

Blessington's Folly

"Yes," replied John.

"As a reward for getting me into this trap, I suppose?"

"No. But why do you call this a trap? You came here of your own free will. We didn't want you here, heaven knows!"

"You've more brains than I gave you credit for, John. But I must get back to New York! My affairs are all going to the devil! See here, son, I'll retire from that South American business without a kick if you'll let me go—and if you and the girl will get married immediately. That will be a good match for you, John—even if she does happen to be the daughter of a dead man. Get a missionary, and splice up, and give me your word that you'll let me go immediately after the wedding, and we'll step off at the nearest lawyer's and fix up the South American business. Otherwise, keep me here as long as you can—and I'll fight—and it's even chances Wentworth will lose his stakes. Think of the bloodshed you'll save."

"Do you mean it?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"To tell you the truth, John, I've lost my