

me out and skate this afternoon.

"He bears beautifully, and there are a few people coming from Hexham." "Was going to answer affirmatively, but elected that my time was not my own, appealed to Mrs. Morton." He entered our conversation by urging that, in consideration of his being at home, Pet should have another week's holiday, "and," he said, "we shall be able to show Pet a little of the neighborhood before she gets into harness." "Mrs. Morton good-naturedly assented, Pet went into ecstasies of delight. "It is such a strange coincidence, Miss P., that your father and mine should be such good friends," said Mrs. Morton.

prance has just been telling me that he recognized you from a portrait he saw a years since."

I began the happiest week of my life. Alice, Pet, and I were constantly together. Mrs Morton was obliged to remain in the house a great deal, as her husband was suffering from an attack of gout, and as he would not approve of solitary confinement,

had to be with him. I look back on that week now, and do not wonder that I am so happy. Horace Felton was then but thirty, tall and well made, with a truthful blue eyes, and crisp, curling dark-brown hair; full of fun and good-nature. He had seen the greater part of the world in his travels, and had a fund of amusing stories.

about half a mile from the house.—
The first afternoon we went down Mrs.
Felton was with us, as it was the public
As we walked across the ice, Hor-
Felton was at my side, and I heard a
man—short, thickest, with a great
of sandy hair—ask, "Who is that
with Horace Felton?"
I saw a curl on Horace Felton's lip but

made no remark. Presently we reached
Island in the middle of the pond, where
Mrs. Morton and Pet kept their skates.—
Several people came up to shake hands and
Mrs. Morton the compliments of the
season, and among them the gentleman
with the sandy hair, who asked to be in-
troduced to me. Mrs. Morton seemed much
pleased, saying:

Miss Peel's father, Major Peel, was an
mate friend of my father's. She is like-
to be with us some time."

How long he would have remained at
side gazing at me with those dreadful
en eyes, I cannot tell; but seeing Hor-
at a little distance helping Pet with
skates, I gave him an imploring glance,
rich had the desired effect, and brought
me side, when the captain lifted

"You do not know our local celebrities?" Horace said; "that gentleman is the best man within a circuit of fifty miles. He has a splendid place called the Grange, and no wife."

rs. Morton lent me her skates, and I was roughly at home on them. Pet, Horace and I skinned along, the cold air dying our cheeks with ruby.

I do not know how it was, but from that afternoon I felt that Horace Felton cared for me. Day after day the conviction grew; till it only wanted spoken words to render it a certainty. On the ice, or driving

out to different places of interest in the neighborhood, Pet, Horace, and I were always together. In the evening I played with my accompaniments, or we sang duets together, or played a rubber of whist to please Mr. Morton and make him forget his gout.

So the week's holiday passed. The last day Pet had a few young friends to spend with him. They were still boys, but

It was getting late and we were thinking of returning, when I saw him at the further end of the pond. He joined us, and saying that as it would be light for another hour.

had better let the children enjoy the ice while they might with safety, as he believed a thaw would set in very soon, he added, "and you come with me I want to show you the lichen I told you of last evening."

was silent. We reached the stone, and I examined the curious lichen that grew on it. He broke off a piece, and asked, half laughing, half in earnest:

"If I were to give you this, would you keep it for my sake?"

I replied much in the same tone, and opening a little case that I carried in my pocket, held it out for him to drop the

“I would give anything I possess, Ethel, to know whether you care for me. I have told you that I saw your likeness long ago, but not that those sweet eyes stole my heart away; and that when we met, and I found that you were not only the most beautiful woman I ever saw, but as good

His arm was around my waist, and he had kissed me passionately before I had any time to comprehend the full meaning of his words. At that very moment a footfall, sounded behind me, and, to my surprise and confusion, there stood Mrs. Morgan. Could she have heard those words?

"Had she seen it all? Her color was slightly heightened, and her lips compressed, but her manner was perfectly calm. I dared not glance at Horace. I felt that my cheeks were crimson and my manner unnatural. I was thankful when she put her arm within her brother's, and said in a perfectly unconstrained voice:

"Horace and I will prolong our walk,

Miss Peel; we have seen very little of each other lately. Will you kindly take the children home at once, and give them some tea? I shall not see them until after dinner."

I walked back as one in a dream. He had told me he loved me. Whether I loved him was a question I had no need to ask myself. I was happier than I had been for years.

many months. I should be no more alone. There would be some one to eat for me, some one to whom I could cling. Again and again I looked at the precious lichen. It seemed a something tangible to assure me that my new-found bliss was a reality. I pictured to myself how, in that long walk, he would tell his sister the whole story, and I believed she would fully enter into his happiness. She had treated me

so completely as a friend, that I could not but hope she would be glad to receive me as a sister. Whether he was well enough off to marry was a question that had never occurred to me.

I dressed for the evening with a care had never taken before. One golden curl I allowed to escape and it hung on my black dress which was brightened by

piece of scarlet geranium. I played with the children until they left, listening with palpating heart for every footfall; long, yet dreading to see him open the door and come in. How little I imagined the weary years that would come and go before Horace Felton and I met again!

When at last I found myself in the drawing-room, no Horace was to be seen.

fancied I detected an amused expression
 on Mrs. Morton's face as her eye rested on
 my long curl and the bright flower in my
 dress. I was miserably ill at ease. Why
 was not Florence there to explain to his sis-
 ter why she had found me in such an
 unequal position; or if he had already
 told her of his declaration, why did she
 not allude to it?

After a little conversation on mother
subjects, she began:
"I suppose Horace told you he was a
Continued on Fourth Page.

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