

For themselves they were scared. Was Smith scared? He was smoking, they noticed, smoking his cigar, the butt end—the chewed, frayed final of it, and he was smoking it with difficulty; it was as if he was hard up, going shy on cigars.

Every draw that he took illuminated the palm, and the reflected light from the hand smouldered and waned on his face. It was the face of a man disinterested. The paddlers were reassured. The shrieks had no effect on the man they had brought (they being civilised, and don't you forget it) to quell the trouble—just as the eastern, law-abiding citizen blows a whistle for the policeman when trouble visits his residential area. In the inlet it was darker still. A hail came to them from the lugubrious, flashy shore.

"That you, Smith?"

Smith looked shoreward.

"That Clallidge," said one of the guttural paddlers.

"Hello, Claridge!" called Smith, and bade the canoe-men pull inshore. They swept alongside Claridge's pathetic little jetty of lashed trees. From further up the inlet the yells were fearsome and disgusting.

"They seem to be whooping it up here," said Smith, stretching up and taking Claridge's hand.

"By heck! You're wanted all right," Claridge answered.

The Indians lounged down listless on the instant. They looked like effigies for their own totem poles, but they had been at it for twelve hours, having started out this morning in the morning mist, at four a.m., and paddled till the mist of late afternoon.

"Couldn't have come quicker on a cruiser," Smith remarked as he clambered up the sea-weedy and slippery logs. "How is she stackin' up?"