

with a gradual lowering of the lids over his gloomy eyes.

No woman wholly arises above the animal apprisement of the man she loves, not even the most spiritual. Some escape into convents from its contamination, others call it affinity, or intellectual names, but it is part of the price woman pays for the fall, that the man's ruling retains some of its original force over her.

"You want some colour," said Howard, coldly.

His disapproval shamed her. She felt like a creature put up for a price and found wanting. For a moment she had a wild wish to run away and hide herself from his criticising glance. The sweet equality of their past relationship, the simple natural bond between them was as though it had not existed. She remembered that she was a wife who had not been hard to win. She stood there and bore quietly one of those anguishes which surely must tell for a woman's soul at last.

She laughed a little hysterically.

"It is the cold," she said. "I am never very rosy in the winter."

The hand she rested on his arm trembled so violently that he noticed it.

"Would you rather not go?" he asked, kindly.

"Don't ask me to stay at home," she answered in a sudden fright lest she should lose this evening with him. "The Governor will be there and Lady ——" she added in hurried confusion, "and Frank."

Howard laughed, and led her to the carriage.

The drive to St. Clair was a silent one. Their destination was a mansion overlooking the esplanade. They were late, and it took some time to get through the crush and reach the host and hostess. That duty performed, Caroline found a quiet corner for herself, and looked on dreamily at the animation around her without any wish to take part in it. Not that the note of pleasure rang falsely to her—she had that rare gift of creating gods and goddesses everywhere; she had been set apart from

favour by his judgment, and just now she had no strength to demur.

Presently there was a little murmur and rustle as of expectation or welcome. Caroline stood up to look. There was a woman entering the room, beautiful as a statue with the grace and charm of life.

Caroline knew her instantly. "Geraldine Ward!" she exclaimed, above her breath.

The perfect arms and shoulders, the great dark eyes, the wealth of black-bronze hair, the inimitable grace were not to be mistaken. She was dressed in dead-white satin, and wore neither flowers nor jewels, and needed none.

The first sensation of the wife who had been slighted for lack of beauty was a covetous envy of the woman who possessed it; the next was a strange thrill of imparted magnetism. She turned and saw Howard by her side. His startled breath arrested her attention. The soft gaze she had turned to him lingered in wondering surprise. She saw his face flush, grow young and glad, then pale and aged. While oblivious of her presence he watched the other woman in white.

Geraldine made her slow progress of triumph with many interruptions. Her friendly eyes lightened and brightened as she came. Her smile had something of melancholy in its sweetness.

Caroline missed no expression, no gesture; she drew in all the perfection of form and grace of the woman who had supplanted her as she might have breathed a fragrant poison in desperate pain, fascinated even while her life fainted. All around her seemed wavering and fading, yet she saw Geraldine's half-perceptible start when her glance fell upon Howard, the widening of the pupils of the dark eyes, the half mocking of her smile and bow. Then for one swift deep moment the two women's eyes fastened — and Geraldine passed on.

Many people are born and go through life, and die, and do not experience what Caroline did in those moments. All the reserve of her passion rose. It seemed that she had been shipwrecked in the night, and the