

CONSTANGY.

The summer hotel lay on the slope of the mountains. Its entrance opened directly to the dusty main thoroughfare of the little village, a place so simple and primitive that it might have been thousands of miles instead of a few hour's distance from a great city.

Across the little street stood the postoffice and general store. Roses dotted its vineclad front and at one side was a garden of old-fashioned flowers.

A wide veranda extended entirely around the hotel on the second story and to follow this to the rear was to pass into another world. On this side a gurgling brook came dancing along close to the foundation and just over the brook began the steep rise of the mountains, green in the foreground, but soon lost in cloud or purple mist.

All the rooms on the second floor had doors leading directly to the veranda, and fortunate were they who could obtain a little chamber where the brooklet sang all night the song they best loved to hear—the echo of their inmost thoughts. For generations the sparkling little stream had curved its way down the mountain's side, and sang its own little refrain. Not gay today and sad tomorrow, but unchanging, unless it swelled to a torrent and thundered, "Destruction." Those of mankind who lingered by its banks would sometimes say, "The brook is sorrowful, I would that it were gayer!" but a little further down the stream another with beaming eyes and tender, pensive smile, would murmur, "Sing again little brook that entrancing happy song of thine!"

A gentle, sorrowful figure in grey stood alone on the veranda, gazing down into the shallow water darting below over the pebbles and rocks. In the unceasing whirr and gurgle she heard, "Remember love, remember!" For the first time in months, she smiled—smiled back at the bright water which seemed to understand. She had been sent here to forget, but had brought with her a great sorrow to tenderly cherish. She would not own to herself that moments existed in which the beauty of the scene or the brightness of the day blurred the intensity of her heartache, but at such times in her soul instinctively rang, "Love, I remember."

It was so on the day she watched the little speckled trout come gaily down the stream, and leap high for a fly just beneath the spot where she leaned over the railing. His little silvery body gleamed bright in the sunlight, then with lightning swiftness was lost in a cool recess between the rocks and the mossy banks. Or, a cloud came over the mountains, and the purple peaks were mingled with masses of ominous black. The pine-trees nearby, always dark, took on the dismal hue of midnight.

The clouds rolled together but as she awaited the crash which symbolized her own desolation, the black masses parted and a flood of sunlight came through. She almost clapped her hands at its beauty and unexpectedness. For a moment she was caught in the joy and pleasure of living, then—she remembered. "I cannot forget," she cried, "but sing on to me little brook." By night and by day she listened for the message which it murmured alone for her ear.

One day a letter came and was brought to her from the rose-twined postoffice. Only a few lines of friendly inquiry. She read them, started to destroy the note, hesitated and laid it in a drawer. It might need an answer, she thought. In the evening she passed to her usual place on the ver-

anda, to sit and dream and—remember. The others had grown to respect her wish for solitude and left her alone in front of her open door. A strange song was sounding in her ears. With her hands tightly grasping the railing she bent towards the brook, and whispered "remember, love," but it thundered back to her ears in other tones, "Forget, love, forget!"

What spirit of malice had entered the cool, shiny depths? A cloud above on the mountain had burst over the hidden source, were these new waters now speaking? The lights from the house shone full on the stream and all the guests had withdrawn to the dancing hall. The music sounded distinctly but could not drown the strange song of the brook. The pines on the hillside bent towards her in the darkness, and each delicately poised needle sighed disapproval. She went in again to her room and read over the letter, this message was not there. She tore it across but did not throw it away.

Outside the water was calling, "Forget love, forget! Youth, hope and joy await you." Her faint "remember" was lost in the sparkling choral. She closed her window and door to shut out the endless song, but it rose above the music and above her thought. In and out the long watches of the night a little story was woven with the first words. With her fingers in her ears she still heard it plainly—"Love, come to the garden of happiness. There hang pleasure's fruits, for your hand. The birds of joy sing in the boughs, sing of love and beauty and you."

If you must pass through the vale of gloom before entering, I will lead you by the hand and we will hasten. Pause not in its dreary path, but look beyond and listen to the welcome the birds are singing in the garden. The sentinels of happiness, trust and forgetfulness, guard the gateways.

With a gorgeous golden streak of sunshine we will blot out the shadow that fell across your life. You will still remember but sorrow cannot penetrate the dazzling rays with which happiness surrounds you. Haste love, forget!"

All night the incessant stream sang on.

In the morning she changed her room.

ANNIE L. MILLER.

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