

aroused his indignation, and an angry retort was on his lips.

"Stop, Frank, do not speak yet. There is nothing here to be ashamed of except your imprudence. The lady is, however, to be married shortly, and as an honourable man you must not think of her more."

"And what about my feelings? They, no doubt, come second to those of your shop-walker," said Frank bitterly. "This whole business is the work of that old, meddling Dobson," he continued passionately. "He has poisoned you against Miss Marsh. If you could only see her. She is the most beautiful girl in the world, and has the voice of an angel. What does that old idiot know about her? What is she to him? I asked him last night if he was her father."

"You asked Dobson if he was her father?" The words seemed to fall mechanically from Mr. Henderson's lips, as he stood grasping the back of a chair, and with the veins standing out upon his forehead like knotted cords. "What answer did he give you?"

"None," said Frank, thoroughly alarmed by his father's appearance. "What is the matter? I will give her up. I will do anything you wish, but for heaven's sake, father, do not look like that."

Mr. Henderson waved him back, saying in the same dead, passionless tone: "It is a wonder he did not tell you——" when the door opened and Dobson came quickly in.

At the sight of him, Mr. Henderson sank with a deep groan into a chair, where he sat with bowed head. And then for the first and last time in his life Dobson rose to the occasion.

"Do you see what you have done?" he blazed forth. "Are you satisfied with your work? If you are so dense as not yet to understand, at least have some mercy when you see what you have done for the man to whom you owe everything.

Will you go away now and trouble him no more?"

Frank stood as if paralysed. A dreadful thought had come to him. He remembered the look in Dobson's face last night. He would never forget his father's frozen stare. He was beginning to understand, but it was horrible. Something seemed to be suffocating him. The room was filled with it, someone was tightening it around his neck. He could not breathe, and a mist was in his eyes as he staggered towards the door.

Just there he paused and looked at Dobson. "Why did you try to save us? What is she to you?"

"Only the child of the woman I loved," said the tired, patient voice, from which all passion had now departed.

When the two men were left alone, Dobson stood beside his employer's chair, and a hand rested lightly upon the bowed head. The hand was clasped in two feverish ones and the head being raised revealed eyes into which a look of hope had come.

"Willie," said Mr. Henderson, "do you remember the first day I went to school, a little fellow with yellow curls, and how you thrashed Tom Sampson for calling me a baby? For the sake of those days, will you not let me help to make her happy?"

And Dobson's voice was tremulous as he said, "Yes, Charlie, we will help one another in memory of those old days."

George Lambert and his beautiful bride wondered at the cheque for ten thousand dollars which came to them on their wedding day from Mr. Henderson. In her own mind the bride thought Mr. Henderson's son had something to do with it, but, being wise in her generation, she kept the thought rigorously to herself. She was also highly pleased that her aunt should have a boarder and not be left entirely alone. Though it did seem strange that the person to fill the gap should be that antiquated Dobson.

