

"How pale I am—how my eyes glare! I look like a beautiful fiend!" she mut-tered, hoarsely, as, leaning on her el-bow and staring into the gleaming eyes, thinking that she looked like an bow and staring into the gleaming eyes, thinking that she looked like an if ifful soliloquy: "I am a fiend, I sup-pose, for but a few hours ago I was driven mad by the discovery of a fatal secret in my life—a secret too hard to bear with impunity, so I took arms against H, and L hare commender the secret in my life—a secret too hard to bear with impunity, so I took arms against k, and I have conquered Fate. He! ha! she is out of my way, the baby-faced creature who, ever since I first saw her, little more than a month ago, has persistently come between me and all that I most prized! But I always meant to punish her—always, and I have kept my vow!" At that word she shuddered and look-ed behind her as if eveneties to behal

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At that word she shuddered and look-ed behind her, as if expecting to behold the ghastly wraith of Gerald Holmes, with his pallid, menacing finger pointed at her in reproach and anger for her broken vow; but no blood-curdling spec-ter was there, and with a sigh of relief she flung herself down upon her couch, tossed her round white arms over her head, and whispered with a tender, dreamy smile:

dreamy smile: "Oh, these glorious moments alone, up in the blue empyrean with my love— my love—let me call him that! He meed not know. How fresh and exhilar-ating was the pure air, how the silvery monellight shore them an and ight shone upon us, and how pas-ely may heart leaped at finding alone with him for those few moments when no one could interrupt us! I crept nearer to him; I clasped his arm with both hands and whispered imploringly: 'You will not mind if I cling to you a little? I am frightened at the strangeness of it all? Does it not seem awful to you? We two Paradise."

dreamy, tender smile curved her beautiful lips at the memory of the kind and gentle smile with which he looked down at her and said:

frightened, for all consciousness of such weakness is overpowered in me by a sort of mental buoyancy and exhilara-tion. I find it delightful, Miss Lisle. Only feel how pure and fresh is this high air. See how the golden light of the stars sifts through the thin, clear at-mosphere. Do you not think"-gently-"that we seem a little nearer to God and the angels?" "It is strange that you should feel frightened, for all consciousness of such

Loraine recalled with a blush of rap-ture how she had sighed and ex-

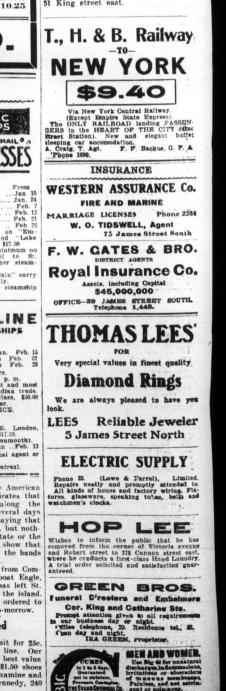
"Oh, how good you are. Mr. Vane! "Oh, how good you are. Mr. Vane! While I am dizzy with such fear that I can not even enjoy the novelty of my position, you are filled with sweet and reverent thoughts. It is no wonder that Vivian your protive teams wife enter Whi reverent thoughts. It is no wonder that Vivian, your pretty young wife, seems so calm and saintly. It is your infin-ence. One grows better by merely liv-ing near you. Even I-wild, wilful Lor-aine, as I have been called-even I would be a better girl if I had such a kind and noble husband." "May you find one even nobler and

kind and noble hushand." "May you find one even nobler and better some day, my dear Miss Lisle." the rector answered, gently; but she felt the arm that she clasped tremble elightly at the wisiful passion of her words, and she knew that he was not altogether ice.

Given such a romantic scene as this and so enchanting a companion, and even a rector of thirty might be some-

even a rector of survey what moved. She looked up at him with wistful eyes, and her voice grew faint with emo-tion as she sighed:

eyes, ann ner vore grew faint with emo-tion as she sighed: "Perhaps no really good man will ever love me, Mr. Vane. You know, do you mot, that people tell false and ernel stor-ies of me? They say I am a heartless coquette. Do you believ them?" "No, I do not." the rector answered, warmly. "I believe that you have a true, kind, womanly heart." "God bless you," Loraine cried. She bent her head impulsively and pressed her warm lips on his hand. "You have made me happy by those words?" she cried. "So you do believe in me? You think a good man could love me?" "Yes," he answered, in a low voice; and she cried."



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