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With her nut brown hair all unkempt
and falling around her white face in
tangled masses, her blue eyes red from
weeping and her cheeks ghastly sunken
where the roses used to be, with her thin
calico dress bedraggled and frazzled and
her shawl, that once was of some color,
now twisted into a cord around her
spare neck, with the faded remnant of a
lisle thread glove clinging to the lean,
bony fingers of the left hand, and with her
right hand in her apron, she stood with
cold, with her toes peeping through the
holes in her shoes like affrighted children
in a death-house, and her stockings bespat-
tered with mud, and her fingers locked up
with the remains of a once jaunty hat held
upon her poor, fevered head by a little
strip of blue ribbon—this forsaken crea-
ture stalks around Creede like the ghost
of a patient in a haunted Spanish castle.
"I am looking for Will," she will tell
you, if you ask her about herself. "Will
came here from two weeks. He sent me the
money to come on, and told me in the let-
ter that he would meet me at the depot
here. He told me to get a ticket for the
train that would leave at 10 o'clock, and
we have been married five years. Some-
body has stolen him from me—I know
they have, and he is in the mountains, in
one of those houses in the mountains."
And thus the poor forsaken creature
rambles on. Great rough men listen to
her and their eyes fill with tears. They
offer her assistance, but she refuses all aid.
"Will will come to me soon," she persists
when declining the kindly offers. God
only knows where he is, but he is in the
low gulch toward Wagon Wheel
Gap. Will was accused of jumping a
claim and he paid the penalty. Nobody
knows who shot him. His countrymen
knew that the buzzards plucked out his
eyes and picked the treacherous flesh from
his poor tired bones. The little woman's
mind is blank now, but she knows her
husband. It is better so. A kindly old
negro woman looks after her and will see
that no further harm comes to her—
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