
GREEN CHALK

making a fool of himself, and gave me an exquisite gold-tipped Russian cigarette."

"You mean George Stein?"

"I do."

"You kept the cigarette a long time."

Philip's eyes were still turned towards the door.

"I didn't; I smoked it as soon as he gave it to me."

"I have seen you smoke since Stein went to South America."

"But not since he returned from North America."

"George Stein is dead!"

"How can he be dead? I tell you he is alive and that he left this hotel ten minutes before you got back. He was so sorry to miss you because he came to Venice on purpose to see you."

"Stein in Venice! you're laughing at me, Lady Grace."

All the same, he turned as white as paper and held his breath.

"If I were, the joke would be in the worst of taste. I'm not laughing when I tell you that George Stein is in Venice to-night. I can't make you believe me, can I? After all, the name George Stein isn't by any means uncommon," she added.

"Good God!"

"You needn't look like that," Grace said, laughing a little. "The situation isn't as hopeless as you think."

"Does he—does he know that we're married?"