

CHAPTER IX.

"There is a lady to see you, Mrs. Tressidar, she has been waiting some time."

Leslie pulled off her gloves slowly, dropping one as she walked. It was an old trick of hers, and one which each new man learned with difficulty. He usually made the mistake of handing the glove at once to his mistress. This was an error. She did not want it—she did not want to be reminded that it had been dropped—just why, no one knew. Why, any habit? She loved to walk through the square hall with its polished floors, covered here and there by oriental rugs, of soft, almost indefinite hues, through the high arch leading into the drawing-room, a symphony in green and silver—she loved to sweep through here uninterrupted by any butlers or maids, or even Loring. Leslie walked well, and she knew it.

This afternoon, after dropping her glove as usual, she passed slowly through the door, and into her drawing-room. The blinds were drawn and by the dim light Leslie discerned a small fair woman sitting in an attitude of nervous tension in the far corner of the room.

Coming from the strong glare outside, Mrs. Tres-