

"You'll die after," Mrs. Latham remarked.

She put her hand on his face. "You are going to do this for me. I've millions, and you are going to double them."

"I could."

"You are going to."

He looked at her then. "Why do you wish to do this — this big thing?"

"Because I like you. And when I like, I like. Never again dare say no one cares for you, Stephen. I care. I liked you cordially from the very first — and believed in you. I like you a thousand times more now. Next to Horace, there is no one in all the world I care for half so much. Won't you do this for me — consent for my sake?"

A slow color crept into the sick, white face. "I'd like to," Pryde said gently — "but I can't. Don't — don't say any more about it — please."

Then Hugh Pryde did the one dramatic thing of his life. A calendar hung on the wall. Hugh pointed to it.

"Do you know what day this is, Stephen?"

Stephen nodded. "I never forget —" There was mist in his stubborn eyes. And in a flash of intuition, Angela understood: this was Violet Pryde's birthday.

"Won't you consent, for her sake?" Hugh said.

"She would ask you to if she could."

"Perhaps she is asking you to?" Angela whispered.

Half a moment beat out in silence. Then Stephen said —