

sheet, over which hung a stillness of death—nature reigned in the vastness of the solitude of prairies—the falling of the snow had given place to the tranquility of the spheres, broken only by their music. It was my opportunity. I must hit the trail for C.—, and hit it immediately. As I stepped out into the cool, exhilarating life-filling air, I shouted for very joy. For I was free, free from all the cramped quarters, and the stuffy atmosphere of a western log cabin, that had been my humble, though in many ways my regal abode, for three days. For under the sail roof of that humble cabin there reposed an unbounded hospitality, a large heartedness, a kindness, highly indicative of the best and truest of womanhood and of manhood. I reached the stable. My noble horse stood, expectant of a long dash through the light and fleecy snow. Little did he expect, however, that a short time hence he would be playing an important part in a thrilling drama, even tragical; a drama not dealing with things bearing the mere appearance of reality, but with hard, stern, inexorable reality itself.

A drama having for a stage a hard white plain; for an auditory the vast expanse of ethereal space; for stage-characters, myself and horse, a bitter, relentless cold, a whirling moving blinding mass of snow an irresistible and merciless wind. But such was to

be the case.

I un-saddled, mounted, bid a hasty farewell, and was off through the white and glistening snow. My horse, responding to my every movement, was soon far away upon the illimitable vastness—shaking the trail behind him with an almost marvelous rapidity as he plunged forward on a swift lope. The air was clear, brisk, and cold; the heavens above unbroken; not a breath of wind moved, the stillness being perfect, save for the dull, heavy thud of the iron-clad hoofs of my horse as he struck the hard-frozen ground, or the dismal, weird howling of the hungry coyote away in the distance. On, on, on, and still on. But halt, what is that? A dark spot appears upon the northern horizon. A faint, low, sad sighing comes stealing across the prairie—that serene, white surface is agitated.

I draw rein. One glance, one thought, are sufficient. A blizzard, a blizzard, and with all the necessary accessories for its full development into one merciless, heart-rending, death-dealing. Even now, within the short space of a few seconds, the hoarse, dark, distant rumbling of the wind is heard; a seething heavy, blustering, whirling mass of snow is seen, approaching with the velocity of an express train.

Caught in a blizzard, and miles from human habitation!

I draw my cap well down, make a