

Jefferson made her a little inclination. "I am," he said gravely, "not sure that I have, either."

He went on with his story, but Jacinta scarcely listened to it, for she was wondering why Austin had not come, and waiting expectantly for the time when she could, in self-abasement, endeavour to wipe what she had said from his memory. Still, he did not come, and it was half an hour later when a barefooted boatman was shown into the patio. He had an envelope in his hand, and turned to Brown.

"The Englishman who was in the *Estremadura* gave me this on board the *Carsegarry*," he said. "I am sorry I could not bring it before, but several steamers I had to go to came in, and then it was some time before I found out that the Señor Jefferson had gone home with you."

When he went away Brown handed Jefferson the note, while the latter, who opened it, straightened himself suddenly and seemed to be struggling with some emotion. Then he passed it to Jacinta.

"You have good nerves, Miss Brown," he said. "If I had known it would come to this, I think I would have left the *Cumbria* there."

Jacinta took the letter in a steady hand, but her face grew a trifle blanched as she read.

"I am going home with Farquhar," the message ran. "I could hardly go in a passenger boat, and he is fixing me up a room by myself. I didn't care to tell you when you were just shaking off the fever, but one of my arms feels very much as that engineer said his did. I am going to see if one of the big specialists or the Tropical Disease men can do anything for me."

Jacinta sat quite still a minute, and then slowly rose.

"It is horrible, but I suppose even a purpose of the kind he had does not exempt one from the consequences," she