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upstairs into a stiffly furnished sitting-room. She had not seen Grace since they had met frequently in London durthey had met frequently in London during the weeks of the previous spring, and when she looked into the white, set face of the woman who awaited her in the sitting-room, she found it difficult to believe this was the lovely, brilliant Grace Cardew, who had been one of the beauties of the season only a year before

beauties of the season only a year before.

"You are his niece," she said, looking at Rosa with those tired, grief-stricken eyes, "he is conscious—he would like to see you—he cannot live long, you know."

"He was so badly hurt?" the other questioned, a great pity for the woman before her filling her heart.

"Yes! nothing could be done. He is just—waiting for the end—that is all."

"Oh! but I am so sorry for you," Rosa cried impetuously, putting out her hands to Grace with a gesture of irrehands to Grace with a gesture of irrehands to Grace with a gesture of irrehands."

Rosa cried impetuously, putting out her hands to Grace with a gesture of irrepressible sympathy, "you love him?"

"Yes, I love him," the strangely toneless voice answered, "I never loved anybody before. I never knew what love was. He taught me. It is heaven and hell all in one."

"I think it is only heaven," Rosa said gently.

gently.

"Heaven? Yes, if you have your man and are happy. Hell, if you have to let him go, as I must." The mechanical note in her voice all at once faltered and broke, her face lost its look of set hardness, her lips quivered.

"You had better come to him," she said abruptly. "He knows you are here—he must not be kept waiting. And you must not stay long—there is so little time for me—"

time for me—"

The sentence was not finished, a sob broke from her, a dry, tearless sob, infinitely more pitiful than tears could have been; and she controlled herself immediately.

have been; and she controlled herself immediately.

"He must not see me upset," she said, "the doctor says we must keep him as quiet as we can—between the paroxysms of pain. Come!" and so saying, she led the way across a corridor, into a big bedroom where, in the bed facing the window, her husband lay. His form was very rigid and still, his face the colour of death, but his dark eyes were strangely full of life, and as the two women entered the room together they lighted up, and he smiled.

"My beautiful — white — queen," he whispered, his glance fixed on Grace, "you and I—are—paying the price . . . And Rosa has come?" his glance turned from his wife to Rosa, "why have you come? To gloat over my downfall?"

"No, no—oh! no," she knelt down by the bed, and put a hand over his hand that lay motionless on the sheet. "I came—because I was—sorry, because I—could not help coming. Something—made me come."

"Ah! so that was it? Something

made me come.

"Ah! so that was it? Something made you come," he smiled again, a faintly sardonic smile, then went on softly: "It must have been your good fate. softly: "It must have been your good angel who sent you, or your good fate, or whatever you choose to call it. For, seeing you has reminded me of what I might have forgotten, even in this place. Though this place, above all others, should make me remember," he added

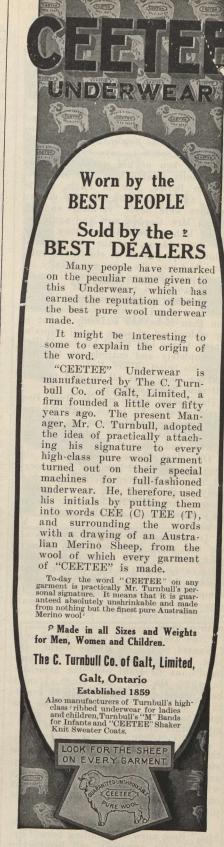
Though this place, above all others, should make me remember," he added dreamily.

"Funny," he rambled on, after a moment of silence. "It was on that very same white road where I practically met my death that I ran—her down—Tiny, you know—and the child. What is the child's name, I forget?"

"Sylvia," Rosa put in.

"Sylvia, that was it; she was there with her mother the day my car ran down their pony carriage. I didn't know then that the child—was mine—hers and mine," he stirred uneasily, and for an instant Rosa thought his mind was wandering; but he understood her thought, and shook his head.

"No, I'm sane enough, my brain hasn't given way, though—I have come to the end. She—was my wife—Sylvia's mother—my wife, an English girl—Hester Stansdale was her name. She ran away from her own people for my sake. She—two women have loved me," he broke off to say, with a long upward look at Grace, "but—she—was afraid of what she had done. She and I—were never really mated. She—was afraid of me, as well as of her own action in running away with me," he spoke on in curiously dreamy tones, almost as though he had forgotten his listeners. Then,



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