

A Mountain Girl's Ruse

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The last rays of the sun softened the girl's red hair into a golden halo as she sat upon the log, her bare feet showing beneath the hem of her cheap print skirt. On the log beside her was a sunbonnet, and pressing against the sunbonnet was the helve of an ax, such as only a very strong man was accustomed to wield.

The girl was evidently resting after a day of hard labor, for deep around her were scattered the still odorous pine chips, and on the other side of the log rose a huge pile of wood, cut into two foot chunks to fit the regulation fireplace of the mountain log and mud cabin.

A handsome, powerfully built man had come down the mountain path, barefoot, and, as he seemed to think, unnoticed, for he stopped a few yards away and regarded the girl for some time with an air of admiring ownership. In the sunlight her hair was beautiful, and her form, even in its dejected attitude, was graceful and pleasing. The only appearance of feminine ornamentation was a pitiful attempt at a ruffe on the sunbonnet.

"Don't stand there gawkin' all day, Hoke," at last the girl called pettishly, but without turning or raising her head. "You ain't no scared rabbit with one paw up, and I ain't no great to look at. How's all?"

"Tolerable," answered the man as he came forward sheepishly. "But I ain't scared, an' you needn't say you ain't no great to look at, Tirzy, for f'ain't so. I've come clear from Bear Lake to ask you what I asked last week. When are you going to marry me?"

"Don't know as ever," shortly.

"But your daddy's dead," earnestly, "and your cabin's plumb two miles from any other. You can't live here all by yourself, Tirzy. 'Tain't proper."

"And why not?" lifting her head defiantly. "Ain't I got a bigger truck patch than any man on the mountain, and ain't I kept it better worked? And didn't I help father build the cabin, cutting and toting the logs and mixing

became sober. "Why, Tirzy," he remonstrated, "it's scandalous! You're the handsomest and peartest girl on the mountain and the best worker. Any man would be glad to have you. And he"—contemptuously—"he's just an outside onstepper, coming here and fencing in land and digging in the dirt the whole enduring day, and he totes his truck stuff down into the valley on his own back and peddles it round. Huh! He couldn't hit a bear ten foot off with a shotgun, and he don't chew and don't know the taste of whisky. Why, I 'low one spoonful would set him plumb crazy. But he does wear s-h-o-e-s," prolonging the word derisively, "and you're going to—study—bout—him."

"Yes, I am," quietly. "He knows how to work and ain't scared of it. And up where he comes from women folks don't milk and cut fireplace wood—up there the men folks look out for the women. If Ground Hog—I mean Mr. Allen—marries me, it won't be just because he aims to be more comfortable. But h'ah! Here he comes now."

A man had emerged suddenly from the woods and was approaching them rapidly. Hoke was still standing several yards away. As the stranger came to about the same distance an idea seemed to strike the girl, for she raised her hand warningly.

"Don't come any closer, either of you," she called. "I was down to Back creek yesterday."

"Back creek?" echoed Hoke, recalling a few steps. "Why, that's where they have the smallpox, and they do say it's terrible this season. Everybody catches it that goes near!"

"Yes, I've heard so," calmly.

"Oh, Tirzy, how could you?" And Hoke took a few more involuntarily backward steps.

"I was obliged to, Hoke. I heard a girl I used to know was down there and I wanted to find out for sure."

The stranger was now at her side, and Tirzy had noticed with an odd look in her eyes that he had not shown the least hesitation at her startling announcement.

"Well, I'll see you again, Tirzy," Hoke called from a still greater distance, "and I hope you won't catch it, but I'm mighty afraid for you."

"I don't reckon there's much danger, Hoke," the girl retorted, "for I didn't go across the creek. I just called and a woman answered that 'twasn't the girl I knew at all."

Hoke paused abruptly and was turning to come back when something in the attitude of the two, who were now seated upon the log, made him grind out a few words between his teeth and swing savagely into the woods.

Marking Books.

Every now and then you will find in some periodical an item relating to the subject of a book in which you are interested. It is a good plan to enter on the flyleaf a reference to this passage, so that you may find it again when needed. Such notes neatly written in pencil do no harm and will often save you much time. You may in the same way make notes of the numbers of pages in which you have been specially interested. A correspondent writes to us asking whether we recommend "marking books." To this extent we certainly do, provided the book is not so fine an edition that it should be kept as spotless as can be. Besides, very light pencil notes can be removed in a moment without harm to any page. But the marking of books that extends to disfiguring them will never be done by any one who realizes how long a good book may continue to delight new readers and to bring them help in right living and thinking.—St. Nicholas.

Dangerous Devices.

There were some cunning devices in vogue among the belles of the old world for giving expression to the eye. The most reckless of them were wont to place a single drop of that deadly poison, prussic acid, in the bottom of a wineglass and hold it against the eye for two or three seconds, or, more rashly still, they would take a small quantity—a piece not larger than a grain of rice—of an ointment containing that mortal drug, atropia, and rub it on the brow. Each of these was supposed to give clearness and brilliancy, expand the pupil and impart a fascinating fullness and mellowness to the eye. Certain slightly pungent and volatile perfumes, such as oil of thyme, were occasionally worn on the handkerchief, causing the eye to glitter and sparkle. The eye was made to appear large, full and almond shaped by the use of a fine pencil dipped in antimonial sulphur or Egyptian black, rubbed upon the lids along the angle.

Black Bottles For Wine.

Black bottles for wine were introduced about a hundred and fifty years ago. Lord Delaval, an English peer, brought over a number of Hanoverian bladders and started works at Sutton Sticize, in Northumberland. His main idea was to utilize a seam of inferior coal on his estate. At first the black color was due to the material used in making the glass, but afterward the public became so habituated to the association of wine and black bottles that, even when the constituents used were changed and improved, coloring matter was introduced to keep up the familiar appearance.

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Dated, Astoria, Oregon, October, 21st, 1905.
OLOF ANDERSON,
Auditor and Police Judge of the city of Astoria.
The Astorian, 75c per month.



Hoke recoiling a few steps, the stranger was now at her side.

the mud myself? And did any man on the mountain ever cut more fireplace wood in one day than that?" rising suddenly to her feet and flinging out one hand toward the day's work.

Hoke surveyed the wood critically, appreciatingly.

"No-no, I don't reckon I ever did see so much cut in one day, Tirzy," he acknowledged, "though I ain't sayin' but lots of men could if they set out."

"Yes, that's just it," scornfully, "if they set out. But men folks round here don't set out to do nothing but hunt coons and drink still whisky and smoke cornob pipes. It's the women who work truck patches and chop wood and milk cows and do everything else that's sure enough work. But what's the use talking?" dropping her arms again listlessly.

"There's no difference between you men folks. I think a heap of you, Hoke, like I said last week. You're big and good natured and the handsomest man round, but all you've got in the world is a rifle and four dogs and a tumble-down cabin that's scarcely fit to live in, and I've heard you say yourself that you could drink more corn whisky than any man on the mountain and not show it. And you go barefoot, too, Hoke. Maybe I'll have to marry somebody some time, but I used to say when a girl that I'd never marry a man who didn't wear shoes."

Hoke looked down at his feet reflectively. "I reckon there's but one man on the mountain who wears shoes steady," he observed sarcastically. "Maybe he'd marry you if you asked him."

"You mean Ground Hog," flashed back the girl instantly. "Well, he asked me last Tuesday, and I told him like I did you—I'd study it over a spell."

Hoke looked at her incredulously for a moment, then threw back his head in a roar of laughter that echoed through the forest. "Told him you'd study it over," he ejaculated between his bursts of merriment. "Told Ground Hog that? Ho, ho! I'll sure have to let all the boys know." Then instantly he

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