

THE BEWILDERED BENEDICT



CHAPTER I

CONCERNS RELATIONS IN GENERAL, AND ONE IN PARTICULAR

SOPHONISBA looked at the signature, read a few lines, and banged down the letter in disgust.

"Why, I thought he was dead!" she exclaimed indignantly, and added: "How like a relation!"

"Who isn't dead?" I asked.

"Oh, only an uncle——" She picked up the letter gingerly.

I was astonished, for her father had told me distinctly that his brother was dead. He had been a saint and a martyr, and perished somewhere abroad. I knew no more than this, for I had not cared to inquire into what was obviously a painful matter.

"You see, you never mention your relations, dear," I observed.

"One prefers not to," she returned.

Now the vice of curiosity seized me. I wanted to know all about this mysterious uncle who was dead, and yet not dead.

"I understand he went into the interior and was swallowed up?" I ventured.