

ceremony with almost maternal interest. Immediately behind Ronayne, from whom he evidently did not like to be separated, stood Waunangee, with an air of deep dejection, yet casting glances rapidly from one to the other of his two friends.

When the young officer, after having formally received the bride from her mother, whose strength barely permitted her to rise and go through that part of the ceremony, proceeded to place the ring upon the finger of his wife, it fell, either from nervousness or accident upon the matted floor. Quick as thought, Waunangee, who had now his whole attention bent upon the passing scene, stooped, picked it up, and attempted to place it on the finger, still extended, for which it was designed.

"Gently, Waunangee, my good fellow," said the officer, piqued not less at his own awkwardness at such a moment, than at the outré act of the youth, from whom he rather unceremoniously took it—"the husband only does this."

"Wah!" involuntarily exclaimed the other, his cheek becoming brighter, and his eyes kindling into sudden fierceness, while his hand intuitively clutched the handle of his knife—yet the moment afterwards relinquished it. The motion had been so quick, indeed, that only Mr. Headley and the bride herself had noticed it.

Still fascinated as it were by the novel scene, Waunangee moved not away, but the expression of his eyes had wholly changed. There was no longer to be remarked there the great melancholy of the past—but the wild restless, flashing glance that told of strong excitement within.

When immediately afterwards they knelt, and had their hands joined by Captain Headley, Waunangee bent eagerly forward, as if apprehensive of losing the slightest part of the ceremonial, but when at the conclusion, Ronayne saluted his wife in the usual manner, his cheek became suddenly pale as its native hue would permit, and with folded arms and proud attitude he withdrew slowly from the place he had hitherto occupied, to mingle more with the crowd behind.

When Ronayne, who, remembering the little incident of the ring, and the possible pique Waunangee might feel, turned to look for him, that he might again present his bride in her new character, he was no where to be seen, nor was he ever again beheld within the precincts of that stockade.

And under those singular and somewhat ominous circumstances, were the long-delayed nuptials of Harry Ronayne and Maria Heywood—the great favorites of the garrison—celebrated to the joy of all within the Fort of Chicago.

THE END.