

had helped papa at his school, and that evening when papa went to feed the hogs I asked him about Titian tints, and he was greatly pleased and told me all about the old Venetian painter who had come down from the Alps to be the lion of Venice. And now I was more certain than ever I should marry poor, sickly little Harriet Jacobs.

A few days later, my elder brother and she sat together on the shady side of a big walnut stump that stood in the garden before the door. Now, I was not jealous. To this day, I hardly know what jealousy is, except from books, and then I loved my gentle, manly little brother dearly. But I saw some big, yellow ripe cucumbers lying on that stump, and I thought to slip up from the other side and push one of them down on their heads and scare them. But after I crept up there I found these were rotten, and so I thought instead to push off a stone that papa had laid there when planting the garden: I could not see where it would fall, but I was so full of laugh at what I was doing that I gave it a shove, and then ran away with a shout. Mother heard me and came to the door. Then she ran to Harriet, and she and my brother helped her into the house and to bed, and tied up her head in vinegar. Goodness gracious! How all these things come back to me now, as distinctly as if yesterday! Mother took me behind the smoke-house. She had her right hand behind her till she got out of Harriet's hearing, then out came the hand and the hickory. There was a blotch of blood on my little home-made tow shirt when I got to the branch and jerked it and my other things off to drown myself. Oh, I was going to die right there. I had nearly killed Harriet and she never, never would marry me now, anyhow. And, then, that thrashing! That thrashing was really terrible, and was all wrong, too. I can say this truly, after all these years, that this ungainly gosling of mother's got thrashed when he did not deserve it many times when he was little. But, on the other hand, let it be as frankly admitted that he deserved many a thrashing when he got big that he did not get. So the thing is about even. Anyhow, mother did what she thought was her duty, and she always told me that the whipping hurt her more than it did me. And after all these years, as I sit here by the frozen Klondike bank, I know it was true; but I didn't believe a word of it then.

I rushed out to the willows where the Indians camped, and was going to throw myself into the water far out, in a most dramatic fashion, after my last words of farewell to Harriet and mother, which I hoped the Indians would hear and take to them along with my clothes and my dead and dripping body. But I fell in over my head before I got to my last words, and an Indian squaw swam in, laughing gleefully, and took me down to where her children were at play in the water. The naked, brown children laughed and played and tried to make me swim. But I was so shy and naked that I had only one use for my two hands. Then a pretty little girl pulled me into the water with her and almost drowned me till I had to swim. And then, what fun! We swam, we dived, we laughed, we flirted. I forgot Harriet. I was in love, my second love, in less than an hour. The little black-eyed red Indian girl was really very, very pretty. She is at this hour the queen of all my early memories. I was so happy I pulled some wild