

LOVE'S ORDEAL
By Aivah Jordan Garth

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"Don't do it, Althea."

"I shall."

The first speaker shrugged her shoulders daintily.

"As you will, my love," she said, "but I am older than you and more experienced. It is nonsense to say that Roscoe Blinn is not in love with you, devotedly, desperately."

"He doesn't show it, then!" flamed out Althea Kendall. "Only four weeks ago we arranged for four engagements during the next two weeks. I waited hours and hours Tuesday, ready dressed for the Merrivale reception. When it was half over I received a phone message, brief and indifferent, it seemed to me, bearing his apologies. 'An unavoidable circumstance' had detained him, he telephoned!"

"Well, then—"

"The next day, not himself, but a friend of his called me up. He said that Mr. Blinn had requested him to tell me that he must postpone the Thursday engagement. That settles it!"

"And are you going to write—"

"Canceling all the other engagements and advising him that tomorrow I am going on the western two months' trip with the Demings. I had given that up on his account. Now, see the result of my sacrifice!"

"Still, I wouldn't send the letter," advised Althea's friend.

"I shall send it. I am mad all through! I shall never speak to Mr. Blinn again."

"You mean Roscoe, dear."

"I don't. Oh, if he dares to ever approach me again!" and there Althea broke down, the tears came and she ran into the house precipitately, leaving her friend without warning, and had a good cry.

"Oh, it was shameful!" she told herself, when vexation and the wom-

anly caprice of feeling abused succeeded the first outburst. True, they were not engaged—true, further, he had spoken no word of love, but for nearly a month she and Roscoe Blinn had mutually realized that they loved one another. Even to observing outsiders this had become unmistakable.

Althea sat down with great deliberation. She felt herself as hard as steel and immovable as marble. Half



"There, That Will Do," She Decided. a dozen times she wrote and tore up a note, formal in its tone, then cutting, then fairly cruel.

"There, that will do," she decided with flashing eyes, but dewy, and her pretty lips set firmly, but quivering "Oh, it's all over—the beautiful, beautiful dream!" she wailed, and threw herself face down on the couch—and wept again as though her tender but rebellious heart would break