

Harold made himself late that night, purposely—he liked to hear the suppressed murmur that always followed the advent of his handsome figure; he loved to catch the sly glances of admiring eyes; and the short program was just about to commence as he entered the brilliantly-decorated hall. He scarcely had time to exchange cordial greeting with an old friend before he heard the piano, and conversation ceased. Turning toward the player, Harold saw a shapely head, gracefully rounded shoulders, a very tasty costume, and white fingers nimbly running over the keys—a picture to arouse the keenest curiosity—as to the face, he could not see. At her side stood a tall gentleman, ready to turn her music. After a short prelude she began to sing. From where he stood, Harold could see the changing color of her cheeks, as if her soul were in her words. Her voice was rich and sweet, her song an old ballad. At her first soft notes a stillness came over the gay company, and in a moment even the most suppressed whispering had ceased. Soon she swelled the tone with a gentle crescendo until her rich contralto voice seemed to lift everyone into triumphant sympathy, and then, with tones so pure and sweet that they seemed to come from her own heart, she told a story of love so plaintive and so touching that when her last note died away and she arose from the piano, there was only that deepest applause, silence and tears.

“How beautiful Miss Ellington is to-night,” said Harold’s friend.

“Flossie Ellington!” cried Harold. “Can that be Flossie Ellington?” But just then she turned her face. “Yes, it is she,” he muttered, in a dazed sort of a way.

Four years ago Flossie had won a high school honor for which Harold worked very hard. A year older than she, he had always treated her in a sort of patronizing way, and to have her step in and deliberately take a prize which he had done his best to win was a liberty which his proud boyishness could not forgive.

When Harold went to Montrose she had entered a Boston seminary. During her first vacation she was ill and did not come home, and at the beginning of the second she started abroad with her aunt. Thus it came that for three years Harold had not seen her, and what a change three years may work in a young girl! This was what Harold thought when it dawned upon him fully that the cultured singer was his girl playmate. Two years of college life in Boston, a year of foreign travel, had sufficed for