

## 14 THE WEB OF THE GOLDEN SPIDER

to disclose a shelf upon which rested a bit of candle. He lighted this.

She watched him closely, and as the wick sputtered into life she grasped eagerly at every detail it revealed. She stood alert as a fencer before an unknown antagonist. Then he turned and, with this steadier light above his head, stepped towards her.

She saw eyes of light blue meeting her own of brown quite fearlessly. His lean face and the shock of sandy hair above it made an instant appeal to her. She knew he was a man she could trust within doors as fully as she had trusted him without. His frame was spare but suggestive of the long muscles of the New Englander which do not show but which work on and on with seemingly indestructible energy. He looked to her to be strong and tender.

She realized that he in his turn was studying her, and held up her head and faced him sturdily. In spite of her drenched condition she did not look so very bedraggled, thanks to the simple linen suit she had worn. Her jet black hair, loose and damp, framed an oval face which lacked color without appearing unhealthy. The skin was dark -- the gypsy dark of one who has lived much out of doors. Both the nose and the chin was of fine and rather delicate modeling without losing anything of vigor. It was a responsive face, hinting of large emotions rather easily excited but as yet latent, for the girlishness was still in it.

Wilson found his mouth losing its tenseness as he looked into those brown eyes; found the strain of the