

Sandy permitted himself one look at the dear face so close to his own. It wore the white rapt look he remembered so well; the wonderful, brooding tenderness as fancy held it. It was so she had looked upon him when, as a ragged boy, he sat beside her. She had awakened imagination within his starved soul and given his ambition wings with which to soar.

He and she were now bent forward toward the smouldering fire; he on the stool, she in the deep chair.

"Do you remember, Sandy, lil' Madam Bubble?"

"I reckon I remember nothing else so — clearly."

He looked away, he could trust himself no farther.

"And the 'Biggest of Them All' — you remember him?"

"I — I have forgotten him, Cynthia."

"No — you have not forgotten him, Sandy!"

"He — he does not seem to have any place, lil' Cyn."

"Oh! yes and yes he does! I reckon he is bigger than even you or I — know!"

Did she suspect the terrible weakness of desire that was overpowering him? At this thought Sandy gripped his hands closer; he felt her deep, true eyes upon him and a rush of blood dyed his dark face to crimson. Cynthia saw this and laid her cool hand upon his shoulder while she asked bravely, daringly:

"Do you love me — Sandy?"

What other woman on earth could have put that