

we turned, we crushed them under our feet, and felt them fluttering down on our heads. They floated down the creek in millions, and flecked the old mossy stumps with many a gaudy tint. We revelled in all this glory of ripeness, entwining each other with the blood-red vines of the Virginia creeper till they hung in garlands all over us, and trailed after us as we walked along. We gathered the leaves, every fresh one seeming prettier than the last, until we could carry no more; and then threw them away, to be replaced by others that we thought too pretty to leave. It was a glorious day this, a day to dream of. I have seen such days since, though not often. A soft balminess and haziness in the air, not a breath stirring anywhere, nor a sound but the soft flutter of the leaves as they fell to the ground, sometimes slowly one by one, and sometimes in little showers. A great stillness and silence seemed to have fallen over everything, and, moreover, there was an impressiveness in the silent grandeur of the woods that we felt but could not understand—a feeling that recurred to me years afterwards on visiting a grand old cathedral.

We came back again in a couple of weeks, but, alas! the glory of the woods had departed. We waded with a loud crackling noise through the brown, crisp leaves, that had almost set us wild with their beauty such a little while ago. The skeleton branches spread overhead in strange contrast to their leafy splendour the last time we saw them. We got plenty of nuts this time, the ground underneath the trees being literally brown with them.

At Christmas, the Bunnns gave a party, to which we were all invited, notwithstanding that they had been among the first to be taken away from Mrs. Melverton's to be sent to the new school. Flora Teasdale tried to persuade me not to go, but the girls were all in high glee about the party, and I was not going to let her keep me from enjoying myself with the rest; so when she saw she could not keep me from going, she made up her mind to go herself, stipulating at the same time that we should keep together as

much as possible, and hold aloof from the Bunn boys, of whom she said there were about a "dothen," and whom she represented as being the roughest kind of a "thet"; one of them being actually named "Jerry." "Jutht fanthy any one having a brother named Jerry," Flora said, lowering her voice.

I was perfectly willing to stay with Flora and keep the Bunn boys—particularly the one named Jerry—at a distance. So we settled the matter, and went to the party. I do not know if the Bunnns sent for all their guests, but I know they sent a handsome sleigh for Flora and me, and as it was a fine evening, and we had three miles to go, we thought the drive there while it lasted was the best part of the entertainment. I had never been at the Bunnns' before, though I had often been invited, as who had not that could claim acquaintance with the kind-hearted, generous, social, fun-loving Bunn family.

We were among the latest arrivals, and were shown upstairs by a kind, motherly lady, that turned out to be the mother, who took off our over-socks and mufflers; and, after smoothing our hair with her hands, sent us down-stairs. We were pounced upon and kissed heartily from all quarters as soon as we entered the parlor. Everybody seemed to be in high good humor with themselves and everybody else. I had a sense of light and warmth and glow. The excessive warmth of our reception kept me from seeing what kind of a place we had got into for some time, and just as my eyes were taking in the remarkably large dimensions of the room—the flowing crimson curtains, flashing mirrors, and large, massively-framed pictures—I was seized from behind, and unceremoniously dragged out into the hall, and up-stairs, where I had got half-way before I became aware that my captor was no less a personage than Miss Mary Anne Bunn, whom I had not seen before, and who had her coat and cap on, and a scarlet sash tied around her waist. I was surprised to see Flora up-stairs before me, and surrounded by three girls—Nellie