

a most valuable ally. In a few days the ground was covered thickly with snow, and the cold set in. She had now, however, abundance of food and furs, and a weather-proof tent. She made herself a pair of snow-shoes for exercise, and at times half resolved to defy the snow, make a sledge, and get Esquimaux to drag her back to the Mabasha. More prudent second thoughts, however, prompted her to delay it until spring.

How utterly drear was that winter! Esquimaux was faithful and kind, but he was but a dog after all. Matonaza was in her thoughts night and day.

The coldest season passed, and new dangers now menaced her. The snares and nets seemed to have lost their usual good fortune. She began to suffer more than she had yet done from hunger. At last one February day, the crisis of her fate seemed come. She had let her fire out, and her tinder having become damp, there was no means of rekindling it. For a day or two she was driven to eat raw, half-frozen fish, and the only means of keeping warm was by violent exercise on snow-shoes. She was once engaged in this, when another source of fear presented itself. She suddenly became aware of a fire on a distant point of the shore, and three canoes speeding towards it—the first human signs she had seen. With a heightened pulse she watched what followed, and was not long kept in suspense. The well-known whoop rang over the waters, telling her that a scene of mortal strife was dangerously near. In an instant, two men started away from the fire to the shore, caught one of the empty canoes, and hurried off, followed closely by the other two canoes. Carefully hiding herself, she watched the chase till it was hidden from sight behind the nearest island of the lake. Filled with alarm, and allowing all kinds of gloomy ideas to prey upon her, the White Swallow returned to her hut, now so buried in the snow, as to resemble rather a snow-heap than a wigwam, and hiding herself under her fur coverlids, sought to collect her thoughts. All her reflections, however, produced no very satisfactory result, and she soon fell fast asleep. Suddenly an angry growl from her dog alarmed her: she awoke with a violent start; the door of the hut was opened, and the face of an Indian warrior peered in upon the darkness!

The White Swallow lay motionless. She discovered that it was night, and that the moon had risen, and that she could see, though not be seen. Then she started up.

"Matonaza!" she cried.

"Thee-kis-ho!" replied the Indian.

The young warrior looked behind him: no one was near: and giving way to the native impulses of his heart, he passionately embraced his affianced wife. The dog at once ceased growling, and the lovers were soon sheltered from the piercing cold under cover of the hut.