

a letter of condolence rather more human than any of her other communications to him had been of late.

But that the shattering of such a moderate financier as Len Haswell should foreshadow the total ruin of a money czar like Hamilton Burton and impoverish his parasite brother, was an idea too colossal to grasp in its entirety. Yet in the news from America it slowly dawned. In the Paris edition of the *Herald* it was convincingly chronicled, and the beautiful dark-haired woman who had thrown away her husband began to see that she had no reserve upon which to fall back. Had Len's modest fortune survived that tempest, it would have been easy to put back into port. A little contrition, a confession that she had tried living without him and found it impossible, would have won his forgiveness, because his heart had been too sore to calculate. But now Len was bankrupt and Paul would be likewise.

In these days Carlos de Metuan was no longer a speaker of veiled phrases. He was playing the rôle of the generous Platonic friend, watching her moods and seeking to comfort her.

There was no strain of iron in this woman's soul, and that suited his purpose. Just now he would gain more by merely standing by. Her increasing alarm would one day turn to panic and she would lose her head. For that day he could afford to wait.

Lorraine was undergoing an agony, and when the time came which the duke regarded as the psychological moment, and he baldly offered her his proposition, she made a lovely picture of a woman in distress converted into a righteous fury.

She sent him away with blazing eyes and words that should have scorched, and he went with a shrug