

by something of that subtle, horrible fascination with which a serpent holds its quivering victim. They are already within five yards of her; a second or two and they will be face to face.

And then—what will he do then? He hates a scene—will he make one before all these people? As she thinks, her brain whirling, some one meets them, and Mrs. Pettingill pauses for a moment to introduce the same one to the lion of the night.

And then, like a flash, Dolores awakes from her stunned stupor. He has not seen her; it is not yet too late; no one is looking at her; Blanche is watching, in a flutter of apprehension, the approach of ma and her nobleman.

She starts to her feet, slips between the tall plants, flies out of the room, down a long hall, up the stairs, and into the room she so lately left. Her hat and mantle lie where she threw them upon entering; she snatches them up, breathlessly, and puts on. No time to stop, no time to think, no time to falter or hesitate. Flight!—that is her one idea—to get away from this house—from him—without a second's loss of time. A sickening fear of him fills her—a blind, unreasoning fear that makes her fly and need no consequences. A clock on the mantel strikes two. It is an unearthly hour to be out alone in the streets of New York; but she never heeds that—nothing that can befall her can be as terrible as meeting Vane Valentine.

With the thought in her mind, she is down the stairs, and out of the house, and hurrying rapidly down the silent street. It is moonlight, bright and cold. There is no wind, and the cold, keen air she does not feel. If it were blowing a hurricane she would not feel it now. She is filled with but one idea—to get home, to hide herself, to fly to the uttermost ends of the earth, it need be, from this man. Of course he is here in search of her. Will her sudden disappearance to-night create comment, and come to his ears?—quick and suspicious ears always. Will he ask question—and get a description of her, and recognize her at once? Will he set the city detectives on her track, and hunt her down? It will not be difficult—an assumed name is but a thin disguise. And when he has found her, what then?

'I will die before I return to him,' she says aloud, as she flies breathlessly on. 'No law, no power on earth shall compel me, I will never go back—never!' She is panting and breathless with her haste; once or twice a passing 'guardian of the night' tries to stop and scout her, but she is past like a flash

before he can frame the words. She may be pursued—she does not know—they will be fleet walkers who will overtake her to-night. At last, without harm or molestation, but spent, gasping, fainting with fatigue, she unlocks her door, and drops in a heap on the little parlour sofa.

Jemima Ann is in bed and asleep, she is not expected back until to-morrow. She does not wake her, she lies there in a sort of stupor of exhaustion, and at last drops asleep. And so, still sleeping, when with the morning sunshine Jemima Ann rises, she finds her—dressed as she came in, with the exception of her hat, which lies on the floor beside her. Her exclamation of surprise and alarm, faint though it is, arouses Dolores—she sits up in a bewildered way and looks with wild eyes at her friend.

'Jemima,' she cries, 'he has come.'

'Lor!' says Jemima Ann, and sits down flat. She needs no antecedent to the pronoun; there is but one he for these two in the universe—their arch enemy. 'Lord's sake! Miss Snowball, you never mean that.'

'I saw him last night. He was at Mrs. Pettingill's party. I got up and fled. I ran out of the house at two in the morning, and never stopped to draw breath it seems to me, until I fell down here. Jemima—oh, Jemima! what shall we do?'

'Lord sake,' exclaims Jemima Ann again, stunned. Maid and mistress sit gazing blankly and fearfully at each other—altogether stupefied by the magnitude of the blow.

'We must leave here, Jemima—we must go to-day. He is here to search for me, he will never rest until he finds me. We must fly again. And we have been so happy here,' she says, despairingly.

But Jemima's wits are beginning to return.

'Wait a minute, Miss Snowball,' she says, 'let us think. It's of no use flying—this big city is the safest place we can hide in, it seems to me. If he finds us out under false names here, in a crowded part of the town like this, why he will find us go where we may. I don't believe in flying; it ain't a mite o' good. Let us just stay here, and face it out.'

Jemima Ann, it would kill me to see him I think—just that.'

'Bless you, my deary, no it wouldn't. It takes a sight more to kill us than we reckon for. Besides you can refuse to see him—you can fly you know, when it comes to that. What is he going to do to you? Sir Vane Valentine may go to grass! This is a free country, I guess; there ain't no lor as ever I heard on to make a wife go back to a husband as ill-treated her, if she's a mind to