

"Why is it, May, that you persist in holding me in suspense? I truly believe you don't care one straw for me."

"You have never heard me say that, have you?" she asked.

"Well, no," he was forced to admit. "But your actions show it plainly. You give me the cold shoulder one instant and turn round the next and treat that young chump, Spofford, as though —"

"Mr. Weston," came in icy tones from the girl at his side, "I wish you would be more careful in speaking of my friends in my presence."

Percival could have bitten his tongue out the moment after he had spoken. He had made a big mistake in showing his jealousy. But worst of all, he knew she had noticed his weakness.

"Forgive me," he said, after a moment of silence; "I scarcely knew what I was saying."

But after that, somehow, the conversation became broken and desultory. Miss Douglas sat prim and stern, looking straight ahead, answering Percival's questions in monosyllables, and asking few herself. Under such circumstances, affairs became very trying. Weston knew that he had caused all this misery and inwardly cursed himself for it. This was the evening he had looked forward to with such pleasant anticipations. And now his happiness had all fled even before he had rightly commenced to enjoy it. This, too, was the evening which was to settle the momentous question of his life. Well, it was settled now, and with a vengeance; and at the thought he laughed dryly. The laugh seemed to rouse Miss Douglas.

"Don't you think we had better turn back, Mr. Weston?" she asked, slowly.

"Perhaps," was the rather unsatisfactory answer. But a few rods further on Percy turned about and silently began the return.

Unnoticed till now by either of them, it had grown suddenly very dark and snow had commenced to fall. The winds, too, had freshened and a cold, cutting blast was sweeping across the country. Percival knew that in a few minutes more a storm would be upon them, and he resolved to cover as much ground as he could before it came. But they had barely gone a mile when it broke in full fury. The snow fell so thickly now as to shut out entirely all objects beyond a distance of a few feet from the sleigh. The wind, too, drove the snow with stinging force into the faces of the young people. Percival could not see his horse's head,