

Flossie good-bye that night, was a sense of a broader view of human life, for his experience had given him a sense of its realness and its earnestness.

The sad expression in Flossie's face as she greeted him only made her more beautiful, for it was the evidence of that indescribable something in a woman's heart which adds the finest touch to her beauty of face and character. They talked in as pleasant and careless a manner as they could command, carefully avoiding any allusion to the vital subject of which both were constantly thinking, until Harold arose to go. This was the hardest moment of all. Yes, he would show her Tom's letter, perhaps she would understand him better then.

"Flossie, perhaps I have not been manly," he said as he gave it to her; "perhaps you do not respect me as you did before, but"—and the passionate words forced themselves from his lips—"but it is because I love you so. You are everything to me, and I shall never love any other woman."

Just at this moment she finished those first lines. Her face flushed, then turned pale, and with a little scream she turned and ran up stairs to her room. Harold stared after her in bewilderment, and then, as unconscious of his actions as she had been, he went out and began pacing the veranda, animated by a fever of hope and fear.

Flossie had hastened to her room to still her throbbing heart from the agitation which those words had produced. She must be calm before she spoke to him again. She went to her desk and reread Elmer Mason's urgent entreaty. Then she tore open a sealed and addressed letter, and read: "Dear Elmer, I do not feel that I love you as a husband should be loved; but if—" a moment she hesitated, then tore the letter into shreds. A flood of tears gushed down her fair cheeks. The tide of resistance was past and love had conquered.

Harold Brown was pacing the veranda with nervous anxiety. What could Flossie's actions mean. The hope which a few minutes before had been so low, came back like a wave, and every moment strengthened it.

"Whatever her answer be, I'm going to make something of myself. It's not brains that makes a man, it's work; and I'm going to work. But if Flossie—"

He had not heard the gentle step, he did not feel the soft hand on his arm, but he heard a sweet voice: "Harold?"