

How many of these infernal dollars do you say you want? A thousand?’

‘A thousand!’ she faltered, and went violently red.

The emphatic statesman shot a look at the other man.

‘How’s that, Liscard? What are you going to put up? And the whole outfit downstairs?’

Liscard looked a bit foolish.

‘Well, anything in reason, I daresay. But Miss Dunn has been through most of us once before. And eight or nine into a thousand is a pretty stiff proposition. Say, you give us a lead of two-thirds?’

‘Look here,’ Mr Hickman pursued, ‘this place they’ve put up at Finlay is the first and only thing of the sort in the province—a Hospital designed for the farmers and built out among them. Two or three other districts are already following suit—as you say it would be a rare job to have the pioneer place fail. Well—’ he used a strong expletive—‘let’s prevent it! What do you say to a trip down there to see the Board? We could spare the time. Why, great guns! what’s this?’

Without a word of warning Sandra had pitched forward in the rocking-chair and fallen heavily to the ground.

‘Where the devil’s the woman who keeps this hotel? The girl has fainted!’