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The Old Love and the New.

"In two years, Alice, I am coming back with my fortune made, to claim you."

These had been John Maxwell's last words; and there had been a fire in his eyes, and certain lines of determination about his mouth, which argued that he would make them good.

But the two years had passed, and for the last six months Alice Tower had heard nothing.

Sitting under the trees one warm May afternoon, she idly wondered whether his silence gave her pain or pleasure.

When John had hidden her good-by the thought of his return had been the sustaining power in the moment of his departure.

Though she had shed bitter tears over the story of his many failures; though he had recovered with gladness the knowledge of his first success; though she had once waited with impatience for letters that did not come, she now felt it to be almost a relief.

Alie thought would not whisper to her own thoughts that there had been another teacher, that not so easy would have been the lesson of forgetfulness had not another lesson been given in its stead.

It was all a bewildering maze in the little head under the canopy of rich brown hair, on just a glint of red among them as the sun gave them their farewell kiss.

But a brighter red stole into the rounded cheek, and a shadow for which the trees were not responsible was thrown behind her.

"Good evening, Alice," said a cheery voice. "I thought that I should find you here. The evening is too lovely for indoor life."

"Yes," she answered; "it is very lovely."

"As it should be," he added, in lower, more impressive tones, "to grow your presence, Alice," he continued, throwing himself back on the grass, "shall I tell you why I am glad to find you here? Because to me it seems the most fitting place to tell you something else, which, though you must already know, it is fit that I should put into words. That is our poor words, darling, I am not versed in eloquence; and even were I, here eloquence is not what I need. But they are words old as the world itself—'I love you.' I have but one hope in life, and that is, that you will share it. It is not much that I can offer you, dear. Perhaps I should say, before I take you to a comfortable home. But yet, why should I? If you love me, you will stand bravely by my side, and we will share whatever storms life may have in store for us, as we share its sunshine. Alice, what in your answer? Will you be my wife?"

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