

"Because if I were your wife my first duty would be to you, my parents could only hold second place; as it is now, my father and mother must come first and you next."

"I cannot agree with you, Eva, it is cruel, it is unjust to me. I would not ask you to leave your luxurious home did I not know I could offer you one as good, though all my fortune has sunk with the bank failure. I have, besides a considerable amount of money invested in different things, more than enough to purchase a nice home in New York, and the situation Mr. Grant offers me is a certainty and the salary a splendid one."

Eva drew back with a proud gesture, as she said, "I have said once, Alan Horten, that I am not afraid of poverty. I do not wish to know what money you have invested nor what your salary will be. When I promised to marry you I trusted you fully in all these things, and I do so now. Were you a millionaire and asked me to go with you I should still refuse under the same conditions, and I expect the same trust and confidence from you in return."

Will you allow me to put our case in the hands of your father and mother, and abide by their decision?"

"No," she answered, decidedly, "because if they told me to yield to your wishes I should disobey them."

"And yet you try to make me believe that you love me," said Alan, with a short, hard laugh. "Why not say at once that you wish our engagement at an end. Who knows what eligible suitors may present themselves before we meet again. Perhaps it would be better to leave you free."

"Perhaps the wish is father to the thought, and you desire your own freedom," answered Eva, throwing back her head proudly. "It would be unfair to keep you pledged to me. You will likely meet many charming and beautiful women in your new home. It may be years before we meet again, and men forget very soon," and she drew their engagement ring from her finger and handed it towards him.

In a moment his arms were around her, "Oh, Eva, Eva, my own darling, forgive me! I deserve all you can say to me but I am so bitterly disappointed. I cannot bear the thought of leaving you; it is like tearing the heart from my body. Unfair to keep me pledged to you; why, Eva, if I looked upon