

The "Water-Witch"

stomach for trouble—and I'd be glad to have you married, to that Wentworth girl. I'm growing old—and my nerve is going. I've been worrying about that deal with Wentworth lately—and other deals I've put through. Of course, if I could see my way to it, I'd fight, but you've got me tight, and my business needs me. That South American property has always been more trouble than it was worth, anyway. . . . Your mother has been muck-raking, too, John. She knows why you left New York. She belongs to a proud family, John—and so do these Wentworths. I never did. My father hadn't a grain of self-respect in his make-up. . . . The truth is, John, I am sick of being a crook. It didn't worry me much until you and your mother found me out. . . . Tell Wentworth that if he'll come aboard I'll beg his pardon and talk business with him."

John returned to the shore. He could scarcely bring himself to believe that his father meant what he had said. He explained the matter briefly to Mr. Wentworth and delivered his father's message.

The wind blew up strong from the north-west while Wentworth was aboard the "Water Witch".