

'Yes,' said the man to whom Rodgers referred. 'When these young Indians came in to tell us that they and the Chief were together and witnessed the fire from a distance, I did not consider their word enough, so Mr. Rodgers and I agreed we would take them with us and follow you to the Caryll ranch first, where we expected to hear which way you had gone. After that we went to Mr. Rodgers's place to see what evidence we could find of how the fire originated.

'The man Ross was a drinking man, and Mr. Rodgers says he had been to the town and got liquor there, and hid it in his lean-to. There is no doubt that he burned Kearns's shakabout himself, and we thought he might have done the same by his benefactor's house.

'Well, we found the metal stand of a large paraffin-lamp in the grip of a corpse—or, rather, the charred bones—and those remains are lying where his bed was; there is a broken spirit-jar in the same place. The thing is as plain as it can be.'

'It is plain, and I have done a great wrong,' replied the scout.

'There is another matter that has been explained,' Rodgers resumed. 'The young Indians told me that a party of their tribe had fallen in with my horses and annexed them that time