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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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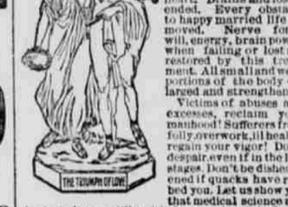
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WAVERLAND

along over the stones and across the narrow streams with ease.

At last we reached the head of the canyon where the ladies commenced making merry by throwing snowballs at the opposite walls of the canyon. By some unaccountable impulse they aimed their mischievous weapons at our heads as we came near to their great amusement and our discomfort.

"Be careful," cried Mrs. Lollard, "or you'll fall into that well of ice cold water," as they gathered fresh handfuls of snow that lay in a mass by the granite wall.

"Why, you said there were seven falls, Lollard, but I can only see three," said Melvorne.

"To see the seven we must climb out of the canyon on the left side, then at a certain place, we can see them all at once."

"O, look!" cried Mrs. Lollard, "there are the stars!"

Sure enough the afternoon sun had passed and left the gorge in twilight.

"I would like to see the falls," said Lady Irving.

"So would I," cried Stella and Mrs. Lollard with one voice.

"The eye can hardly grasp the vast height. The blaze of light on the red sandstones at the top of the mountains make the dim light down here seem darker by the contrast," said Melvorne, as we commenced to ascend the wild, rocky gorge to get a view of the upper falls.

The ladies were very glad now of the aid of our outstretched hands to help balance them from one shelving rock, tree or fallen log to another. At last we reached the point we sought and were repaid by seeing the seven falls of the little river with its foam and roar, as it leaps in quick succession into the depths below.

"If we could imagine some ivy covered towers made immortal by legendary lore, this would excel in beauty the fastnesses of the Alps," said Lady Irving.

"When I become an authoress I will make this the place from which to send forth thrilling tales of wild Indian maidens and their brave warrior chiefs," said Stella, her cheeks glowing from the vigorous exercise and her eyes sparkling with joyous animation.

"This place will sometime echo with the imagination of a Homer, a Byron, or a Scott," said Melvorne. "It is the very home of romance and poetry!"

Our guide followed us with a dainty lunch, of which every weary traveler found the value. Seated on a trunk of a fallen tree beside a cool stream in a shady nook we soon emptied the basket and were ready for the descent into the canyon.

Weary but delighted we reached the valley and returned to our hotel. Notwithstanding the generous lunch we had enjoyed, we were ready to devour the wholesome food spread before us. We were tired enough to rest, but after a little while we met in the parlor where the evening was passed with music and conversation.

CHAPTER XVIII.—PIKE'S PEAK.

Preparations were made and the following morning we gathered with a party of ten or fifteen persons, ready to ascend the world renowned summit of Pike's Peak.

In the party was an editor from Vermont, who was making a tour of the West and wanted to accompany us up the mountain. He carried a huge note book as a repository from which he hoped to draw his writer editorials. Being a tall slim man and wearing a hat with a very long brim, Stella said, his sharp face looked like a "pick ax under an awning."

We were much amused as he came from the hotel with an umbrella under one arm and his huge note book under the other, wearing a loose tweed overcoat that scarcely touched him below the shoulders. Then there was a young couple who were very unconsciously telling us that they were "taking in" the beauties of the West as an accompaniment to their honeymoon. We gathered on the steps of the great hotel and as each one mounted a small pony, we started on the Cheyenne road for the trail to the upper world.

We set out on a rapid swinging gallop, but from some unaccountable reason my animal suddenly stopped still, eating grass, and I lay on the ground a few feet away observing my situation. From the

roar of laughter that greeted me I must have performed a most wonderful gymnastic feat. I had hardly recovered my perpendicular when Mr. Editor with his umbrella and note book made the same flying leap and came down to the earth with more haste than elegance.

We remounted and kept our seats after that.

The trail up the mountains was frequently rough and steep. Sometimes we had to stop and let our horses breathe before mounting the steepest places. But we were in no hurry. The scenery was enchanting. Constant surprises burst upon us as we reached one height after another. Yet the longer for peak was always just a little beyond like the famous pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

We reached the seven lakes and had our lunch. The lakes are picturesque, as such sheets of water are apt to be among the mountains. While we were resting a party of twelve or more passed us coming down. Some of them wore the most haggard expressions. One lady of the party said to Lady Irving, "O madam, take my advice and go down. It is a deadly place up there. If I ever reach the hotel I will never tempt Providence again by starting out on another excursion."

Judging from the expression of her countenance it must have been a trying ordeal for her.

We were not going back. We were bound for the summit and if sea sickness or rather sky sickness came with the view we were prepared for that also. We had not gone far before we felt the need of our fur wraps and warm gloves. When we reached the little stone house where the officer of the signal service lived our teeth

chattered as with an ague fit. For a time we sat by a warm fire. It was a luxury. Then we went out to enjoy the sunset scene from the summit of the peak. The sun looked like a ball of fire as it sank behind the mountains beyond and brightened the ragged tops with its golden beams. The plains away to the east were mystified by the peculiar light until we imagined we could see the steeples of Chicago or Boston, but we were in doubt which. The mists and shadows were brought out in vivid contrast by the brilliant sunset hues. To the west lay the dark lines of mountains like a distant sea with madly rolling billows.

We could not stay long after the sun had dropped out of sight. We returned to the little house where we enjoyed our lunch brought from the world below. The officer kindly prepared for us a cup of hot coffee which was highly acceptable. The one sleeping room was given to the ladies while with buffalo robes and winter coats we passed the night dreaming of "Greenland's icy mountains," and sundry expeditions to the north pole.

When morning came the Yankee editor with chattering teeth called us to "see the sunrise."

From the experience of the previous evening, we wrapped up as though going for a sleigh ride with the thermometer twenty below zero. We reached the regulation station just before the sun appeared. A white cloud lay on all the world below us until the sun that looked like a ball of fire coming from the uttermost rim of the universe burst forth in all its beauty, dispersing the misty cloud and rolling it away like the angry white caps on a stormy white sea. For a few moments we all stood in silence. Then exclamations of surprise, admiration and reverence gave vent to the intensity of our feeling.

"How grand! how glorious!" cried Stella, as we stood together in the frosty air, forgetful of the bodily pain at the grandeur of the sight.

"'Tis worth all the trouble and all the labor to stand here above the earth, above all sounds of sin or sorrow, free from the petty cares of life and for one moment enjoy the grandeur of the new born day! Now can anyone stand here in the presence of the king of day and not believe in God, who has created and sustained all these wonderful things!" I said, as we stood on the snow-clad summit of the mountain and viewed the great world that lay beneath us, gladdening into life under the rays of the rising sun.

"It seems almost a vision of Benah land," said Lady Irving. "The sky is so bright above with its tints of red and gold blended with the heavenly blue; the earth so green below mingled with the tints of red and brown of the rocks and cliffs of the mountains."

"Here we all see the colors that St. John saw in his vision of the New Jerusalem. From the red Jasper, typifying human passion, through all the colors to the sapphire purity of heaven!" said Stella, reverently.

"Where does the real cease and the ideal begin? What can be more real than this vast rocky fragment that crowns the summit of the peak?" said Melvorne. "Yet who ever thinks of broken rock or chilling air when enjoying a scene like this?"

"The imagination is the reader here. Hold fast the granite rock and all becomes mute and near sighted," I said, picking up a piece that lay at my feet. "But let it and all the rest of this grand sight be lit with imagination and we feel that it is but a symbol of something grander and nobler than the mind can conceive."

"You little fairy star of mountain wild," said Stella, as she gathered some of the delicate white flowers that grow wherever the granite rock has crumbled enough to cover their tiny rootlets. "Tell me the secret of your life!"

"I will tell you its secret," I said. "It is doing what it can; it brings one link of living nature to this bare, bleak and desolate mountain top, as you, my fairy star, brought a link of life and love to the bleak old house at Waverland. And as that tiny flower can charm us with its beauty and hold us prisoners by its fragrance, so you charmed me into an active thinking man and held my heart a prisoner by the purity and purpose of your life. But come, my darling, I see you shiver. You must not stay longer in this keen winter air."

When we reached the house we found the rest of the party there thawing their benumbed fingers, and drinking a cup of fragrant coffee, made by the signal officer who seasoned his hospitality with thrilling tales of former visitors, which made the party roar with laughter till the rafters echoed our glee.

"O, you should stay till noon and see the frail, tender daughters of the earth, who like the lilies of the field that 'toil not neither do they spin,' but think the earth and all that dwell therein were made for them and to do their will. Why, sometimes I am ordered to build fires, to make coffee and to fix comfortable lounging places for them as though they were queens and I their slave," he said in a mock tone of outraged dignity.

"Well coffee is a luxury," said Lollard, taking his second or third cup. "And the sergeant knows just how to make it."

After breakfast we all went out for one more look from the lofty place, before we left. The sun had been traveling at a rapid rate. The rosy hue of the morning light had disappeared, but the clear bright sunlight had revealed every visible object with our new glasses we could discern gulches Denver and Manitou; and the Platte and Arkansas rivers with their lines of green trees, and many beautiful parks among the mountains. The brilliant colors of the images in the garden of the gods were distinctly marked. To the west we imagined we could see Leadville like a black speck among the bristling peaks.

"Colorado, rare and beautiful Colorado!" exclaimed Lollard. "Yonder she rests her head of silver and gold pillowed on the Rocky Mountains; her feet nestling in the soft brown grasses of the boundless plains. She is set on a hill before the world, and the air of heaven is so clear that all may see her well! That expresses my idea of Colorado, standing here on this dizzy height viewing her from all points of compass."

"Did you find that in your guide book?" asked Melvorne.

"Don't ask me that, as though I never had any idea of my own," he said turning away in seeming disgust.

With a last lingering look we left the peak and started on our downward journey. The twenty-four miles to and from the summit of the peak is a ride that will never be forgotten. The grandeur of the scene and the impression left in the mind that the world is great, and man is but a tiny object, is worth all the trouble and fatigue that it costs.

We reached the hotel just at sunset, in good condition for supper and rest.

CHAPTER XIX.—STELLA'S STORY.

For once, since our party had gathered from the opposite sides of the world, there were vacant places at the breakfast table

but we were all present when the dinner hour arrived.

"Where is the next point of interest?" I inquired of Mr. Lollard.

"Manitou," said he. "That is the Saratoga of the mountains, and one of the finest places in the world for a summer resort."

"So your guide book says," said Mrs. Lollard with a mischievous glance at her husband.

For a moment Mr. Lollard was tempted to be vexed, but changing his mind he replied:

"I have studied this guide book so faithfully to find the most interesting and picturesque places for our excursions that I have nearly learned it by heart. By the time I reach London I shall have the immortal Ferguson who showed Mark Twain the wonders of the Orient, when he was 'abroad.'"

"That Mark is a cute one, I wish we might meet him," said Melvorne.

"Where are we going to stop?" asked Melvorne, as we came in sight of Manitou. "It seems built in careless ease along the hidden and bushy valleys among the mountains."

"Yes, it has a changing air of individuality about it," said Lollard. "We will go to the Beebe's."

Very soon we were domiciled in the spacious rooms of that elegant and comfortable hotel. It is really wonderful to see such wealth of taste and comfort as we found nestled down in the valley at the foot of the everlasting hills, surrounded by the most beautiful scenery in America; amid the grandeur of the mountains and so near the gently rolling plains.

After a most delicious supper which was supplemented with "strawberries smothered in cream," we started out from the rear of the hotel on what is called the "Lover's Lane." It is a most romantic ramble. Very naturally we separated into

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Finding one of those dainty rustic seats I drew Stella to my side.

couple, and finding one of those dainty rustic seats made just for two, I drew Stella to my side, saying:

"Now for the story you promised me when I first found you, darling. You can not tell how happy I have been since then. The world seems full of new beauty. Even rocks and gleams full of a language of love. It seems as though some fairy had wrought a magic spell over my life, until I almost fear that I shall wake and find it all a passing dream, sent to cheat me with its mockery."

"Yes, Lloyd," she said, "I can realize your happiness by my own. I have been so free, so happy! no longing for the forbidden love. All my wishes have been more than realized. Where shall I begin my story?"

"When you were a child, remember I know nothing of your life except the few months at Waverland."

"Well, then, we will begin in the usual style. Once upon a time there was a little girl," she began in a theatrical tone. Then sober thoughts came, and she continued, "I was the only child of an English clergyman. We had a beautiful home while my dear mother lived. But when I was about ten years old she died. From that time my father seemed to think he must be everything to me. He devoted what time he could spare to my studies. When he was preparing his sermons he would assign me to some task, and as soon as the lesson was learned would hear me recite. Then he would talk with me about it until it became a part of myself. He was passionately fond of music. Under his patient instruction I learned to play on the piano, and on the organ in church for him. With pencil and brush he was good, but never could satisfy himself. He always insisted that my fingers were more deft than his, and encouraged me to copy some objects and pictures as I fancied. We had but one servant and I always helped her with the housework. My father said that he wanted me to be a woman and not a toy with merely a few accomplishments. One morning when I was helping the housekeeper as usual, she said: 'Your father has strange notions for an English nobleman.' I was surprised, and said: 'My father is only a clergyman.' But she declared that he was the son of an English earl, and that because he married my dear mother his father had disowned him. I wanted to ask my father about it but she forbade me."

"Years passed by full of life and study. When my father made his visits through the parish, I was always by his side. When any one was sick he was often their physician as well as their spiritual comforter. With his little case of homeopathic remedies he gave ease to bodily pain, while with his genial manner and warm, kindly heart he cheered them with his words of counsel, or read to them from the holy Bible. One day I went into his room and found him asleep, as I thought. He had not been well for some time, so I moved about very quietly, fearing to disturb his slumbers. As I came near his chair something about his position attracted my attention. I placed my hand upon his head and everything grew dark. I fell and when I opened my eyes, I was in my own room. The old nurse and a doctor were standing over me. I asked for my father. The nurse tried to calm me. But I kept asking for him until the doctor said that he was dead. Again there was a blank. For weeks I lay in a semi-conscious state. The nurse, (who was our old housekeeper and my only friend,) watched and tended me faithfully. At last I took up my burden; all the joy had fled. I found fifty pounds safely stored away for me, and a few books, and the old piano. We sold them for what they would bring and paid our little debts."

Here Stella paused as though dreading to continue her sad story.

"My precious darling, how long was that before you came to Waverland?" I asked, bringing her nearer to me and pressing a loving kiss on her innocent lips.

"Father died about three months before I came to Waverland," she said. "But it was only a few days before that we sold our little furniture. I saw Annie Wren whom I had often met when I had been around with my father, and she told me of

Continued.