



As they reached the restaurant and passed between the rows of tables, women looked up at him; oblivious, apparently, to their gaze, he chose a table a little removed from the others, where servants hurried to take his order, recognizing one whose time was of importance. She glanced across at him, when she had settled herself, and the first little trivialities of their being together were over.

"I took a visitor down to your office this morning," she said.

"Yes," he answered.

Constance was aware that it was only formally that she had taken Alan Conrad down to confer with her father; since Henry was there, she knew her father would not act without his agreement, and that whatever disposition had been made regarding Alan had been made by him. She wondered what that disposition had been.

"Did you like him, Henry?"

"Like him?" She would have thought that the reply was merely inattentive; but Henry was never merely that.

"I hoped you would."

He did not answer at once. The waitress brought their order, and he served her; then, as the waitress moved away, he looked across at Constance with a long scrutiny.

"You hoped I would!" he repeated, with his slow smile. "Why?"

"He seemed to be in a difficult position and to be bearing himself well; and mother was horrid to him."

"How was she horrid?"

"About the one thing which, least of all, could be called his fault—about his relationship to—Mr. Corvet. But he stood up to her!"

The lids drew down a little upon Spearman's eyes as he gazed at her.

"You've seen a good deal of him, yesterday and to-day, your father tells me," he observed.

"Yes." As she ate, she talked, telling him about her first meeting with Alan and about their conversation of the morning and the queer awakening in him of those half memories which seemed to connect him in some way with the lakes. She felt herself flushing now and then with feeling, and once she surprised herself by finding her eyes wet when she had finished telling Henry about showing Alan the picture of his father. Henry listened intently, eating slowly. When she stopped, he appeared to be considering something.

"That's all he told you about himself?" he inquired.

"Yes."

"And all you told him?"

"He asked me some things about the lakes and about the Miwaka, which was lost so long ago—he said he'd found some reference to that and wanted to know whether it was a ship. I told him about it and about the Drum which made people think

CONCERNING the mysterious fate of old Ben Corvet, head of Corvet, Sherrill and Spearman, great lakes shippers in Chicago. Corvet suddenly disappears. Alan Conrad, from Kansas, has the contract of making the discovery. Previously unknown to himself, he is the son of Corvet. Conrad searches his father's house and discovers an intruder who is trying to find something and thinks Conrad is the ghost of somebody who is connected with the Miwaka? What was the Miwaka? Conrad gropes for a clue until Sherrill reveals how Corvet left his property to himself. In a stormy interview with Spearman, Conrad gets still more of the clue to the mystery of the Miwaka.

that the crew were not all lost."

"About the Drum! What made you speak of that?" The irritation in his tone startled her and she looked quickly up at him. "I mean," he offered, "why did you drag in a crazy superstition like that? You don't believe in the Drum, Connie!"

"It would be so interesting if some one really had been saved and if the Drum had told the truth, that sometimes I think I'd like to believe in it. Wouldn't you, Henry?"

"No," he said abruptly. "No!" Then quickly:

"It's plain enough you like him," he remarked.

She reflected seriously. "Yes, I do; though I hadn't thought of it just that way, because I was thinking most about the position he was in and about—Mr. Corvet. But I do like him."

"So do I," Spearman said with a

seeming heartiness that pleased her. He broke a piece of bread upon the tablecloth and his big, well-shaped fingers began to roll it into little balls. "At least I should like him, Connie, if I had the sort of privilege you have to think whether I liked or disliked him. I've had to consider him from another point of view—whether I could trust him or must distrust him."

"Distrust?" Constance bent toward him impulsively in her surprise. "Distrust him? In relation to what? Why?"

"In relation to Corvet, Sherrill, and Spearman, Connie—the company that involves your interests and your father's and mine and the interests of many other people—small stockholders who have no influence in its management, and whose interests I have to look after for them. A good many of them, you know, are our own men—our old skippers and mates and fami-

lies of men who have died in our service and who left their savings in stock in our ships."

"I don't understand, Henry."

"I've had to think of Conrad this morning in the same way as I've had to think of Ben Corvet of recent years—as a threat against the interests of those people."

HER color rose, and her pulse quickened. Henry never had talked to her, except in the merest commonplaces, about his relations with Uncle Benny; it was a matter in which, she had recognized, they had been opposed; and since the quarrels between the old friend whom she had loved from childhood and him, who wished to become now more than a mere friend to her, had grown more violent, she had purposely avoided mentioning Uncle Benny to Henry, and he, quite as consciously, had avoided mentioning Mr. Corvet to her.

"I've known for a good many years," Spearman said reluctantly, "that Ben Corvet's brain was seriously affected. He recognized that himself even earlier, and admitted it to himself when he took me off my ship to take charge of the company. I might have gone with other people then, or it wouldn't have been very long before I could have started in as a ship owner myself; but, in view of his condition, Ben made me promises that offered me most. Afterwards his malady progressed so that he couldn't know himself to be untrustworthy; his judgment was impaired, and he planned and would have tried to carry out many things which would have been disastrous for the company. I had to fight him—for the company's sake and for my own sake and that of the others, whose interests were at stake. Your father came to see that what I was doing was for the company's good and has learned to trust me. But you—you couldn't see that quite so directly, of course, and you thought I didn't—like Ben, that there was some lack in me which made me fail to appreciate him."

"No; not that," Constance denied quickly. "Not that, Henry."

"What was it then, Connie? You thought me ungrateful to him? I realized that I owed a great deal to him; but the only way I could pay that debt was to do exactly what I did—oppose him and seem to push into his place and be an ingrate; for, because I did that, Ben's been a respected and honored man in this town all these last years, which he couldn't have remained if I'd let him have his way, or if I told others why I had to do what I did. I didn't care what others thought about me; but I did care what you thought; yet if you couldn't see what I was up against because of your affection for him, why—that was all right too."

"No, it wasn't all right," she denied almost fiercely, the flush flooding her cheeks; a throbbing was in her throat which, for an instant, stopped her. "You should have told me, Henry; or—I should have been able to see."

"I couldn't tell you—dear," he said the last word very distinctly, but so low that she could scarcely hear. "I couldn't tell you now—if Ben hadn't gone away as he has and this other fellow come. I couldn't tell you when you wanted to keep caring so much for

He fell forward on to the snow and lay still.

