

have changed her or it had him. He had been thirty years old then, and she twenty.

His hair was beginning to turn gray; and while he knew he wasn't old, yet he did not feel youthful. But ten years of having a good time—what would they have done to Leila?

He began to pace the floor of his apartment, smoking an endless chain of cigarettes—waiting for Leila. How had she found out he was at home? He had arrived only yesterday.

Norman had cherished the memory of Leila as she had been years ago. He resented anything destroying that memory, and yet, he wanted to see her; it was that desire that had impelled him to travel four thousand miles to his home.

When his door bell rang, he jumped as though a bomb had exploded in

the room. That would be Leila; after ten years.

He strode across the vestibule, unsteadily, and flung the door open.

It was Leila. She stood there framed in the door, beautiful and radiant. He could only gaze as she crossed the threshold. The years had taken nothing from her. Maturity had only added to her beauty.

She came and laid her head on his breast. "It has been so long, Norman, Dear," she said in a quivering voice, "so long."

He put his arm around her tenderly, and led her to the settee.

They sat there looking into each other's eyes. "I have changed, Norman, but it took a tragedy to bring me to my senses."

"Tragedy?"

"Yes," she replied, "perhaps you

will abhor and hate me when I tell you.

"One night, about a month after you left, my brother and I were driving home from a party. We had been drinking. We were speeding, and a speed cop started in pursuit. For the thrill of the thing, we tried to escape, and as we rounded a corner a man was run down by our car." She closed her eyes and shuddered.

"We picked him up," she continued, "and rushed him to the hospital. But he died the next morning."

"We were arrested, tried and convicted of manslaughter, and sentenced to five years in the penitentiary."

"I had a long time to think of life, and—you, I realized how selfish and cruel I had been, and since I have been out of prison, I have tried to live a useful life."

She rose and stood before the gas-lighted fireplace, with her hands behind her. He thought of her, ten years ago, standing in the same position in her Atlanta home.

"I've tried so hard to atone, hoping that you would return, daring to believe you would forgive me."

She reminded him of a lawyer pleading a case. He was reminded too, of his desire of ten years ago, to take her into his arms and crush those red lips, shaped like a bow, to his. He wanted to do so now, and he did.

"I am not interested in the process that changed you, darling," he said huskily. "It was the hand of Providence. You have paid the price."

"It seems," she said as she snuggled closer in his embrace, "that I waited for you, instead of you waiting for me."

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