STORY PAGE.

POOR TUFTS.

(BY MARGARET PULLING.)

Mark Tufts one evening came into Smith's den and found Smith thinking very hard.

"Look here, Smith," he said, "you must help me out here. I'm in a pack of trouble, old nick. Now you promise you won't say a word to anybody about this?"

"How! know what it is before I promise," said Smith. "It may be something criminal."

"It isn't," said Tufts. "It's about those girls."

"Which?"

"Hallie Morton and her cousin."

"All right," said Smith. "Go ahead."

"Well, just listen to this. Dear Mr. Tufts: Many thanks for the flowers. Even if you never see me again, I shall always remember my stay here with pleasure. You have done so much to make me happy. I haven't, have I?"

"I don't know," said Smith. "Go on."

"——to make me happy. May I keep a few faded flowers to remind me of your years, Ruth?"

"But I didn't even send those flowers for her," said Tufts, in exasperation.

"Then how did she get them? Wasn't her name on the box?"

"Miss Hallie——" he said, "or——How is your cousin?"

"Very well, thank you, Mr. Tufts. She was so pleased with those lovely flowers."

And the smile became broader, and more unnerving, and more exasperating.

"Don't be down to see you presently," said Hallie, quite.

"Oh, no! I didn't——I didn't want to disturb you," said Tufts hastily.

"Why? Did you think she had gone to bed?"

"I wanted to explain something," said Tufts. "They before yesterday, you know, when I sent those flowers——"

"Oh, she's fearfully proud of that," said Hallie, gaily. "You quite to have come in, you know. Dad I told her you probably hadn't time."

"It isn't that Miss Hallie; it isn't, indeed, I was going to say, I only wrote 'Miss Morton' on the box, and I sought——"

"Oh, of course, we knew which Miss Morton you meant," said Hallie, with a knowing smile.

Poor Tufts was beginning to perspire with anguish.

"No," he said, "I don't mean that. I mean, those flowers——"

"Why did you send them, anyhow?" said Hallie. Then, as a rattle of shirts sounded outside the door, "Here comes little brother! I'm going to hide you two. You know, she's going away in a day or two. Bye——"

"Bye," said Tufts, in a dazed way.

"Bye, bye, bye," said Hallie, with a knowing smile.

"Bye, bye, bye," said Smith, in a dreamy way.

"Bye, bye,