

AT LOVE'S EXTREMES

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649066902

At Love's Extremes by Maurice Thompson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MAURICE THOMPSON

**AT LOVE'S
EXTREMES**

AT LOVE'S EXTREMES

BY

MAURICE THOMPSON

Author of "A Tallahassee Girl," "His Second Campaign,"
"Songs of Fair Weather," etc., etc.

*"I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfettered by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes."*

—TENNYSON.

NEW YORK :
CASSELL & COMPANY LIMITED
1885

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
CHAPTER I. MOUNTAIN DEW.	1
CHAPTER II. MILLY.	15
CHAPTER III. MR. HAWKINS NOBLE.	25
CHAPTER IV. WHITE PLAYS "SEVING UP".	38
CHAPTER V. SOME LIGHT TALK.	48
CHAPTER VI. AT THE GATE.	64
CHAPTER VII. AN OLD PLANTATION HOUSE.	77
CHAPTER VIII. WITH DOG AND GUN.	93
CHAPTER IX. LUNCHEON AL FRESCO.	110
CHAPTER X. MILLY INQUIRES.	123
CHAPTER XI. DALLYING.	134
CHAPTER XII. A BIT OF LOVE MAKING.	149
CHAPTER XIII. AT THE RUIN.	164
CHAPTER XIV. A WHISPER IN THE CABIN.	180
CHAPTER XV. A DISCLOSURE.	189
CHAPTER XVI. CONVALESCENT.	202

203779

CHAPTER XVII. DREAMS AND PLANS.	.	.	. 217
CHAPTER XVIII. REALITIES.	.	.	. 229
CHAPTER XIX. WHITHER.	.	.	. 250
CHAPTER XX. AFTER ALL.	.	.	. 260

AT LOVE'S EXTREMES.

CHAPTER I.

MOUNTAIN DEW.

A MAN stood on the jutting shoulder of a mountain overlooking a long, narrow valley, whose scattering houses and irregular farm-plats, seen through the clear air of that high region, appeared scarcely a gunshot distant, when in fact they were miles away. It was early morning; the sun had barely cleared the highest peaks in the east, and the landscape, albeit a mid-winter one, was wonderfully rich in colors. On the oak trees the leaves still clung in heavy brown, green and russet masses; the hickory forests, though leafless, made bits of tender gray along the lower valley-slopes, whilst high up toward the mountain tops, the billowy wilderness of pines, cedars and chestnut trees added their variegated patch-work that gradually rose and shaded off into the blue of distance. In some places where storms, or the needs of man, had removed the oak woods, a dense, frondous mass of

young pines had leaped up with a greenness full of a soft yellow glow. The sunshine and the wind of the South were flowing over this scene, and there were fragrant odors and balsamic pungency in every wave.

The man, a tall, shapely fellow, was a young Englishman who had lately come to the iron and coal region of Alabama to take charge of extensive manufacturing and mining interests belonging to his family. Just at present, with a true English faith in the value of outdoor sports, he was hunting wild turkeys, or, for that matter, whatever other wild game might chance to let him get within gun-shot of it. He had left his hotel at Birmingham with the first hint of dawn, and had steadily tramped over hills and mountain spurs and through wild ravines and beautiful glades, without a sight of fur or feather. Now he stood on this airy height, flushed with his healthful exercise, a little disappointed and annoyed. But the mountain air of the South has in it a tenderly exhilarating influence which affects the imagination and lulls one into pleasant, though often rather vague dreams. No matter if Edward Moreton was an intensely practical-minded man of affairs, the kind of Englishman who is willing to come to America and superintend iron works and coal mines, he was, nevertheless, not wholly impervious to the poetry—the lulling magnetism of the climate and the scene. For a while he leaned on his gun, a long, heavy double-barreled piece; then he took from his

pocket a cigarette and match, seated himself on an old gray stone and began smoking. In the midst of the valley below, ran a rivulet, winding through the woods with a silvery shimmer, and out across the farms and past one little mill, on into a deep gorge of the stony hills.

Moreton had not found his surroundings in Birmingham quite satisfactory, notwithstanding the fact that he had fallen in love, after the old time fervid fashion, with a fair young Northern girl living there. The little mining town, cramped between the hills, full of rough folk, raw and new, could not be very attractive to a man who, no matter how practical and matter of fact in his disposition, had studied art and who still nursed the artist's dreams. As he sat there with his blue-gray eyes slowly sweeping the valley, he was not as blithe-looking as a model sportsman should be. His dog, a small brown spaniel, sat down at his feet and eyed him lazily. No sound, save the rustle of the wind in the trees and a dull distant tapping of a woodpecker, was disturbing the broad silence of the forest. The sky was intensely blue. Suddenly a short puff of dampness came from the southwest, followed by a growl of thunder, a thing not usual in winter, even in that latitude. Moreton arose and saw a heavy line of black cloud overhanging some conical peaks far away on the southwestern horizon.

"Come Nat," he said to his dog, "we must be going

back; a nasty squall is coming. We shall get our jackets wet."

Nat answered with divers canine antics and the two turned away from the valley, the man walking with long firm strides and the dog trotting perfunctorily at his side. Their way led among the flanking spurs and foot-hills of the range, now over great fragmentary bowlders, now through yawning clefts and down winding defiles, sometimes on bare ridges of shale, anon under the dark odorous brushes of the pines. The cloud came after them, sending in advance its gusts of moist, fragrant air. A vast wing reached up to the zenith and a few big drops of rain pattered down. A morning shower in the mountains comes at race-horse speed. The swiftest birds are caught by it. A flock of noisy crows went flapping across the valley, striving in vain to outstrip the slanting flood that fell with a broad, washing roar from that rushing cloud.

"We are in for a soaking, Nat," grumbled Moreton, as he plucked up the collar of his shooting jacket; "a deuced bad outcome for our first day's shooting in America!"

Nat's tail was down and so were his ears. He relished the signs of the weather no more than did his stalwart master. A chilliness was creeping into the air, foretelling how disagreeable the rain was sure to be. The very trees shivered as the sunshine was shut off by the overlapping cloud.