

the smile, assent in the gesture. However, he perceived neither.

She took a short step forward. The wind whipped the fountain jet, and a fan-like cloud of spray drifted off across the asphalt. Then they moved on together.

Presently she said, quietly, "I believe I will carry a bunch of those violets"; and she waited for him to go back through the fountain spray, find the peddler, and rummage among the perfumed heaps in the basket. "Because," she added cheerfully, as he returned with the flowers, "I am going to the East Tenth Street Mission, and I meant to take some flowers, anyway."

"If you would keep that cluster and let me send the whole basket to your mission—" he began.

But she had already started on across the wet pavement.

"I did not know you were to give my flowers to those cripples," he said, keeping pace with her.

"Do you mind?" she asked, but she had not meant to say that, and she walked a little more quickly to escape the quick reply.

"I want to ask you something," he said, after a moment's brisk walking. "I wish—if you don't mind—I wish you would walk around the square with me—just once—"

"Certainly not," she said; "and now you will say good-bye—because you are going away, you say." She had stopped at the Fourth Avenue edge of the square. "So good-bye, and thank you for the beautiful dog, and for the violets."

"But you won't keep the dog, and you won't keep the violets," he said; "and, besides, if you are going north—"

"Good-bye," she repeated, smiling.

"—besides," he went on, "I would like to know where you are going."

"That," she said, "is what I do not wish to tell you—or anybody."

There was a brief silence; the charm of her bent head distracted him.

"If you won't go," she said, with caprice, "I will walk once around the square with you, but it is the silliest thing I have ever done in my entire life."

"Why won't you keep the bull-terrier?" he asked, humbly.

"Because I'm going north—for one reason."

"Couldn't you take His Highness?"

"No—that is, I could, but—I can't explain—he would distract me."

"Shall I take him back, then?"

"Why?" she demanded, surprised.

"I—only I thought if you did not care for him—" he stammered. "You see, I love the dog."

She bit her lip and bent her eyes on the ground. Again he quickened his pace to keep step with her.

"You see," he said, searching about for the right phrase, "I wanted you to have something that I could venture to offer you—er—something not valuable—er—I mean not—er—"

"Your dog is a very valuable champion; everybody knows that," she said, carelessly.

"Oh, yes—he's a corker in his line; out of Empress by Ameer, you know—"

"I might manage . . . to keep him . . . for a while," she observed, without enthusiasm. "At all events, I shall tie my violets to his collar."

He watched her; the roar of Broadway died out in his ears; in hers it grew, increasing, louder, louder. A dim scene rose unbidden before her eyes—the high

gloom of a cathedral, the great organ's first unsteady throbbing—her wedding-march! No, not that; for while she stood, coldly transfixed in centred self-absorption, she seemed to see a shapeless mass of wreaths piled in the twilight of an altar—the dreadful pomp and panoply and circumstance of death—

She raised her eyes to the man beside her; her whole being vibrated with the menace of a dirge, and in the roar of traffic around her she divined the imprisoned thunder of the organ pealing for her dead.

She turned her head sharply toward the west.

"What is it?" he asked, in the voice of a man who needs no answer to his question.

She kept her head steadily turned. Through Fifteenth Street the sun poured a red light that deepened as the mist rose from the docks. She heard the river whistles blowing; an electric light broke out through the bay haze.

It was true she was thinking of her husband—thinking of him almost desperately, distressed that already he should have become to her nothing more vital than a memory.

Unconscious of the man beside her, she stood there in the red glow, straining eyes and memory to focus both on a past that receded and seemed to dwindle to a point of utter vacancy.

Then her husband's face grew out of vacancy, so real, so living, that she started—to find herself walking slowly past the fountain with Langham at her side.

After a moment she said: "Now we have walked all around the square. Now I am going to walk home; . . . and thank you . . . for my walk, . . . which was probably as wholesome a performance as I could have indulged in—and quite unconventional enough, even for you."

They faced about and traversed the square, crossed Broadway in silence, passed through the kindling shadows of the long cross-street, and turned into Fifth Avenue.

"You are very silent," she said, sorry at once that she had said it, uncertain as to the trend his speech might follow, and withal curious.

"It was only about that dog," he said.

She wondered if it was exactly that, and decided it was not. It was not. He was thinking of her husband as he had known him—only by sight and by report.

He remembered the florid gentleman perfectly; he had often seen him tooling his four; he had seen him at the traps in Monte Carlo, dividing with the best shot in Italy; he had seen him riding to hounds a few days before that fatal run of the Shadowbrook Hunt, where he had taken his last fence. Once, too, he had seen him at the Sagamore Angling Club up state.

"When are you going?" he said, suddenly.

"Tomorrow."

"I am not to know where?"

"Why should you?" and then, a little quickly: "No, no. It is a pilgrimage."

"When you return—" he began, but she shook her head.

"No, no. I do not know where I may be."

In the April twilight the electric lamps along the avenue snapped alight. The air rang with the metallic chatter of sparrows.

They mounted the steps of her house; she turned and swept the dim avenue with a casual glance.

"So you, too, are going north?" she asked, pleasantly.

"Yes—tonight."

She gave him her hand. She felt the pressure of his hand of her gloved fingers after he had gone, although their hands had scarcely touched at all.

And so she went into the dimly lighted house, through the drawing-room, which was quite dark, into the music-room beyond; and there she sat down upon a chair by the piano—a little gilded chair that revolved as she pushed herself idly, now to the right, now to the left.

Yes, . . . after all, she would go; . . . she would make that pilgrimage to the spot on earth her husband loved best of all—the sweet waters of the Sagamore, where his beloved club lodge stood, and whither, for a month every year, he had repaired with some old friends to renew a bachelor's love for angling.

She had never accompanied him on these trips; she instinctively divined a man's desire for a ramble among old haunts with old friends, freed for a brief space from the happy burdens of domesticity.

The lodge on the Sagamore was now her shrine; there she would rest and think of him, follow his footsteps to his best-loved haunts, wander along the rivers where he had wandered, dream by the streams where he had dreamed.

She had married her husband out of awe, sheer awe for his wonderful personality. And he was wonderful; faultless in everything—though not so faultless as to be in bad taste, she often told herself. His entourage also was faultless; and the general faultlessness of everything had made her married life very perfect.

As she sat thinking in the darkened music-room, something stirred in the hallway outside. She raised her eyes; the white bull-terrier stood in the lighted doorway, looking in at her.

A perfectly incomprehensible and resistless rush of loneliness swept her to her feet; in a moment she was down on the floor again, on her silken knees, her arms around the dog, her head pressed tightly to his head.

"Oh," she said, choking, "I must go tomorrow—I must—I must. . . . And here are the violets; . . . I will tie them to your collar. . . . Hold still! . . . He loves you; . . . but you shall not have them—do you hear? . . . No, no . . . for I shall wear them, . . . for I like their odor; . . . and, anyway, . . . I am going away." . . .

IV

The next day she began her pilgrimage; and His Highness went with her; and a maid from the British Isles.

She had telegraphed to the Sagamore Club for rooms, to make sure, but that was unnecessary, because there were at the moment only three members of the club at the lodge.

Now although she herself could scarcely be considered a member of the Sagamore Angling Club, she still controlled her husband's shares in the concern, and she was duly and impressively welcomed by the steward. Two of the three members domiciled there came up to pay their respects when she alighted from the muddy buckboard sent to the railway to meet her; they were her husband's old friends, Colonel Hyssop and

Major Brent, white-haired, purple-faced, well-groomed gentlemen in the early fifties. The third member was out in the rain fishing somewhere downstream.

"New man here, madam—a good fellow, but a bad rod—eh, Brent?"

"Bad rod," repeated Major Brent, wagging his fat head. "Uses ferrules to a six-ounce rod. We splice—eh, Colonel?"

"Certainly," said the Colonel.

She stood by the open fire in the center of the hall-way, holding her shapely hands out toward the blaze, while her maid relieved her of the wet rain-coat.

"Splice what, Colonel Hyssop, if you please?" she inquired, smiling.

"Splice our rods, madam—no creaky joints and ferrules for old hands like Major Brent and me, ma'am. Do you throw a fly?"

"Oh, no," she said, with a faint smile. "I—I do nothing."

"Except to remain the handsomest woman in the five boroughs!" said the Major, with a futile attempt to bend at the waist—utterly unsuccessful, yet impressive.

She dropped him a courtesy, then took the glass of sherry that the steward brought and sipped it, meditative eyes on the blazing logs. Presently she held out the empty wine-glass; the steward took it on his heavy silver salver; she raised her eyes. A half-length portrait of her husband stared at her from over the mantel, lighted an infernal red in the fire-glow.

A catch in her throat, a momentary twitch of the lips, then she gazed calmly up into the familiar face.

Under the frame of the picture was written his full hyphenated name; following that she read:

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF

THE SAGAMORE ANGLING CLUB 1880—1901

Major Brent and Colonel Hyssop observed her in decorously suppressed sympathy.

"I did not know he was president," she said, after a moment; "he never told me that."

"Those who knew him best understood his rare modesty," said Major Brent. "I knew him, madam; I honored him; I honor his memory."

"He was not only president and founder," observed Colonel Hyssop, "but he owned three-quarters of the stock."

"Are the shares valuable?" she asked. "I have them; I should be glad to give them to the club, Colonel Hyssop—in his memory."

"Good gad! madam," said the Colonel, "the shares are worth five thousand apiece!"

"I am the happier to give them—if the club will accept," she said, flushing, embarrassed, fearful of posing as a Lady Bountiful before anybody. She added, hastily, "You must direct me in the matter, Colonel Hyssop; we can talk of it later."

Again she looked up into her husband's face over the mantel.

Her bull-terrier came trotting into the hall, his polished nails and padded feet beating a patter across the hard-wood floor.

"I shall dine in my own rooms this evening," she said, smiling vaguely at the approaching dog.

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