

"I raised my rates on Costin from three to four cents a word," said Charles. "I'll work like five men now!"

"And I have my island," she said.

He turned in his long chair and took both her hands in his.

"Will you do something for me?" he asked.

"Anything," she replied.

"There is a young negro named Paul Alexander on Rum Island," he said. "Will you deed the island to him—every foot of it?"

"Yes," she answered quietly. "But why?"

His grip on her hands tightened. He told her of the gold that had lain in the golden water off the western reef, of Paul Alexander, and of the hammer.

She left her chair and clung to him.

"He was mad!" she cried against his cheek. "It was only sunstroke; but perhaps I—should not—marry you! I have no right—to marry you!"

"If you mean that, do you know what I will do?" he whispered.

She shook her head.

"I'll kill you," he said. "I'll strangle you with my fingers—now, here, on my breast. I shall be armed with the strength of insanity!"

That threat seemed to comfort her vastly. She clung closer to him, turned her face to his, and kissed him on the lips.