

ENOCH CRANE

that she alone was the only one who could lay claim to him.

Rose had changed. She was no longer the gracious spoiled Rose Van Cortlandt of old. Her widowhood and the Bohemian life she had led since Sam Van Cortlandt's suicide had left its imprint. She was still a seductive, remarkably handsome woman, but she had grown harder. This showed in certain lines about her still glorious eyes, especially when she smiled; her lips were thinner, the angle of her jaw squarer, the subtle curves of her once lovely throat and neck less interesting. Strange to say, she still preserved her figure, her white skin, and her splendid arms. She looked upon life now with more of the view-point of a man of the world than of a woman. Much of her femininity had gone. She had grown calmer, more calculating; men no longer disillusioned her, though she still trusted them more than she did women. Of the latter, she could still count a few among her acquaintances who came to her studio apartment in Washington Square. All of them she had met since her husband's death; but mostly her friends were men. Like the women, they, too, had come into her life after the tragedy. She still regarded Jack Lamont, however, as her oldest friend, the one who understood her best, and no one understood Jack Lamont better than Rose. Both had reached that stage in their friendship when they knew each other perfectly. Illusion no longer existed between them. Between two such people there are no secrets—even jealousy is ab-