

cival at once stopped the horse and proceeded to investigate. It had grown somewhat lighter by this time, although the snow was yet falling quite rapidly and the wind had abated. A single glance showed him that one of the bolts which held the thills had broken, and that he could not proceed until it was fixed. He informed Miss Douglas of the accident, but she offered no comment.

"I shall have to get out and cut a wooden pin to replace the bolt," he said. "Please hold the lines for me."

Percival quickly clambered from the sleigh and walked to the road-side. From one of the rails of the fence he managed to cut a piece of oak of sufficient size to replace the lost bolt, and, after a few minutes' whittling, had reduced it to proper form. He was about to return to the sleigh, when there came a piercing scream from Miss Douglas.

He turned quickly to see her rushing toward him with outstretched arms.

"Save me, Percy, save me," she cried wildly.

He ran forward and caught the flying figure in his arms.

"What is it?" he inquired, anxiously, pressing the fair form closer—a liberty which she did not seem to resent.

"Oh, a bear. There, don't you see it coming down the road, the horrible animal?" And again she hid her face on his shoulder.

Sure enough there was some animal approaching, and it was remarkably like a bear in dim outline. But as it came closer Percival gave a yell of delight.

"Why, it's Nero, May. He's come to hunt us. He will guide us home."

And true it was. The noble dog, true to instinct, had scented the danger of his mistress, and had come to rescue her.

Then, suddenly, Miss Douglas awoke to the peculiarity of her position. Gently she tried to free herself from Percival's close embrace, but it was useless.

"I thought you were never going to speak to me again," he said. "Do you really despise me so much as you said? Think what would have become of you had that been a real bear."

Then the over-taxed nerves gave way and she burst out crying.

"Oh, Percival, haven't I been punished enough for my carelessness, without your adding to my torture. You know I never meant it. I don't hate you. I—I—" and she stopped, blushing.

"Go ahead," urged Percival. "Finish your sentence."