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AND yet, the next time Chad saw Margaret, she spoke to him shyly but cordially, and when he did not come near her, she stopped him on the street one day and reminded him of his promise to come and see them. And Chad knew the truth at once—that she had never asked her father about him, but had not wanted to know what she had been told she must not know, and had properly taken it for granted that her father would not ask Chad to his house, if there were a good reason why he should not come. But Chad did not go even to the Christmas party that Margaret gave in town, though the Major urged him. He spent Christmas with the Major, and he did go to a country party, where the Major was delighted with the boy's grace and agility, dancing the quadrille, and where the lad occasioned no little amusement with his improvisations in the way of cutting pigeon's wings and shuffling, which he had learned in the mountains. So the Major made him accept a loan and buy a suit for social purposes after Christmas, and had him go to Madam Blake's

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dancing school, and promise to go to the next party to which he was asked. And that Chad did—to the big gray house on the corner, through whose widespread doors his longing eyes had watched Margaret and her friends flitting like butterflies months before.

It intoxicated the boy—the lights, music, flowers, the little girls in white—and Margaret. For the first time he met her friends, Nellie Hunt, sister to Richard; Elizabeth Morgan, cousin to John Morgan; and Miss Jennie Overstreet, who, young as she was, wrote poems—but Chad had eyes only for Margaret. It was while he was dancing a quadrille with her, that he noticed a tall, pale youth with black hair, glaring at him, and he recognized Georgie Forbes, a champion of Margaret, and the old enemy who had caused his first trouble in his new home. Chad laughed with fearless gladness, and Margaret tossed her head. It was Georgie now who blackened and spread the blot on Chad's good name, and it was Georgie to whom Chad—fast learning the ways of gentlemen—promptly sent a pompous challenge, that the difficulty might be settled “in any way the gentleman saw fit.” Georgie insultingly declined to fight with one who was not his equal, and Chad boxed his jaws in the presence of a crowd, floored him with one blow, and contemptuously twisted his nose. Thereafter open comment ceased. Chad was making himself

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known. He was the swiftest runner on the football field; he had the quickest brain in mathematics; he was elected to the Periclean Society, and astonished his fellow-members with a fiery denunciation of the men who banished Napoleon to St. Helena—so fiery was it, indeed, that his opponents themselves began to wonder how that crime had ever come to pass. He would fight at the drop of a hat, and he always won; and by-and-by the boy began to take a fierce joy in battling his way upward against a block that would have crushed a weaker soul. It was only with Margaret that that soul was in awe. He began to love her with a pure reverence that he could never know at another age. Every Saturday night, when dusk fell, he was mounting the steps of her house. Every Sunday morning he was waiting to take her home from church. Every afternoon he looked for her, hoping to catch sight of her on the streets, and it was only when Dan and Harry got indignant, and after Margaret had made a passionate defence of Chad in the presence of the family, that the General and Mrs. Dean took the matter in hand. It was a childish thing, of course; a girlish whim. It was right that they should be kind to the boy—for Major Buford's sake, if not for his own; but they could not have even the pretence of more than a friendly intimacy between the two, and so Margaret was told the truth. Immediately, when

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Chad next saw her, her honest eyes sadly told him that she knew the truth, and Chad gave up then. Thereafter he disappeared from sports and from his kind in every way, except in the classroom and in the debating hall. Sullenly he stuck to his books. From five o'clock in the morning until ten o'clock at night, he was at them steadily, in his room, or at recitation—except for an hour's walk with the school-master and the three half-hours that his meals kept him away. He grew so pale and thin that the Major and Caleb Hazel were greatly worried, but protest from both was useless. Before the end of the term he had mounted into college in every study, and was holding his own. At the end he knew his power—knew what he *could* do, and his face was set, for his future, dauntless. When vacation came, he went at once to the Major's farm, but not to be idle. In a week or two he was taking some of the reins into his own hands as a valuable assistant to the Major. He knew a good horse, could guess the weight of a steer with surprising accuracy, and was a past master in knowledge of sheep. By instinct he was canny at a trade—what mountaineer is not?—and he astonished the Major with the shrewd deals he made. Authority seemed to come naturally to him, and the Major swore that he could get more work out of the "hands" than the overseer himself, who sullenly resented Chad's interference, but

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dared not open his lips. Not once did he go to the Deans', and neither Harry nor Dan came near him. There was little intercourse between the Major and the General, as well; for, while the Major could not, under the circumstances, blame the General, inconsistently, he could not quite forgive him, and the line of polite coolness between the neighbors was never overstepped. At the end of July, Chad went to the mountains to see the Turners and Jack and Melissa. He wore his roughest clothes, put on no airs, and, to all eyes, save Melissa's, he was the same old Chad. But feminine subtlety knows no social or geographical lines, and while Melissa knew what had happened as well as Chad, she never let him see that she knew. Apparently she was giving open encouragement to Dave Hilton, a tawny youth from down the river, who was hanging, dog-like, about the house, and foolish Chad began to let himself dream of Margaret with a light heart. On the third day before he was to go back to the Bluegrass, a boy came from over Black Mountain with a message from old Nathan Cherry. Old Nathan had joined the church, had fallen ill, and, fearing he was going to die, wanted to see Chad. Chad went over with curious premonitions that were not in vain, and he came back with a strange story that he told only to old Joel, under promise that he should never make it known to Melissa. Then he started for the Bluegrass,

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going over Pine Mountain and down through Cumberland Gap. He would come back every year of his life, he told Melissa and the Turners, but Chad knew he was bidding a last farewell to the life he had known in the mountains. At Melissa's wish and old Joel's, he left Jack behind, though he sorely wanted to take the dog with him. It was little enough for him to do in return for their kindness, and he could see that Melissa's affection for Jack was even greater than his own: and how incomparably lonelier than his life was the life that she must lead! This time Melissa did not rush to the yard gate when he was gone. She sank slowly where she stood to the steps of the porch, and there she sat stone-still. Old Joel passed her on the way to the barn. Several times the old mother walked to the door behind her, and each time starting to speak, stopped and turned back, but the girl neither saw nor heard them. Jack trotted by, whimpering. He sat down in front of her, looking up at her unseeing eyes, and it was only when he crept to her and put his head in her lap, that she put her arms around him and bent her own head down; but no tears came.