

CHAPTER II

THE WHISPER FROM BEYOND

INGOLBY had a will of his own, but it had never been really tried against a woman's will. It was, however, tried sorely when Fleda came to consciousness again in his arms and realized that a man's face was nearer to hers than any man's had ever been except that of her own father. Her eyes opened slowly, and for the instant she did not understand, but when she did, the blood stole swiftly back to her neck and face and forehead, and she started in dismay.

"Put me down," she whispered faintly.

"I'm taking you to my buggy," he replied. "I'll drive you back to Lebanon." He spoke as calmly as he could, for there was a strange fluttering of his nerves, and the crowd was pressing him.

"Put me down at once," she said peremptorily.

She trembled on her feet, and swayed, and would have fallen but that Ingolby and a woman in black, who had pushed her way through the crowd with white, anxious face, caught her.

"Give her air, and stand back!" called the sharp voice of the constable of Carillon, and he heaved the people back with his powerful shoulders.

A space was cleared round the place where Fleda sat with her head against the shoulder of the stately woman in black who had come to her assistance. A dipper of water was brought, and when she had drunk it she raised her head slowly and her eyes sought those of Ingolby.

"One cannot pay for such things," she said to him,