

# Winter

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I SHIVERED underneath by heavy coat and forced my mittened hands more firmly into my pockets. The wind blew my green scarf across my smarting face, causing a momentary sensation of warmth. I shivered, and hurried, and wished I were more than halfway across the western playing grounds of the campus. The lights in the buildings in front of me suggested warmth and comfort; but it was cold outside. "Cold." I muttered the word between chattering teeth. It sounded unfamiliar. Perhaps that was because I had never crossed a snow-covered field before. It seemed to suggest emptiness, and loneliness—the loneliness of a solitary person in a crowd. And I thought of a starless night, without light, or warmth, or friendship—pitiless, as truth without love.

I hurried, almost running—that seemed to make me feel a little warmer. I felt and heard the crunching of the dry snow under my feet, and I thought how crisp it really was, and how soft it had seemed. Falling, it had appeared to have the softness of blown cotton, with the yielding pressure of a cloud upon some mountain peak. I kicked some from the path and saw the wind sweep it away, like dust. And I saw the whiteness of the winter scene—its dazzling whiteness, as the chilled rays of the rising sun were reflected from every shrouded thing, and only the leafless trees stood out, black against the prevailing whiteness. And I saw that it was beautiful—as death is beautiful, when, all striving over, rest at last is found, and peace—the peace of the frozen brook, without toil or gladness.