

contract than I could take your life, for what is life without love, which is its right and its meaning? I did plan to save you in the Place de la Concorde only to make you suffer a worse fate through all the years to come.

"And to-day, too, it is not hard for me to understand that my friend was not disloyal in loving you—how could he help it, having seen and known you? A man is blind and deaf and dumb because he serves in another place. Having a heart in his breast how could he stop its beating when you were near? To-day I can understand what his loyalty to me really was, and how he lived to it when his whole soul must have been fighting his life.

"And stranger still than all else, loving you as I do, with all that is in me, I can to-day understand him by measuring men by what you would demand in one who could love, you, having known this one man, could love no other in the whole world. I can thank God humbly in spite of the pain, that He has given you a heart as strong as your own to mate with it.

"Yet I have not the courage to tell you this face to face. Just for a little time I could not look upon you with joy unmoved, so selfish I am. But I can serve Franz, and I am going to her, hoping that she will receive again a son who, in service for her, will also find a way to serve you.

FRANZ

Mademoiselle suddenly crushed the letter in her hand and leaned forward, as if her straining eyes would find him in the darkness and call him back.

"Franz, oh, Franz!" she cried softly. Pity for a sufferer overwhelmed at the moment all thought of herself, all thought even of this other man whose strong hand had laid its grip on her whole life.

She heard the lantern dropped to the deck and the sound brought to her an appreciation of what the letter