

THE WEB OF THE GOLDEN SPIDER

CHAPTER I

The Closed Door Opens

IN his aimless wanderings around Boston that night Wilson passed the girl twice, and each time, though he caught only a glimpse of her lithe form bent against the whipping rain, the merest sketch of her somber features, he was distinctly conscious of the impress of her personality. As she was absorbed by the voracious horde which shuffled interminably and inexplicably up and down the street, he felt a sense of loss. The path before him seemed a bit less bright, the night a bit more barren. And although in the excitement of the eager life about him he quickly reacted, he did not turn a corner but he found himself peering beneath the lowered umbrellas with a piquant sense of hope.

Wilson's position was an unusual one for a theological student. He was wandering at large in a strange city, homeless and penniless, and yet he was not unhappy in this vagabondage. Every prowler in the dark is, consciously or unconsciously, a mystic. He is in touch with the unknown; he is a member of a universal