

## THE BLACK STONE

---

hear the discreet cough just behind them. It was repeated more loudly and they drew apart, looking at Dawson. In his hand he held a pink ribbon from which a key dangled.

"Ahem! The key you sent me for, Miss Constance."

"Ah, of course. Thank you, Dawson." And she took it.

"Is that all, Miss?"

"Yes, that will be all, Dawson," she said smiling.

Dawson inclined his head slightly.

"Thank you, Miss," he said soberly.

Connie took the key in her fingers and handed it to Alan.

"The key to your desk, Alan, and to your heart. Dawson gave it to me."

"My note!" he exclaimed. "You read it!"

"It was addressed to me, wasn't it?"

"Yes, but——"

"You *won't* discharge Dawson, will you, Alan?"

He waited a moment and then broke into a laugh, a joyous ringing laugh, deep from his brown throat, and then caught her in his arms again.

"Discharge Dawson? Oh, I say, Connie. A genius, that's what Dawson is."

"A good genius, yours and mine," she whispered.

"Good old Dawson," said Alan.

\* \* \* \* \*

Down below in Mr. Jessup's stateroom Dawson was carefully turning back Mr. Jessup's bed and taking things out of the closet and putting them back again.

"Now, what 'as become of them new pink pajamas?" he muttered.