

**UNDER
THE HARROW**

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Under the Harrow by Ellis Meredith

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ELLIS MEREDITH

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By

Ellis Meredith

Author of "The Master Knot of Human Fate,"
"Heart of My Heart," Etc.

The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-point goes.
The butterfly upon the road
Preaches contentment to the toad.

Page 11, M.P.

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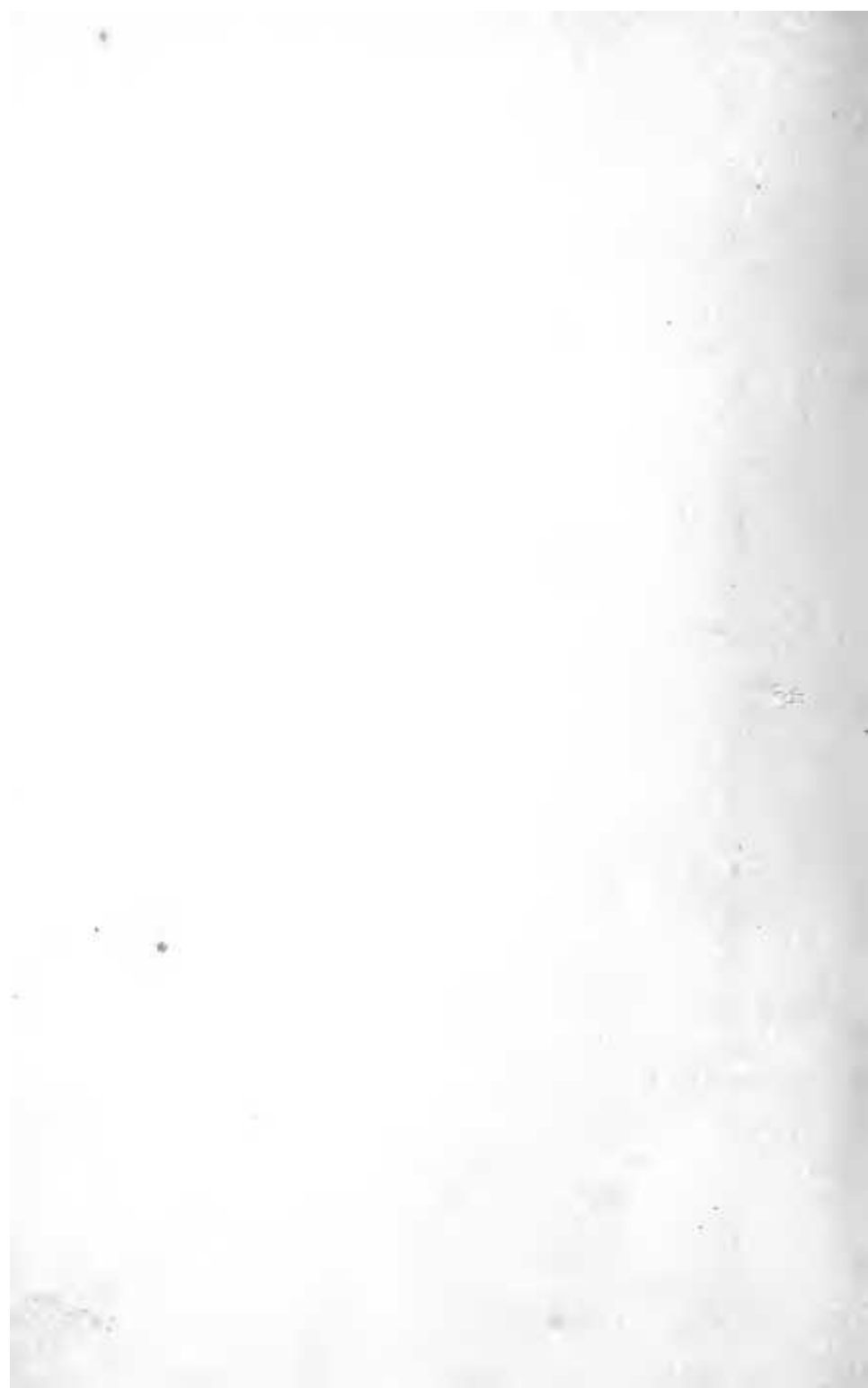
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DEDICATED TO
THE HEAVENLY TWINS
AND ALL THOSE GOLDEN GIRLS AND LADS WHO CLIMB
THE HILL DIFFICULTY
TOWARDE MOUNT PARNASSUS

2229004



UNDER THE HARROW

I

THE rain was falling steadily, insistently, and the winter night was cold and cheerless. Lorraine Townsend plodded on down Broadway, the water sopping through her worn shoes at every step, while her wet skirts were blown and wrapped about her by the wind which threatened to tear her umbrella from her numbed fingers. The many lights were a blur in the rain and the shops looked inhospitable. She turned west at Twenty-third Street, and sighed as she looked at the long, interminable blocks, and took a fresh hold upon her refractory umbrella. Presently, turning in at a small grocery, she bought the supper supplies for herself and the two girls who were waiting for her in the fourth floor back, a block or so beyond. She wondered whether

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they had had anything to eat that day. They had finished the crackers the night before and the tea that morning. She was conscious of a feeling of weakness which had superseded that of hunger to which she had grown accustomed during the past few months, and she dreaded the cold, dark room and the wan faces of her companions. But there was enough change left to buy some coal, and then had she not glorious news? Poor they unquestionably were, but before them were glowing possibilities. She hesitated a little, for Hope was sarcastic and Bess matter of fact, and what had seemed an amusing adventure might not appeal to them in the same way. Lorraine held her parcels tightly and tried to hurry. One more turn, and she found herself stumbling up the dimly lit stairway, conscious of an excited colloquy going on overhead. As she reached the last turn she saw the attenuated form of their landlady and heard her high, strident voice.

"I don't want to be unreasonable, and you ain't much behind, with this leastways," she was saying, while she examined the bill in her hand, "but land sakes, what's the use of it