

hand compassionately toward the crouching songster. "Your companions have gone to the South, and you wait here, trusting that your mate will come back, and not journey to summer lands without you. Is not that so, my poor bird? Ah, would that I could go with you where there are always flowers, and ever can be heard the ripple of little brooks. Here the leaves will soon fall, ah, me! and the daisies wither; and, instead of the delight of summer, we shall have only the cry of hungry wolves, and the bellowing of bitter winds above the lonesome plains.

But could I go to the South, there is no one who would sing over my absence one lamenting note, as you sing, my bird, for the mate with whom you had so many hours of sweet love-making in these prairie thickets. Nobody loves me, woos me, cares for me, or sings about me. I am not even as the wild rose here, though it seems to be alone, and is forbidden to take its walk; for it holds up its bright face and can see its lover; and he breathes back upon the kind, willing, breeze-puffs, through all the summer, sweet-scented love messages, tidings of a matrimony as delicious as that of the angels."

She stood up, and raised her arms above her head yearningly. The autumn wind was cooing in her hair, and softly swaying its silken meshes.

"Farewell, my desolate one; may your poor little heart be gladder soon. Could I but be a bird, and you would have me for a companion, your lamenting should not be for long. We should journey, loitering and love-making all the long sweet way, from here to the South, and have no repining."

Turning around, she perceived two men standing close beside her. She became very confused, and clutched for her robe to cover her face, but she had strayed away among the flowers without it. Very deeply she blushed that the strangers should have heard her; and she spake not.