

Tremaine should be his care. Quietly he went inside the building, quietly went up the stairs, steadying himself, as he mounted upward, for the task of renewed consolation that inevitably lay before him.

Half way up the last flight of stairs, however, a slight sound from above brought him to a sudden halt. There was talking above, a continuous low murmur. Two voices? Tremaine's, for one, and — Hilda's!

"But I have it all planned out, dear boy," Hilda was saying. "Of course, I can't go back to live with — him. You'll have to take me; you can't well help it. We'll live ever so simply. Really, I can get on with very little, Bernon; very, very little. And I know how to do things, too, some things. Besides, I have a little money of my own, saved out of my allowance. You'd rather that I did n't take it? Bernon," her breath caught sharply; "is your new sister going to be a burden on you, more of a burden than you ought to carry?"

Don, waiting silently upon the stairs, could only hear the accent of the answer, not the words. Then Hilda spoke again.

"Bernon, you are wonderfully good to me," she told him, with a sweet humility. "It is a great deal for you to take me into your care, like this. And I can only thank you by my perfect happiness."

This time, Don heard Tremaine's answer plainly.

"Are you happy, Hilda?"

Without a pause, she replied to him unflinchingly.

"Yes, Bernon, quite. I suppose you never will understand it all; but, after these last weeks when you seemed to be slipping away out of my life, it almost dazes me to know that you are really mine, really my own brother, a part of my own life. Last winter," her