

"Aha, we have discovered one clue—she ish a woman! Good! What nex-ht?"

"You are the one woman in *all* my experience in whom I placed implicit trust. That you were not a gilded saint I well knew, but you were a *woman*. Bah, you are too drunk to even understand me!" He groaned miserably. "Leslie, my wife, what have you done?"

He tried to speak gently, to compel her to look him squarely in the face, but without success. Her wavering glance rested in turn upon each object about them, and all the while her red lips parted in a fatuous smile.

"Leslie!" The cry was quick and sharp.

She blinked her eyes and straightened up for a moment, lifting her chin and showing a beautiful line from the tip of it down her throat and neck.

"Wish t' be called Mrs. Tressidar," she said, with increasing thickness. "I don't know you well enough for such-ch familiarity." Then she laughed, laughed, laughed!

"Leslie!" There was suffering in the cry; it came from Tressidar's soul. "For God's sake stop, and listen to me. This is a deserved punishment, I suppose, though much too great. If you have ever suffered as I am writhing now, may God indeed forgive me, I did not know what I did. Listen!" he cried, again putting two feverish hands upon her gleaming shoulders, "*I swear* by the most sacred thing in life—my love for you, I swear by the God who made me, and the mother who bore me, I swear