

teacher and pupil. Kathleen insisted on an introduction, little reckoning the result to her brother's peace of mind. Henceforth, Gerald was disturbed by hopeless dreams. There was the pledge made to his dying mother to care for Kathleen; and his extreme poverty. He could ask no woman to share his lot. The determination did not, however, prevent the image of the kind and thoughtful teacher from haunting his thoughts, driving him to desperation.

So stood things with our hero on this wintry morning. As the door-bell ceased ringing, Gerald plunged grimly into his work. After a while there was another clatter:

"Is that fellow drunk or crazy! The whole place will be alarmed! Quiet again! I am glad he's gone. Doubtless it is some one looking for Gilford to pawn spoons, rusty pistols or such like articles. Or it may be a bazaar-worker. Heavens! if I should be offered tickets."

And Gerald laughed outright as he glanced about his poor apartment. What did he care if Kathleen wanted nothing. That consoled him.

It was time to open the shop. Slipping on his coat and making sure no visitor was without, Gerald started down the stairs. "Here he is!" was the greeting of a small crowd at the open door out in the wind-swept street. "Why it is he!" exclaimed the landlord who had been proclaiming his lodger surely dead in his room, since the knocker did not arouse him. Gerald's timely appearance prevented the breaking-in of his room door. One stranger, who remained after the crowd dispersed, bowed and offered excuses.

"I am an early bird and so are you. What about the worm, ha! ha! We have him. Here is my card, I have some important business to settle with you at my office.

The card's superscription was: Mr. J. J. Barram, Barrister, 7 State street.

"What can the lawyer want? More of father's debts I suppose? Or a bill overlooked at my mother's death?"

Gerald was unfitted for work that day. At his repeated mistakes and abstractions Mr. Gilford scolded unmercifully, finally losing patience and giving him a curt dismissal. Gerald could not feel sorry. The work was not congenial and the salary insufficient. Yet he would submit to the impositions of a dozen Gilfords rather than impair his sister's dowry.