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CHAPTER XXVII

BUT there came the day, one year, in early April, when Dede sat in an easy chair on the porch, sewing on certain small garments, while Daylight read aloud to her. It was in the afternoon, and a bright sun was shining down on a world of new green. Along the irrigation channels of the vegetable garden streams of water were flowing, and now and again Daylight broke off from his reading to run out and change the flow of water. Also, he was teasingly interested in the certain small garments on which Dede worked, while she was radiantly happy over them, though at times, when his tender fun was too insistent, she was rosily confused or affectionately resentful.

From where they sat they could look out over the world. Like the curve of a scimitar blade, the Valley of the Moon stretched before them, dotted with farm-houses and varied by pasture-lands, hay-fields, and vineyards. Beyond rose the wall of the valley, every crease and wrinkle of which Dede and Daylight knew, and at one place, where the sun struck squarely, the white dump of the abandoned mine burned like a jewel. In the foreground, in the paddock by the barn, was Mab, full of pretty anxieties for the early spring foal that staggered about her on tottery legs. The air shimmered with heat, and altogether it was a lazy, basking day. Quail whistled to their young from the thicketed hillside behind the house. There was a gentle cooing of pigeons, and from the green depths of the big cañon arose the sobbing wood note of a mourning dove. Once, there was a warning chorus from the foraging hens and a wild rush for cover, as a hawk, high in the blue, cast its drifting shadow along the ground.