

"It is not truth," cried Roger. "Prove it."

"Prove it?" asked Brush.

"Ay," answered Roger. "Let him tell me what my mother was like."

He heard Sotheran again order Ellery to speak.

"Why—" began Ellery, not cheerfully. "She was tall, and had a limp, with a mole on her cheek."

Alice saw surprise on Roger's face. The description was correct.

"Come now," said Ellery. "You see it's true. Come out; I'll treat you well. You shall have money, and plenty of clothes. Come, and—I'll—I'll send for your mother from New York, and we will live together."

Brush gasped at the offer. The intention was good; Ellery was doing his best. But from his station Roger laughed.

"My mother!" he cried. "She's been dead these five years!"

In the passageway the father and the uncle looked at each other. Miserly resentment was on Ellery's face. Brush began to grin.

"And you've made me pay for her support," cried Ellery, "all this while!"

"To him, man," urged Brush. "To him. Get the boy out now. You shall have the money back."

Ellery, doubtful and provoked, tried, but the boy would return no further answer. He sat, awed at the revelation of his parentage, but clutching his knife firmly. That he could be an Ellery was a marvel, but it made no difference to his duty. It merely obliged him the more to serve Master Frank. He was so long silent that at last the others gave him up.

"Enough!" said Sotheran. His patience was exhausted. "Mr. Ellery, you may go on deck. Brush, fetch me a hatchet."