

"I am sorry," he said, conventionally.

"It is terrible," said Molly.

"The newspaper gives his name among those killed. I thought it my duty to be the first to tell you."

Molly put her hands in his. "Thank you, Jack," she answered. "I can't pretend to be sorry."

"You ought to be glad," said Jack Douglas, flushing.

Jim Davis chuckled. The situation was amusing — extremely so. The poor fool could have divorced him years before, and she had felt bound by her stupid promise at the marriage altar. And even now these two dared not tell each other of their love.

Jim was mistaken there. Douglas held her hands tight in his own.

"Molly, you know what this means to me," he said.

She leaned her face against his cheek. "To me," she murmured.

"He was a bad man, Molly."

"Sometimes I think of the man I used to love," she answered. "He was not wholly bad, Jack. But I shall try to forget him."

She raised her head and their lips met. Incredulity and rage swept over Davis' face. He had not dreamed that this love-making would go on in the face of his supposed death. He thrust the door open and stalked into the room.

"A little premature, Douglas," he sneered. "I'm sorry to break up this love-making scene, but I couldn't die when I knew how much it would mean to you, Molly."

To his amazement neither answered him. Jack put his arm about Molly and drew her closer to him. Jim Davis ran toward him, his fists clenched.

"Get out, you blackguard!" he roared, making a vicious swing at the other.

His fist seemed to pass right through Douglas. And still there was the loving smile on Molly's face. And while Jim Davis looked at them in

consternation everything faded and he became aware of an intense and unendurable pain that gripped his body and wrung it as if in a vise.

He opened his eyes and the light of day almost blinded him. He was lying under the wreckage. It had all been a dream. Near him was the girl whom he had seen, pinned under the beam but not severely hurt. She was free above the knee and it rested lightly upon her leg without pressing there. Still, to escape was impossible.

Jim Davis rolled toward her, and every motion was like the plunging of knives into his body.

He tried to lift the beam, but of course, could not. And suddenly a fresh outcry from near by, and a sense of intolerable heat startled him. The wreckage was afire from the engine. The flames were creeping nearer. Men were working frantically to remove the injured, but there was hardly time.

A burning cinder lit on the girl's dress. Jim Davis picked it up with his free hand and pushed it away. He knew now that he was paralyzed from the waist downward.

"Help me!" pleaded the girl again, in terror.

The flames were circling about them. A trick of the wind had sent a shower of sparks across the spot where they lay, and the wrecked cars on the other side of them were blazing. And then — two men rushed through the smoke and grasped him.

"Not me!" said Davis. "There's a girl there—under the smoke. Get the beam off her leg."

As the girl's choking cry came to their ears they released the gambler and plunged into the smoke. Davis watched them anxiously. Would they succeed? They strained with all their might at the fallen beam while the red sparks whirled about them and the smoke covered them. And Davis watched more eagerly than he had ever watch anything in his life.