

JAVA HEAD

him onto the bed. "Nettie!" she cried, "Nettie! Nettie!" Brevard was chilled by the possibility of an unutterable tragedy, when with a faint suffusion of color the girl gave a gasping sigh. Her voice stirred in a terror-shaken whisper:

"Uncle Edward, don't! Why — don't. Oh!" She pressed her face with a long shudder into the pillow. "Whatever was it —?" her mother began wildly. Brevard caught her shoulder. "Not now," he directed; "you'll come downstairs with me. We must have help at once and your daughter quiet."

However he was in a quandary — he couldn't trust the woman here, he would have to go immediately for assistance, and yet it was impossible to leave Nettie Vollar and Gerrit's wife alone. "You will have to wait in the room," he decided, turning to Quarles.

Edward Dunsack was wavering against a wall; Brevard went swiftly up to him. "We'll need you," he said shortly. Dunsack maintained his silence and air of stubborn cunning; but, when the other man clasped his incredibly thin arm, he went willingly followed by Kate Vollar below. There he sat obediently, his judicious detachment broken by a repetition of the thin shocking snigger.

"You must be responsible for your brother," Roger Brevard told the quivering woman. "I'll be back immediately. Now that you know Nettie's safe you must control yourself. No one should go up — keep everybody out — till you hear from me or the doctor or Captain Ammidon."

What an inexplicable accident or crime, he thought, hur-