

We passed without a word through the entangled streets of the city.

At last we reached her threshold, and climbed the winding stair.

It was almost dark ; they had lit one lamp. There was the cry of the owls in the dusk.

I opened her door. She lay quite still as I had left her ; the dim gold of her curls fell over the broad low brow that was the brow of Ariadne ; her lips were slightly parted ; her eyes gazed at the western sky : where she looked, there was still a pale radiance and a flush left by the dead day.

I signed to him to enter.

He entered, and looked.

"She is dying !" he called aloud, with a cry that rang through all the lonely house.

She heard his voice, and sprang up on her narrow bed, and stretched her arms to him.

He sank on his knees beside her.

"You can forgive?" he cried to her.

In answer her white and wasted arms stole about his throat, and her lips sought his.

"Live, oh, my God, live !" he moaned, as he knelt. "Live for me : *I love you!*"

And for the first time he told no lie.

She made him no answer, but her arms rested about his throat, and her cheek was against his own. For a few moments she lay thus ; then with a little sigh she moved a little, and lifted her tender weary eyes to his.

"Forgive me ; I missed the way !" she murmured, faintly, while her sight grew blind. Then her lips sought his once more, and on his own they trembled one moment longer, then grew cold and still.

He loved her, and she was dead.