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HOME COMING.

When brothers leave the old hearthstone
And go, each one, a separate way,
We think, as we go on alone
Along our pathway, day by day,
Of olden scenes and faces dear,
Of voices that we miss so much,
And memory brings the absent near,
Until we almost feel the touch
Of loving hands, and hear, once more,
The dear old voices ringing out,
As in the happy time of yore,
Ere life had caught a shade of doubt.
If you should place against your ear
The shell you plundered from the sea,
Down in its hidden heart you'd hear
A low and tender melody,
A murmur of the restless tide,
A yearning, born of memory,
And, though its longings be denied,
The shell keeps singing of the sea,
And sometimes when old memories throng,
Like ghosts, the chambers of our souls,
We feel the yearning, deep and strong,
A longing we cannot control,
To lay our cares and business by,
To seek the old familiar ways,
And cross home's threshold, and sit down
With comrades of our earlier days.
For, though our paths are sundered wide,
We feel that we are brothers yet,
And by and by we turn aside
From hurrying care and worldly fret,
And each one wanders back to meet
His brother by the hearth of home;
I think the meeting is more sweet
Because so far and wide we roam.
We cross the lengthened bridge of years,
Meet out stretched hands and faces true;
The silent eloquence of tears,
Speaks welcome that no words can do.
But ah, the meetings hold regret!
The sad, sad story, often told,
Of hands that ours have often met,
Close folded under churchyard mould,
Of eyes that smil'd into our own,
Closed in the dreamless sleep of God;
A sweeter rest was never known
Than theirs, beneath the grave's white sod.
A tender thought for them to-night,
A tribute tear from memory;
Beneath their covering of white
Sweet may their dreamless slumber be.

MOUNTAIN MASQUERADING.

BY ELEANOR KIRKE.

FOR SEVERAL years a little log cabin in the Adirondacks had but two tenants. Joe Fenton, the pioneer, a man of some means—for certain reasons a good deal out of the elbows with the world generally—had come upon this clearing in the valley, and determined to build him a house and enjoy himself after his own fashion. For one season he had held undisturbed possession. The next year, early in June, a traveler begged a night's lodging. This chance acquaintance ended in the gentleman spending season after season in the same place. Indeed, he came to the hut at the first indication of spring weather, and left it late, always waiting to be driven off by the snow. He gave his name as Rex Haughton, and was a handsome, stalwart man of thirty five or thereabouts, of rare intelligence and culture. Joe Fenton's early education had been neglected, but he had traveled extensively, and had picked up by observation a wonderful variety of information, and although a profound hater of the world and its follies, was nevertheless a genial companion and a true friend. Two women situated as these two men were would have longed to exchange confidence. Not so with these. Each knew that the other had experienced some blinding sorrow, but never directly or indirectly had there been the slightest allusion to the causes rendering this yearly exile the only endurable way of managing existence. In temperament, disposition, and personal appearance these two men were entirely unlike. Rex was tall, dark, with clear cut, aristocratic features, and a grace of manner which marked him well born. In speech and gesture he was quiet, and almost lazy. His words were tipped over each other, and were invariably well chosen. His conversation showed profound thought, and a clear insight into political and social economy. He had read much and thought more. Joe was short, light of a nervous, sanguine temperament, and never quite at rest. These men had but one point of resemblance. In both, firmness had developed to dogged obstinacy. They had marked out their paths in life, and these paths they would stick to. They led to social isolation, and quite away from women.
For the past few seasons the trail leading past their hut had been a good deal traveled, and not a few ladies had passed and looked longingly in. These were positively and rudely ignored by our housekeepers. A lady, a little behind her party, had once stepped in front of their hut, and inquired how far it was to the main trail. Rex did not look up from his book, as he answered almost rudely:
"A mile and a half south." Rex did

he cast a single glance at her retiring figure. Joe, who was rubbing up his fishing tackle inside, appeared at the door after she was out of sight, with an expression of disgust on his honest features impossible to describe.

"I wonder she hadn't invited herself to dinner," he growled.

"I was thinking of that myself," drawled Rex, and then the subject was dropped. Joe apparently had but one desire in life; that was to tie himself out so thoroughly in the day that he could sleep soundly at night. For this reason he always cooked the deer as well as hunted it. An indescribable wretchedness invariably came upon him as soon as he was at rest. Rex, on the contrary, drew all his happiness from solitude and perfect rest. He fished, hunted, rode and tramped, because he knew that his health would suffer without the exercise, but to be quite alone with nature was his chief desire. He had some hopes that this, the kindest of mothers, would ultimately turn out a whole man, for he thoroughly realized his spiritual sickness, and would have given all he possessed to be well again. Rex Haughton's history was a painful one.

Ten years before our story opens he had married a young and beautiful girl. The match had been made by the parents of the bride and groom when they were children. A large property was involved, the particulars of which are too tedious to describe. Rex was in love—the young lady far from it. A few months were sufficient to develop a great deal of unhappiness on both sides. Mrs. Haughton did not relish the idea of giving up gay society. Her husband—whose ideas of the sanctity of married life were founded on the most orthodox foundation—soon became disgusted with the girlish freedom of his wife.

One night at a large and fashionable fifth avenue party, Mrs. Haughton had persisted in waltzing with men whose society her husband had forbidden her—men whose character he knew to be thoroughly vile.

After the first waltz he reasoned with her coolly. She laughed in his face. After the next, he threatened. After the third, he ordered his carriage and drove home, leaving her to disgrace herself as much as she desired.

At three o'clock in the morning he had the satisfaction of seeing the most unprincipled scoundrel in upper tandom lift his wife from the carriage and escort her to the hall door.

Then Rex took his turn of making a fool of himself.

Losing all control of his temper, he opened the door to his astonished wife, and dealt her more astonished companion a blow in the face which sent him staggering down the step; then he took the delicate waist of his wife in his maddened grasp and led her to her chamber. There he poured out the concentrated fury of weeks. She, beside herself with girlish indignation, burst away from him and then returned like a little fury to strike him a stinging blow in the face. This blow settled the matter effectually. Rex looked at his wife for a moment intently.

This strange and unwomanly retaliation awakened every part of his nature. The stare had more of wonder than of wrath in it. The blow had evidently possessed all the virtues of a sudden shower bath, for slowly, and with real dignity, he turned and left the room, and in two minutes more, Mrs. Haughton heard the sharp click of his boot heels on the winter pavement.

For a single moment the tiny wife stood and wrung her hands; then she threw up the sash and leaned out into the night. "Rex," she screamed, but the sound of the footsteps died away, and she was alone with her miserable thoughts.

Early the next forenoon she rode down to her husband's place of business. He had not been seen. The next day there came a legal arrangement of property to the now thoroughly sobered and penitent wife, and the next day she read her husband's name among the list of European departures. The family tried their best to keep the matter a secret.

Blanche went for a short time into society as heretofore. Folks wondered why one so fond of waltzing should so suddenly renounce it, but never again did a man's arm encircle her waist, and never again did Strauss's sweetest measures awaken the slightest correspondence of feeling. Did she love him? Not that she was aware. She knew that a nameless sweetness had gone out of her life; but she attributed the change in her thoughts and pleasures to the wretched consciousness of her own wrong doing. One year after, Mrs. Haughton, father and mother, were registered at the Grande Hotel, Paris.

Rex read their names, and started the next day for Rome; they followed him; he started for Switzerland, without being seen by one of the party. Out of patience with even this casual contact, a few months after he sailed for America, and up to this time had successfully buried himself in the wilds of his own native land. Several years had passed since

then, and for all he knew to the contrary, the girl he married might be dead or married to another man. He had not heard her bewildered, agonizing cry from the window all these years ago. The blow was all he remembered. The events leading to it had really sunk into insignificance beside this unwomanly assault, and to his disgrace let it be said, that he had never for one moment ceased to think it a most unprovoked and unforgivable attack. Such is a blow in the face of a man.

When he thought of the little girl he married, as thick he must, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, it was with varied and conflicting emotions. Sometimes the sound of her voice, as sweet as the sound of a lute, would float about him, and with utter disregard to the lapse of time, he would imagine her hand in his again; and then, swift as the blow itself, would the remembrance of it drive away all sentiment, and there would be nothing left to his imagination but the picture of the fury he so uncerimoniously let years before. No words can tell how thoroughly he despised himself for his inability to forget the woman he called wife. He might as well have tried to forget his own existence, and he knew it well.

Joe's log cabin had two rooms on the ground floor and two above. They cooked and ate in the kitchen, and slept in the adjoining room. Every housekeeping detail was attended to punctually and neatly by the indefatigable Joe, and no one would have suspected by a critical examination of the premises that a woman's hand had never been employed there. About the only thing that made Rex laugh heartily was to see Joe go down on his knees scrubbing the pine boards. This was a source of most uproarious amusement, and was always attended to on Wednesdays and Saturdays. On every such occasion Rex was sure to tell his companion that he was getting ready for company.

"There'll be a great load of women emptied out here before night," laughed Rex, as Joe bent over his task one glorious August morning.

"Well, you'll have 'em to entertain," responded Joe, as he came over from his knees into a sitting position, and wrung out his cloth. "You can talk to 'em on the porch, while I get supper. Let's see, we've got venison for quite a large party, there's some cold roast chicken, pickles and doggers left from breakfast, and a good lot of green corn will give us a supper fit for a king."

"Which I propose we have company or no company?"

"Agreed," said Joe, and at it he went, happy in the thought that work wouldn't give out till bed time. This kind of joking was exceptional, and it was only by the merest chance that the word woman was ever mentioned. It was an understood thing that no lady should ever cross their threshold; no sewing woman, nothing wearing petticoats or bloomers. It was also understood that they were to entertain those of their own sex as rarely as possible; and when such visitors were unavoidable, Rex was not to be known by his own name.

On these occasions, he was always Hiram Lawton. Rex had quite a library, but there was not a book with his name on the fly leaf. Not unfrequently it seemed to him that such careful masquerading was a little foolish in this lonely, out-of-the-way log hut; but nobody, he told himself, should carry an account of his hiding place back to his friends and enemies in New York.

The night after this careful house cleaning, Joe was tired. He was asleep by nine o'clock. Rex read until ten, and then he, too, sought his bed. A single moment he lingered by the open window, after putting out his light. The moon almost at the full, was sailing up from the east in all her glory; a few stars were ventureome enough to twinkle but the unusual brilliancy of the goddess of night, and the deep cloudless blue of the heavens, cast into the shade all lesser lights.

"I can stand everything in nature but a moonlight night, and that I can't bear," growled the discontented man. I am afraid he said a bad word or two even with all this beauty spread out before him; and if they were not very bad, I for one, can excuse him.

Is there an old maid, or any kind of a lonely woman, provided she has a heart, and some appreciation of the beautiful, who doesn't want the right man's arm about her waist on such nights as these? This is probably just as true of men as of women; perhaps, in some cases, a little more so. At any rate, either Rex was not weary enough to sleep, or the night had overcome him. It was twelve o'clock before he lost himself in slumber, and even then, his dreams would not allow him to be comfortable. An hour after, he was brought squarely to his feet by a tremendous pounding on the door. This was entirely outside of common events; no such thing had ever happened before. Joe, ever on the alert, was at the door before him.

"Who's there?" demanded Joe, in bear-like tones.

"Two travelers, with a lady and a little boy. The lady has had a bad fall, and is unconscious here, perhaps dead."

"What the devil shall we do?" whispered Joe to Rex, his voice laden with anguish.

"I don't see but one thing to do, and that is to let them in. I guess a dead woman won't hurt us," he continued, with a feeble attempt at a joke.

Joe opened the door, and Rex, after partially dressing himself, lay back upon the bed. They brought the lady in, and placed her on Rex's rude lounge, and then busied themselves trying to restore her to consciousness.

Their story was simple enough, and not at all uncommon to travelers among the mountains. A party of ten had started with their guide, for St. Marcy, and, by carelessness, became separated, but believed they could easily meet again on the same trail. Instead of this, they had taken exactly opposite directions, and the lady had capped the climax by a misstep and a long swoon. Their efforts were unavailing.

Joe who had once been pulled through a hard fever by his companion, at last said:

"I guess Hiram will understand this," and in another moment, Rex was uncerimoniously led, to the side of the sufferer. He gave her one quick glance, laid his hand on her forehead, touched her pulse, tore open her dress, and with an air quite professional, proceeded to an examination of her feet. Here was the trouble; the right ankle was tremendously swollen—whether fractured or badly sprained Rex could not tell.

The little instep and foot looked like that of a child as he removed the heavy boot and carefully pulled off the close fitting stocking. A low moan of pain, and then with a start, the lady partially raised herself and looked about her. Just then Rex was very busy with linen bands and mountain ointion. The little boy, heretofore perfectly still, bounded to his mother's side, and hid his head in her bosom.

"Oh, then, there is a physician here," she said, trying to smile. "I am so glad!" and then relapsed into unconsciousness.

With all the annoyance, Rex couldn't help smiling, as he manipulated the little foot. "I wonder if she will kick when she comes to her senses? Doubtless!" A few hours sufficed to prove it a sprain, and Rex found himself arranging his own bed for the unfortunate lady. "Such an awkward set!" he growled, as she cried out with pain as her companions attempted to lift her. Then he took her up tenderly in his great stalwart arms, and by his candle light he saw that her eyes were soft and gray, and somehow, woman-hater that he was, he felt glad that he could be of service.

"Oh, thank you, doctor!" she said, with true womanly sweetness. "I am so grateful to you." And then, after a moment—"Would you mind giving the Major his night dress? He will attend to himself. You will find it in my strap. Excuse me, but one feels so much better acquainted with a physician than with other people."

It was no harm, Rex thought, to humor the lady's delusion. She would undoubtedly feel easier if she believed there was a doctor within reach, and then the title would be of use to him in his masquerading.

"Excuse me," he replied, pleasantly, "but who is the Major?"

That moment, the little boy came in with his night dress; he had found it himself.

"This is Major," she answered. "Major, won't you shake hands with the doctor, and thank him for helping your mamma?"

Rex took the manly little hand in his, and wondered what was the matter with himself; his eyes filled with tears, and he made no attempt to reply to the naive thanks of his young companion.

"I always was fond of children," he muttered, as he threw himself on the lounge his patient had just occupied, and tried to catch a short nap before Joe commenced rattling the stove, preparatory to breakfast. The gentlemen had been accommodated in the loft, and Rex found that they were both entire strangers to the lady, having been left in her society by the accident of travel. The much desired nap would not come, and the poor fellow actually cursed himself for having a heart tender enough to be touched by a child.

"I told you," said Joe, as he made the coffee, "that if company came you'd have 'em to entertain, but I'll be battered if I thought you'd turn doctor, too. Dr. Lawton! Pretty good! I believe that was the name of the man who brought me into the world, bad luck to him."

Rex wondered, on his first visit to the sick room, if he had not seen the picture of the face in his travels abroad. There was something about it that haunted him. The face was young, yet the hair surmounting it was as white as snow. The mouth was arch, the lips full, but there was a nameless tenderness, a strange wisdom about the eyes and mouth that, in the owner's present weakness,

appeared to him very strongly. Twice a day for three or four days, Rex visited his patient. These calls were brief as possible, and, very much to his surprise, he found himself continually obliged to check an impulse to converse. The "Major" waited on his mother with great care and patience, and ingratiated himself into the good opinion of his companions. About this time Rex made a great many discoveries. With the Major in his house, he forgot his long exile, and wondered at the ease he adapted himself to his young companion. The two gentlemen who had brought the lady to the hut, pushed on the very next day after the accident, thus leaving only the lady and little boy to be cared for.

On the morning of the fifth day, Rex saw that a change was absolutely necessary for his patient. She was feverish and restless, and his proposition to move her to the porch was gladly seconded. So once again he took the lady in his arms and carefully disposed her on the lounge outside. Joe made her some toast and coffee, and Rex, after looking in vain for the Major, found himself obliged to take the invalid her breakfast. Joe looked unutterable things as he handed over the nicely browned slices and the steaming Java, but Rex pretended not to see, and bravely went his way. For the first time Rex wondered that he had not yet learned the lady's name.

"Madam" and the "Major" had done so far, but now it was growing a little awkward. He drew a stool up to the couch and placed the coffee on it—the plate of toast he gave to madam.

"How nicely Mr. Fenton does all these things, and how kind you both are," said the lady.

"Is there anything else you will have?" inquired Rex, anxious to change the subject.

"No, thank you," she answered, "Only if you would please to see where the Major is."

"Here he is now," said Rex, as the boy came running toward them, Rex's fishing-pole dragging in the dirt behind him.

"Oh, doctor, said he, all out of breath with delight, producing his straw hat, "see what I caught with your pole, two trout! and if I hadn't thought mamma would have been worried about me, I could have caught ever so many more."

"But did you ask the doctor for his pole?" inquired his mother, evidently a good deal annoyed at her son's boldness.

"The doctor likes little boys and so does Joe," replied the child, with sweet naïveté.

"I give you *carte blanche*, Major," said Rex, as he looked smilingly up from a stick he was whittling, "to use anything of mine which may seem desirable."

"I guess little boys like *carte blanche* better than anything else," said the boy with perfect understanding. "You hear that mamma. I can use anything of the doctor's that I want. I wish I could live in this hut forever." he continued after a pause and then, as if moved by a sudden impulse of affection, made place for himself on Rex's knee, and laid his soft cheek lovingly against his.

"You will have to stay for a while yet," Rex answered. "Your mamma will not be able to leave for two weeks, certainly. I am afraid it will seem very long for her."

Rex never looked at his patient when it could possibly be avoided, and he had not until this moment had a really correct impression of her face. He found it paler, and more *spirituelle* than he had supposed, and a thousand times more beautiful. Again he was reminded of a resemblance to some one, but the impression was very vague, and he would not allow himself to gaze at her long enough to make it out. A smile played round the corners of the lady's mouth as she replied to Rex's last remark.

"Doctor" she began slowly, "while I know that I am a great deal of trouble to you and your friend, and feel some regrets on this account, I want to say that I have really felt more peace here in this little log hut than I have ever known."

Ten years? How the words whirled round in poor Rex's brain! and how strange that just at that moment an upward reflection of the lady's voice should start him off again in search of a resemblance of a voice he had heard somewhere ages ago. By this time the Major had possessed himself of his companion's knife and stick, and Rex, to hide his confusion, said—

"Let me show you how to cut some letters, Major. Let's see, what shall I begin with? M for Major, perhaps?"

"Oh, no," said the boy. "This shall be my cane, and it shall have my one real name upon it. Now you may make an R." Rex obeyed. "Now an E," dictated his companion. Rex made the desired letter. "Now make a nice X and that will be my first name."

Rex Haughton will never feel again precisely as he did at that moment. He tried to appear unconcerned, but the X was a lamentable failure, and the engraver stopped his work a moment, and, as if

[Continued on English Page.]