



Honeymoon Mountain  
A Frances Shelley Wees

There was a sudden ominous crackling which Bryn scarcely heard; he was listening for Deborah's footsteps on the path beside him, wondering whether to look down and smile or to continue absorbedly with his work. He was spared the necessity of making a choice; for, a moment after the unheeded warning, the ring upon which he was standing collapsed into splinters, and Bryn fell neatly through the heard Deborah scream; the puppy barked furiously; and then he dropped into oblivion.

He awoke, a few moments later, with something cold dashing across his forehead, and the sound of Deborah's voice saying to a whisper, "More, Gary, get more, quick!" The sound of footsteps, Bryn lay motionless, collecting himself. He was not hurt. The grass was thick, here, and he had broken his fall; his head had probably been whacked just hard enough to put him out for a minute or two. He did not open his eyes. Deborah was beside him. She put her hand on his forehead, lifted the wet hair back from his brow.

She bent over him. "Don't die, she whispered like a breath. 'Don't die, please don't die.' He moved his head faintly, and lifted his hand. He would find her... with his wedding ring on it... he would hold it firmly, and tell her her little white hand... he groped for it.

Something soft and light fell on his cheek, a delicate gentle touch. He caught his breath and held it. The touch came again, gentle, on his cheek, at the side of his mouth. He threw off his pretense of weakness, put his hand up quickly, opened his eyes, his heart thumping, and found himself clutching with both hands the puppy, posing him in an anxiety of curiosity. Deborah was gone.

He got up with the puppy under his arm and strolled grimly around the corner, to meet Gary, wild-eyed, approaching with a brimming dipper of water. "You aren't hurt, are you?" Gary gasped breathlessly. "Aren't you hurt?" "Not a scratch," Bryn replied. "Sorry to frighten you."

"Well, that is good," Gary said with heartfelt emotion. "I got a terrible fright. And Miss Deborah was coming to the house and saw you fall. She... she stopped."



"I'm Sorry You Fell and Hurt Yourself."

CHAPTER VI  
Deborah walked slowly back to the house. The shadows were beginning to lengthen; the sun was already dropping down toward the western hills.

"Who is Simon?" Deborah heard herself saying. "Simon? Oh, he's Bryn's husband. They're crazy about each other, you know, and always were, but they did quarrel until they were married. Now, here, Tubby went on, rummaging with one hand and holding out a flat round parcel with the other. "This is from me. It's the only way you'd ever get it. I thought you'd appreciate it," he muttered, his head in the bag.

Deborah unwrapped the parcel attentively. Inside, looking out from a beautiful heavy silver frame, was Bryn's face. The gray eyes twinkled up at her; the mouth was firm and quiet. She looked at it. She handed it across to Grandmother. "You will like this," she said.

It was a most exquisite rose-color silk shawl covered with pale-blue velvet flowers in small perfect arabesque, and a long pale blue fringe. "It's to match the crystals," Tubby explained, quite unnecessarily. Deborah's hand caressed the heavy silk. "I love it," she told him gratefully. "Is Madeline your sister too?"

"Well, no," Tubby said, with what seemed to her a hint of embarrassment. "Who was that, dear?" Grandmother inquired as Deborah reached the foot of the steps. "Not gardeners, surely. They seem quite different."



"All the Girls Are Crazy About Bryn."  
"Not exactly. She's Simon's sister, so of course she's practically in the family. She's an extremely nice girl."

"Has she been a friend of Bryn's all his life, too?" "Well, yes. Practically."

"Do they...?" Deborah stopped, her violet eyes were fixed on his face. She waited. "Tubby coughed. "You know how it is," he explained with a wave of his hand. "All the girls are crazy about Bryn. Always were. They're bound to be a little upset to think he's married now and gone."

"Is Madeline upset?" "Tubby laughed heartily. "Oh, I don't think so," he said. "She's too sensible for that."

"I see," Deborah said quietly. Grandmother looked up from the shawl and lifted the picture again. "Would it be possible to have another copy made of this?" she inquired.

"I'm sorry you fell and hurt yourself."  
"I think it's a little chilly," Bryn replied. "Do you suppose your grandmother thinks we've been out long enough now?"

"She stopped and looked up at him. And as he looked down at her, she turned away with a little droop to her shoulders, and left him."

Deborah stood against the stone railing of the balcony, surveying the changes taking place in her little world, and was thoroughly miserable. Everyone seemed to be in a conspiracy against her. Day by day, slowly but inevitably, all that reminded her of the old peaceful happy life was being removed, and nobody seemed to realize or care that she was being left alone in a vacuum.

"Grandmother, this is Mr. Forbes," she murmured, and Tubby crossed the porch to bend over the wrinkled hand held out to him. He looked very nice indeed in a suit of gray-blue, a perfectly tailored suit.

"I am so glad you have come," Grandmother was saying. She settled herself again into her pillows and drew the thin Paisley smooth over her knees. "I have suggested to Bryn any number of times that we might have some of his friends come and visit us, but as yet we have been so busy putting the house and ourselves in order."

Tubby was frankly staring at her. "Do you call him Bryn, now?" he inquired. "Yes. He explained it to me, and asked me if I minded. Of course, I did not mind. I have become very fond of him, even in this short time. It doesn't matter what he is called. You have known him a long time. Mr. Forbes?"

"I didn't hurt myself," Bryn said calmly. "Sorry to cause a commotion."

They reached the end of the path. Bryn turned. Deborah hesitated, but after a second, turned beside him. Half-way to the house she hesitated. "It was... kind of you to remember tobacco for Gary," she said. "I didn't realize why he wasn't smoking."

Almost back at the house, she spoke again. Her voice held a hint of desperation. "It... it is a lovely night, isn't it?" she said.

"I think it's a little chilly," Bryn replied. "Do you suppose your grandmother thinks we've been out long enough now?"

"She stopped and looked up at him. And as he looked down at her, she turned away with a little droop to her shoulders, and left him."

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From the road outside the wall came the steady hum of an approaching motor. The motor slowed. The gate was open; the car turned in and came cautiously up the drive not with its usual swift rush to the house.

"It was Mr. Forbes." "Here I am," he said cheerfully. "Don't say you don't remember me!" "Of course I remember you," Deborah said, smiling. "It's only a little more than two weeks."

He took her outstretched hand. He smiled down at her, the warmest and most comfortable kind of smile. "Where's Bryn?" His eyes searched her face, and she smiled faintly as she answered.

"He's gone to town. You must have passed him there." "Well, he'll come back," Tubby said with assurance, and turned to the man who had come with him, still sitting in the car. "It's the plane, all right," he said, and the man began to climb out. Tubby turned back to Deborah. "I've brought the new butter."

"Oh," Deborah's eyes flickered over the grave and dignified man of the new butter. She nodded to him. "I'll call Gary," she decided, turned, stepped inside the kitchen and called out. "Gary! Oh, Gary!"

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