

## A PAGAN OF THE SOUTH

came a letter from Freeman himself, saying that his wife was dead; that he had identified her body in the Morgue at Paris—found drowned, and all that. He believed that remorse had driven her to suicide. But he had no trace of the brother, no trace of the villain whom he had scoured Europe and America over to find. Again, another three years, and now he writes me that he is going to be married to Clare Hazard on the twenty-sixth of this month. With that information came this portrait. I tell you all, M. Barré, because I feel that this woman Gabrielle has some connection with the past life of my friend Luke Freeman. She recognized the face, and you saw the effect. Now will you tell me what you know about her?"

Shorland had been much more communicative than was his custom. But he knew men. This man had done him a service, and that made toward friendship on both sides. He was an officer and a gentleman, and so he showed his hand. Then he wanted information and perhaps much more, though what that would be he could not yet tell.

M. Barré had smoked cigarettes freely during Shorland's narrative. At the end he said, with peculiar emphasis: "Your friend's wife was surely a Frenchwoman?"

"Yes."

"Was her name Laroche?"

"Yes, that was it. Do you think that Lucile Laroche and Gabrielle—!"