

his soul beyond anything that had happened to him for years.

For the next three days he really avoided the new arrival as far as was possible. They met at meals, it is true, and he could not help joining in the conversation, which was made spicy and piquant by her wit, her vivacious interest in any subject that came up, and her contagious gaiety. Her beauty was one both of features and expression, and it gained on him at each repetition of her appearance at the table. Actual contact with her he dared not risk: instinctively he realized that the touch of her dainty finger tips would send a current of hot blood from his heart tingling through his entire frame.

On the evening of the third day, however, she approached him of her own accord. The others had gone to an entertainment at the opera house in town. She had declined to go, alleging a little migraine caught the night before when the weather had turned somewhat damp and chilly. Marchmont, too, had decided to stay where he was, he hardly knew why. He had taken a book—it was "The Children of the Mist," by Eden Philpotts—and had sat down in an easy chair by the lamp in the parlor—there were not electric lights out at Pomegranate Grove,—fully possessed in his own mind with the idea that Mrs. Sinclair had retired to her own room.

What was his surprise when suddenly she walked into the parlor, more bewitching than ever in her simple evening dress of white, and came straight up to him, with the evident intention of speaking to him! She came close to him, and stretched out her hand invitingly to him, saying at the same time with a frank natural-

ness, that was simply irresistible:

"Why do you shun me, Mr. Marchmont? I hope it is not because I am a Yankee, for I thought this Spanish war had brought us all together again, and that there were no more prejudices between North and South. It must be something else, and I want to know what it is, for I have observed that you are sociable enough with others."

Marchmont tried to be as frank and open on his part, as she had been with him, and taking her extended hand into his, as he rose, he said: "I will tell you the truth, Mrs. Sinclair. I was simply afraid of your beauty and your charm. I can love with passion, and I dare not run the risk of falling in love with a married woman."

"Oh!" said she, in a very low tone, half surprised and half amused. "That is it, is it? Well, I must try to repress some of my seducing qualities. But don't be afraid of me. I'll not run away with you. Come and hear me sing: I'm just in the mood for it to-night."

And she led him, rather than he her, into the music room, which was in fact one end of the large parlor cut off from the rest by a row of great jars with japonicas and opopanax in them.

Marchmont went with his heart in the palms of his hand—the hand she held. Her touch had indeed, as he had feared, set his blood on fire.

She sat down at the piano and played and sang. Her playing was nothing more than a soft accompaniment to her songs. But such singing Beverly Marchmont had never heard in his life before. The songs themselves were new to him. They were Bohemian, and Hungarian songs of the