

The Stowaway

"They are cold, these English," she communed, as she passed up the slope to the house. "It takes something to rouse them. What would he have said were he in Salvador's place last night!"

It did not occur to her that Philip could not possibly have been in Salvador's place, since God has made as many varieties of men as of berries, whereof some are wholesome and some poisonous, yet they all have their uses. And she might have modified her opinion of his coldness had she seen the manner of his meeting with Iris.

Visiting the sick is one of the Christian virtues, so Philip visited Coke. Iris had just finished writing a letter, partly dictated, and much altered in style, to Mrs. James Coke, Sea View, Ocean Road, Birkenhead, when a gentle tap brought her to the door. She opened it. Her wrist was seized, and she was drawn into the corridor. She had no option in the matter. The tall young man who held her wrist proceeded to squeeze the breath out of her, but she was growing so accustomed to deeds of violence that she did not even scream.

"There is a British chaplain at Pernambuco," was Philip's incoherent remark.

"I must ask my uncle," she gasped.

"No. Leave that to me. No man living shall say 'Yes' or 'No' to me where you are concerned, Iris."

"Do not be hard with him, Philip dear. He was always good to me, and—and—I have grown a wee bit afraid of you."