

Chapter 1 : Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair by Louisa May Alcott

"Mountain-laurel and Maidenhair" is one of Louisa May Alcott's longer short stories. It features an all-female cast, focusing on two young women, named Emily and Becky. Emily is too fragile to do much of anything.

I like the flowers. Her eyes brightened as they fell upon a glass of rosy laurel and delicate maidenhair fern that stood among the toast and eggs, strawberries and cream, on the tray. That view is perfectly splendid! A balmy wind kissed a little color into the pale cheeks, the listless eyes brightened as they looked, and the fretful lines vanished from lips that smiled involuntarily at the sweet welcome Nature gave the city child come to rest and play and grow gay and rosy in her green lap. Becky watched her with interest, and was glad to see how soon the new-comer felt the charm of the place, for the girl loved her mountain home, and thought the old farm-house the loveliest spot in the world. Down by the laurel bushes is my favorite spot, and among the rocks is a cave where I keep things handy when I get a resting-spell now and then, and want to be quiet. I want her to have a good rest now, for she has taken care of me all winter and needs it. You shall be my nurse, if I need one; but I hope to be so well soon that I can see to myself. Mother says I make a pretty good nurse, being strong and quiet," answered Becky, plumping up pillows and folding towels with a gentle despatch which was very grateful to the invalid, who had dreaded a noisy, awkward serving-maid. What do you do to keep well, Rebecca? Now I can only dawdle, doze, and read a little. Will you please put those books here on the table? I shall want them by-and-by. They seem to go right to the spot somehow;" and Becky smiled at the name of Whittier as if the sweetest of our poets was a dear old friend of hers. Do you know him? But this man makes things so kind of true and natural I feel at home with him. She told her mother about the odd girl, and was sure she would be amusing if she did not forget her place and try to be friends. Be kind to the poor girl, and put a little pleasure into her life if you can," answered Mrs. Spenser, as she moved about, settling comforts and luxuries for her invalid. How are the school marms? You may safely cultivate Becky; Mrs. Taylor told me she was a remarkably bright girl, though she may not look it. But I do hate freckles and big red hands, and round shoulders. Shall we read, dear? You rest, Mamma dear, and let me make discoveries all alone," proposed Emily, when the sun shone warmly, and the instinct of all young creatures for air and motion called her out. So, with her hat and wrap, and book and parasol, she set forth to explore the new land in which she found herself. Down the wide, creaking stairs and out upon the door-stone she went, pausing there for a moment to decide where first to go. The sound of some one singing in the rear of the house led her in that direction, and turning the corner she made her first pleasant discovery. A hill rose steeply behind the farm-house, and leaning from the bank was an old apple-tree, shading a spring that trickled out from the rocks and dropped into a mossy trough below. Up the tree had grown a wild grape-vine, making a green canopy over the great log which served as a seat, and some one had planted maidenhair ferns about both seat and spring to flourish beautifully in the damp, shady spot. It looks clean, and I can see what is going on in that big kitchen, and hear the singing. A little of the talk reached Emily and both amused and annoyed her, for it proved that the country people were not as stupid as they looked. She fussed about every pillar, chair, trunk, and mite of food last night, and kept that poor tired lady trotting till I was provoked. I should think such a big girl would feel real ashamed without no braids," said the other child, proudly surveying the tawny mane that hung over her shoulders,--for like most red-haired people all the children were blessed with luxuriant crops of every shade from golden auburn to regular carrots. Suppose it had to be cut off when she had the fever. We must kind of pamper her up for a spell till her appetite comes back," said the mother. Here the chat ended, and soon the little girls were gone, leaving Becky alone rolling out pie-crust before the pantry window. As she worked her lips moved, and Emily, still peeping through the leaves, wondered what she was saying, for a low murmur rose and fell, emphasized now and then with a thump of the rolling-pin. If I stand on that wash-bench I can look in and see her work. Do tell me what you were saying. It sounded like poetry," said Emily, leaning both elbows on the wide ledge with a pale pink morning-glory kissing her cheek, and a savory odor reaching her nose. I often do when I work, it sort of helps me along; but it must sound dreadfully silly," and Becky blushed as if caught in some serious fault. I should think you would want something to help you along, you work so

hard. Do you like it, Becky? We are doing real well now, for Mr. Why, how old are you, Becky? I took the place of a teacher who got sick last fall, and I kept school all winter. You can see the school-house down the valley, that red brick one where the roads meet;" and Becky pointed a floury finger, with an air of pride that was pleasant to see. Emily glanced at the little red house where the sun shone hotly in summer, and all the winds of heaven must rage wildly in winter time, for it stood, as country schools usually do, in the barest, most uninviting spot for miles around. We often coast down, the whole lot of us, and that is great fun. We take our dinners and have games noon-spells, and so we get on first rate; some of my boys are big fellows, older than I am; they clear the roads and make the fire and look after us, and we are real happy together. We made and wove all the carpets in the house, except the parlor one. Taylor gave us that, and the curtains, and the easy-chair. Mother takes a sight of comfort in that. Taylor is the lady who first came to board here, and told us and others about it," said Emily. May I sit in that pretty place; or is it your private bower? Father made the spring long ago, and I put the ferns there. Working all summer and teaching all winter in that dismal little school-house, with no change but home cares and carpet-weaving! It looked horrible to pleasure-loving Emily, who led the happy, care-free life of girls of her class, with pleasures of all sorts, and a future of still greater luxury, variety, and happiness, opening brightly before her. It worried her to think of any one being contented with such a meagre share of the good things of life, when she was unsatisfied in spite of the rich store showered upon her. She could not understand it, and fell asleep wishing every one could be comfortable,--it was so annoying to see them grubbing in kitchens, teaching in bleak school-houses among snow-drifts, and wearing ugly calico gowns. A week or two of quiet, country fare and the bracing mountain air worked wonders for the invalid, and every one rejoiced to see the pale cheeks begin to grow round and rosy, the languid eyes to brighten, and the feeble girl who used to lie on her sofa half the day now go walking about with her alpenstock, eager to explore all the pretty nooks among the hills. Her mother blessed Mrs. Taylor for suggesting this wholesome place. Emily felt like the queen of this little kingdom, and was regarded as such by every one, for with returning health she lost her fretful ways, and living with simple people, soon forgot her girlish airs and vanities, becoming very sweet and friendly with all about her. The children considered her a sort of good fairy who could grant wishes with magical skill, as various gifts plainly proved. The boys were her devoted servants, ready to run errands, "hitch up" and take her to drive at any hour, or listen in mute delight when she sang to her guitar in the summer twilight. It came about in this way. It was a pretty nook in the shadow of a great gray boulder near the head of the green valley which ran down to spread into the wide intervale below. Emily liked this spot, and ever since she had been strong enough to reach it, loved to climb up and sit there with book and work, enjoying the lovely panorama before her. Floating mists often gave her a constant succession of pretty pictures; now a sunny glimpse of the distant lake, then the church spire peeping above the hill, or a flock of sheep feeding in the meadow, a gay procession of young pilgrims winding up the mountain, or a black cloud heavy with a coming storm, welcome because of the glorious rainbow and its shadow which would close the pageant. Unconsciously the girl grew to feel not only the beauty but the value of these quiet hours, to find a new peace, refreshment, and happiness, bubbling up in her heart as naturally as the brook gushed out among the mossy rocks, and went singing away through hayfields and gardens, and by dusty roads, till it met the river and rolled on to the sea. Something dimly stirred in her, and the healing spirit that haunts such spots did its sweet ministering till the innocent soul began to see that life was not perfect without labor as well as love, duty as well as happiness, and that true contentment came from within, not from without. On the evening we speak of, she went to wait for Becky, who would join her as soon as the after-supper chores were done. In the little cave which held a few books, a dipper, and a birch-bark basket for berries, Emily kept a sketching block and a box of pencils, and often amused herself by trying to catch some of the lovely scenes before her. These efforts usually ended in a humbler attempt, and a good study of an oak-tree, a bit of rock, or a clump of ferns was the result. She had never cared to look at it but once, having read all the best of its contents in more attractive volumes, so Becky kept it tucked away in the farther corner of her rustic closet, and evidently thought it a safe place to conceal a certain little secret which Emily now discovered. As she turned the stiff pages filled with all sorts of verses, good, bad, and indifferent, a sheet of paper appeared on which was scribbled these lines in school-girl handwriting:

Chapter 2 : A Garland for Girls - Mountain-Laurel and Maiden-Hair

*Mountain-laurel and maidenhair [Louisa May Alcott] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This book was digitized and reprinted from the collections of the University of California Libraries.*

I like the flowers. Her eyes brightened as they fell upon a glass of rosy laurel and delicate maidenhair fern that stood among the toast and eggs, strawberries and cream, on the tray. That view is perfectly splendid! A balmy wind kissed a little color into the pale cheeks, the listless eyes brightened as they looked, and the fretful lines vanished from lips that smiled involuntarily at the sweet welcome Nature gave the city child come to rest and play and grow gay and rosy in her green lap. Becky watched her with interest, and was glad to see how soon the new-comer felt the charm of the place, for the girl loved her mountain home, and thought the old farm-house the loveliest spot in the world. Down by the laurel bushes is my favorite spot, and among the rocks is a cave where I keep things handy when I get a resting-spell now and then, and want to be quiet. I want her to have a good rest now, for she has taken care of me all winter and needs it. You shall be my nurse, if I need one; but I hope to be so well soon that I can see to myself. Mother says I make a pretty good nurse, being strong and quiet," answered Becky, plumping up pillows and folding towels with a gentle despatch which was very grateful to the invalid, who had dreaded a noisy, awkward serving-maid. What do you do to keep well, Rebecca? Now I can only dawdle, doze, and read a little. Will you please put those books here on the table? I shall want them by-and-by. They seem to go right to the spot somehow;" and Becky smiled at the name of Whittier as if the sweetest of our poets was a dear old friend of hers. Do you know him? But this man makes things so kind of true and natural I feel at home with him. She told her mother about the odd girl, and was sure she would be amusing if she did not forget her place and try to be friends. Be kind to the poor girl, and put a little pleasure into her life if you can," answered Mrs. Spenser, as she moved about, settling comforts and luxuries for her invalid. How are the school marms? You may safely cultivate Becky; Mrs. Taylor told me she was a remarkably bright girl, though she may not look it. But I do hate freckles and big red hands, and round shoulders. Shall we read, dear? You rest, Mamma dear, and let me make discoveries all alone," proposed Emily, when the sun shone warmly, and the instinct of all young creatures for air and motion called her out. So, with her hat and wrap, and book and parasol, she set forth to explore the new land in which she found herself. Down the wide, creaking stairs and out upon the door-stone she went, pausing there for a moment to decide where first to go. The sound of some one singing in the rear of the house led her in that direction, and turning the corner she made her first pleasant discovery. A hill rose steeply behind the farm-house, and leaning from the bank was an old apple-tree, shading a spring that trickled out from the rocks and dropped into a mossy trough below. Up the tree had grown a wild grape-vine, making a green canopy over the great log which served as a seat, and some one had planted maidenhair ferns about both seat and spring to flourish beautifully in the damp, shady spot. It looks clean, and I can see what is going on in that big kitchen, and hear the singing. A little of the talk reached Emily and both amused and annoyed her, for it proved that the country people were not as stupid as they looked. Jest be pleasant, and take no notice, and that nice mother of hers will make it all right," said the woman's voice. She fussed about every pillar, chair, trunk, and mite of food last night, and kept that poor tired lady trotting till I was provoked. I should think such a big girl would feel real ashamed without no braids," said the other child, proudly surveying the tawny mane that hung over her shoulders,â€”for like most red-haired people all the children were blessed with luxuriant crops of every shade from golden auburn to regular carrots. Suppose it had to be cut off when she had the fever. We must kind of pamper her up for a spell till her appetite comes back," said the mother. Here the chat ended, and soon the little girls were gone, leaving Becky alone rolling out pie-crust before the pantry window. As she worked her lips moved, and Emily, still peeping through the leaves, wondered what she was saying, for a low murmur rose and fell, emphasized now and then with a thump of the rolling-pin. If I stand on that wash-bench I can look in and see her work. Do tell me what you were saying. It sounded like poetry," said Emily, leaning both elbows on the wide ledge with a pale pink morning-glory kissing her cheek, and a savory odor reaching her nose. I often do when I work, it sort of helps me along; but it must sound dreadful silly," and Becky blushed as

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The tired "school marms," as Emily called the three young women who were their fellow-boarders, congratulated her as well as themselves on the daily improvement in strength and spirits all felt; and Becky exulted in the marvellous effects of her native air, aided by mother's good cookery and the cheerful society of the children, whom the good girl considered the most remarkable and lovable youngsters in the world. Emily felt like the queen of this little kingdom, and was regarded as such by every one, for with returning health she lost her fretful ways, and living with simple people, soon forgot her girlish airs and vanities, becoming very sweet and friendly with all about her. The children considered her a sort of good fairy who could grant wishes with magical skill, as various gifts plainly proved. The boys were her devoted servants, ready to run errands, "hitch up" and take her to drive at any hour, or listen in mute delight when she sang to her guitar in the summer twilight. 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These efforts usually ended in a humbler attempt, and a good study of an

oak-tree, a bit of rock, or a clump of ferns was the result. This evening the sunset was so beautiful she could not draw, and remembering that some where in Becky s scrap-book there was a fine description of such an hour by some poet, she pulled out the shabby old volume, and began to turn over the leaves. She had never cared to look at it but once, having read all the best of its contents in more attractive volumes, so Becky kept it tucked away in the farther corner of her rustic closet, and evidently thought it a safe place to conceal a certain little secret which Emily now discovered. As she turned the stiff pages filled with all sorts of verses, good, bad, and indifferent, a sheet of paper appeared on which was scribbled these lines in school-girl handwriting: My bonnie flower, with truest joy Thy welcome face I see, The world grows brighter to my eyes, And summer comes with thee. My solitude now finds a friend, And after each hard day, I in my mountain garden walk, To rest, or sing, or pray. All down the rocky slope is spread Thy veil of rosy snow, And in the valley by the brook, Thy deeper blossoms grow. The barren wilderness grows fair, Such beauty dost thou give; And human eyes and Nature s heart Rejoice that thou dost live. Each year I wait thy coming, dear, Each year I love thee more, For life grows hard, and much I need Thy honey for my store. So, like a hungry bee, I sip Sweet lessons from thy cup, And sitting at a flower s feet, My soul learns to look up. No laurels shall I ever win, No splendid blossoms bear, But gratefully receive and use God s blessed sun and air; And, blooming where my lot is cast Grow happy and content, Making some barren spot more fair, For a humble life well spent. I can t believe it! Well, "She wrote it herself! Of course she has more tucked away somewhere. Oh dear, I wish I could do it! Emily had a girlish admiration for talent of any kind, and being fond of poetry, was especially pleased to find that her humble friend possessed the power of writing it. She had time to build a splendid castle in the air and settle Becky in it with a crown of glory on her head, before the quiet figure in a faded sunbonnet came slowly up the slope with the glow of sunset on a tired but tranquil face. Becky sunk upon the red cushion prepared for her, and sat looking down at the animated speaker, as Emily, perched on a mossy stone before her, began the performance. Becky, did you ever hear of the Goodale children? They lived in the country and wrote poetry and grew to be famous. Do you know em? This makes me interested in other girls who can do it, and I want to help my friend.

Chapter 3 : Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair|LOUISA MAY ALCOTT|Free download|PDF EPUB|Freedito

"Mountain-laurel and Maidenhair" is one of Louisa May Alcott's longer short stories. It features an all-female cast, focusing on two young women, named Emily and Becky.

Chapter 4 : Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair eBook: Louisa May Alcott: www.nxgvision.com: Kindle Store

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Chapter 7 : Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair|LOUISA MAY ALCOTT| Descargar Libro|PDF EPUB|Freedito

Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair. Published by Little, Brown, & Co., Boston, This is the first edition/printing of this title outside of the Garland Girls. This charming 48 page childrens' classic is bound in pictorial blue-green cloth and is in

good condition. | eBay!

Chapter 8 : Mountain-Laure and Maidenhair

The mountain laurel clung to the bleak hillside, careless of wintry wind and snow, as its sturdy branches spread year by year, with its evergreen leaves for Christmas cheer, its rosy flowers for spring-time, its fresh beauty free to all as it clothed the wild valley with a charm that made a little poem of the lovely spot where the pines.

Chapter 9 : A Garland for Girls, /Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair - Wikisource, the free online library

Read "Mountain-Laurel and Maidenhair" by Louisa May Alcott with Rakuten Kobo. LA NIOLE BLANCHE. (Suite.) A la vue du gendarme qui venait de paraître sur le seuil, J'aimé devint très pâle, le verre q.