







THE STROLLERS

By FREDERIC S. ISHAM

Author of "Under the Rose"

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Had she turned she would probably have seen her pursuer...

CHAPTER XXVII

LONGER and longer trailed the shadow of a tall tombstone...

The annual festival of the dead, following All Saints' day, was being observed in the burial ground...

A solemn peace fell upon the young girl as she entered, and she seemed to leave behind her all disturbing emotions...

Now Constance smiled to see the little ones playing on the steps of a monument...

"Hush!" whispered one of the sisters as a meral cortege approached.

The silver crucifix shone fitfully ahead, while the chanting of the priests winding in and out after the holy symbol...

"Is he dead?" she asked quickly, unable to withdraw her glance from the immovable figure stretched out in the dim light on the path.

"No fear," said Manville quietly, almost thoughtfully, although his eyes were yet bright from the encounter.

"You can't kill his kind," he added contemptuously, "brutes from coal barges or ruffians from the head waters...

Not difficult was it for him to surmise upon whom her mind had been bent, and involuntarily his jaw set disapprovingly...

"I see no reason," she replied wearily, yet not unkindly, "why we should not be friends."

"Friends?" he answered shortly. "I do not beg for a loaf, but a crumb, yet you refuse me that! I will wait. Only a word of encouragement. Will you not give it?"

She turned and looked into his eyes, and before she spoke he knew what her answer would be.

"How can I?" she said simply. "Why should I promise something I can never fulfill?"

He held her glance as though loath to have it leave him.

"May I see you again?" he asked abruptly.

She shook her head. His gaze fell, seeing no softening in her clear look.

"You are well named," he repeated, more to himself than to her.

"I have no dislike for you," she replied. "It seems to have been left behind me somewhere."

He held her glance as though loath to have it leave him.

"May I see you again?" he asked abruptly.

She shook her head. His gaze fell, seeing no softening in her clear look.

"You are well named," he repeated, more to himself than to her.

"I have no dislike for you," she replied. "It seems to have been left behind me somewhere."

"Only indifference, then," he said dully.

"No; not indifference," she said. "You do care what may become of me?"

"You should do so much—be so much in the world," she answered thoughtfully.

"Sans peur et sans reproche," he cried, half amused, half cheerlessly.

They were now at the broad entrance of the brilliantly lighted hotel.

He stood for a moment watching them. Door opened and Culver, the attorney, entered, with ruddy countenance and youthful bearing...

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