

was loyal to the scoundrel for whom she had sacrificed two lives, her own and another's. Her brow might flush with shame of the mad deed that turned her life awry, and of the degradation of her present surroundings; but her eyes looked straight into those of Shorland without wavering, with the pride of strength if not of goodness.

"Yes, there is one thing more," she said. "Give me that portrait to keep—until the 25th. Then you may take it—from the woman in the Morgue."

Shorland thought for a moment. She had spoken just now without sneering, without bravado, without hardness. He felt that behind this woman's outward cruelty and varying moods there was something working that perhaps might be trusted, something in Luke's interest. He was certain that this portrait had moved her deeply. Had she come to that period of reaction in evil when there is an agonised desire to turn back towards the good? He gave the portrait to her.

IV

SITTING in Alençon Barré's room an hour later, Shorland told him in substance the result of his conference with Gabrielle, and begged his consideration for Luke if the worst should happen. Alençon Barré gave his word as a man of honour that the matter should be sacred to him. As they sat there, a messenger came from the commandant to say that the detachment was to start that afternoon for Bompari. Then a note was handed to Shorland from Governor Rapont offering him a horse and a native servant if he chose to go with the troops. This was what Shorland had come for—news and adventure. He did not hesitate, though the