

gesture toward the floor, "must have made considerable noise."

"If you had seen Tompkins' face when he came to answer your ring, you would not doubt," Pendleton replied.

"Then why bring Stephanie into the affair? Let her know nothing—let her be upstairs—anywhere—so long as she isn't on *this floor*.—How did *you* enter?" he asked suddenly.

"Through the piazza-room."

"Are you prepared to take the risk of being—implicated—to relieve Stephanie?" Cameron asked.

"I understand," Pendleton answered. "I am willing to take the risk."

"And Stephanie can—if the extremity arise," Cameron went on, "tell the facts and relieve you. We may have to confide in the front office, but I think even that will not be necessary. Fix up the story with her while I notify the police. I'll use the upstairs telephone."

"What do you want me to tell?" asked Stephanie, entering the hall from the dining-room door.

She had regained her composure—and save for a slight flush on her cheeks she appeared as calm and self-contained as ever.

"We want to save you the painful experience of having to relate what happened—there," Pendleton replied, with a slight motion toward the living-room. "You can say that you were upstairs asleep—lying down after dinner—that you heard nothing of the