

CHAPTER XL

THE KINGDOM CALLED HOME

A strange gathering it was which formed and melted away and changed from hour to hour, in those luxurious apartments overlooking the lake, as Emerson Courtright lay in the quiet of the remotest room, while surgeons examined his case and gave out their forecasts. Odette Cassler and her husband; Joyce Gray, who had come in from an Iowa town when she heard of Olive's trouble; the Grants, and the well-groomed, mobile-mouthed stage-folk, talked in low tones with Tim and Mollie Burns, Rabinowski of the packing-house, and others of the bolder denizens of Courtright's habitat on the West Side who dared to come and ask after the Strangler's welfare. Stranger and more eerie was the time when the night shut down, and only the nurses, the physicians and other attendants shared the vigil with the wife. Outside, sitting in a great chair, or lying on a couch, was posted Morgan Yeager, the guardian of privacy, the one who took control when Olive laid it down. Nobody came in but by his permission; and all went to him for commands. Mrs. Dearwester, tardily found in a remote village in New England, was still absent.

The press was exultant over the sudden collapse of the strike at the first showing of the government's teeth in the use of Colonel Bloodgood's troops, firing

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