

farther removed from Salome. Her face gained a wonderful spiritual beauty by the dress.

A husband coming back would not wish to find a wife more lovely. The shock Lady Missenden had anticipated could have been got over.

Laura wasn't amused. "How dull you are, my dear!" she said.

"And how beautiful!" murmured one man.

The doors were thrown open and Captain Stuart was announced.

His intention had been to come in unannounced. Then he had thought it might frighten Violet. He had never imagined that she wouldn't at once guess what he had come for. His one wish had been not to frighten her; the difficulty that now confronted him was that she didn't seem to associate him with the object of his mission. She seemed surprised to see him; asked him how he had come; what he was going to wear; and why he was so late?

He drew her aside and said very gently, "You got my telegram? You expected him?"

"Who?" said Violet. He had frightened her now. Her eyes were wide with terror.

"Can't you guess?" he said, smiling at her.

"Dick?" said Violet, in a hushed voice. The look on her face astonished him. No real nun could have looked more horrified at the mention of a husband.

"Yes, Dick; he arrived this afternoon. Didn't you get the telegram? As you hadn't come by an earlier train I chanced catching you. Are you ready?" He was exercising self-restraint; he was longing to shake this beautiful, immovable nun. Had she no feeling?

"Come as you are. I have the motor at the door."

"As I am?"

"Just as you are!"