turning quickly around she saw Twid! There, with just the narrow walk between them, he stood leaning on his long gun, his eyes fixed upon her. She was startled to see how changed he was. The events of the past few weeks had paled his bronzed face, and brought great black rings under his eyes.

She could not speak. She had expected reproaches, and perhaps harsh words, but in the face she saw before her, there was nothing but weariness, and the eyes that looked at her were perhaps a little sad. Her first feeling was that of gladness that he had come; her second, resentment that he had seen her in tears, actually crying, and for him too? After this it was easy to recover her composure, and in a moment she stood before him, calmly waiting for him to speak. Thus were her good resolutions flung to the winds.

Twid was the first to break the silence.

"What's the matter, Miss May?" he asked, quietly, although she could see that he was trembling.

"Nothing of any consequence, Twid," she replied; "I— I pricked my fingers on a rose-thorn, that was all."

Twid was looking straight at her, and somehow or other she felt that he did not believe her. Summoning all her courage, she crossed over to him.

"Twid," she said, "why have you not been to see me in all these weeks?"

Twid started, and his pale face flushed. With a quick motion he bared his head, and took a step away from her. "Miss May, don't you know?" he exclaimed, and then he turned and faced her. "Ah! why do you ask me such a question?" he cried, passionately. "There ain't no one knows why as well as you do! You know, an' you know'd it then, that I—that I,— O Miss May! I can't say it, but you know what it is! An' then when you treated me so cold like, I couldn't stand it. It seemed ter me ter be the same as sayin' that you was tired of me, an', an'—well, I jist couldn't come no more!"

May's face was very white now, as she came up to him and laid her hand on his arm.

"Twid," she said, and her voice trembled, "I want to ask you to forgive me for—for treating you that way, but I did it all for the best. Some day you will see that it is so. Can't you see!" she exclaimed almost passionately, as Twid made no sign whatever that he had heard, "can't you see that—that I didn't love you? that I was trying to show you that I did not?"

Slowly Twid took her hand from his arm, and let it drop to her side.

"Miss May," he said, and his voice was strangely quiet, "I came up here to say good-bye; I'm goin' away. Will you wish me a good journey?" and he held out his hand.

May leaned against the lattice for support. Mechanically she held her hand out to him, but her dry lips refused to frame the words he asked.

He waited a moment, and then suddenly raising her hand to his lips, he turned abruptly away and strode down the path.

Then May's power of speech came back to her. Rushing after him she cried: "Twid! Twid! Have you nothing to say to me? Nothing to do for me?"

Twid stopped and turned around. "There ain't nothing I kin say to you, Miss May, and I don't reckon there's much I kin do for you; but if ever there is anything I kin do for you or yourn, I'll do it. Good-bye;" and once more Twid turned and strode down the hill.

May, standing where he had left her, watched him until he disappeared among the trees. Then retracing her way to the little veranda she sank down on the steps, and Twid, watching her from the edge of the woods at the foot of the hill, felt a great sob rising in his throat, and turned hastily away.

II.

It is toward the close of an autumn day, two years later. The setting sun, about to disappear behind the low line of hills in the West, sends its parting rays down the only street of a Nevada mining town. The dingy fronts of the rough buildings are softly gilded, and the win-