

Chris insisted upon driving him as far as the first mountain settlement, where a horse and conveyance might be hired. When Gaither started down the long slope to the valley he took Leezer's girlish heart with him, but left all of his own in exchange.

A few days after his mountain adventure, the small Virginia community became greatly excited to hear that James Gaither had bought him a horse. Dunrobin could put two and two together, as well as the next, especially when one of the two was a horse. Such an extravagance, coupled with the hunter's having been lost a whole day on the heights told the story; for the Gaithers, in common with many of the old families, had been impoverished by the Civil War.

James had christened his spirited chestnut by the queer name of "Sister," and in a very few weeks the mare could have gone, in the dark, up a certain long winding road, and paused, nicker-ing hopefully for refreshment, at a certain old tumbledown stable on high Painter's Bald.

In October of the same year, on a day when the mountains were splendid in scarlet, and gold, and warm sunshine, James Gaither and a few chosen friends, men and women, took the long trail together, and brought Leezer down to the lowlands as his bride.