

Helen's face grew hotter than before, and the hostess, getting an idea, blushed too and glanced reproachfully at Jack.

Many explanations were necessary before Mrs. Winters was fully satisfied that all was well and before she would consent to let Jack drive them back to the hotel.

Of course she would not let them go without sharing her hospitality, and the moon was well up when they started back on their evening drive.

Miss Kingsley, who had been a highly amused observer of the events of the evening, had little to say, but Helen chatted away with her usual vivacity, taking turns between explaining just why she had worn that particular costume, and in scolding Jack for not telling her that he had a summer home in the Adirondacks.

An hour later Jack delivered his passengers at the hotel.

Miss Kingsley, as soon as she had alighted from the carriage, ran up the steps, remarking, "I'll hurry in, because your mother must be anxious about us." She said "Good night," while Helen lingered for a moment to thank Mr. Winters for his kindness.

John Winters' heart had been throbbing savagely during all the ride. He realized that in spite of his rage at her treatment, he loved this tall, handsome girl he had just lifted to the ground. As the soft moonlight fell on her wavy auburn hair, which would persist in straying from beneath her jaunty blue cap, he felt sure that he had never before seen anything so enticing. Then an awful temptation came to him—"she has teased the life out of me and she doesn't care one bit, this is my last chance to get even"—and so quickly that she hadn't time to be astonished he kissed her.

Very seldom was Helen under circumstances such that she lost her self-possession, but now she was utterly astounded.

"Jack—Mr. Winters, I mean!" she exclaimed, tremblingly, and covered her face. But she did not move, and neither did she resist when Jack put his arm about her waist and lifted her into the carriage again. Happily, there were no witnesses to this little episode, and Jack drove away with a strange feeling of sweet triumph. Helen had not spoken since her exclamation of surprise, but the fact that she seemed so willing to drive away with him made Jack's heart beat high with hope.