

ENOCK CRANE

"I heard you call her 'Gladys' the last time you met her here," she smiled.

"Perhaps I did."

"There's no perhaps about it. I heard you."

"Why—er—she's charming—pretty—and clever," he exclaimed, brightening.

"She's more than that," she declared. "Gladys is a trump. She's been a good friend to me. We became widows about the same time. Her husband died in California, you know."

"Yes, she told me."

"Then there's Billy Bowles—fat, jolly Billy Bowles—mighty good company, Jack."

"Well, what of it?"

"And Johnny Richards. Did you ever see Johnny in a bad humor? I never did."

"Rose, what are you driving at?"

"I was only thinking they'd make a splendid trio on the *Seamaid*. We could run first to Bermuda—then just to any old place we thought of. I'm sick of New York."

He looked at her, his whole face alight.

"Rose!" he cried. "You're the best—" He bent over her, his black eyes gleaming. "Rose, I want to— Ah! what's the use of trying to thank you."

"Don't thank me, Jack. Promise me what I've asked. Will you promise me? On your honor, Jack?"

"Yes—I promise you. I give you my word of honor, Rose, I'll do as you say." He lifted her hand to his lips in gratefulness.