

It was near one of these that Denise halted. He lay upon his side, his face half-hidden by one arm, while the other was flung out upon the floor, palm down and fingers crooked so that the knuckles stood out, white and bloodless. The tears had been running down her cheeks from the very threshold, and every time she tried to speak sobs choked her. The pity of it, oh ! the pity and the anguish of it, and all for one man's great wickedness ! But now she drew in her breath with a gasp.

"Lhoeac's ring !" she cried, pointing to the hand that was already so like the hand of death. "Who—who is that ?"

"That ?" and Caterina looked from the woman to the man and back again to the woman's face while she slipped an arm round her waist and drew her close to herself before answering. "That is Monsieur la Clazonnè, and Carlo says that by God's grace and with a woman's nursing he may live."

"No, no, no, not Giles la Clazonnè ; it is François de Casera."

"Giles François la Clazonnè, to whom the Pope gave Casera in the south, though of that Carlo knows nothing. Why, Denise, Denise, what is this ?" For Denise had sunk down upon her knees at the man's feet.

"Oh ! God ! God !" she cried through her renewed tears, "I thank Thee that it is no sin. Yes, yes, by God's grace and a woman's love and care he will