

leaving his load, and should not be back before four o'clock at the earliest.

Martha and her mother were soon in the midst of baking.

'We won't get a regular dinner to-day,' said Martha, 'and so get through our work sooner to go over to Otis's. We won't let them know Will is not going to be at home on New Year's Day, and arrange for them to come.'

'Yes, but oh, it spoils all for William to hold out so.'

'Well, we won't have to make chicken-pies for that day, for no one eats them but him.'

'We'll have one for him, though. I'll get it all prepared on Saturday night, and bake it for dinner.' So, hands and tongues flying, the baking was dispatched, but Martha, who was not strong, had quite exhausted her strength, and found herself wearied for the visit that night at Otis's which they concluded to defer until morning.

William, after concluding his business at the mill and Dyers's, drove rapidly toward home. He had to pass his brother's house on the way. The village school-house stood midway between that and his home. He had nearly gained the top of the hill where the school-house stood, when he suddenly started out of a reverie he had fallen into, at the sound of a child's screams that seemed to come from the valley at the bottom of the bank behind the house. A small pond here was the playground of the scholars, where with skates and sleds they passed an hour after school at night.

Again the scream, and by this time William had driven to the fence, sprang over and ran down the bank to where a boy was lying flat on the ice of the pond, and with one arm stretched out was trying to drag a board toward him. His head was but a couple of yards from the hole, and as he came up carefully behind him — for the ice cracked ominously—he saw it was his brother's boy Ned, who then sobbed out, 'Quick, oh, pull the board over the hole! Alice is in there,' while the other arm never moved that held the rope of his sled that had gone in with his sister. The board was in position, and William dropping carefully in, held to it while he searched for the child, whose benumbed hands had a minute before slipped from the sled, to which she clung bravely as long as possible, and grasping her clothes as she rose he soon had her out on the ice, and tossing Ned his sled said:

'Run, now, as fast as you can, don't stop a minute till you get home. I'll take her to grandma's.'

The frightened boy obeyed. William sprang up the bank, and wrapping her in the blankets, lashed his team into a gallop, and in ten minutes his mother at the sound of the bells saw him bearing into the room the half-drowned child.

'Quick, mother, undress her, and get hot water and blankets. I'll have the doctor here in a few minutes,' and before they could ask a question they heard him galloping out of the yard.

'The poor little dear,' said grandma, as she stripped off the icy clothes and applied hot blankets, while Martha chafed the cold limbs. They had worked so vigorously that the eyelids began to tremble, and a strange beating of the heart took place just as William and Dr. Sill appeared at the door.

With the doctor's help and skill the child was brought slowly back to life, when the doctor cried out:

'Man alive, here you are with wet clothing on yet. Off with them instantly.' Something hot for him was made immediately. Otis, entering at this moment, the doctor sent him to help Martha with Alice, and while vigorously at work over William said:

'You are in for it, sir. Shouldn't wonder if you had a fever in spite of me.'

And so it proved. Chill followed chill, and by noon the next day he was in a high fever, and calling in his fever, 'Save that child.'

Three weeks he lay dangerously ill, watched over by Otis and his mother night and day. Alice had been carried home, and now, as reason came back to the sick man, his eyes wandered about seeking something apparently.

'Who was that that went out?' he asked, as Otis, seeing him coming to himself, slipped out of the room.

His mother evaded the question by replying: 'The doctor said you are not to talk.'

Sick and feeble, he obeyed, and was soon in a deep, sweet sleep, from which he awoke at the doctor's call in the morning.

'You have pulled me through, doctor,' he said, 'but who is that other man who was here all the time?'

'That? Why, brother Otis, to be sure.'

'Is he here now?'

'Yes, you may talk with him, as I am going now.'

As the doctor left Otis stole in. A look passed between the two brothers. William put out his hand, which Otis took in both his, saying, 'You saved my child.'

'And you saved my life,' replied William. Mother and Martha were sobbing behind them, both sending up thanksgivings all the while.

William advanced rapidly. A week later he was sitting by the bright kitchen fire with Alice in his lap. She had twice been over to see him, but he did not know her, and now that he did her joy knew no bounds.

'I tried to keep hold of the sled; uncle, but I couldn't.'

'There, Alice, I wouldn't think about it any more,' and folding the shining curls to his heart, he asked, 'Can you sing me a song?' And soon the childish voice was soothing the yet sensitive nerves, and making soft the proud heart of her uncle.

The feast that was so sadly interrupted was to take place as soon as Dr. Sill said the word. On a soft February day he gave permission, and the two brothers started off for Otis's home.

'What's this Otis? A tip-top animal. How he stops off. Is easily curbed, too.'

'I came across him at a sale in the city two weeks ago and got him at a bargain.'

William was silent, and Otis touched up the finely mettled young creature, who with arched neck skimmed along the road. Soon they stopped at Otis's door, out of which rushed the children to see Uncle Will. Each taking a hand they led him in to a delicious lunch, William declaring they meant to kill him with kindness.

Home again by three o'clock, for were not all the families to eat together that day?

As the brothers drove into the barn, William saw with surprise Otis's old bay horse standing in the stall.

'Hello! how came old Sted here? Didn't you drive over with this colt?'

'No this colt I took out of the next stall.'

'Why, that's where my colt stands,' moving on to see.

The stall was empty, and Otis leading into it the beautiful creature they had ridden after, said as he feigned to be busy with the haker:—

'Well, old fellow, I lied to you once. I cheated you. That colt had been lame, but I doctored him up and palmed him off onto you for the land I had coveted so long, because I thought you asked too much for it. An evil spirit was in me then; let's hope he's driven out for a while. The lame colt I led home last night, and if you say so will keep

him. I can get enough work out of him for his keeping, and this fellow shall pay for him if you'll give him stall room. He's sound, I'll warrant you.'

Deeply touched, William could hardly reply. 'No, Otis, a bargain's a bargain. I don't wish to take advantage of your gratitude or generosity,' and proceeded to harness into the sleigh the old 'Sted,' and drove off. It does not at all detract from William's manhood that he dropped his head on the manger, and tears of brotherly forgiveness dropped freely.

He had hardly recovered and got to the house, when the gay laugh of the children greeted his ear as Otis with a flourish brought his load to the door. Grandma and Martha were setting the last dish on the loaded table, a smoking chicken pie.

All were soon in their places, the brothers one on each side of the happy old mother, the other side of Will a happy little Alice, radiant in a new scarlet dress.

Ned, in reply to a question of his aunt, said: 'No, indeed, Aunt Martha, I'd have held on to that rope till I froze.'

'Brave fellow,' said Uncle Will, as he stooped to bring Alice's chair nearer to his as she whispered:

'I am so glad because papa and you have made it all up now. I've learned a new song. May I sing it to you, uncle?'

'Oh, yes, we are going to have some music after dinner.'

As the evening shades gathered about them, Martha took her place at the organ in the parlor, while Alice's sweet voice softly sang the words:

'Be kind to each other,
The night's coming on,
When friend and when brother
Perchance may be gone.
Then midst our dejection
How sweet to have earned,
The blest recollection,
Of kindness returned.'

Grandpa's Lesson.

Nell came in with broom, duster and sweeping-cap. From under the blue cap looked a dissatisfied face.

'Maggie's gone home sick,' she said, 'so I must do the sweeping, as mamma can't do all the work, and, of course, I can't cook the dinner.'

'Why cannot you get the dinner? You wore fifteen last week,' said grandpa, 'When I was ten, and my elder sister was fifteen, our mother was in bed for over a month with a broken leg, my sister did all the housekeeping, and all the cooking, too, and did it well. The others of us helped her as we could, but she managed it all.'

'She must have been a real wonder,' said Nell, somewhat interested. 'I hope she liked it better than I do. I hate cooking, and can't bear sweeping.'

'You would like both better if you really knew how to cook and sweep. We like what we can do well. When by the excellence of our doing, we raise some common duty to a fine art, then we like doing it.'

'I never thought of sweeping as a fine art,' said Nell, smiling, 'and I know how to do it—just take the broom and go at it. Grandpa, I don't know how I am to get you out of this room. Could I pull your chair out?' and Nell looked at the old gentleman's bandaged foot.

'Suppose I don't go out? Let me stay where I am.'

'But, grandpa, you'll be covered with dust!'

'Not if you know how to sweep. A good sweeper raises little dust!'

'Then I am sure I don't know how to