

He smiled gratefully at her apparent understanding. "Yes, we can go on now. It's like a home-coming to me—to Nel and me."

She watched him go to raise the curtain above the sleeping girl and look off to the East. Some divination came to her. "Nel? I wondered what you would do about her, when you go to the hills—to find yourself—as you promised me."

"There's a way," he answered, "and I'm finding it. Nel's tried and she's not failed. No, in nothing has she failed," he added. "After this, nothing could matter."

"I don't understand you, John?"

"I've been working this week. It's at the foundation for the Mutual Bank Building. I'm a cement mixer's helper, and I get a dollar and seventy-five cents a day. And those fellows are going to get me in their union, too. It's only a hole, but I can look up and see the sky. Seems like I'd been about this town all my life and never knew before how blue the sky is!" He turned to her with a smile. "I'm not going to quit the town. And Nel, she's the only woman who could understand—she's paid the price with me. And I'm pretty weak and wild. Suppose I lost my hold and went down after all—who'd understand, save Nel?"

The mystic's eyes did not waver from his face.

"You mean?" she questioned, clearly but low. "Tell me?"

"Nel's only what life makes her—and she's tried."

Slowly the splendor darkened, the faith was humbled in the other's soul.

"Is this your way of happiness? John, is this the way—for you?"