

10 THE WEB OF THE GOLDEN SPIDER

Pausing before the little door, they discussed the situation with the interest of hunters baffled of their game.

"Faith, Murphy, they *must* have got over this wall somewhere."

"Naw, they could n't. There's glass atop the length of ut, an' there is n't a door wot is n't locked."

"I dunno. I dunno. This wan here ——"

He seized the latch and shook the door, kicking it stoutly with his heavy boots.

Inside, Wilson had risen to his feet, armed with a short piece of the joist, his lips drawn back so tight as to reveal his teeth. Wilson had never struck a man in his life before to-night, but he knew that if that door gave he should batter until he could n't stand. He would hit hard — mercilessly. He gripped the length of wood as though it were a two-handled scimitar, and waited.

"D'ye mind now that it's a bit loose?" said Murphy.

He put his knee against it and shoved, but the joist held firm. The man did n't know that he was playing with the certainty of a crushed skull.

"Aw, come on!" broke in the other, impatiently. "They'll git tired and crawl out. We can wait for thim at th' ind. Faith, ut's bitter cowld here."

The man and the girl heard their steps shuffle off, and even caught the swash of their knees against the stiff rubber coats, so near they passed. The girl, who had been staring with strained neck and motionless