

AFTER THE STORY

"Yes," she smiled.

For the youthful name must have sounded odd on my alien lips.

"You will print it?" she asked.

"Every word," said I.

"Then—maybe?"

But was there an interrogation in the soft dark eyes? Was it possible that before me she laid down her cross and would take it up again only when she reached Vonner? Was it certainty to him and uncertainty to me? For the sin of loving too well was this her endless penance? I would not be a party to the interrogation. I took the soft old hand; I gazed into the velvety eyes; I said:

"There must be no 'maybe'."

"No," she nodded humbly, with bowed head, "that was wrong."

Yet, within me that conscience which doth make cowards of all—but the women who wait, was crying:

"It is fifty years! Dave, if alive, is an old, old man! Evelyn is an old woman! Age can