

## THE LIFTED VEIL

could be as much greater than any of them as the ship, with its adjusted machinery, is greater than the formless, weltering sea.

Here, on the other hand, the city was the thing—gigantic, tumultuous, terrifying, monstrous. It had aspects like those of a vast mechanism seen in a nightmare, pounding and stamping and pushing and shrieking and suffering, without pity as without rest. Of man it made nothing. He was mere grist for its mill, and was ground up in it. With no soul of its own, it mocked at the soul in him, and laughed down a belief in it. Bainbridge was coming to the conclusion that it was harder to have faith in a spiritual life in New York than in any other spot in the world. He was wondering miserably whether he should stand by the work he had undertaken or run away from it when Mrs. Wedlock came to his door to announce the visitor.

Being seated at the flat-topped desk which held the center of the room, with his back to the fading light, he rose as the tall figure, veiled and shrouded like a Mohammedan woman, appeared on the dim threshold. He had been expecting a book agent or a solicitor of subscriptions, but he could see at a glance that this was neither the one nor the other. In her carriage there was something that betokened refinement, and probably position in the world. More than this it was impossible to guess, because of the thick black veil and long black cloak.

"You don't know me," she said, in a voice so low that he could barely distinguished the words, "but that doesn't matter. I should like to talk to you, if you'll let me and have the time. Have you?"

"I've plenty of time. Please come in."

As he went forward to place a seat for her she slipped