

"Congratulate me, Captain!" I said, springing forward and seizing both his hands to shake them vigorously, quite ignoring the inquiry about our absence.

I fancy he thought that something had gone wrong with my head, for he glanced significantly at Pierre and then at his sister.

"It's quite true, Alfred," said Ruth, as if her brother ought instinctively to know all about it.

"What's quite true?" said the Captain, looking puzzled.

"Why, about Lachlan and me," answered Ruth.

"Tut, tut! speak plainly. How can I understand riddles?" said the Captain. "What's true about Lachlan and you?"

"Why, you great big silly, can't you guess?" said Ruth, going up to her brother and kissing him on the cheek.

Pierre was quicker than the Captain, but he was more accustomed to read faces.

"Can you no' see?" he said, nudging the Captain. "You never see fellow look happy lak Lachlan but once in he's life. W'y, dey's bot' happy, an' you'd better give de blessing."

The Captain understood in an instant, and shaking my hand warmly, said, "Cameron, I congratulate you. Ruth is my sister, but a nobler girl you'll not find if you search all Quebec. She's a bit inclined to preach, and has ideas and all that kind of thing, but have patience, you'll find her quite like an ordinary woman. As for yourself, you know that I love you and am