

Captain Macklin

projected from another life, a wonderful, beautiful memory, from a life already far in the past. I handed her the cablegram and stood up stiffly. My joints were rigid and the blood was still cold in my veins. She read the message, and gave a little cry, and stood silent, gazing at me. I motioned her to give it to Lowell, who was looking at us anxiously, his eyes filled with concern.

He kept his head lowered over the message for so long, that I thought he was reading it several times. When he again raised his face it was filled with surprise and disapproval. But beneath, I saw a dawning look which he could not keep down, of a great hope. It was as though he had been condemned to death, and the paper Beatrice had handed him to read had been his own reprieve.

"Tell me," said Beatrice. Her tone was as gentle and as solemn as the stroke of a bell, and as impersonal. It neither commended nor reproved. I saw that instantly she had determined to conceal her own wishes, to obliterate herself entirely, to let me know that, so far as she could affect my choice, I was a free agent. I looked appealingly from her to Lowell, and from Lowell back to Beatrice. I still was trembling with the fever the message had lit in me. When I tried to answer, my voice was hoarse and shaking.