

"Don't mention it," she replied. "You can go out by this way just as well as by the other."

She stood up and continued to regard him pleasantly but intently. He returned her gaze politely but with interest, attracted by her general appearance, and particularly by her eyes. They were remarkable eyes, well shaped and well placed, the pupils large and as black as midnight, and the irises as brown and as warmly tinted as old mahogany. Her face and brow and throat were very white, with just a tinge of pink in each smooth cheek. Her plentiful hair was auburn, lighter and brighter than her eyes by a single tone and tint.

"I believe you are Mr. Beauchamp—Charles Beauchamp," she continued. "We published your photograph in our announcements for this year. I have read a number of your stories."

Charles blushed and beamed and let fall his hat and stick. The hat, which was of hard straw, rolled around the room. While Charles waltzed after the hat, Miss Featherstonhaugh picked up the stick.

"I think 'Shark Reef' is the best thing you have done," she said. "I love those islands and that sea and everything true and fine that is written about them."

Before Charles could find words in which to express his delight, a puff of wind leaped into the room through an open window, snatched a