

"If you will excuse me, sir, I will find Markham for you. May I present Captain Osborne? My own name is Armitage."

The Prince held out his hand.

"You two gentlemen were responsible for bringing this man Henley to book, I understand?"

"We were really all in it equally, sir, for better or worse."

Armitage bowed and withdrew, returning a few minutes later with the last two members of the alliance. Fenwick sidled boldly into the room but the Kitten hung back at the door, blushing like a girl and unable to raise his eyes from the floor.

The Prince set himself to put every one at ease.

"We are no strangers at any rate, Fenwick," he said, shaking hands. "And you, I take it, must be Mr. Markham." He looked approvingly at the dark hair, small features, and brown eyes; in appearance, at least, the Kitten had no cause to fear criticism. "I remember your father very well when he was First Secretary; you, I gather, are flying rather higher than the Diplomatic."

The Kitten looked up quickly to be sure of his meaning, and the two exchanged a smile.

"Not again, sir! I may be discredited, but I've got out of this alive, and I mustn't tempt Providence."

The Prince selected a chair and motioned to the others to be seated.

"Well, gentlemen," he began, "it's on the ques-