

## LITTLE EVE EDGARTON

flesh in the statement, but not a flicker of spiritual self-consciousness or fear.

"But — Eve!" protested Barton. Already he felt the goose-flesh rising on his arms. Once before a girl had told him that she — liked him. In the middle of a silly summer flirtation it had been, and the scene had been mawkish, awful, a mess of tears and kisses and endless recriminations. But this girl? Before the utter simplicity of this girl's statement, the unruffled dignity, the mere acknowledgment, as it were, of an interesting historical fact, all his trifling, preconceived ideas went tumbling down before his eyes like a flimsy house of cards. Pang after pang of regret for the girl, of regret for himself, went surging hotly through him. "Oh, but — Eve!" he began all over again. His voice was raw with misery.

"Why, there's nothing to make a fuss about," drawled little Eve Edgarton. "You've probably liked a thousand people, but I — you see? — I've never had the fun of liking — any one — before!"