

STORIA

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In
Use

For Over

thirty Years

STORIA

STORIA COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY.

F PROSE

E IN EUROPE.

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et, were now assembled
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Speeded by propitious
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ORWARD

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to see to it that the Canadian
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FOR CHURCH UNIONJan. 10.—The question of church
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ophermy stable green and red,
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that's clear! The skill
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in Munich, Brussels, and
no any critic's soul a pain!
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beasts you put inside, be
painting open-eyed, and
half an hour it made me
but when that little time
The truth is better for
so methinks I'll change
ue."

WALT MASON.

THE STANDING ALPINE OF H. STANLEIGH STORME

BY
WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

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CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

The man looked at her. He seemed either deaf to her remarks or bored by them. He had unconsciously returned to the line of thought that he had interrupted. She glanced at his face and started back. "Why—what's the matter?" she inquired, gently laying her hand upon his arm.

He started in his turn. "Helen," he replied, looking her full in the face, "there is something that I've got to tell you. I—I must tell you."

She looked up into his eyes. What she read there to her was well worth reading. "You—you love me!" she murmured, lowering her glance.

He stretched forth his arms and then withdrew them. "Yes," he replied in a tense, strained voice, "I love you. You know it, then?"

She nodded, still with downcast eyes. "I have known it all along," she said, and "I—"

"Helen!" exclaimed the man in a voice full of agonized entreaty, "wait until you have heard—the rest."

She glanced at him in a startled sort of way. "The rest?" she inquired. "Can there be more to say?"

"Everything!" he responded in a low tone. She searched his face again.

"What else can signify?" she asked. "Now that?"

Again he stretched forth his arms—and again withdrew them. "To me," he replied, "nothing unless it can tell you."

She shook her head and laughed gaily. "It cannot be more of that I am sure," she said, looking at him.

"What is this—something that you have to tell me?" she asked. "Is there—another girl? Somebody else, perhaps?"

Even as she said it she smiled again. "No," he returned, "nothing of the kind."

She picked up the paper. "You—you haven't been doing wrong, have you?" she asked again. "Robbed jewelry stores or anything of that kind?"

She waved the sheet carelessly before him. He took it, rose to his feet and, without a word of explanation, dropped it gently in the fire.

It blazed up and made the room suddenly light. He watched the flame turn and die away, and then he turned to her.

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his face grew pale, "did you ever think of you realize—just what it means to starve and freeze, to wander about the streets of a great city with no place to lay your head? To go without food for days, to shiver with the cold for weeks together? To seek for honest work day after day after day, without cleanliness and conscience, a tramp and a vagabond upon the face of the earth? Do you know what that means?"

"Why do you ask me that?" she demanded. "Because," he replied, with a ring of bitterness in his voice, "I know—I have realized it. I—I have been through it. It's a part, a gruesome part, of my life history."

She started up and looked at him in doubt. "You!" she exclaimed. "You—H. Stanleigh Storme?"

He nodded. "Yes—I," he replied, "of whom, when people see me on the street, they say: 'There goes Storme—the man without a care, who only lives for life and pleasure. I have starved and frozen—well-nigh to death.'"

She gave a wild, inarticulate cry and hurried to his side. He noted her expression and was glad.

But he held out his hand. "Not yet—not yet until I finish," he exclaimed. "I have begun—wait until I finish."

"I know," he went on, "that all this does not signify. I know that if, today, instead of living in luxury as I almost do, I were in rags, that it would not affect, by one jot or tittle, your feelings towards me, knowing me as you do."

She sank back into her chair with a sigh of relief. She knew now that she was understood.

He went on. "What does the town know of H. Stanleigh Storme? It thinks it knows much—it knows practically nothing. Ask anybody."

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"Some day," he went on hurriedly, as though he dared not stop, "some day—but not now—I shall tell you of my birth and antecedents. They are both good. If it be of any satisfaction to you to know

it, I may tell you that I am your equal—or was in birth and social position and the other things that seem to count for so much. That is not the point. There are some things I can tell you about—some that I must not. I cannot tell you why."

"I have done a foolish thing—a ridiculous thing—a most peculiar thing. Sometimes I have thought of it and stood against. Sometimes, especially at first, I laughed at it, and approved of it. At other times I have denounced myself for it."

"What is it you may know some day. There is but one thing that secondly leads to the situation. Had I not taken the step, I would never have met you. Had I never met you—still, only complicated what was already too much complicated."

"I'm afraid," said the girl, with a mischievous smile, "that I do not understand. Except," she added gravely, "that to it seems most serious."

"Helen," he exclaimed, "can you conceive that a man—a good man, if you like—a man of spirit and courage—a man who was placed in a peculiar position where he was literally forced to do something utterly ridiculous and absurd perhaps in order to get out of his predicament?"

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