

and motioned to Fay to take his place. She went timidly to the low couch and knelt down by it.

"Speak to him," said the bishop sternly.

"Michael!" she said.

He knew her. All other voices had gone from him, but hers he knew. All other faces had faded from him, but hers he knew. He looked full at her. Love stronger than death shone in his eyes.

"Fay," he said in an awed voice—"at last."

She had come to release him, after the duke's death, as he knew she would.

She leaned her white cheek a moment against his in speechless self-abasement.

He whispered to her, "Have I served you?"

She whispered back, "Yes."

He whispered again, "Do you stil love me?"

The words were quite inaudible.

Again she said, "Yes."

Again a movement of the lips, but no sound.

He looked at her with radiant, questioning eyes.

Again she murmured, "Yes."

It had to be like that. He had always known that this moment had to come. Had he not foreseen it in some forgotten dream?

A great trembling laid hold on Michael, and then a stillness of exceeding joy.

In the silence the cathedral bells chimed out suddenly for early service. The sound of the bells came faintly to him as across wide water, the river of death widening as it nears the sea. It was all part of his dream. The bells of Venice were rejoicing with him in this his blessed hour.

He was freed at last, free as he had never been, free as the seagull seen through the bars that could no longer keep him back. Useless bars, why had he let them hold him so long? He was out and