

CHAPTER II.

THE husband, erect and slow, directed his steps to a room which had lain unused for the last three weeks, his wife's. As he entered, his arms shook. There were flowers here—great masses—in vases, as usual: the gardener had gone his daily round; the machinery of the house moved on. The room looked horribly unaltered: he laid down the beautiful burden from his arms, on the familiar couch in the great bay window. And he turned quickly, to double-lock the door.

Seven years ago, that time she had sprained her ankle, he had carried her down like this, day by day, for a month. She was very young and lovely then. She was very lovely still. And young.