

## MARCUS HOLBEACH'S DAUGHTER

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"Well, you're never going to have a chance to, if I can help it," he protested. "Why, we've a Frenchman up there that's as handy about the house as any woman, let alone he's got a wife that's asking nothing better than to be fetched up to the mine."

The toasting-fork Virginia held wavered down into the fire, and the slice of bread on it burned unheeded, as she turned on him, radiant with the joyful cry:

"Oh, Jack, then you're really going to take me back to the woods with you?"

Jack turned scarlet in the strife between desire and scruples.

"A winter journey would be a risky thing for you," he hesitated, "though if we fitted up a toboggan with two men to draw it, it would be light enough going on the lakes . . ."

"Of course it would!" she triumphed. "What stories you're telling! Why, you've been planning it all out! Tell me now, on your honor, haven't you got any place there I could live in?"

Scruples were gone now, and Jack's blue eyes shone with hope. "Yes, there was a good log hut finished for Noel and me before the snow came, and there's another building now," he said with a great air of impartial statement.

"Who's that for?"

"Well, we thought we'd each like one to ourselves, you know."

"To yourselves! Selfish things! Go on!" Then, with an admonitory finger: "Still, on your honor, is there any reason I shouldn't do it?"

Jack's hold on himself was gone, and he caught her in his arms. His mother had retreated to the scullery to skim the milk, and they were in possession.