

disagree, for in the very surge of disappointment, I did the thing true to life."

She arose with flashing eyes and stood before him. (She had taken amateur parts.)

"You have convinced me that you are strangely deficient in those finer qualities which commended you to me." She made a quick, impatient movement. "There, word for word, is a letter I wrote you to while away a dreamy hour at the Cliffs. Under the influence of sea breezes and because of sympathy for you, who were enduring the summer in the city, I wrote what I thought expressed my feeling regarding your heroic effort to prevent the crash from coming during your father's life. You stemmed the tide and he never knew. It would have broken his heart." Her eyes softened and flashed again. "This letter you insert in this story,"—crushing the pages in her hand. "You have selected a title for it. Why did you call it the 'Hidden Slur?' You have destroyed my faith in you, and I—I despise you!" She buried her face in her hands and the outburst culminated in convulsive sobs.

The man, styled heartless, looked at the quivering head, and did not chuckle, but muttered, "Catastrophe." It was his cue.

"Grace, listen,"—directing his remark at the grate and failing to see that she was glancing through her fingers. "Have I complained when you trampled on *my sensitive* nature. You alone know how sensitive I am."

She barely restrained her mirth.

"I have a way of concealing it under the mask of indifference you penetrated that mask. If a man loves a woman he cannot conceal it by a monchalant air. It would be useless. Now why does this affair distress you? Why do you not laugh it off as you did my love? I thought you seemed indifferent, but why do you despise me if that's the case?" He had staked his all to win.

A wondrous face was raised. There was no marks of tears.

"Fred Newton, I loved you before—before you revealed—"—faltering. "That is why I could not laugh it off." Her head