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feelings had been of the very shadow-  
iest, hardly rippling the surface of  
consciousness, so when Rosamund had  
made her odd proposal, they had  
seemed phantom nothings indeed com-  
pared with the aching reality of a  
month's exile from her side.

All that had been Meriel had passed  
into Sid's love for Rosamund. Meriel  
herself could only be a ghost, however  
beautifully visible and audible, a fair  
house of dreams from which the dreams  
had departed. Yet, for all that, it was  
not without some agitation that Sid  
found himself at length in the quaint,  
little seaside town, whence a ferry-boat  
would take him to a village across the  
bay, high over which Meriel and her  
mother lived, looking over the sea. Her  
ghost began to grow more and more  
luminous with memories, as a pale moon  
fills with silver as the night deepens.  
He stood on the deck of the little boat,  
and as it drew near to the landing-place  
he could see clearly on the hillside the  
old white house with its trellises and  
its terraced gardens descending the hill.  
He could see plainly the little bower  
where one summer evening they had sat  
together, and she had suddenly put her  
hand in his and said, "My life is in your  
hands."

His heart beat fast as his memories  
crowded in upon him, and it made him  
almost frightened to think that in a few  
short moments he would really be look-  
ing at her again. He felt as though he  
were about to see someone who had  
been dead a long time, and had come  
to life again startlingly as in dreams.  
Then there suddenly floated over the  
water from the village music very  
mournful and sweet, and he could see  
a long line of dark figures moving  
slowly up the tortuous village street.  
At the first strains of the music a great  
foreboding had swept through Sid's  
heart. What if Meriel were dead, and  
as in a fairy tale, he had come to meet  
her—carried through the streets to the  
tomb. The idea pleased his poet's  
fancy, with its picturesque pathos;  
but not that music was not for Meriel.  
It was a soldier's death music, yet its  
solemn valedictory chords seemed to  
Sid's ears to be playing the requiem of  
a great passion, fitly ushering him with  
their voluptuous melancholy to the  
grave of his beautiful love.

He took his way thoughtfully up  
through the climbing villages, but there  
was a subdued excitement in his face  
which Rosamund might have construed  
as an undue eagerness to face his com-  
ing ordeal. At last he turned the well-  
known corner of the lane, and there was  
the house facing the airy infinite of the  
sea. How poignantly familiar it all  
was yet, why instantly did something  
tell him, something blank about the  
expression of the very windows, that—  
Meriel was not there.

Her mother met him as he turned  
into the garden, but Meriel was not  
there. She had been married—yester-  
day.

That is what the music had meant.  
"So 'Judgment Day' is married!" said  
Rosamund, when Sid had once more re-  
turned to his cage to report himself.  
"It's too bad of her," she continued,  
for she quite spoiled my little plan.  
My test has been no test at all."

"It was all I needed," answered Sid.  
He was thinking of the siren, about  
whom, like a wise lover, he had kept  
silence. Too much confession is a  
dangerous weakness, and we are usually  
the best judges of our own actions.  
The siren had been but the process of  
an experiment. All that concerned  
Rosamund was the result.

"I wish I could have seen you, Sid,  
when you heard about 'Judgment Day.'  
I'd give anything to know what you  
really felt; but, of course, you'll never  
tell me."

Sid smiled, but said nothing.  
"Weren't you disgusted with her for  
daring to do it without your consent?  
The bare idea of a woman who had  
loved you daring to have any new life  
on her own account! I am sure you  
had pictured her spending her days  
looking dreamily over the sea—waiting  
for your return. I know you had."

As a matter of fact Sid had, and his  
feelings on hearing of Meriel's marriage  
had been exceedingly mixed. It was  
perhaps as well that Rosamund had no  
record of them.

"Won't you tell me what you really

felt—just for fun? You can be honest,  
I shan't mind."

But Sid was too wise to be honest.  
He knew where these heart-to-heart  
confessions just for fun were apt to  
lead.

"I had no feelings. My one thought  
from beginning to end was to get back  
to my cage—and never go out of it  
again."

"You were relieved then? You had  
been a little frightened, eh? Yes, you  
knew you had, and you were glad to be  
let off the ordeal—now, weren't you?"

Sid certainly had been, but he steadily  
refused to be drawn. And then Rosa-  
mund suddenly changed her tactics.

"But you haven't asked anything about  
me during your retrospective pilgrimi-  
age!" she said.

"You!" exclaimed Sid, a look of  
peculiarly masculine surprise coming  
into his face.

"Oh, yes, me! I suppose you  
imagined me, during your absence sit-  
ting here, *a la* 'Judgment Day,' docilely  
awaiting your return."

"What do you mean, Rosamund?"  
asked Sid, anxiously.

"I mean that you seem to forget that  
I, too, had made previous engagements  
for Judgment Day. When you were  
off pilgrimage in the past—what was  
to hinder me from doing the same?"

"Oh, Rosamund, you didn't!"

"Didn't I? I'd often wonder what  
it would be like to kiss Jack Meriden  
again, so you being away on your own  
affairs gave me good opportunity."

"You kissed him!" exclaimed Sid,  
in angry astonishment, all his mascu-  
line proprietorship in his face.

"Why not!" she answered, nodding  
her head affirmatively.

"You—kissed—him?" Sid repeated,  
grasping her wrists fiercely.

Rosamund shook herself free, with  
mocking laughter.

"Ah! there talks the man—the lord  
of creation. The man is to be allowed  
to go off and flirt with whom he pleases,  
but the woman. Oh, no! While the man  
is engaged in these pleasing diversions  
she must sit at home faithfully darning  
his socks. No, sir! I did kiss Jack  
Meriden, and it was a very nice kiss,  
too."

"You did," repeated Sid slowly, in an  
anguish of jealousy.

"You must remember, Sid," she  
answered mockingly, "what a serious  
affair it was between us—quite a  
Judgment-Day affair. These old  
memories die hard, as you, of all people,  
should know."

"I only know that you—kissed—  
Jack—Meriden," repeated Sid, rising to  
his feet "and that I am going."

He strode savagely across the lawn,  
making as if to leave the garden.  
Rosamund let him go some distance,  
and then called him back.

"Why should I come back?" he  
asked sulkily.

"I want to tell you something," she  
said in a caressing voice.

He came back to her side, and stood  
there.

"Well, what is it?" he asked stiffly.  
"You must sit down. I can't tell  
you that way."

Sid sat down, with non-committal  
aloofness. She put her arms around his  
rigid shoulders, and whispered.

"You are the greatest goose that ever  
lived. I never kissed Jack Meriden. I  
love you—not as a man loves, but as a  
woman."

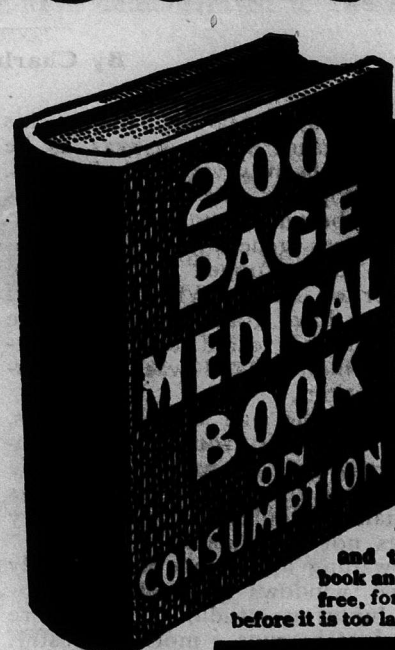
"I love you the same way," answered  
Sid, the storm-clouds suddenly swept  
from his face, "there is only one way  
of—loving. The other thing needs  
another name."

And, with that, Rosamund snapped to  
the door of his cage forever.

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that stand a thousand years.  
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within its walls may hold  
A home of priceless treasure, rich in  
love's eternal gold.  
The men of earth build houses, halls  
and chambers, roofs and domes,  
But the women of the world, God  
knows, the woman builds the home."

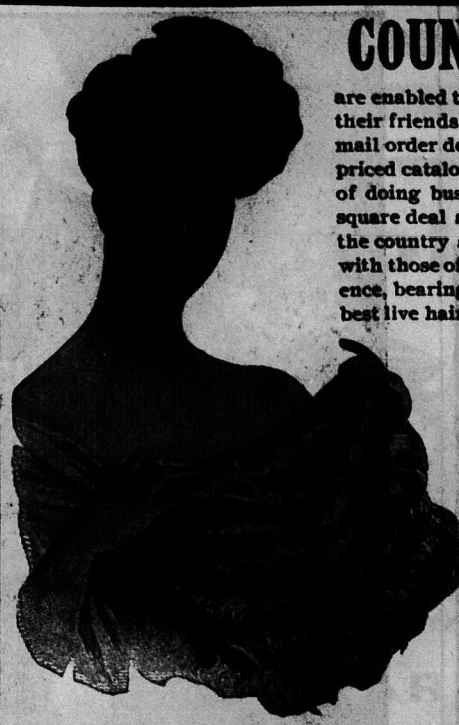
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