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jingled cheerfully was clapped upon the extended wrists.

Klein, who had remained coolly seated, spoke now for the first time.

"I presume I may ask the meaning of this outrage?"

The little man considered.

"Not in instructions," he said finally. Adding reluctantly: "You'll find out all you want to know in town."

Klein seated himself more comfortably.

"I do not intend to stir until I know what this means," he declared calmly.

The little man looked at him and decided that it is sometimes necessary to exceed instructions.

"Oh, I don't mind," he said generously. "I'll tell you if you like. You're wanted for the placing of an obstruction on the Big River bridge. Murder, I think, is the charge preferred."

The surprise on Klein's face was so patent that the little man, who was watching closely, smiled.

"Did you think it was for the Rutherford affair?" he asked condescendingly.

With all his iron nerve Klein could not repress a start. The other observed it gleefully. He had not dogged this man for months without learning to hate him. He continued as in a burst of confidence.

"No, it's not that. No proof. Beside didn't you know," keeping a careful eye upon his prisoner, "that little affair ended in a fiasco?"

It was evident that he had not known. The eyes lifted to the detective's face blazed with baffled rage. Well, if this was the way to move him the little man was willing to risk something. In any case it would probably be wise to hold him until the town constables came up.

"Yes," he said, "it was somewhat of a failure, that little scheme! Well planned, though. Who could prove that you *didn't* believe the girl was up the river or that you *didn't* stumble just in the right place? Nobody. It was a near thing for Rutherford, too. He was nearly gone. If I'd have been a few minutes later it would have worked out all right."

Klein kept a fierce hold upon himself. Outwardly he was calm.

"Do I understand that you were successful in rescuing Mr. Rutherford?" he asked politely.

"You do," said the little man in the same tone.

"No doubt you will be suitably rewarded," Klein's tone was kindly patronising.

The little man was disappointed. The officers were not yet in sight. He would try again.

"Yes," he said, "I got him out. He was numb—rather. But you needn't be alarmed, the old lady at the farmhouse fixed him up. Dry clothes, hot blankets and bottles, some old Scotch and a roaring fire. I doubt if he has even a cold to show for it."

Klein remained impassive.

"The young lady—"

Klein raised his head. The glitter in his eyes might have warned the other, but, secure behind his levelled pistol, he went on.

"The young lady, Miss Manners, had a bad shock. Wonderful how these young girls set their heart on a man! I guess it's mutual in this case."

A low exclamation escaped Klein's tight shut lips, but the little man was reckless.

"She came to her senses just as we got her to the door. She's plucky. Insisted on walking in alone. She was staggering, though and pale. I never saw anyone paler. But when she looked around and saw him lying there by the fire—why, she just gave one little cry, the gladdest cry I ever heard, and ran to him! She wasn't pale then. He—"

Klein's manacled fists shot out, the

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