come, a murderess in heart, as a friend to that pure girl! And you ask forgiveness! Forgiveness! Yes, when I see you dying I'll

forgive you. Never till then! Away! before I denounce you!"

But the stricken girl has fled out into the night, he knows not, cares not, whither.

Feronia is at home the next day, and goes about her tasks much the same as ever, only now she never answers back the peevish railings of Lizette. Dull as Lebaire is, he sees that something unusual ails the girl, and silences for a time Lizette's shrill tongue.

"Let the girl be, can't ye?" he growls. "She looks like one in a fever, her eyes so bright and strange, and her queer ways. Or like as not your clackin' tongue is settin' the girl mad! So shut it up I tell ye!" and Lizette sees it the wisest policy to obey.

So Feronia comes and goes at will, not even little Dick keeping track of her now.

F'roney isn't like my F'roney any more," he moans to himself, and tries all his little arts and blandishments on her in vain. Kind and gentle she is to him still, but the wonderful fund of stories that brightened the nights of old are all silent now. No laughter, no songs, no whispers of Jack even. What had come over F'roney? A slow consuming fire was wasting the girl. Lebaire was right, a fever it was. Hundreds and hundreds of times it repeated itself to her aching ears: "When I see you dying, I'll forgive you. Never till then! Never till then!" No wonder she rushed away, sometimes to the rustling wood, sometimes to the roaring water to hide from herself the sound. But in vain. Its persistent iteration maddened her.

The weather had changed. Great banks of cloud wedged themselves into the western sky; the wind wailed among the patient trees; the crows cawed dismally as they flew low a-field; the swollen Ottawa, muddied and foam-flecked swept turbulently on.

The camp on the Heights had broken up some days before. The ladies had returned home; Redmond was with the party on the island. This Feronia knew, and from a sheltered nook would watch for hours, herself unseen, the little island with its merry guests. Sometimes she would watch far into the night, the glimmer of the camp-fire, and hear the echo of the camp-songs borne lightly across the water. Then wearied and faint she would creep back to the darkened house, and up to her own dark room.

But this night, something fascinates her. She cannot leave, cannot tear herself away. A vague rumour is afloat that several dams on the Ottawa are broken, and that the low-lying lands are in danger of an overflow. Certainly the river is rising rapidly, and the foaming, turbulent current has now a dangerous look. No camp-songs float across the water to-night, the wind is too high, still the camp-fire flickers. She has heard of Loon's Island being completely submerged. What if there is danger now? But they have their stout boat and could leave at the approach of danger. Still, if thoughtless they should sleep while the water dashed up and up and so cut them off? She is terrified at the thought, and meanwhile the water is certainly rising.

The moon has broken out now clear and calm from among jagged clouds and shows Feronia an odd sight. Almost at the base of the cliff on which she lies is a sheltered cove. Into this a man is dragging a boat. He succeeds in getting it up high and dry, but not content, pulls it around to the back of the cliff out of sight. He is hiding it, Feronia thinks. She knows the man—Baptiste. Then he springs into a punt that was beached near by, and rows off towards the village. It is rough work, for the waves are unusually high. But Feronia is musing. What boat is that? And why should Baptiste hide it, and trust his life to a crazy punt in such a storm? True, he was keeping well to shore, and yet—like a flash it becomes clear to the girl. That is the boat belonging to the camp on the island! Has the water then got so high as to sweep it from its moorings? Or—maddening thought—has the revengeful Baptiste, knowing Redmond was on the island, stolen it away and so left him to the mercy of the waves, should the water sweep over the place? Stealthy as a cat, she creeps down and reaches the hidden boat. Yes, it is as she feared. She had watched that boat too many times to be mistaken in it now. Her resolve is quickly taken. One last look back to where the house of Le Croix lies dark on the hillside, then she wraps her shawl about her shoulders, crosses it on her breast, and securely fastens it behind. That leaves her arms free. Seizing the boat with resolute grasp, she, mightily tugging, moves it little by little, till she finds the bow in the water.

"He says he'll never forgive me till he sees me dying," she pants, pausing for the final shove, "perhaps he'll forgive me sooner than he thinks," and a last effort sends the skiff out on the clamorous water. She braces herself firmly and adjusts the oars, but a great wave sends the boat half around and drenches the rower. Still she resolutely sets her teeth and forces the boat back into position. It is perilous work, but she never falters.

The moon is in full glory now; earth and sky and water are lighted up with the clear radiance. So is the lonely boat tossing on the waves with its desperate occupant. Ah! this is worse even than she thought. The waves are fearfully high. She recognizes the danger; she had guessed it before she started. Will she ever reach them? Her boat is rudderless; can she make the island in time, if at all? God in Heaven! Where is the island! A hell of waters drenches her and blots out all things. The island! The island! Ah, yes, there is a speck amidst the heaving mass, but how small! Will she be in time to save