

"Are you much hurt?" inquired the man in a trembling voice of anxiety.

"I don't think so," returned the girl, as he helped her to her feet.

"I was only stunned." Then, with a shaky laugh, she added: "Well, I suppose I'm your prisoner?"

"No, no!" protested the other.

For a moment the girl looked into the strong face of the man, then said quietly, with a tender smile:—

"I think I should like to be. You see, I heard."

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Some six hours later the inspector was sitting in his office at Manatchee. Fortune, which for so long had frowned on him, had at last taken a great turn in his favor.

Certainly, he had not succeeded in capturing Norman Burleigh, but other members of the gang were in custody; and the fact that the rancher had escaped was quite outshadowed by the fact that the girl who aided him to do so had promised to become his wife. Indeed, he was at heart glad that Burleigh would not be doomed to a period in the penitentiary.

Suddenly there was a rap at the door, and an orderly entered.

"Mr. Norman Burleigh wishes to see you, sir."

"Burleigh?" gasped the other in surprise. Then added eagerly — "Show him in."

The next moment, Burleigh entered.

"I hear you've been looking for me, Combrone," he said quietly. "You've been laboring under some mistake, and I've come to put matters straight."

The inspector gazed at him keenly.

"D'you think you can?" he inquired eagerly. "Nothing would please me better."

"Sure!" said the other, taking the proffered chair in front of the police-officer. "I seem to be under the idea that you believe I am mixed up with the whisky-running outfit. Why you thought so in the first instance I don't know, but I can assure you that I am innocent of having anything to do with it. I can understand that now that whisky had been discovered at my place you should naturally suspect me, although I knew absolutely nothing about its being there. You as good as accused me the night you searched my wagon."

The inspector was thoughtful for a moment, then he sat up with a start.

"By jingo, I think I can see through the whole business now. Donelly must have been in the swim, and put you under suspicion. That would also account for them sending me the note which let me see the running of a cargo."

"But why should they want to put suspicion on me?"

The inspector gave a laugh.

"They knew that if they did that they would run a less chance of being caught. That's all I can suggest. The man Dresden, who