

"Ah—I saw him," admitted Bedford. "He was here—but he has gone."

"Where to?" she asked; and there was a note of relief in her voice. "To his gold-mines in Dutch Guiana?"

"I don't think so," he stammered. "Never heard of them. He went to Rum Island, and—and his heart was weak, you know."

"Is he ill?"

"Not ill, exactly. You—you are very fond of him, I suppose?"

"He is my father; but I have seen very little of him, and—and though I have tried to—love him——"

Mr. Bedford interrupted her by clasping both her hands in his. He breathed a great sigh of relief.

"It was very sudden," he said. "He died of heart failure, shortly after landing on Rum Island."

Her face whitened with horror.

They were all at the Ice House Hotel—Victoria and the convalescent, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Lemont Costin, and Mr. Kent Savage. It was Monday, and Victoria and Charles were to be married on Tuesday. It was eleven o'clock in the morning, and the lovers had the upper seaward gallery of the hotel to themselves. The poet and the bride and groom were bathing in the blue sea.