

PETER

they were going to have him; a resolution which was put to vote and carried unanimously, the two pink bridesmaids and the two steel-gray gentlemen voting the loudest.

The merriment ceased when Ruth disappeared and came back in a dark-blue travelling dress and Jack in a brown suit. We were all in the doorway, our hands filled with rose petals—no worn-out slippers or hail of rice for this bride—when she tried to slip through in a dash for the carriage, but the dear lady caught and held her, clasping the girl to her heart, kissing her lips, her forehead, her hands—she could be very tender when she loved anybody; and she loved Ruth as her life; Peter and her father going ahead to hold open the door where they had their kisses and handshakes, their blessings, and their last words all to themselves.

The honeymoon slipped away as do all honeymoons, and one crisp, cool December day a lumbering country stage containing two passengers struggled up a steep hill and stopped before a long, rambling building nearing completion. All about were piles of partly used lumber, broken bundles of shingles, empty barrels, and abandoned mortar beds. Straight from the low slanting roof with its queer gables, rose a curl of blue smoke, telling of comfort and cheer within. Back of it towered huge trees, and away off in the distance swept a broad valley hazy in the morning light.

“Oh, Jack—what a love!” cried one passenger—she had alighted with a spring, her cheeks aglow with the