

meeting his look firmly and steeling herself to thank him. Though deeply grateful, it was a trial beyond telling to be obliged to owe the debt of a life to any one, and in particular to a man of the sort to whom material gifts could not be given.

"Such things are paid for just by accepting them," he answered quickly, trying to feel that he had never held her in his arms, as she evidently desired him to feel. He had intuition, if not enough of it, for the regions where the mind of Fleda Druse dwelt.

"I couldn't very well decline, could I?" she rejoined, quick humour shooting into her eyes. "I was helpless. I never fainted before in my life."

"I am sure you will never faint again," he remarked. "We only do such things when we are very young."

She was about to reply, but paused reflectively. Her half-opened lips did not frame the words she had been impelled to speak.

Admiration was alive in his eyes. He had never seen this type of womanhood before—such energy and grace, so amply yet so lithely framed; such darkness and fairness in one living composition; such individuality, yet such intimate simplicity. Her hair was a very light brown, sweeping over a broad, low forehead, and lying, as though with a sense of modesty, on the tips of the ears, veiling them slightly. The forehead was classic in its intellectual fulness; but the skin was so fresh, even when pale as now, and with such an underglow of vitality, that the woman in her, sex and the possibilities of sex, cast a glamour over the intellect and temperament showing in every line of her contour. In contrast to the light brown of the hair was the very dark brown of the eyes and the still darker brown of the eyelashes. The face shone, the eyes burned, and the piquancy of the contrast between the soft illuminating whiteness of the skin and the flame in the eyes had fascinated many more than Ingolby.