

## THE DARROW ENIGMA 337

It occurred on the afternoon of the first day that Maitland showed the slightest improvement. I remember distinctly how he had fallen into a troubled sleep from which he would occasionally cry out in a half-articulate manner, and how Gwen and I sat beside him waiting for him to awaken. Suddenly he said something in his sleep that riveted our attention. "I tell you, Doc," he muttered, "though love of her burn my heart to a cinder, I will never trade upon her gratitude, nor seek to profit by the promise she made her father. *Never, so help me God!*"

Gwen gave me one hurried, sweeping glance and then, throwing herself upon the sofa, buried her face in the cushions. I forbore to disturb her till I saw that Maitland was waking, when I laid my hand upon her head and asked her to dry her eyes lest he should notice her tears.

"May I speak to him?" she said, with a look of resolution upon her face. I could not divine her thoughts, as she smiled at me through her tears, but I had no hesitancy in relying upon her judgment, so I gave her permission and started to leave the room.

"Please don't go," she said to me. "I would prefer you should hear what I have to say." I reseated