

made him realise that he would not stand a show with them, although something of an athlete, and he did not fancy for a moment having the threat of killing the first man from the lumber company that they should meet executed upon him. Another time he might have taken the chance, but now that he had met and grown to like Miss Lang somewhat differently than he loved his neighbor and differently than he liked even his friends, life held something for him which it had held before.

Finally, when the evening drew on, they all knelt about the statue of Madonna, as is the custom in all the Catholic homes of Canada, for the evening prayer. There were Dubawnt, his two sons, and Miss Lang, Bartlett having been forced to retire early in the afternoon. The prayers were said in French, Dubawnt leading. Their voices rang through the small house.

'Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we—' The men paused suddenly, their faces hard set. Miss Lang's voice, entirely feminine, but with an unmistakable determination, alone continued.

'As we forgive those who—'

'Annette,' interrupted the elder Dubawnt. She paused. 'Yes, uncle,' she said, a touch of inquiry in her tone.

'Annette, don't say that. Don't call down the curse of God upon us.'

'But, uncle, I do forgive those who trespass against us.'

'You forgive the murderers of my son! You forgive the thieves who have stolen my property, my land, who have left me penniless, made me an outlaw! You forgive them?'

There was a moment of deadly silence. Dubawnt, his face white with hate, was staring almost strangely at the girl.

'Do you forgive them?' he finally asked.

The girl's face and voice were full of sweetness. A sweetness born in heaven. 'Uncle,' she asked, with determination, 'do you remember how, when Christ was dying on the Cross, He raised His eyes to Heaven and prayed for His murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He was God. He forgave His murderers. Should we not forgive our enemies also?' She paused. Dubawnt made no reply.

She looked up at him.

'Uncle, can you forgive them? "Unless you forgive every man his brother from his heart, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."'

'Annette,' said Dubawnt, 'leave the room.'

She rose and without reply withdrew from the room and went directly to her own.

Stolidly the three men repeated the prayer. After the words, 'Forgive us our trespasses,' they paused. They understood the words that followed too well to repeat them unless they forgave their enemies, and yet they had not the moral courage to forgive. Then they continued: 'and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.' It seemed to Annette, who could hear them from her room, that she had never before realised the full meaning of those words. The night passed slowly for her. She could not sleep. She thought of what would be Bartlett's fate should they discover his identity, and she felt sure that he would declare himself should they put the question directly to him. Hour after hour passed, each longer than the other. She thought of her uncle, her cousins, of their thirst for revenge, and finally, unable to bear it any longer, buried her face in the pillow and gave vent to the tears that were struggling to her eyes. For a long time she wept silently, then came the relief of sleep.

She was awakened in the morning by the big clock, which had just finished striking six, and, hastily dressing, she left her room and gently knocked at the door beyond which Bartlett lay.

'Do you wish anything?' she whispered.

'I would like a little water,' he answered.

Hastily filling the glass she brought it to him.

'The fever seems to be letting up a trifle now,' he said in answer to her inquiry as to how he felt.

She related to him the events of the preceding night, of how her uncle had renewed his threat, and reprimanded her.

Bartlett became very angry, and feeling that he was the cause of Dubawnt's anger, wanted to go to him at once and undeceive him in regard to the injustice of the lumber company, but she restrained him.

'Mr. Bartlett,' she pleaded, 'be patient. In a day or two you can go out to the camp, and then you can send uncle the money and explain how your superintendent had kept the matter from you, and I am sure he will understand. Suppose you should tell him and in an angry impulse he would kill you; think of what it would mean to me!' She buried her face in her hands.

'Come, come,' he said gently; 'I won't tell him.'

She heard her uncle moving about the living-room and stirring the fire. Then there were several moments of silence.

'Excuse me, Mr. Bartlett,' she said, and leaving him she went out to the other room, where she saw her uncle seated on the long bench before the fireplace, his head in his hands, looking intently at the burning logs. He did not realise that he was not alone till she came over and seated herself beside him.

He started and looked up at her, then putting his arm gently about her neck, and bending over kissed her gently on the cheek.

'Annette,' he said, 'I'm sorry I spoke to you that way last night. I forgive them, child. They have done me great injustice, but I forgive them. All night I was thinking of what you had said. I could not sleep. I forgive them entirely.'

'Oh, uncle, I'm so glad,' she said, and throwing her arms about his neck she kissed him.

She took his big hand between her dainty fingers, and looking up into his eyes, asked:

'Uncle, what ever made you say you would kill the first man from the lumber company that you met?'

He looked at her kindly. 'I was mad with grief, child,' he answered.

'Oh, you wicked uncle,' she said teasingly. 'Now, Bluebeard,' she asked, 'if Mr. Bartlett himself happened to be in this house right now, what would you do?'

For a moment he thought in silence. 'I don't know what I would do,' he answered slowly.

'But you would not kill him?'

'I would have killed him yesterday,' he answered earnestly, 'but to-day—no, I forgive them all.'

'Sure?' she asked with a smile.

'Sure,' came the answer, and it seemed almost solemn.

They were interrupted by Bartlett, who had entered the room at the moment. Dubawnt rose and advanced to meet him.

'Bon matin, Mr. William,' he said, 'and how do you feel this morning?'

'Not Mr. William, uncle,' interrupted Annette, 'Mr. William Bartlett.'

Dubawnt stopped short. His hand instinctively fell to his side as though some force had repulsed it. For fully a moment he stood there stolidly regarding the other. Then drawing himself to his full height, he extended his hand.

'Good morning, Mr. William Bartlett,' he said. 'I'm glad to know you.'

Bartlett took the proffered hand and for what seemed an age they stood face to face, each looking the other full in the eye. Together they relaxed their grasps and Dubawnt turned instinctively to Annette. She read the look of inquiry in his eye.

'Mr. Bartlett and I have known each other for some time. We first met in New York, but you understand that I would not introduce him to a Bluebeard,' she said, taking both their hands.

Bartlett drew the other man aside.

'Mr. Dubawnt,' he said, 'I'm more than sorry that our company should have given you so much trouble, and I assure you if I had known anything of the matter you should long since have had your money