

would be glad to have you begin by telling me who was in that launch? Why all the excitement? Where do you want to go now?"

"You are inquisitive enough to be a detective. Are you?"

"In that case would I need to ask where we were going?" countered Kendrick. "I believe you said this had been the best haul yet. Whose house was it this time?"

She remained silent. When she spoke again Kendrick fancied a nervous note in her voice.

"Will you please explain how you happened to be waiting for me at that particular spot?"

"Bless your heart, madam, I wasn't waiting for you! I happen to live nearby and was getting ready to step ashore when you grabbed my canoe and ordered me to keep quiet. I did so. Here we are."

"Your discretion was commendable," she approved. "It certainly is most extraordinary. I don't see where on earth—I guess my escort has taken French leave." She tried to laugh carelessly, but she could not hide the fact that she was greatly disturbed. "Will you paddle me across to the city?"

"And leave poor Joe out in the cold gray fog? Don't you think it would be better to turn back and give a holler or two?"

"Never mind him. He has gone home already very likely. I will pay you one dollar to paddle me over. Is that satisfactory?"