

"It is your wish, Michael, that it should be destroyed now?"

He made a sign of assent. The poignant inflection of the "now," and all it implied, drove speech from his lips. In silence, without looking back, he walked swiftly away, Téphany watched his fine form melt and vanish into the shadows. When she could no longer see him or hear him, she smiled triumphantly, but her eyes were wet.

*(To be continued)*