

"I don't know how I said it. She was asking me sentimental questions, and I told her the truth. I was ashamed of myself at the time."

"If you told her so, I am sure she would forgive you. She knows you care for her now."

"But I don't care for her, Louie, and that's what I told her. I told her I never cared for any one but you."

Louie's face was a study.

"Go away this minute! You've no right to speak to me like this," and the delicate hand which held the dog collar trembled.

"I didn't mean to speak this way, or to mention poor Katie at all," replied the young man with a deeper blush, "but you asked me questions, and I had to answer them as I answered hers the other day. I can't help being a fool, and I don't know what's got into me."

"Well, go away now, please, and then there'll be no more harm done," she said with a great effort to be calm.

"Don't call it harm that these wretched mistakes are put right. Now that so much has been said, give me a little hope. Can you ever care for me, Louie?" he pleaded with his very heart in his eyes.

"I do care for you now—Oh! go away. I didn't think you could be so hateful."

"Hateful! Don't say that. You don't hate me."

"Yes, I do." Her lips were quivering and her eyes full of tears, but she would rather have died than give way.

The happy light faded from her companion's eyes for a moment, and then he asked:—

"How can you hate me and care for me at the same time?"

"I don't know—I wish to be alone, Charley." The way in which she said his name gave him courage, and he said in a low voice:—

"But you do care for me a little, don't you? Will you ever love me and forgive me for all—for being such a contemptible wretch?"

"Yes—Oh! do go away."

He came very near instead, but she shrank from him, and Nero