

daughter of the old homesteader in the valley. How was he to tell her? The girl, educated and refined, as were all the people of the district, was utterly unrepresentable in the sort of society in which he had moved. She would be helpless among a crowd of people such as Marion Vansittart.

Yet it never occurred to Will that he could do anything but go. It had never entered his mind that he was to stay permanently in the west.

A man on horseback was riding up to his cabin. Will watched him as he approached. Visitors were something of an event in the settlement and Will knew the rider as the telegraphist in the cluster of houses that had grown up around the depot and was called a city.

"Wire for you, Thorpe," he announced briefly.

Will took the message and opened it. He stared at it as if he did not understand. It was from Marion. She had learned his address, she said—probably everyone could discover the address of a millionaire—and she was passing through on her way from the San Francisco exposition. She would stay an hour while they changed engines. Would he meet her?

"Thanks," said Will to the telegrapher and watched him ride away.

Yes, he was going east and going back to Marion. For a moment the old life came rushing over him, with its memories, its thousand allurements. And the new life meant nothing.

He mounted his horse and rode slowly down the valley. He had no destination in mind, but suddenly he realized that he was approaching the homesteader's house. And at the door stood Norma.

She greeted him. "Won't you come in and take some tea?" she asked. "I hear you are going east, Mr. Thorpe."

He dismounted, and now he saw that her lips were trembling. How had she known he was going east? Did news fly as fast in this settlement

as in the great world? And what did it matter to her?

"Yes, I am going east, Norma," he answered, taking her hands in his.

"I—I congratulate you," she answered quietly. But he saw the tears in her eyes.

"You have meant so much to me," he said impulsively. "I hate the thought of going. And yet—it is my duty, I suppose."

"Then you must go," said the girl softly. She was smiling very bravely at him. "Won't you come in?"

"No, I can't now," he said crudely. "Norma, I shall see you again before I go."

She nodded and he knew the meaning of her silence. The girl cared for him and in her unsophisticated way was incapable of concealment. He saw her walk back quickly into the cabin.

Marion's train was to arrive the following morning. Will rode down to the depot with a heavy heart. The old and the new were tugging at it and he did not know which pulled him the harder. There were so many memories here—yet the thought of Marion came to him like a flood of sunlight. How he had loved Marion! She had tactfully released him by her silence, and yet doubtless she would explain that. He would follow her soon. He saw the old life vividly, their marriage, the home in Boston.

The train was pulling in. He had stood on the platform in a sort of daze. Now he awakened suddenly and he felt his heart beating hard in anticipation. The men about the platform were watching him curiously. He looked into the carriages of the train as it came to a halt. He walked its length. Marion was not there. Had she missed her train?

"Still dreaming, Will?" asked a hard voice over his shoulder.

He started round, to see Marion, with a party of girl friends, dressed in the height of fashion, looking at him with a smile.

"Dear me, I must be very hard to