

## MOON-MADNESS

dangers through which they had passed. But the key! What did Constance want with a key here?

With an effort he turned away, afraid to believe the look that he saw in her eyes. It had never been there before. But she laid her hand over his and compelled him to look at her again.

"Alan dear," she said softly, "I've wanted so much to tell you all that is in my heart. It has been there a long while, Alan, since Oyster Bay. Yes, I've missed you terribly. I didn't know it until I had sent you away."

"Connie!"

"Yes, dear. It's true. I tried to show you there in the garden at Shephard's, but you *wouldn't* see, and then I lost courage. I was afraid that you had changed, I couldn't say more."

"Oh, I say——"

"Something in me rebelled, my modesty, my pride, I don't know, and I became dumb."

"I've been a fool."

"My punishment, Alan. I deserved it for ever letting you go, but I don't care for modesty, for pride, now. There's something greater than either and you've shown it to me; I want to humble myself to you, give myself to you, for I know that your soul is finer than mine."

"Don't talk rubbish, Connie."

"It's the truth, I can never forgive myself for thinking that you and Amneh——"

"Sh—Connie, dear."

He caught her in his strong arms and held her for a moment without words. If physical tokens were what he had wanted of her, she gave them to him now; her lips—no longer adolescent but trembling with the vows of womanhood. For a long moment they stood in the flood of tropic moonlight, lost in the mazes of their madness. They did not