

"I am afraid there is none," she answered. "Oh, I am so sorry that this has happened."

Then, as he did not offer to speak, she continued :

"But remember, Jack, that although I cannot be your wife, I am ever your friend."

"I shall," he replied. Then, suddenly, "good-night, Marion," and he held out his hand.

"Good-night, Jack," she said, and placed her hand in his.

He held it but for a moment, then turned abruptly on his heel, picked up his hat, and without one backward glance, went swiftly down the slope and disappeared gradually in the gathering darkness.

Another summer evening, some weeks later, found Marion in her usual place by the door, absorbed in thought. The day had been almost intolerably hot, and ever since noon great banks of heavy gray clouds had been piling up in dark masses along the northern horizon. About the middle of the afternoon she had noticed that it had begun to rain up there, and even yet she could see the long gray streaks reaching toward the earth, proclaiming that the storm was yet in progress.

"What a terrible rain they're having up there," she mused. "How it will swell the little gulch stream. I wonder whether it will cause a flood of any dangerous size."

Then, suddenly and unconsciously, her thoughts turned to Jack. He had never been back since that night when she had refused him. How lonely she felt each evening because his presence was not there to brighten the gloom. She found herself growing morose and unhappy, yet she would not admit, even to her own conscience, that it was because of him. True, the short evenings did seem long and dull since he was not there to spend them with her, and she found herself wishing that she had not been so stern with him. She had seen him only once lately. How pale and haggard he had seemed; and she felt a wave of pity surge over her—pity, which is akin to love. Ah, well, it was all over between them now, and perhaps 'twere better so.

A clatter of swiftly-flying hoofs startled her and she glanced up to see a dusty horseman, on a foaming steed, dash past the door and down the slope. Far down in the village below she heard him shout, in broken phrases:

"Run, for your lives. There's been a cloud-burst."

She sat there, stupified by the dreadful news. Already she