

## WHEN THE ARBUTUS BLOOMS.

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SHE was waiting in the gathering twilight, and the fragrant clusters of arbutus which he brought, pink and fresh from the hillside, were not so beautiful as the fair girl who received them. His usually cheerful face was grave that night, and as he told her of the firing on Sumter and of the call for volunteers, her face paled and her heart almost stopped beating. She knew what it all meant,—war, fierce, bloody, and long, and he would go.

Yes, he marched away under the silken folds of the old flag which he would, ere long, give his life blood to save; but he left behind in the little brown house up the lane a young wife, who watched and waited in vain for his return.

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That was years ago; and tonight she was waiting again in the twilight. Time had changed her, but had not taken away her beauty; and the man who came up the lane, one could almost imagine, was the same one who brought the Mayflowers so many years ago, for he, too, was bringing her some from the hillside. He was her pride, all she lived for, and as the rumors of another struggle came to her ears from time to time she trembled to think that he might be taken from her like the other.

How like that April night was this one! The fresh Spring air filled with the perfume of apple blossoms, the steady murmur from the meadow below, and the moon just showing through the rim of pine wood beyond, brought back the memories of that other night with painful force.

His face lit up with a glad smile as he approached and pinned the Mayflower to her bosom, and then, folding her in his arms, he told her of the insult to our flag, the capture of Spanish vessels, and the feverish excitement from ocean to ocean.

“Mother, I must go. May I?”

“Oh my son, can I give you up, too? Father in Heaven help me to bear it!”

The fond heart almost broke with the anguish of the parting, but she sent him away with a mother’s blessing; and night after