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THE KING OF BEAVER AND BEAVER LIGHTS

From "Mackinac And Lake Stories", 1899

By Mary Hartwell Catherwood

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THE KING OF BEAVER

Success was the word most used by the King of Beaver. Though he stood before his people as a prophet assuming to speak revelations, executive power breathed from him. He was a tall, golden-tinted man with a head like a dome, hair curling over his ears, and soft beard and mustache which did not conceal a mouth cut thin and straight. He had student hands, long and well kept. It was not his dress, though that was careful as a girl's, which set him apart from farmers listening on the benches around him, but the keen light of his blue eyes, wherein shone the master.

Emeline thought she had never before seen such a man. He had an attraction which she felt loathsome, and the more so because it drew some part of her irresistibly to him. Her spirit was kin to his, and she resented that kinship, trying to lose herself among farmers' wives and daughters, who listened to their Prophet stolidly, and were in no danger of being naturally selected by him. This moral terror Emeline could not have expressed in words, and she hid it like a shame. She also resented the subservience of her kinspeople to one no greater than herself. Her stock had been masters of men.

As the King of Beaver slowly turned about the circle he encountered this rebel defying his assumption, and paused in his speaking a full minute, the drowsy farmers seeing merely that notes were being shifted and rearranged on the table. Then he began again, the dictatorial key transposed into melody. His covert message was to the new maid in the congregation. She might struggle like a fly in a web. He wrapped her around and around with beautiful sentences. As Speaker of the State Legislature he had learned well how to handle men in the mass, but nature had doubly endowed him for entrancing women. The spiritual part of James Strang, King and Prophet of a peculiar sect, appealed to the one best calculated to appreciate him during the remainder of his exhortation.

The Tabernacle, to which Beaver Island Mormons gathered every Saturday instead of every Sunday, was yet unfinished. Its circular shape and vaulted ceiling, panelled in the hard woods of the island, had been planned by the man who stood in the centre. Many openings under the eaves gaped windowless; but the congregation, sheltered from a July sun, enjoyed freely the lake air, bringing fragrance from their own fields and gardens. They seemed a bovine, honest people, in homespun and hickory; and youth, bright-eyed and fresh-cheeked, was not lacking. They sat on benches arranged in circles around a central platform which held the Prophet's chair and table. This was his simple plan for making his world revolve around him.

Roxy Cheeseman, Emeline's cousin, was stirred to restlessness by the Prophet's unusual manner, and shifted uneasily on the bench. Her short, scarlet-cheeked face made her a favorite among the young men. She had besides this attraction a small waist and foot, and a father who was very well off indeed for a Beaver Island farmer. Roxy's black eyes, with the round and unwinking stare of a bird's, were fixed on King Strang, as if she instinctively warded off a gaze which by swerving a little could smite her.

But the Prophet paid no attention to any one when the meeting was over, his custom being to crush his notes in one hand at the end of his peroration, and to retire like a priest, leaving the dispersing congregation awed by his rapt face.

The two cousins walked sedately along the street of St. James village, while their elders lingered about the Tabernacle door shaking hands. That primitive settlement of the early '50's consisted of a few houses and log stores, a mill, the Tabernacle, and long docks, at which steamers touched perhaps once a week. The forest partially encircled it. A few Gentiles, making Saturday purchases in a shop kept by one of their own kind, glanced with dislike at the separating Mormons. The shouts of Gentile children could also be heard at Saturday play. Otherwise a Sabbath peacefulness was over the landscape. Beaver Island had not a rugged coastline, though the harbor of St. James was deep and good. Land rose from it in gentle undulations rather than hills.

Emeline and Roxy walked inland, with their backs to the harbor. In summer, farmers who lived nearest St. James took short-cuts through the woods to meeting, and let their horses rest.

The last house on the street was a wooden building of some pretension, having bow-windows and a veranda. High pickets enclosed a secluded garden. It was very unlike the log-cabins of the island.

“He lives here,” said Roxy.

Emeline did not inquire who lived here. She understood, and her question was—

“How many with him?”

“All of them—eight. Seven of them stay at home, but Mary French travels with him. Didn't you notice her in the Tabernacle—the girl with the rose in her hair, sitting near the platform?”

“Yes, I noticed her. Was that one of his wives?”

Roxy waited until they had struck into the woods path, and then looked guardedly behind her.

“Mary French is the youngest one. She was sealed to the Prophet only two years ago; and last winter she went travelling with him, and we heard she dressed in men's clothes and acted as his secretary.”

“But why did she do that when she was his wife according to your religion?”

“I don't know,” responded Roxy, mysteriously. “The Gentiles on the mainland are very hard on us.”

They followed the track between fragrant grapevine and hickory, and the girl bred to respect polygamy

inquired—

“Do you feel afraid of the Prophet, Cousin Emeline?”

“No, I don't,” retorted the girl bred to abhor it.

“Sometimes I do. He makes people do just what he wants them to. Mary French was a Gentile's daughter, the proudest girl that ever stepped in St. James. She didn't live on the island; she came here to visit. And he got her. What's the matter, Cousin Emeline?”

“Some one trod on my grave; I shivered. Cousin Roxy, I want to ask you a plain question. Do you like a man's having more than one wife?”

“No, I don't. And father doesn't either. But he was obliged to marry again, or get into trouble with the other elders. And Aunt Mahala is very good about the house, and minds mother. The revelation may be plain enough, but I am not the kind of a girl,” declared Roxy, daringly, as one might blaspheme, “that cares a straw for the revelation.”

Emeline took hold of her arm, and they walked on with a new sense of companionship.

“A great many of the people feel the same way about it. But when the Prophet makes them understand it is part of the faith, they have to keep the faith. I am a reprobate myself. But don't tell father,” appealed Roxy, uneasily. “He is an elder.”

“My uncle Cheeseman is a good man,” said Emeline, finding comfort in this fact. She could not explain to her cousin how hard it had been for her to come to Beaver Island to live among Mormons. Her uncle had insisted on giving his orphan niece a home and the protection of a male relative, at the death of the maiden aunt by whom she had been brought up. In that day no girl thought of living without protection. Emeline had a few thousand dollars of her own, but her money was invested, and he could not count on the use of it, which men assumed a right to have when helpless women clustered to their hearths. Her uncle Cheeseman was undeniably a good man, whatever might be said of his religious faith.

“I like father myself,” assented Roxy. “He is never strict with us unless the Prophet has some revelation that makes him so. Cousin Emeline, I hope you won't grow to be taken up with Brother Strang, like Mary French. I thought he looked at you to-day.”

Emeline's face and neck were scarlet above her black dress. The Gentile resented as an insult what the Mormon simply foreboded as distasteful to herself; though there was not a family of that faith on the island who would not have felt honored in giving a daughter to the Prophet.

“I hate him!” exclaimed Emeline, her virgin rage mingled with a kind of sweet and sickening pain. “I'll never go to his church again.”

“Father wouldn't like that, Cousin Emeline,” observed Roxy, though her heart leaped to such unshackled freedom. “He says we mustn't put our hand to the plough and turn back. Everybody knows that Brother Strang is the only person who can keep the Gentiles from driving us off the island. They have persecuted us ever since the settlement was made. But they are afraid of him. They cannot do anything with him. As long as he lives he is better than an army to keep our lands and homes for us.”

“You are in a hard case betwixt Gentiles and Prophet,” laughed Emeline.

Yet the aspects of life on Beaver Island keenly interested her. This small world, fifteen miles in length by six in breadth, was shut off by itself in Lake Michigan, remote from the civilization of towns. She liked at first to feel cut loose from her past life, and would have had the steamers touch less often at St. James, diminishing their chances of bringing her hateful news.

There were only two roads on the island—one extending from the harbor town in the north end to a village called Galilee at the extreme southeast end, the other to the southwest shore. Along these roads farms were laid out, each about eighty rods in width and a mile or two in length, so that neighbors dwelt within call of one another, and the colony presented a strong front. The King of Beaver could scarcely have counselled a better division of land for the linking of families. On one side of the Cheesemans had dwelt an excellent widow with a bag chin, and she became Elder Cheeseman's second wife. On the other side were the Wentworths, and Billy Wentworth courted Roxy across the fence until it appeared that wives might continue passing over successive boundary lines.

The billowy land was green in the morning as paradise, and Emeline thought every day its lights and shadows were more beautiful than the day before. Life had paused in her, and she was glad to rest her eyes on the horizon line and take no thought about any morrow. She helped her cousin and her legal and Mormon aunts with the children and the cabin labor, trying to adapt herself to their habits. But her heart-sickness and sense of fitting in her place like a princess cast among peasants put her at a disadvantage when, the third evening, the King of Beaver came into the garden.

He chose that primrose time of day when the world and the human spirit should be mellowest, and walked with the farmer between garden beds to where Emeline and Roxy were tending flowers. The entire loamy place sent up incense. Emeline had felt at least sheltered and negatively happy until his voice modulations strangely pierced her, and she looked up and saw him.

He called her uncle Brother Cheeseman and her uncle called him Brother Strang, but on one side was the mien of a sovereign and on the other the deference of a subject. Again Emeline's blood rose against him, and she took as little notice as she dared of the introduction.

The King of Beaver talked to Roxy. Billy Wentworth came to the line fence and made a face at seeing him helping to tie up sweet-peas. Then Billy climbed over and joined Emeline. They exchanged looks, and each knew the mind of the other on the subject of the Prophet.

Billy was a good safe human creature, with the tang of the soil about him, and no wizard power of making his presence felt when one's back was turned. Emeline kept her gray eyes directed towards him, and talked about his day's work and the trouble of ploughing with oxen. She was delicately and sensitively made, with a beauty which came and went like flame. Her lips were formed in scarlet on a naturally pale face. Billy Wentworth considered her weakly. He preferred the robust arm outlined by Roxy's homespun sleeve. And yet

she had a sympathetic knowledge of men which he felt, without being able to describe, as the most delicate flattery.

The King of Beaver approached Emeline. She knew she could not escape the interview, and continued tying vines to the cedar palisades while the two young islanders drew joyfully away to another part of the garden. The stable and barn-yard were between garden and cabin. Long variegated fields stretched off in bands. A gate let through the cedar pickets to a pasture where the cows came up to be milked. Bees gathering to their straw domes for the night made a purring hum at the other end of the garden.

“I trust you are here to stay,” said Emeline's visitor.

“I am never going back to Detroit,” she answered. He understood at once that she had met grief in Detroit, and that it might be other grief than the sort expressed by her black garment.

“We will be kind to you here.”

Emeline, finishing her task, glanced over her shoulder at him. She did not know how tantalizingly her face, close and clear in skin texture as the petal of a lily, flashed out her dislike. A heavier woman's rudeness in her became audacious charm.

“I like Beaver Island,” she remarked, winding the remaining bits of string into a ball. “'Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile.'”

“You mean Gentile man,” said King Strang. “He is vile, but we hope to get rid of him some time.”

“By breaking his fish-nets and stealing his sailboats? Is it true that a Gentile sail-boat was sunk in Lake Galilee and kept hidden there until inquiry ceased, and then was raised, repainted, and launched again, a good Mormon boat?”

He linked his hands behind him and smiled at her daring.

“How many evil stories you have heard about us! My dear young lady, I could rejoin with truths about our persecutions. Is your uncle Cheeseman a malefactor?”

“My uncle Cheeseman is a good man.”

“So are all my people. The island, like all young communities, is infested with a class of camp-follow-ers, and every depredation of these fellows is charged to us. But we shall make it a garden—we shall make it a garden.”

“Let me train vines over the whipping-post in your garden,” suggested Emeline, turning back the crimson edge of her lip.

“You have heard that a man was publicly whipped on Beaver Island—and he deserved it. Have you heard also that I myself have been imprisoned by outsiders, and my life attempted more than once? Don't you know that in war a leader must be stern if he would save his people from destruction? Have you never heard a good thing of me, my child?”

Emeline, facing her adversary, was enraged at the conviction which the moderation and gentleness of a martyr was able to work in her.

“Oh yes, indeed, I have heard one good thing of you—your undertaking the salvation of eight or nine wives.”

“Not yet nine,” he responded, humorously. “And I am glad you mentioned that. It is one of our mysteries that you will learn later. You have helped me greatly by such a candid unburdening of your mind. For you must know that you and I are to be more to each other than strangers. The revelation was given to you when it was given to me in the Tabernacle. I saw that.”

The air was thickening with dusky motes. Emeline fancied that living dark atoms were pressing down upon her from infinity.

“You must know,” she said, with determination, “that I came to Beaver Island because I hated men, and expected to see nothing but Mormons here—”

“Not counting them men at all,” indulgently supplemented the King of Beaver, conscious that she was struggling in the most masculine presence she had ever encountered. He dropped his voice. “My child, you touch me as no one has touched me yet. There is scarcely need of words between us. I know what I am to you. You shall not stay on the island if you do not wish it. Oh, you are going to make me do my best!”

“I wish you would go away!”

“Some Gentile has hurt you, and you are beating your bruised strength on me.”

“Please go away! I don't like you. I am bound to another man.”

“You are bound to nobody but me. I have waited a lifetime for you.”

“How dare you talk so to me when you have eight wives already!”

“Solomon had a thousand. He was a man of God, though never in his life was there a moment when he took to his breast a mate. I shall fare better.”

“Did you talk to them all like this?”

“Ask them. They have their little circles beyond which they cannot go. Have you thoughts in common with your cousin Roxy?”

“Yes, very many,” asserted Emeline, doggedly. “I am just like Cousin Roxy.”

“You have no mind beyond the milking and churning, the sewing and weaving?”

“No, I have no mind beyond them.”

“I kiss your hands—these little hands that were made to the finest uses of life, and that I shall fill with honors.”

“Don't touch me,” warned Emeline. “They can scratch!”

The King of Beaver laughed aloud. With continued gentleness he explained to her: “You will come to me. Gentile brutes may chase women like savages, and maltreat them afterwards; but it is different with you and

me.” He brought his hands forward and folded them upright on his breast.

“‘I HAVE ALWAYS PRAYED THIS PRAYER ALONE’”

“I have always prayed this prayer alone and as a solitary soul at twilight. For the first time I shall speak it aloud in the presence of one who has often thought the same prayer: O God, since Thou hast shut me up in this world, I will do the best I can, without fear or favor. When my task is done, let me out!”

He turned and left her, as if this had been a benediction on their meeting, and went from the garden as he usually went from the Tabernacle. Emeline's heart and eyes seemed to overflow without any volition of her own. It was a kind of spiritual effervescence which she could not control. She sobbed two or three times aloud, and immediately ground her teeth at his back as it passed out of sight. Billy and Roxy were so free from the baleful power that selected her. They could chat in peace under the growing darkness, they who had home and families, while she, without a relative except those on Beaver Island, or a friend whose duty it was to shelter her, must bear the shock of that ruinous force.

The instinct that no one could help her but herself kept her silent when she retired with Roxy to the loft-chamber. Primitive life on Beaver Island settled to its rest soon after the birds, and there was not a sound outside of nature's stirrings till morning, unless some drunken fishermen trailed down the Galilee road to see what might be inflicted on the property of sleeping Mormons.

The northern air blew fresh through gable windows of the attic, yet Emeline turned restlessly on her straw bed, and counted the dim rafters while Roxy slept. Finally she could not lie still, and slipped cautiously out of bed, feeling dire need to be abroad, running or riding with all her might. She leaned out of a gable window, courting the moist chill of the starless night. While the hidden landscape seemed strangely dear to her, she was full of unspeakable homesickness and longing for she knew not what—a life she had not known and could not imagine, some perfect friend who called her silently through space and was able to lift her out of the entanglements of existence.

The regular throbbing of a horse's feet approaching along the road at a brisk walk became quite distinct. Emeline's sensations were suspended while she listened. From the direction of St. James she saw a figure on horseback coming between the dusky parallel fence rows. The sound of walking ceased in front of the house, and presently another sound crept barely as high as the attic window. It was the cry of a violin, sweet and piercing, like some celestial voice. It took her unawares. She fled from it to her place beside Roxy and covered her ears with the bedclothes.

Roxy turned with a yawn and aroused from sleep. She rose to her elbow and drew in her breath, giggling. The violin courted like an angel, finding secret approaches to the girl who lay rigid with her ears stopped.

“Cousin Emeline!” whispered Roxy, “do you hear that?”

“What is it?” inquired Emeline, revealing no emotion.

"IT'S BROTHER STRANG SERENADING"

"It's Brother Strang serenading."

"How do you know?"

"Because he is the only man on Beaver who can play the fiddle like that." Roxy gave herself over to unrestrained giggling. "A man fifty years old!"

"I don't believe it," responded Emeline, sharply.

"Don't believe he is nearly fifty? He told his age to the elders."

"I haven't a word of praise for him, but he isn't an old man. He doesn't look more than thirty-five."

"To hear that fiddle you'd think he wasn't twenty," chuckled Roxy. "It's the first time Brother Strang ever came serenading down this road."

He did not stay long, but went, trailing music deliciously into the distance. Emeline knew how he rode, with the bridle looped over his bow arm. She was quieted and lay in peace, sinking to sleep almost before the faint, far notes could no longer be heard.

From that night her uncle Cheeseman's family changed their attitude towards her. She felt it as a withdrawal of intimacy, though it expressed reverential awe. Especially did her Mormon aunt Mahala take little tasks out of her hands and wait upon her, while her legal aunt looked at her curiously. It was natural for Roxy to talk to Billy Wentworth across the fence, but it was not natural for them to share so much furtive laughter, which ceased when Emeline approached. Uncle Cheese-man himself paid more attention to his niece and spent much time at the table explaining to her the Mormon situation on Beaver Island, tracing the colony back to its secession from Brigham Young's party in Illinois.

"Brother Strang was too large for them," said her uncle. "He can do anything he undertakes to do."

The next Saturday Emeline refused to go to the Tabernacle. She gave no reason and the family asked for none. Her caprices were as the gambols of the paschal lamb, to be indulged and overlooked. Roxy offered to stay with her, but she rejected companionship, promising her uncle and aunts to lock herself within the cabin and hide if she saw men approaching from any direction. The day was sultry for that climate, and of a vivid clearness, and the sky dazzled. Emeline had never met any terrifying Gentiles during her stay on the island, and she felt quite secure in crossing the pasture and taking to the farm woods beyond. Her uncle's cows had worn a path which descended to a run with partially grass-lined channel. Beaver Island was full of brooks and springs. The children had placed stepping-stones across this one. She was vaguely happy, seeing the water swirl below her feet, hearing the cattle breathe at their grazing; though in the path or on the log which she found at the edge of the woods her face kept turning towards the town of St. James, as the faces of the faithful turn towards Mecca. It was childish to think of escaping the King of Beaver by merely staying away from his exhortations. Emeline knew she was only parleying.

The green silence should have helped her to think, but she found herself waiting—and doing nothing but waiting—for what might happen next. She likened herself to a hunted rabbit palpitating in cover, unable to reach any place of safety yet grateful for a moment's breathing. Wheels rolled southward along the Galilee road. Meeting was out. She had the caprice to remain where she was when the family wagon arrived, for it had been too warm to walk to the Tabernacle. Roxy's voice called her, and as she answered, Roxy skipped across the brook and ran to her.

"Cousin Emeline," the breathless girl announced, "here comes Mary French to see you!"

Emeline stiffened upon the log.

"Where?"

Roxy glanced behind at a figure following her across the meadow.

"What does she want of me?" inquired Emeline. "If she came home with the family, it was not necessary to

call me.”

“She drove by herself. She says Brother Strang sent her to you.”

Emeline stood up as the Prophet's youngest wife entered that leafy silence. Roxy, forgetting that these two had never met before, slipped away and left them. They looked at each other.

“How do you do, Mrs. Strang?” spoke Emeline.

“How do you do, Miss Cheeseman?” spoke Mary French.

“Will you sit down on this log?”

“Thank you.”

Mary French had more flesh and blood than Emeline. She was larger and of a warmer and browner tint—that type of brunette with startling black hair which breaks into a floss of little curls, and with unexpected blue eyes. Her full lips made a bud, and it only half bloomed when she smiled. From crown to slipper she was a ripe and supple woman. Though clad, like Emeline, in black, her garment was a transparent texture over white, and she held a parasol with crimson lining behind her head. She had left her bonnet in her conveyance.

“My husband,” said Mary French, quiet and smiling, “sent me to tell you that you will be welcomed into our family.”

Emeline looked her in the eyes. The Prophet's wife had the most unblenching smiling gaze she had ever encountered.

“I do not wish to enter your family. I am not a Mormon.”

“He will make you wish it. I was not a Mormon.”

They sat silent, the trees stirring around them.

“I do not understand it,” said Emeline. “How can you come to me with such a message?”

“I can do it as you can do it when your turn comes.”

Emeline looked at Mary French as if she had been stabbed.

“It hurts, doesn't it?” said Mary French. “But wait till he seems to you a great strong archangel—an archangel with only the weakness of dabbling his wings in the dirt—and you will withhold from him nothing, no one, that may be of use to him. If he wants to put me by for a while, it is his will. You cannot take my place. I cannot fill yours.”

“Oh, don't!” gasped Emeline. “I am not that sort of woman—I should kill!”

“That is because you have not lived with him. I would rather have him make me suffer than not have him at all.”

“Oh, don't! I can't bear it! Help me!” prayed Emeline, stretching her hands to the wife.

Mary French met her with one hand and the unflinching smile. Her flesh was firm and warm, while Emeline's was cold and quivering.

“You have never loved anybody, have you?”

“No.”

“But you have thought you did?”

“I was engaged before I came here.”

“And the engagement is broken?”

“We quarrelled.”

Mary French breathed deeply.

“You will forget it here. He can draw the very soul out of your body.”

“He cannot!” flashed Emeline.

“Some one will kill him yet. He is not understood at his best, and he cannot endure defeat of any kind. When you come into the family you must guard him from his enemies as I have constantly guarded him. If you ever let a hair of his head be harmed—then I shall hate you!”

“Mrs. Strang, do you come here to push me too! My uncle's family, everything, all are closing around me! Why don't you help me? I loathe—I loathe; your husband!”

Mary French rose, her smile changing only to express deep tenderness.

“You are a good girl dear. I can myself feel your charm. I was not so self-denying. In my fierce young girlhood I would have removed a rival. But since you ask me, I will do all I can for you in the way you desire. My errand is done. Good-by.”

“Good-by,” said Emeline, restraining herself.

She sat watching the elastic shape under the parasol move with its shadow across the field. She had not a doubt until Mary French was gone; then the deep skill of the Prophet's wife with rivals sprung out like a distortion of nature.

Emeline had nearly three weeks in which to intrench herself with doubts and defences. She felt at first surprised and relieved. When her second absence from the Tabernacle was passed over in silence she found in her nature an unaccountable pique, which steadily grew to unrest. She ventured and turned back on the woods path leading to St. James many times, each time daring farther. The impulse to go to St. James came on her at waking, and she resisted through busy hours of the day. But the family often had tasks from which Emeline was free, and when the desire grew unendurable she knelt at her secluded bedside in the loft, trying to bring order out of her confused thoughts. She reviewed her quarrel with her lover, and took blame for his desertion. The grievance which had seemed so great to her before she came to Beaver Island dwindled, and his personality with it. In self-defence she coaxed her fancy, pretending that James Arnold was too good for her. It was well he had found it out. But because he was too good for her she ought to go on being fond of him at a safe distance, undetected by him, and discreetly cherishing his large blond image as her ideal of

manhood. If she had not been bred in horror of Catholics, the cloister at this time would have occurred to her as her only safe refuge.

These secret rites in her bedroom being ended, and Roxy diverted from her movements, she slipped off into the woods path, sometimes running breathlessly towards St. James.

The impetus which carried Emeline increased with each journey. At first she was able to check it in the woods depths, but it finally drove her until the village houses were in sight.

When this at last happened, and she stood gazing, fascinated, down the tunnel of forest path, the King of Beaver spoke behind her.

Emeline screamed in terror and took hold of a bush, to make it a support and a veil.

“Have I been a patient man?” he inquired, standing between her and her uncle's house. “I waited for you to come to me.”

“I am obliged to go somewhere,” said Emeline, plucking the leaves and unsteadily shifting her eyes about his feet. “I cannot stay on the farm all the time.” Through numbness she felt the pricking of a sharp rapture.

The King of Beaver smiled, seeing betrayed in her face the very vertigo of joy.

"'YOU WILL GIVE YOURSELF TO ME NOW?'"

"You will give yourself to me now?" he winningly begged, venturing out-stretched hands. "You have felt the need as I have? Do you think the days have been easy to me? When you were on your knees I was on my knees too. Every day you came in this direction I came as far as I dared, to meet you. Are the obstacles all passed?"

"No," said Emeline.

He was making her ask herself that most insidious question, "Why could not the other have been like this?"

"Tell me—can you say, 'I hate you,' now?"

"No," said Emeline.

"I have grown to be a better man since you said you hated me. The miracle cannot be forced. Next time?"

He spoke wistfully.

“No,” Emeline answered, holding to the bush. She kept her eyes on the ground while he talked, and glanced up when she replied. He stood with his hat off. The flakes of sun touched his head and the fair skin of his forehead.

He moved towards Emeline, and she retreated around the bush. Without hesitating he passed, making a salutation, and went on by himself to St. James. She watched his rapid military walk furtively, her eyebrows crouching, her lips rippling with passionate tremors. Then she took to flight homeward, her skirts swishing through the woods with a rush like the wind. The rebound was as violent as the tension had been.

There were few festivities on Beaver Island, the Mormon families living a pastoral life, many of them yet taxed by the struggle for existence. Crops shot up rank and strong in the short Northern summer. Soft cloud masses sailed over the island, and rain-storms marched across it with drums of thunder which sent reverberations along the water world. Or fogs rolled in, muffling and obliterating homesteads.

Emeline stayed in the house, busying herself with the monotonous duties of the family three days. She was determined never to go into the woods path again without Roxy. The fourth day a gray fog gave her no choice but imprisonment. It had the acrid tang of smoke from fires burning on the mainland. About nightfall the west wind rose and blew it back, revealing a land mantled with condensed drops.

Emeline put on her hat and shawl to walk around in the twilight. The other young creatures of the house were glad to be out also, and Roxy and Roxy's lover talked across the fence. Emeline felt fortified against the path through the woods at night; yet her feet turned in that direction, and as certainly as water seeks its level she found herself on the moist elastic track. Cow-bells on the farm sounded fainter and farther. A gloom of trees massed around her, and the forest gave up all its perfume to the dampness.

At every step she meant to turn back, though a recklessness of night and of meeting the King of Beaver grew upon her. Thus, without any reasonable excuse for her presence there, she met Mary French.

“Is that you, Miss Cheeseman?” panted the Prophet's youngest wife.

Emeline confessed her identity.

“I was coming for you, but it is fortunate you are so far on the way. There is a steamboat at the dock, and it will go out in half an hour. I could not get away sooner to tell you.” Mary French breathed heavily from running. “When the steamboat came in the captain sent for my husband, as the captains always do. I went with him: he knows how I dread to have him go alone upon a boat since an attempt was made last year to kidnap him. But this time there was another reason, for I have been watching. And sure enough, a young man was on the steamboat inquiring where he could find you. His name is James Arnold. The captain asked my husband to direct him to you. You will readily understand why he did not find you. Come at once!”

“I will not,” said Emeline.

“But you wanted me to help you, and I have been trying to do it. We easily learned by letter from our friends in Detroit who your lover was. My husband had me do that: he wanted to know. Then without his knowledge I stooped to write an anonymous letter.”

“To James Arnold?”

“Yes.”

“About me?”

“About you.”

“What did you tell him?”

“I said you were exposed to great danger on Beaver Island, among the Mormons, and if you had any interested friend it was time for him to interfere.”

“And that brought him here?”

“I am sure it did. He was keenly disappointed at not finding you.”

“But why didn't he come to the farm?”

“My husband prevented that. He said you were on Beaver Island three or four weeks ago, but you were now in the Fairy Isle. It was no lie. He spoke in parables, but the other heard him literally. We let him inquire of people in St. James. But no one had seen you since the Saturday you came to the Tabernacle. So he is going back to Mackinac to seek you. Your life will be decided in a quarter of an hour. Will you go on that steamboat?”

“Throw myself on the mercy of a man who dared—dared to break his engagement, and who ought to be punished and put on probation, and then refused! No, I cannot!”

“The minutes are slipping away.”

“Besides, I have nothing with me but the clothes I have on. And my uncle's family—think of my uncle's family!”

“You can write to your uncle and have him send your baggage. I dare not carry any messages. But I thought of what you would need to-night, and put some things and some money in this satchel. They were mine. Keep them all.”

Emeline took hold of the bag which Mary French shoved in her hand. Their faces were indistinct to each other.

“For the first time in my life I have deceived my husband!”

“Oh, what shall I do—what shall I do?” cried the girl.

A steamer whistle at St. James dock sent its bellow rebounding from tree to tree in the woods. Emeline seized Mary French and kissed her violently on both cheeks. She snatched the bag and flew towards St. James.

“Stop!” commanded the Prophet's wife.

She ran in pursuit, catching Emeline by the shoulders.

“You sha'n't go! What am I doing? Maybe robbing him of what is necessary to his highest success! I am a fool—to think he might turn back to me for consolation when you are gone—God forgive me such silly fondness! I can't have a secret between him and myself—I will tell him! You shall not go—and cause him a mortal hurt! Wait!—stop!—the boat is gone! It's too late!”

“Let me loose!” struggled Emeline, wrenching herself away.

“‘LET ME LOOSE!’ STRUGGLED EMELINE”

She ran on through the woods, and Mary French, snatching at garments which eluded her, stumbled and fell on the damp path, gathering dead leaves under her palms. The steamer's prolonged bellow covered her voice.

Candles were lighted in St. James. The Tabernacle spread itself like a great circular web dark with moisture. Emeline was conscious of running across the gang-plank as a sailor stooped to draw it in. The bell was ringing and the boat was already in motion. It sidled and backed away from its moorings.

Emeline knelt panting at the rail on the forward deck. A flambeau fastened to the wharf bowed its light to the wind as the boat swung about, showing the King of Beaver smiling and waving his hand in farewell. He did not see Emeline. His farewell was for the man whom he had sent away without her. His golden hair and beard and blue eyes floated into Emeline's past as the steamer receded, the powerful face and lithe figure first losing their identity, and then merging into night. What if it was true that she was robbing both him and herself of the best life, as Mary French was smitten to believe at the last moment? Her Gentile gorge rose against him, and the traditions of a thousand years warred in her with nature; yet she stretched her hands towards him in the darkness.

Then she heard a familiar voice, and knew that the old order of things was returning, while Beaver Island, like a dream, went silently down upon the waters.

Some years later, in the '50's, Emeline, sitting opposite her husband at the breakfast-table, heard him announce from the morning paper:

“Murder of King Strang, the Mormon Prophet of Beaver Island.” All the details of the affair, even the track of the bullets which crashed into that golden head, were mercilessly printed. The reader, surprised by a sob, dropped his paper.

“What! Are you crying, Mrs. Arnold?”

“It was so cruel!” sobbed Emeline. “And Billy Wentworth, like a savage, helped to do it!”

“He had provocation, no doubt, though it is a horrid deed. Perhaps I owe the King of Beaver the tribute of a tear. He befogged me considerably the only time I ever met him.”

“You see only his evil. But I see what he was to Mary French and the others.” “His bereaved widows?” “The ones who believed in his best.”

BEAVER LIGHTS

A magnificent fountain of flame, visible far out on the starlit lake, spurted from the north end of Beaver Island. It was the temple, in which the Mormon people had worshipped for the last time, sending sparks and illumined vapor to the zenith. The village of St. James was partly in ashes, and a blue pallor of smoke hung dimly over nearly every hill and hollow, for Gentile fishermen crazed with drink and power and long arrears of grievances had carried torch and axe from farm to farm. Until noon of that day all householding families had been driven to huddle with their cattle around the harbor dock and forced to make pens for the cattle of lumber which had been piled there for transportation. Unresisting as sheep they let themselves be shipped on four small armed steamers sent by their enemies to carry them into exile. Not one of the twelve elders who had received the last instructions of their murdered king rose up to organize any defence. Scarcely a month had passed since his wounding unto death, and his withdrawal, like Arthur, in the arms of weeping women to that spot in Wisconsin where he had found his sacred Voree plates or tables of the law. Scarcely two weeks had passed since news came back of his burial there. And already the Mormon settlement was swept off Beaver Island.

Used to border warfare and to following their dominating prophet to victory, they yet seemed unable to strike a blow without him. Such non-resistance procured them nothing but contempt. They even submitted to being compelled to destroy a cairn raised over the grave of one considered a malefactor, carrying the heap stone by stone to throw into the lake, Gentiles standing over them like Egyptian masters.

Little waves ran in rows of light, washing against the point on the north side of the landlocked harbor. A primrose star was there struggling aloft at the top of a rough rock tower. It was the fish-oil flame of Beaver lamp, and the keeper sat on his doorsill at the bottom of the light-house with his wife beside him.

The lowing of cattle missing their usual evening tendance came across from the dock, a mournful accompaniment to the distant roaring of fire and falling of timbers.

“Do you realize, Ludlow,” the young woman inquired, slipping her hand into her husband's, “that I am now the only Mormon on Beaver Island?”

“You never were a very good Mormon, Cecilia. You didn't like the breed any better than I did, though there were good people among them.”

“Will they lose all their cattle, Ludlow?”

“The cattle are safe enough,” he laughed. “The men that are doing this transporting will take the cattle. None of our Mormon friends will ever see a hoof from Beaver Island again.”

“But it seems robbery to drive them off and seize their property.”

“That's the way King Strang took Beaver from the Gentiles in the first place. Mormons and Gentiles can't live together.”

“We can.”

“I told you that you were a poor Mormon, Cecilia. And from first to last I opposed my family's entering the community. Tithes and meddling sent my father out of it a poor man. But I'm glad he went before this; and your people, too.”

She drew a deep breath. “Oh yes! They're safe in Green Bay. I couldn't endure to have them on those steamers going down the lake to-night. What will become of the community, Ludlow?”

“God knows. They'll be landed at Chicago and turned adrift on the world. I'm glad they're away from here. I've no cause to love them, but I was afraid they would be butchered like sheep. Your father and my father, if they had still been elders on the island, wouldn't have submitted, as these folks did, to abuse and exile and the loss of everything they had in the world. I can't understand it of some of them. There was Jim Baker, for instance; I'd have sworn he would fight.”

“I can understand why he didn't. He hasn't taken any interest since his second marriage.”

“Now, that was a nice piece of work! I always liked Jim the best of any of the young men until he did that. And what inducement was there in the woman?”

The light-house keeper's wife fired up. “What inducement there was for him ever to marry Rosanne I couldn't see. And I know Elizabeth Aiken loved him when we were girls together.”

“And didn't Rosanne?”

“Oh—Rosanne! A roly-poly spoiled young one, that never will be a woman! Elizabeth is noble.”

“You're fond of Elizabeth because she was witness to our secret marriage when King Strang wouldn't let me have you. I liked Jim for the same reason. Do you mind how we four slipped one at a time up the back stairs in my father's house that night, while the young folks were dancing be-low?”

“I mind we picked Elizabeth because Rosanne would be sure to blab, even if she had to suffer herself for it. How scared the poor elder was!”

“We did him a good turn when we got him to marry us. He'd be on one of the steamers bound for nowhere, to-night, instead of snug at Green Bay, if we hadn't started him on the road to what King Strang called disaffection.”

The light-house keeper jumped up and ran out on the point, his wife following him in nervous dread.

“What is the matter, Ludlow?”

Their feet crunched gravel and paused where ripples still ran in, endlessly bringing lines of dimmer and dimmer light. A rocking boat was tied to a stake. Anchored and bare-masted, farther out in the mouth of the bay, a fishing-smack tilted slightly in rhythmic motion. While they stood a touch of crimson replaced the sky light in the water, and great blots like blood soaking into the bay were reflected from the fire. The burning temple now seemed to rise a lofty tower of flame against the horizon. Figures could be seen passing back and forth in front of it, and shouts of fishermen came down the peninsula. The King's printing-office where the *Northern Islander* was once issued as a daily had smouldered down out of the way. It was the first place to which they had set torch.

“I thought I heard some one running up the sail on our sail-boat,” said the light-house keeper. “No telling what these fellows may do. If they go to meddling with me in my little Government office, they'll find me as stubborn as the Mormons did.”

“Oh, Ludlow, look at the tabernacle, like a big red-hot cheese-box on the high ground! Think of the coronation there on the first King's Day!”

The light-house keeper's wife was again in imagination a long-limbed girl of fifteen, crowding into the temple to witness such a ceremony as was celebrated on no other spot of the New World. The King of Beaver, in a crimson robe, walked the temple aisle, followed by his council, his twelve elders, and seventy ministers of the minor order. In the presence of a hushed multitude he was anointed, and a crown with a cluster of projecting stars was set on his golden head. Hails and shouts, music of marching singers and the strewing of flowers went before him into the leafy July woods. Thus King's Day was established and annually observed on the 8th of July. It began with burnt-offerings. The head of each family was required to bring a chicken. A heifer was killed and carefully cut up without breaking a bone; and, while the smoke of sacrifice arose, feasting and dancing began, and lasted until sunset. Firstlings of flocks and the first-fruits of orchard and field were ordained the King's; and he also claimed one-tenth of each man's possessions. The Mosaic law was set up in Beaver Island, even to the stoning of rebellious children.

The smoke of a sacrificed people was now reeking on Beaver. This singular man's French ancestry—for he was descended from Henri de L'Estrange, who came to the New World with the Duke of York—doubtless gave him the passion for picturesqueness and the spiritual grasp on his isolated kingdom which keeps him still a notable and unforgotten figure.

“It makes me feel bad to see so much destruction,” the young man said to his wife; “though I offered to go with Billy Wentworth to shoot Strang if nobody else was willing. I knew I was marked, and sooner or later I would disappear if he continued to govern this island. But with all his faults he was a man. He could fight; and whip. He'd have sunk every steamer in the harbor to-day.”

“It's heavy on my heart, Ludlow—it's dreadful! Neighbors and friends that we shall never see again!”

The young man caught his wife by the arm. They both heard the swift beat of footsteps flying down the peninsula. Cecilia drew in her breath and crowded against her husband. A figure came into view and identified itself, leaping in bisected draperies across an open space to the light-house door.

“Why, Rosanne!” exclaimed the keeper's wife. She continued to say “Why, Rosanne! Why, Rosanne Baker!” after she had herself run into the house and lighted a candle.

She set the candle on the chimney. It showed her rock-built domicile, plain but dignified, like the hollow of a cavern, with blue china on the cupboard shelves and a spinning-wheel standing by the north wall. A corner staircase led to the second story of the tower, and on its lowest step the fugitive dropped down, weeping and panting. She was peculiarly dressed in the calico bloomers which the King of Beaver had latterly decreed for the women of his kingdom. Her trim legs and little feet, cased in strong shoes, appeared below the baggy trousers. The upper part of her person, her almond eyes, round curves and features were full of Oriental suggestions. Some sweet inmate of a harem might so have materialized, bruising her softness against the hard stair.

“Why, Rosanne Baker!” her hostess reiterated.

Cecilia did not wear bloomers. She stood erect in petticoats. “I thought you went on one of the boats!”

“I didn't,” sobbed Rosanne. “When they were crowding us on I slipped among the lumber piles and hid. I've been hid all day, lying flat between boards—on top where they couldn't see me.”

“Suppose the lumber had been set on fire, too! And you haven't had anything to eat?”

“I don't want to eat. I'm only frightened to death at the wicked Gentiles burning the island. I couldn't stay there all night, so I got down and ran to your house.”

“Of course, you poor child! But, Rosanne, where's your husband?”

The trembling creature stiffened herself and looked at Cecilia out of the corners of her long eyes. “He's with Elizabeth Aiken.”

The only wife of one husband did not know how to take hold of this subject.

“But your father was there,” she suggested. “How could you leave your father and run the risk of never seeing him again?”

“I don't care if I never see him again. He said he was so discouraged he didn't care what became of any of us.”

Cecilia was going to plead the cause of domestic affection further, but she saw that four step-mothers could easily be given up. She turned helplessly to her husband who stood in the door.

“Poor thing! Ludlow, what in the world shall we do?”

“Put her to bed.”

“Of course, Ludlow. But will anybody hurt you to-morrow?”

“There are two good guns on the rack over the chimney. I don't think anybody will hurt me or her either, to-morrow.”

“Rosanne, my dear,” said Cecilia, trying to lift the relaxed soft body and to open the stairway door behind her. “Come up with me right off. I think you better be where people cannot look in at us.”

Rosanne yielded and stumbled to her feet, clinging to her friend. When they disappeared the young man heard her through the stairway enclosure sobbing with convulsive gasps:

“I hate Elizabeth Aiken! I wish they would kill Elizabeth Aiken! I hate her—I hate her!”

The lighthouse-keeper sat down again on his doorstep and faced the prospect of taking care of a homeless Mormon. It appeared to him that his wife had not warmly enough welcomed her or met the situation with that recklessness one needed on Beaver Island. The tabernacle began to burn lower, brands streaming away in the current which a fire makes. It was strange to be more conscious of inland doings than of that vast unsalted sea so near him, which moistened his hair with vaporous drifts through the darkness. The garnet redness of the temple shed a huger amphitheatre of shine around itself. A taste of acrid smoke was on his lips. He was considering that drunken fishermen might presently begin to rove, and he would be wiser to go in and shut the house and put out his candle, when by stealthy approaches around the lighthouse two persons stood before him.

“Is Ludlow here?” inquired a voice which he knew.

“I'm here, Jim! Are all the Mormons coming back?”

“Is Rosanne in your house?”

“Rosanne is here; up-stairs with Cecilia. Come inside, Jim. Have you Elizabeth with you?”

“Yes, I have Elizabeth with me.”

The three entered together. Ludlow shut the door and dropped an iron bar across it. The young men standing opposite were of nearly the same age; but one was fearless and free and the other harassed and haggard. Out-door labor and the skill of the fisheries had given to both depth of chest and clean, muscular limbs. But James Baker had the desperate and hunted look of a fugitive from justice. He was fair, of the strong-featured, blue-eyed type that has pale chestnut-colored hair clinging close to a well-domed head.

“Yes, Rosanne is here,” Ludlow repeated. “Now will you tell me how you got here?”

“I rowed back in a boat.”

“Who let you have a boat?”

“There were sailors on the steamer. After I found Rosanne was left behind I would have had a boat or killed the man that prevented me. I had to wait out on the lake until it got dark. I knew your wife would take care of her. I told myself that when I couldn't find any chance to land in St. James's Bay until sunset.”

“She's been hiding in the lumber on the dock all day.”

“Did any one hurt her?”

“Evidently not.”

The Mormon husband's face cleared with a convulsion which in woman would have been a relieving burst of tears.

“Sit down, Elizabeth,” said the lighthouse-keeper. “You look fit to fall.”

“Yes, sit down, Elizabeth,” James Baker repeated, turning to her with secondary interest. But she remained standing, a tall Greek figure in bloomers, so sure of pose that drapery or its lack was an accident of which the eye took no account. She had pushed her soft brown hair, dampened by the lake, behind her ears. They showed delicately against the two shining masses. Her forehead and chin were of noble and courageous shape. If there was fault, it was in the breadth and height of brows masterful rather than feminine. She had not one delicious sensuous charm to lure man. Her large eyes were blotted with a hopeless blankness. She waited to see what would be done next.

“Now I'll tell you,” said Baker to his friend, with decision, “I'm not going to bring the howling Gentiles around you.”

“I don't care whether they come or not.”

“I know you don't. It isn't necessary in such a time as this for you and me to look back.”

“I told you at the time I wouldn't forget it, Jim. You stood by me when I married Cecilia in the teeth of the Mormons, and I'll stand by you through any mob of Gentiles. My sail-boat's out yonder, and it's yours as long as you want it; and we'll provision it.”

“That's what I was going to ask, Ludlow.”

“If I were you I'd put for Green Bay. Old neighbors are there, my father among them.”

“That was my plan!”

“But,” Ludlow added, turning his thumb over his shoulder with embarrassment, “they're all Gentiles in Green Bay.”

“Elizabeth and I talked it over in the boat. I told her the truth before God. We've agreed to live apart. Ludlow, I never wanted any wife but Rosanne, and I don't want any wife but Rosanne now. You don't know how it happened; I was first of the young men called on to set an example. Brother Strang could bring a pressure to bear that it was impossible to resist. He might have threatened till doomsday. But I don't know what he did with me. I told him it wasn't treating Elizabeth fair. Still, I married her according to Saints' law, and I consider myself bound by my pledge to provide for her. She's a good girl. She has no one to look to but me. And I'm not going to turn her off to shift for herself if the whole United States musters against me.”

“Now you talk like a man. I think better of you than I have for a couple of weeks past.”

“It ought to make me mad to be run off of Beaver. But I couldn't take any interest. May I see Rosanne?”

“Go right up-stairs. Cecilia took her up to put her to bed. The walls and floors are thick here or she would have heard your voice.”

“Poor little Rosanne! It's been a hard day for her.”

The young Mormon paused before ascending. “Ludlow, as soon as you can give me a few things to make the women comfortable for the run to Green Bay, I'll take them and put out.”

“Tell Cecilia to come down. She'll know what they need.”

Until Cecilia came down and hugged Elizabeth silently but most tenderly the lighthouse-keeper stood with his feet and gaze planted on a braided rug, not knowing what to say. He then shifted his feet and remarked:

“It's a fine night for a sail, Elizabeth. I think we're going to have fair weather.”

“I think we are,” she answered.

Hurried preparations were made for the voyage. Elizabeth helped Cecilia gather food and clothes and two Mackinac blankets from the stores of a young couple not rich but open-handed. The lighthouse-keeper trimmed the lantern to hang at the mast-head. He was about to call the two up-stairs when the crunching of many feet on gravel was heard around his tower and a torch was thrust at one of the windows.

At the same instant he put Elizabeth and Cecilia in the stairway and let James Baker, bounding down three steps at once, into the room.

Each man took a gun, Ludlow blowing out the candle as he reached for his weapons.

“Now you stand back out of sight and let me talk to them,” he said to the young Mormon, as an explosive clamor began. “They'll kill you, and they daren't touch me. Even if they had anything against me, the drunkest of them know better than to shoot down a government officer. I'm going to open this window.”

A rabble of dusky shapes headed by a torch-bearer who had doubtless lighted his fat-stick at the burning temple, pressed forward to force a way through the window.

“Get off of the flower-bed,” said Ludlow, dropping the muzzle of his gun on the sill. “You're tramping down my wife's flowers.”

“It's your nosegays of Mormons we're after having, Ludlow. We seen them shlipping in here!”

“It's shame to you, Ludlow, and your own da-cent wife that hard to come at, by raison of King Strang!”

“Augh! thim bloomers!—they do be makin' me sthummick sick!”

“What hurts you worst,” said Ludlow, “is the price you had to pay the Mormons for fish barrels.”

The mob groaned and hooted. “Wull ye give us out the divil forninst there, or wull ye take a broadside through the windy?”

“I haven't any devil in the house.”

“It's Jim Baker, be the powers. He wor seen, and his women.”

“Jim Baker is here. But he's leaving the island at once with the women.”

“He'll not lave it alive.”

“You, Pat Corrigan,” said Ludlow, pointing his finger at the torch-bearer, “do you remember the morning you and your mate rowed in to the lighthouse half-frozen and starved and I fed and warmed you?”

“Do I moind it? I do!”

“Did I let the Mormons take you then?”

“No, bedad.”

“When King Strang's constables came galloping down here to arrest you, didn't I run in water to my waist to push you off in your boat?”

“You did, bedad!”

“I didn't give you up to them, and I won't give this family up to you. They're not doing you any harm. Let them peaceably leave Beaver.”

“But the two wives of him,” argued Pat Corrigan.

“How many wives and children have you?”

“Is it 'how many wives,' says the hay then! Wan wife, by the powers; and tin childer.”

“Haven't you about as large a family as you can take care of?”

“Begobs, I have.”

“Do you want to take in Jim Baker's Mormon wife and provide for her? Somebody has to. If you won't let him do it, perhaps you'll do it yourself.”

“No, bedad!”

“Well, then, you'd better go about your business and let him alone. I don't see that we have to meddle with these things. Do you?”

The crowd moved uneasily and laughed, good-naturedly owning to being plucked of its cause and arrested in the very act of returning evil for good.

“I tould you Ludlow was the foine man,” said the torch-bearer to his confederates.

“There's no harm in you boys,” pursued the fine man. “You're not making a war on women.”

“We're not. Thrue for you.”

“If you feel like having a wake over the Mormons, why don't you get more torches and make a procession down the Galilee road? You've done about all you can on Mount Pisgah.”

As they began to trail away at this suggestion and to hail him with parting shouts, Ludlow shut the window and laughed in the dark room.

“I'd like to start them chasing the fox around all the five lakes on Beaver. But they may change their minds before they reach the sand-hills. We'd better load the boat right off, Jim.”

In the hurrying Rosanne came down-stairs and found Elizabeth waiting at the foot. They could see each other only by starlight. They were alone, for the others had gone out to the boat.

“Are you willing for me to go, Rosanne?” spoke Elizabeth. Her sweet voice was of a low pitch, unhurried and steady. “James says he'll build me a little house in your yard.”

“Oh, Elizabeth!”

Rosanne did not cry, “I cannot hate you!” but she threw herself into the arms of the larger, more patient woman whom she saw no longer as a rival, and who would cherish her children. Elizabeth kissed her husband's wife as a little sister.

The lights on Beaver, sinking to duller redness, shone behind Elizabeth like the fires of the stake as she and Cecilia walked after the others to the boat. Cecilia wondered if her spirit rose against the indignities of her position as an undesired wife, whose legal rights were not even recognized by the society into which she would be forced. The world was not open to her as to a man. In that day it would have stoned her if she ventured too far from some protected fireside. Fierce envy of squaws who could tramp winter snows and were not despised for their brief marriages may have flashed through Elizabeth like the little self-protecting blaze a man lighted around his own cabin when the prairie was on fire. Why in all the swarming centuries of human experience had the lot of a creature with such genius for loving been cast where she was utterly thrown away?

Solitary and carrying her passion a hidden coal she walked in the footsteps of martyrs behind the pair of reunited lovers.

“Take care, Rosanne. Don't stumble, darling!” said the man to whom Elizabeth had been married by a law she respected until a higher law unhus-banded her.

Cecilia noted the passionate clutch of her hand and its withdrawal without touching him as he lurched over a rock.

He put his wife tenderly in the boat and then turned with kind formality to Elizabeth; but Ludlow had helped her.

“Well, bon voyage,” said the lighthouse-keeper. “Mind you run up the lantern on the mast as soon as you get aboard. I don't think there'll be any chase. The Irish have freed their minds.”

“I'll send your fishing-boat back as soon as I can, Ludlow.”

“Turn it over to father; he'll see to it. Give him news of us and our love to all the folks. He will be anxious to know the truth about Beaver.”

“Good-bye, Elizabeth and Rosanne!”

“Good-bye, Cecilia!”

A grinding on pebbles, then the thump of adjusted oars and the rush of water on each side of a boat's course, marked the fugitives' progress towards the anchored smack.

Suspended on starlit waters as if in eternity, and watching the smoke of her past go up from a looted island, Elizabeth had the sense of a great company around her. The uninstructed girl from the little kingdom of Beaver divined a worldful of souls waiting and loving in hopeless silence and marching resistlessly as the stars to their reward. For there is a development like the unfolding of a god for those who suffer in strength and overcome.

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