

sire to return the Stamp was implied in the young man's manner.

"It is easily explained," was the answer. "I found the Stamp and lost my heart at the same time. What could an instrument of torture effect more than that?"

"Oh, is that all? Why hearts are much oftener lost than *Connell* Stamps found, I should imagine."

Harriet laughed. It was a very pleasant laugh, generally,—so, at least Guy thought—but this time there was a sound like "jingling bells" about it that was worse than a thumbscrew.

"But," she continued, "you have not explained this affair to my satisfaction yet. I can't understand how finding a Stamp could cause so great a loss as one's heart; neither why you imagine it mine."

"I imagine it yours, because I saw you drop it, or rather, I saw it flutter out from your dress, in Broadway, New York, and immediately picked it up. As to your first enquiry: any one who has been so happy as to see Miss King can understand my love better than I can explain it."

"Ah," said Harriet, smilingly, "I see you have been at Court as well as the Inquisition. Do you know Ellis Blair, Mr. Sinclair?"

"Yes; certainly I do."

"Well, I heard through him that Miss Percy had lost and advertised a *Connell* Stamp, and that you had found it."

"Yes; I know Ellis thinks so. I thought so too, till I met you at the inn, I knew at once that the *Connell* belonged to you. Will you take it?"

"No," said Harriet, quickly; "I have good reason to believe that it really does belong to Miss Percy."

"But," remonstrated Guy, "I saw you drop it."

"You may be mistaken," urged the lady; "it is a long time ago, and memory is sometimes deceitful."

"It is impossible for my memory to have betrayed me, even though a life time had passed," answered Guy, earnestly. "There is only one way in which I can solve this difficulty. The wind may have lodged it among your laces; but I am positive that this stamp I now hold, came from your dress into my hands."

"Are you acquainted with Miss Percy, Mr. Sinclair?" asked Harriet, timidly.

"No, Miss King," replied Guy, frigidly; but I had another reason for asking your name. May I tell you what it was?"

"Yes," replied the young girl, softly; "I suppose there can be no objection to your telling me."

"It was because I have loved you deeply since that day I found the Stamp," pleaded the young man. "I have been so isolated all my life—I knew little but what I had learned from books. I had been annoyed by some informa-

tion received that morning, and felt rebellious and miserable,—I hated myself, and all the world. Then you came before my eyes, looking so free and happy, with a gentleman beside you, who hung upon your words in a way that was maddening to a recluse like myself. This stamp came fluttering towards me as you passed; since then it has been my dearest treasure, I have worshipped it because it was the only link that bound me to you. Then I heard, when in Paris, that Miss Percy had lost a *Connell* on that day, and that she was on the Continent. Of course I thought you one and have looked for her everywhere, till now, when my second year has nearly passed, I find how mistaken I have been. Words seem powerless, now, when I wish to convey so much. Can you not encourage me a little, my dear girl?"

"I might encourage you, I dare say," said Hattie, gently, "if it is quite right. You are everything a girl could wish for in a lover; and what goes a great way with people generally, is the only and beloved child of a rich man."

"No, no," exclaimed Guy, warmly, "not beloved; do not say that. I never knew neither sister nor brother, and I have been a stranger to my father all my life. Did not I say I was isolated?"

"Oh, how cruel!" cried Hattie; "you should have been all the world to him—and he seems so good and gentle too."

"Ah! you know my father, then," exclaimed Guy in surprise.

"Of course,—that is, I have seen him several times, and I quite fell in love with him, which is no wonder, I suppose, since he knew my parents, and is my guardian besides. I have been an orphan most of my life."

Her pretty, bright lips grew tremulous, and a tear, which Guy's sad story had brought into her eyes, gathered strength, and sparkled downward till it met the floor.

"But you had other friends to love you," suggested Guy, sympathetically.

"Certainly I had," replied Hattie, naively; but you see I am not at all like you. I was a regular romp; and I took everything into my heart, from the kitten to the old blind gardener. That makes every difference in the world—folks had to love me whether they would or not."

"If you had only taken me in among the rest," murmured Guy, regretfully. "But is it too late now?"

"Oh no, not at all too late—only I can never think of caring the least about you, if it is not honorable every way."

"Why should it be dishonorable?" inquired Guy, flushing up quickly.

"I could tell you in a minute, if I thought it would not vex you again. I hope you believe I did not intend to do it before."

"I am quite satisfied about that," said Guy, as he leaned heavily against a pillar. "Tell me what you had to say, will you, please?"